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THE SOWER.

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

"In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand; for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good."—ECCLES. xi. 6.

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THE SOWER.

THE EDITOR'S ADDRESS.

IN commencing another year's editorial work, we desire to greet our readers heartily with the Scriptural salutation, "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity;" and we are sure that, to many who read our pages, that name yields sweeter music than all the world besides, because it is pregnant with divine mercy and love, as the name God the Father gave to His beloved Son, incarnate, who, in love to fallen, sinful men, came down from on high to seek the lost sheep of His flock, and died to "save His people from their sins." To all who can adopt the language of the poet as their own, and sing—

"Jesus sought me when a stranger,
Wandering from the fold of God;
He, to save my soul from danger,
Interposed His precious blood"—

that name is above every other name, for none but He could pity and save under such circumstances, neither could any beside Him, ransom them from the hand of the enemy, heal their wounded consciences, and bind up their broken hearts.

Reader, have you heard His voice saying unto you, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"? Have you felt His constraining love drawing you to His feet, and His oil and wine flow into your bleeding breast, as He spake the words, "Thy sins are forgiven thee"? Oh, what a healing word to a troubled, contrite heart! Well may all who, by faith, have heard Him thus speak, say, "Never man spake like this Man!" Happy are they who, like Mary of old, delight to sit at His feet, and catch the gracious words which drop like honey from His sacred lips! These treasure up His sayings in their hearts, and esteem them more than their necessary food. To them He is the Bread of Life, and nothing will satisfy their hearts save fellowship with Him by faith. Changes may take place all around them, and they may feel constant changes of frames within them; but, from the conviction that Christ is all, they never change. They are well assured, whatever be their frame of mind, that all they need or desire of God is found in His Son. They may be exercised with indwelling sin, Satan's temptations, manifold afflictions, tribulations, and crosses of a weighty kind; but these will, in due course, so work as to make them hunger and thirst for Him who is the life and health of their souls, and they will find in Him—who, as their High Priest, has been afflicted, tempted, and tried

in all points like unto them—"a Friend that loveth at all times," and one who sticketh closer than a brother. Yes—

"They who once His kindness prove,
Find it everlasting love."

Reader, how do matters stand betwixt thee and this Friend? Have you, during the past year, known anything of His merciful kindness? Have you found Jesus to be a Friend in times of need? and do you still feel it to be a privilege that you can at times go to His mercy-seat with your sins, sorrows, and heavy burdens? He is a true, sympathizing Friend, and all who trust in Him shall find Him such. Also, He is able to save to the uttermost, and faithful to fulfil His every word of promise. It is as true now as in the days when the words were first uttered, that "Jesus, having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end."

We trust many of our readers, in looking back upon the year just passed away, can, like the Psalmist, bear record to the honour of that name they love, and say, "Thou hast been my help;" and we desire that the remembrance of His mercy may produce humility, contrition, and confidence in all of us who can sing, in spirit—

"Thus far my God has led me on,
And made His truth and mercy known."

And, while our sins, shortcomings, backslidings, and unfruitfulness in the past fill us with shame and self-loathing, may we again find the remedy for our wounds and sores in the fountain for sin and uncleanness; and, as we sit beneath the shadow of Him who once hung upon the cross, and read His covenant love in all His dealings with us, may we, with gratitude for the past, and in hope as to the future, "thank God, and take courage."

In noticing some of the chief events which have transpired in connection with our national welfare, we feel bound to say that God has graciously tempered His judgments with mercy; for, while His hand has been heavy upon some parts, where storms and floods have caused much loss and suffering to many, yet we have cause for thankfulness that the harvest was not spoiled, and the sufferings of the poor especially, not greatly aggravated by such a calamity. Again, though we never wish to be found going hand in hand with those who delight in war, yet we may justly esteem it a mercy that our army was favoured with success in Egypt, at the cost, to them, of so few precious lives. We hope that the future may prove that step to be ordered by the King of kings for the good of many, the peace of nations, and the advancement of the kingdom of Christ. In the professing Church

in general we see but little difference as to the state of things which have marked—of late years especially—the sad and rapid decline of the multitude from the letter of truth and the most essential and plainly-declared parts of the Christian religion found in the Bible. The growth of so-called free-thought—which means, taking as much of the Bible as is relishable to the carnal mind, and rejecting all beside—has produced a state of things which promises to result in Rationalism, and that at no distant period, unless the Spirit of the Lord lift up a standard against the foe. We have just lately been appalled by reading some things boldly avowed by some of these religious free-thinkers and semi-infidels, who sneer at the mention of the inspiration of the Bible, explain away original sin and the atonement of Christ, and, in their teaching, substitute for the eternal punishment of the wicked a kind of purgatory, by which means they suppose the ungodly will be fitted for a paradise of happiness. Oh, how we tremble for the rising race when we see such anti-scriptural and soul-destroying errors taught by professed ministers of the Christian religion, spread abroad by people who seem to grudge neither time nor money, but, by means of the post or by house to house distribution, assiduously disseminate the deadly poison of materialism under the garb of a profession misnamed the Gospel of truth and peace! This kind of teaching, being so congenial to the carnal passions of human nature, is well suited to ensnare the minds of the young, and lead them astray from the good old paths of sound doctrine and Scriptural salvation, revealed and witnessed to by the Holy Ghost. Surely, when professors of the religion of Christ adopt and teach the anti-Gospel tenets of scientific materialists, it clearly proves that they at least love the darkness of agnosticism rather than the true and certain light of the truth of God.

Dear friends, again we earnestly entreat you to give these matters your most serious attention, and, for the sake of the young, the souls of your fellow-men, and the honour of God, whom you profess to love, do all in your power to spread that truth which, with the Lord's blessing, is calculated to counteract the deadly influences of those productions which are sent forth by the various enemies of the cross of Christ. With them there is much worldly wisdom and great literary influence we know, but we have a power which they care not to know, promised us by our Lord and Master as an abiding strength, which is more than all they can bring against either His truth or us, even the Holy Spirit, who is able to frustrate the tokens of the liars, and to drive the diviners mad, and whose gracious influences attending the Word of truth we teach and our feeble efforts to spread it abroad, will produce an effect which no human agency can of itself accomplish, as was

seen on the day of Pentecost, and in many other instances during the early days of the New Testament Church ; and, since we believe that "the Lord's hand is not shortened," may we have grace to earnestly and importunately pray that His presence and might may be afresh revealed in Zion, in the quickening of dead sinners and the reviving of lukewarm saints.

And now, dear friends, lest we should be thought tedious, we will close by saying that we once again solicit an interest in your prayers upon, and hope for your kind help in, our labours, trusting that you will do all in your power to promote the spread of both SOWER and GLEANER, both of which we shall endeavour to make specially adapted for opposing the twin evils, Popery and Materialism, by exposing their vile deceits, and publishing that Gospel which "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

Reader, are you a stranger to Christ ? Remember that all apart from Him is death ; and, if you are not a violent opposer of His truth, still, without faith in Him, you are under the curse, for He says, "If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins." To all who love and fear Him we say, "Grace be with you," to make this New Year a happy one to you in soul matters and in life's course.

Yours to serve,

THE EDITOR.

THE hope of a believer does not hang upon such an untwisted thread as "I imagine so," or "It is likely ;" but the cable, the strong rope of our fastened anchor, is the oath and promise of Him who is eternal verity. Our salvation is fastened with God's own hand and Christ's own strength to the strong stake of God's unchangeable nature.—*Rutherford*.

TAKE a straight stick, and put it into the water, then it will seem crooked. Why ? Because we look at it through two mediums—air and water. There lies the deception ; thence it is that we cannot discern aright. Thus the proceedings of God in His justice, which in themselves are straight, without the least obliquity, seem unto us crooked. That wicked men should prosper, and good men be afflicted—that the Israelites should make the bricks, and the Egyptians dwell in the houses—that servants should ride on horseback, and princes go on foot—these are things that make the Christians stagger in their judgment. And why, but because they look upon God's proceedings through a double medium of flesh and spirit ? that so all things seem to go cross, though, indeed, they go right enough.

LIFE A JOURNEY.

A SERMON BY THE LATE AUGUSTUS TOPLADY, M.A.

(SLIGHTLY ABRIDGED).

"They went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came."—GENESIS xii. 5.

GOD, having decreed to put Abram's posterity into possession of the country, since called Palestine, commanded that patriarch to leave Chaldea, his native land, and to set out, with his family, for the place whither Providence should lead him. Abram, who had obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful, was not disobedient to the heavenly vision; but, as the inspired penman informs us, he "took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all the substance that they had gathered, and the souls [or persons] which they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came." The same unchangeable God who had promised to bring them into that land, actually brought them into the land He had promised; and they not only set out for Canaan, but arrived safely there, according to the purpose and promise of Him who had bid them go.

Now, since Abram is distinguished in Scripture as "Father of the Faithful," or as one whose steadfast, unsuspecting confidence in the promises was singularly eminent, and whose faith, for that reason, stands on record as a pattern to the people of Christ in all succeeding generations; since he was likewise a type of the Church collective, which consists of, and takes in, all true believers, from the beginning to the end of time; and as the land of Canaan, to which Abram travelled, is represented in Scripture as a figure of heaven, that better country to which all God's elect people are bound, and to which they shall all be led; for these reasons we shall, I apprehend, put no force on the words of that text which stands as a motto to this essay, nor strain them beyond their due meaning, if (beside their literal signification as a history) we consider them in a spiritual light, as importing the safety of those who, in consequence of being called forth from a state of nature by converting grace, are enabled to set their faces Zionward, and enter on a journey to the kingdom of God. The chief business, therefore, of the present attempt shall be to show that, to every real Christian, the present life is only a journey to a better; and that all they who do in earnest set out for the heavenly Canaan, the Jerusalem which is above, shall certainly get safe to their journey's end, and not one of them perish by the way.

When a merchant sends out his fleet on a trading voyage, he is not sure of the event. His ships may arrive at the desired haven, and return with the wished increase, or they may founder on their passage, and both cargoes and crews be lost. Or, when a person takes a far journey, he has no assurance of safety. He cannot pre-discern what is before him; nor whether he shall come back to his house in peace, or no. Such is the uncertainty of earthly transactions with regard to our fore-knowledge of them. We cannot tell what a day, what a moment, may bring forth. The issue of things lies hid in the womb of futurity, till Providence and time make manifest the determinations of God, by bringing those determinations to pass.

Not so clouded are the better things which relate to a better life. The feeblest seeker of salvation by the blood of the Lamb, and the meanest hungerer after the kingdom and righteousness of Jesus, may be assured beforehand that the kingdom shall be his. The inseparable blessings of grace and glory are styled "the sure mercies of David" (Acts xiii. 34), the sacred, *i.e.*, the inviolably certain, and the faithful things of David, *i.e.*, of Christ; or more conformably to the original passage in Isaiah, "the sure benefits of David," meaning, the infallible certainty of those benefits, such as pardon, justification, sanctification, final perseverance, and eternal happiness, which are secured to the Church by virtue of that unalterable covenant subsisting between the Father, the Spirit, and Christ, the Antitype of David, in behalf of all who shall be made to believe through grace. This everlasting covenant of peace and salvation, entered into with God the Son by the other Two divine Persons, Paul had in view when he says, "God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel [of his decree], confirmed it by an oath: that by two unchangeable things [namely, His decree and oath], wherein it is impossible for God to falsify, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us" (Heb. vi. 17, 18).

Now, as Abram literally set forward from the land of his nativity, so, in a figurative sense, does every person who is effectually called by grace. By nature we are insensible of our sinful state, and ignorant of our extreme danger; impenitent and unbelieving, and (which argues the utmost blindness and depravation) self-righteous, though unholy. This is a compendious map of the natural man. He is a native of Mount Sinai; born under a covenant of works; fondly expecting to be justified by the deeds of the law, though he has broke the law more or less in every particular.

From this legal state of insensibility, impenitence, unbelief, self-righteousness, and bondage to sin, every child of God is

delivered by the effectual operation of the Holy Ghost. Ignorant no longer of the danger to which we were obnoxious by reason of original and actual sin, we have recourse to Christ alone, as "the Way, the Truth, and the Life." Retrieved from absolute unbelief, we feel the necessity of Christ, and throw ourselves upon the grace of God in Him for deliverance from the wrath to come, and rest upon the righteousness of Christ as the sole procuring cause of our acceptance in the Father's sight. And now we pant after inward conformity to the divine image, and outward conformity to the divine law. Whosoever is brought thus far is more than half-way to the kingdom of heaven. He has made, through grace, a good progress on the road to Zion, and shall go on from strength to strength, till he appear before God in glory.

Yet let not the follower of Christ cause the way of truth to be ill-spoken of, or bring an evil report on the good land by needless rigour and by affected severity. Do not sullenly reject the gifts of Providence, under a pretence of superior sanctity; but use them without abusing them. If you have them not, be not anxious after them. If you have them, enjoy them in the fear and to the glory of God. Gnat-strainers are too often camel-swallowers; and the Pharisaical mantle of superstitious austerity is very frequently a cover for a cloven foot. Take heed however, O believer in Christ, of verging to the opposite extreme. Beware of a supine, lukewarm, libertine spirit. Watch unto prayer; guard against negligence. Advance not to the uttermost bounds of your liberty. It is a just remark, which I have somewhere met with, that the best way to be secure from falling into a well is not to venture too near the brink. Swim not with the stream, if the tide roll downward; neither follow a multitude to do evil. It is the duty of a Christian not to be ashamed of being singularly good, especially in an age like this, when so many are not ashamed of being eminently bad. Better go with a few to heaven than to go with much and polite company to hell. He that fears men, and seeks to please men, at the expense of Gospel truths or of good morals, is not an honest man, much less a servant of Christ. If you find—as in some instances you probably will—that even things in themselves indifferent, prove a snare, an entanglement, and a hindrance to you, in running the race that is set before you, pluck out those things, be they what they may, and cast them from you, though they be useful as a right hand, or as tender as a right eye.

If the believer's journey should prove a long one—*i.e.*, should he live to be far advanced in years—he must expect to meet with diversity of paths. The face of the country will not always be the same. Even with regard to temporal things, perhaps, he may experience a vicissitude of ups and downs. Sometimes

the road will go rough ; sometimes smooth. To-day, it may be, he is high on the mount ; to-morrow, low in the valley. Now, his way is carpeted with moss ; anon, it is planted with the prickling briar and the grieving thorn. But remember, O child of God, that both one and the other is thy Father's ground ; that thou art still in the land of providence, and that the land of providence is also a land of grace to them who are strangers and pilgrims upon earth. So likewise, in a spiritual sense, when faith is in lively exercise, we may be said to travel through a rich, level, open country, where all is easy, lightsome, and pleasant. Soon, perhaps, may faith sicken—sicken it may, but, blessed be God, it cannot die—and hope may flag its wing ; fear may set upon thee, as a strong man armed, and the overshadowing of doubt may for a while eclipse thy comforts. In that case, let the believer still go forward as well as he can. The way will mend and the prospect brighten in God's good time ; and, in the meanwhile, that precious promise will be fulfilled, "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass ; and as is thy day, so shall thy strength be" (Deut. xxxiii. 25). If thou canst not go on, sit down ; but let it be by the wayside. Wait, but let it be at Jacob's well. Ply the ordinances of God, and the God of ordinances will come to thee and bless thee. When poor Hagar, overwhelmed with distress of mind, and quite exhausted with fatigue of body, threw herself on the ground, unable to walk a step further, an angel was sent to point her to a fountain which she knew not of, and to give her "the oil of joy for mourning, and a garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." Godly sorrow ever was, and ever will be, the peculiar care and the tenderest object of Almighty love.

Travellers need not be told that the weather is not always uniformly the same. At times, the affections of a saint are warm, sublime, and strongly drawn up to God and divine things. Anon, his affections may gravitate, grow numbed, and cold ; and, like an eagle that is pinioned, be scarce able to creep where once they used to fly. Yet, be not cast down. You may, like Samson, be shorn of your locks for a season ; but they will grow again, and your strength shall return as heretofore. Remember that comfortable frames, though extremely desirable, are not the foundation of your safety. Our best and ultimate happiness is grounded on an infinitely firmer basis than anything in us can supply. The immutability of God, the never-failing efficacy of Christ's mediatorial work, and the invariable fidelity of the Holy Ghost, are the triple rock on which thy salvation stands : whence that of the Apostle, "The foundation of the Lord [*i.e.*, the decree or covenant of the Lord] standeth sure ; having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His." And, again,

"Though we believe not [though we may occasionally reel and stagger and faint], yet He [faith's unchangeable Author and immoveable Supporter] abideth faithful, and cannot deny Himself." Was He to deny His decree, He must deny Himself, for His decree is Himself decreeing. But He cannot do this. He cannot forego His covenant, for His covenant is Himself covenanting. He cannot reverse His promise, for His promise is Himself promising. Consequently, every believer is safe, and can never be ultimately left or forsaken. As surely as effectual grace stirred thee up to undertake the heavenly journey, so surely shall glory crown thee at the end of thy pilgrimage.

Contentedly, therefore, embrace thy lot, knowing, that the whole disposal thereof is of the Lord. Be the weather fair or foul; let the calm prevail, or the storm rage; be thy mind cheerful or benighted; be thy path dreary with gloom or radiant with sunshine, commit thyself in patience and well-doing to God, as to a gracious Creator and an all-wise Disposer. A traveller is not the worse for being weather-beaten. It teaches him to "endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." Besides, he is, at the worst of times, sure of invisible support; and every difficulty he encounters by the way will be infinitely overbalanced when he gets home to His Father's house, for the utmost "sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

In point, likewise, of affluence and fortune, all the travellers to Canaan are not alike. Some of them are literally "rich and increased in goods," while others have but a small allotment of temporal wealth, barely enough to carry them to their journey's end. The former may be said to be well mounted for the road—the other goes on foot. But, in spiritual things, the humble foot-passenger frequently outstrips the rapid horseman or the stately charioteer, and is seen, not seldom, to make swifter advances in the knowledge of God and the way to heaven; and thus that observation of the Apostle is verified, "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom?" Yes, he has; and some, too, who are opulent, for we read that even Cæsar's household, the very court of Nero, was not wholly destitute of saints. But, since much wealth too often proves a snare and an incumbrance to the Christian racer, let him lighten the weight by dispersing abroad and giving to the poor, whereby he will both soften the pilgrimage of his fellow-travellers and speed his own way the faster.

When persons undertake a journey to a distant, unknown country, it is not unusual to have recourse to a guide. During their passage to Canaan, good people may, by mutual exhortation, reproof, and instruction in righteousness, be occasionally guides

to each other. But the two grand stated guides of the Redeemer's Church are, the Spirit and the Word of God, to which may be added, in humblest subordination to these two, the ministers of God. Generally speaking, these three guides do best together. A minister without the written Word would bid fair to be a false guide, a mere will-o'-the-wisp, a dancing meteor, who would only set you astray; and the Word itself, without the Spirit, is but as a dial without the sun, a dead letter, and a Book that is sealed. Therefore, the way for us not to lose our way is, to receive nothing from man but what bears the stamp of Scripture; to beg of God that He would shine upon the dial, that we may consult it profitably, and know whereabouts we are; *i.e.*, that He would make us understand the Scripture by the saving light of His blessed Spirit, and then to look upon no influence, impulse, suggestion, or direction, as the certain voice of God in the soul, except it harmonize and coincide with that sacred Scripture which Himself inspired. Thus wonderfully and wisely are the means of salvation connected. The Word of God directs us to the Spirit of God; the Spirit of God makes that Word effectual; and the true ministers of God act in the most absolute subserviency to both.

Nor are the Christian travellers guided only, but guarded likewise; and a guard is requisite, for the highway of holiness is infested with robbers. Though the celestial road is enclosed from the common, and made a distinct way of itself, yet it lies through an enemy's country, and the Canaanite is still in the land. Satan will study to annoy those whom he cannot devour; the world will try various arts, both of menace and allurement; and indwelling depravity, from whose remains we are never wholly delivered in the present life, will on all occasions be ready to revolt from the obedience of faith, and to bring us into subjection to the law of sin. The foes without, though vanquished, are not slain; and original corruption, that beast within, though wounded, is not dead; nor motionless, though chained.

Happy it is for God's regenerate people that they do not go through the wilderness defenceless and alone. If they did, they might well fear, with David, "I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul." But they are under the escort of a truly invincible armada. Providence is for them without, and grace within. Though they appear as strangers and pilgrims upon earth, they are no less than kings in disguise—"kings and priests unto God." Hence, in that grand writ of protection, recorded in the ninety-first Psalm, we read, "He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou hurt thy foot against a stone. Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt

thou tread under thy feet." The gates of hell may assault, but they shall not prevail. They may endeavour to intercept the believer on his passage to Canaan ; but God, who put it into his heart to go, will be his Guardian even unto death.

There is no convenient travelling without proper accommodations, and a competent supply of provision. Deprived of these, the healthiest would become languid, and the most robust would faint by the way. For this reason, the God of all kindness has, figuratively speaking, furnished the road to His kingdom with houses of rest and refreshment, where His redeemed may occasionally turn in and renew their strength. The good things of His providence may be considered as the temporal accommodations, vouchsafed by His bounty for the comfort and support of our mortal part ; and the stated means of grace are the spiritual accommodations, designed to quicken, strengthen, and sustain the soul unto life eternal. When outward ordinances are effectual to this end, through the Holy Spirit's influence, of which they are the ordinary channel, then is it that God's travellers can pursue their way, rejoicing as they go : "The King of Sion has brought me into His banqueting-house, and His banner over me was love." In secret prayer, in public worship, in reading the Scriptures, in sitting under the Word preached, and in compassing the altar of the Lord, His saints catch some delightful glimpses of their heavenly Father's countenance, and these experiences, viewed in retrospective, are what the soul can sometimes reflect on with comfort, during the cold and darkness of wintry deserts ; just as the pot of manna, reserved in the ark, reminded Israel of the months and years that were past, and remained as a token for good long after God had ceased to rain on His people the bread of heaven, and to feed them with angels' food.

Nor does His goodness only spread a table for us in the wilderness, by the bounties of His providence and by the consolations of His presence. He even deigns, perhaps, at times, to soften the toils of our warfare, and to sweeten the fatigues of our journey, by showing us, as in perspective, the city to which we are hastening, and by giving us, in the full assurance of faith, a taste of Canaan's grapes, on our way to Canaan's land. Faith is the mount, and Gospel promises and Gospel ordinances are the pleasant windows, from whence (like Moses from the top of Pisgah) we survey that good land which is afar off. The nearer we approach to heaven, the clearer, frequently, are our views of it—

"Divinely fair, and full in sight,
The shining turrets rise !"

I mean, if and when the light of God's Spirit shines upon faith's

eye, and illuminates the Gospel windows; for the keenest human eye can discern no object, and the most transparent windows in the world can transmit no prospect, if light be totally excluded.

Sin, temptation, weakness of faith, or sense of guilt, may sometimes spread a mist between a child of God and his view of glory. But there are also intervals of assurance, seasons of holy rejoicing, when faith is high on the wing, when hope trims her lamp, and when seraphic love (like the ascending Tishbite's fiery chariot) wraps the elevated soul to heaven. The happy traveller emerges from the dark, deep, narrow lanes, where the boughs met over his head, and all prospects of the adjoining country were shut out. He mounts the hill. The sky brightens, and the prospect widens. All is light and cheerfulness and joy. During these golden moments, this is the triumphant song: "God is my Father. Christ is my righteousness. The Spirit is my Sanctifier. The Messiah loved me, and gave Himself for me. He died for my sins; He rose again for my justification; and, because He lives, I shall live also."

Fear not, thou that longest to be at home! A few steps more, and thou art there. Soon, O believer, it will be said to thee, as it was to her in the Gospel, "The Master is come, and calleth for thee." When that word is pronounced—when you are got to the boundary of your race below, and stand on the verge of heaven and the confines of immortality—there will be nothing but the short valley of death between you and the promised land. Dread not this valley; it is but the shadow of death; and what is there in a shadow to be afraid of? Dark as it may seem, it will brighten as you enter; and, the farther you go, the brighter will it prove. When soul and body, like two bosom friends who have travelled long and far together, come to the parting-place, where they separate, and each goes a different way, one to the grave and the other to heaven; when death, your last enemy, is subdued (for he is not destroyed entirely, until the morning of the resurrection dawn); when you have got to the extremity of the vale, and have actually breathed your last, you will find your equipage waiting for you on the other side, to take you from the body, and to set you down at the throne of God, just as Lazarus was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom.

Having thus traced the Christian in his spiritual journey, from nature to grace, and from grace to glory, let me, for the present, leave him there, and address myself to those who, as well as myself, are still detained in the wilderness, and whose tour is not yet finished.

The readers of this address, and indeed the whole world at large, may be distributed into two kinds of people—of those who

are travelling to Canaan, and of those who are going the direct contrary way. There are but two roads—the broad, which leadeth to destruction; and the narrow, which opens into life. Travellers all mankind are, and travellers at a very swift rate. The grand point is, Where art thou travelling to? Art thou desirous of knowing whither thy footsteps tend, and towards what country thy face is set? Consult the way-marks. Look at the directing-posts. Have recourse to the Scriptures of truth. But study them on your knees, *i.e.*, in a spirit of prayer, and with the simplicity of a little child.

Suppose, for instance, we consult John xvi. 8, where Christ thus describes the office of the Holy Ghost, and the effects which His converting influence has on the human mind: “When He is come”—when the blessed Spirit visits and renews the chosen and redeemed world—“He shall convince the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment;” *i.e.*, He shall (first) feelingly demonstrate to them their absolute sinnership, and their total helplessness, working in them a deep sense and real hatred of self and sin. He shall (secondly) lead them to rest on Christ, and on His righteousness alone for justification; and He shall (thirdly) spiritualize their desires, refine their tempers, sanctify their lives, and make them ready to every good word and work.

Now, has God the Spirit done these things for you? Has He wrought, or begun to work, this three-fold conviction in your soul? If He has not, nor so much as kindled a groaning desire of it in your breast, I dare not give you the right hand of fellowship. I dare not salute you as one of my fellow-travellers to the kingdom of God. No. You are yet in Egypt; and you will quickly be in hell, except the Holy Ghost take you by the hand, and take you by the heart, and lead you in Christ to Zion.

But, if you have ground to hope that this work of grace is experienced by you, in some degree, two things are particularly needful for you to observe:—

1. That the world will endeavour to turn your feet out of the narrow way. If the wicked are so muzzled by Providence that they cannot bite, they will snarl at least. If they cannot do you real injury, they will, probably, pelt you with scandal, and sneer at you for being, in their opinion, righteous over much. But let not this discourage you. Regard it no more than a traveller would mind a little dust upon his shoes. Imitate the blind man in the Gospel, who, the more he was exhorted by the multitudes to hold his peace, cried out so much the more, “Thou Son of David, have mercy on me!”

2. Beware of sin. Shun the remotest appearance of evil. Think it not enough to be, for the main, in the right way; but endeavour to walk steadily and erectly in that way. Though a truly

regenerate person cannot fall, so as to turn back finally, and perish everlastingly, yet, not heeding the admonition, "Watch unto prayer," he may lose his [felt] peace and joy in believing, and forfeit that inward testimony of the Holy Spirit, that felt fellowship with God, and that sweet tranquillity of conscience, without which living scarcely deserves the name of life. Though he cannot lose his soul, yet a fall may break the neck of his comforts, dislocate his frame, and make him go halting to his journey's end. "The devil," as one justly remarks, "is never better pleased than when he can roll a child of God in the dirt." Beg the Lord, therefore, to hold up your goings in His paths, that your footsteps slip not. Yet, if you fall, be humbled, but do not despair. Pray afresh to God, who is able to raise you up, and to set you on your feet again. Look to the blood of the covenant, and say to the Lord, from the depth of your heart—

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee!
Foul, I to the Fountain fly:
Wash me, Saviour, or I die!"

Make those words of the Apostle your motto: "Perplexed, but not in despair; cast down, but not destroyed." It has been justly observed that "it is one thing to fall into the mire; another thing to lie in it." Away to the cross of Christ and to the Spirit of God for cleansing and for healing. Your covenant Father will sprinkle you from an evil conscience, and make you recover the time and the ground you have lost; and, when thus graciously restored, look upon sin as the bitterest calamity that can befall you, and consider those who would entice you to it, or be your partners in it, as the very worst enemies you have.

Soon shall we arrive where not only sin, but every temptation to it and every propensity toward it, will cease for ever. As a good man once said on his death-bed, "Hold out, faith and patience, yet a little while, and I shall need you no longer." When faith and patience have done and suffered their appointed work, the disciples of Christ shall ascend from the wilderness to paradise. With joy and gladness shall they be brought, and shall enter into the King's palace, singing as they mount, "Lift up your heads, ye celestial gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, that the heirs of glory may enter in! We are they, some of whom came out of great tribulation; but all of whom have washed our robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Stirred up by His effectual grace, we went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and, clothed with His righteousness, and preserved by His power, into the land of Canaan we are come." Even so. Amen.

"FEAR NOT!"

(ISAIAH xliii. 5.)

"*Fear not*" the many dangers great
Which in the path abound ;
Those souls who do on Jesus wait,
In safety will be found.

"*Fear not*" the furnace heated hot,
Thy Lord will bring thee through ;
For in the fires He'll leave thee not,
But will thy heart subdue.

"*Fear not*" the scornful frowns of men,
As o'er thy head they ride ;
Their triumph is but short, and then
The Lord is on thy side.

"*Fear not*" the storms on every hand,
Thy peace is most secure ;
On Christ, the Rock of Ages, stand—
A Refuge high and sure.

"*Fear not*" the long and gloomy night ;
The Lord will hear thy cries ;
The darkness shall be turned to light
Before thy wandering eyes.

"*Fear not!*" although thou art but dust,
Jehovah's arm is strong ;
Lean, LEAN on Him—thy Saviour trust ;
He will appear ere long.

"*Fear not*" temptation's dreadful hour,
Thy Lord will make a way ;
Thou shalt escape its utmost power,
And be sustained alway.

"*Fear not,*" though earthly friendships fail,
And creature ties all end ;
Alone, through God, shalt thou prevail ;
He is a faithful Friend.

"*Fear not*" the day of woe and grief,
The chosen, tried must be ;
Thy Lord is near to bring relief—
A present Help is He.

Sleaford.

E. C.

IF our feet are to be kept at the disposal of the Lord, our eyes must be ever towards the Lord for guidance. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord." Very often we find that they have been so literally ordered for us that we are quite astonished, just as if He had not promised.

THE CHARACTER OF A CHRISTIAN IN PARADOXES AND SEEMING CONTRADICTIONS.

A CHRISTIAN is one who believes things which his reason cannot comprehend; who hopes for that which neither he nor any man ever saw; who labours for that he knows he can never attain, yet, in the issue, his belief appears not to have been false. Hope makes him not ashamed. Labour is not in vain.

He believes Three to be One, and One to be Three; the Father not to be older than His Son, and the Son to be equal with His Father, and One proceeding from Both to be fully equal to Both.

He believes in one nature Three Persons, and in One Person two natures.

He believes a Virgin to have been a mother, and her Son to be her Maker.

He believes Him to be born in time who was from everlasting, and Him to be shut up in a narrow room whom heaven and earth could never contain.

He believes Him to have been a weak child carried in arms who is the Almighty, and Him to have died who only hath life and immortality in Himself.

He believes the God of all grace to have been angry with One who never offended Him, and that the God that hates all sin reconciled him to Himself, though sinning continually, and never making or being able to make Him satisfaction.

He believes the most just God to have punished a most innocent Person, and to have justified himself, though a most ungodly sinner.

He believes himself freely pardoned, and yet that a sufficient satisfaction is paid for him.

He believes himself to be precious in God's sight, yet he loathes himself in his own sight.

He dares not justify himself even in those things wherein he knows no fault in himself; yet he believes God accepts even those services wherein himself is able to find many faults.

He praiseth God for His justice, and fears Him for His mercies.

He is so ashamed that he dare not open his mouth before God, yet comes with boldness to God, and asks anything he needs.

He is so humble as to acknowledge himself to deserve nothing but evil; yet so confident as to believe God means him all good.

He is one that fears always, and yet is bold as a lion.

He is often sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; often complaining, yet always giving of thanks.

He is the most lowly-minded, yet the greatest aspirer; most contented, yet ever craving.

He bears a lofty spirit in a mean condition; and when he is aloft, thinks meanly of himself.

He is rich in poverty, and poor in the midst of riches.

He believes all the world to be his, yet dares take nothing without special leave.

He covenants with God for nothing, yet looks for the greatest reward.

He loses his life, and gains by it; and even while he loses it, he saves it.

He lives not to himself, yet of all others is most wise for himself.

THE NEW YEAR.

"The Lord bless thee, and keep thee . . . from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year."—NUMBERS vi. 24; DEUTERONOMY xi. 12.

It is a solemn thought that we are daily and hourly hastening to the end of our mortal life; and our commencing another year seems more forcibly to remind us of this, and the solemnity and importance of the fact appear for the time to increase. The past we look back upon, but feel we cannot recall it; it has fled into eternity. The future we know nothing about; it is the Lord's. The present only is ours—the present moment—but that, too, is fled ere we can call it our own.

But, whilst we think of the past year, and try to pray the Lord to forgive the sins of omission as well as those of commission which we have been guilty of, the remembrance of which may cause us to weep before Him, we desire also to thank Him for all His mercy, for we must acknowledge it has been "rich in mercy," though "poor in grace." For every temporal blessing we have received, our daily food and raiment, our home and friends, all demand our heartfelt gratitude, and this we desire and pray the Lord to help us to give. But yet we feel there have been blessings greater than these, even spiritual blessings; and we would bless Him for every glimpse of His dear face, for every visit of His love, and for every longing desire we have had after Him. These are blessings that will last for ever, and a greater share of which we ask for the future—for this New Year.

May it be indeed "A Happy New Year" to all who love the Lord, and may that happiness consist in knowing and loving Him more, that our hearts may daily burn with greater love to Him who has so loved us, greater love to Christians, and greater love to our poor fellow-creatures who are destitute of God's love mani-

festively. And oh, that the dear sent servants of the Lord may so grow in grace and in likeness to their divine Master that, as He wept over Jerusalem, they too may weep, pray, and yearn over perishing sinners! Oh, that they may, by the help and teaching of the Holy Spirit, be led more than ever to warn poor sinners of the awful consequences of living and dying in their sins, and point them to the only means of salvation—the Lord Jesus Christ—that, during this New Year, if the Lord's will, many in their congregations may be brought to know themselves as sinners, and Jesus Christ to be their Saviour, through their instrumentality—

“ Speak well of Christ ; oh, lift Him high !
 May power divine the Word apply
 In quickening sinners dead :
 Through you may many souls be bless'd ;
 Hungry and thirsty ones refreshed
 With Christ, the Living Bread.”

Oh, what an honour to be used of the Lord in proclaiming His blessed Gospel—the glad tidings of God's grace to sinners !

There is generally much prayer upon entering a New Year. There seems so many things to ask the Lord for, and His goodness in the past ought to encourage us to ask largely for the future. May the Lord help us to pray in faith ; and oh, that our greatest desire and chief request may be to “grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ,” that we may know more what it is to abide in Him, as the branch abides in the vine. The branch yields blossom and fruit, and does the tree credit by abiding in it. Oh, that we, too, may know more of this abiding in Christ, this child-like trust in Him, that we may bring forth fruit to His honour and glory ! We cannot honour God the Father more than by loving and trusting in His Son (John xv. 8), for He loves His dear Son so much that He even loves those who love Him ; or, since their love to Him is His own grace, He says, *because* they love Him (John xiv. 21—23 ; xvi. 27). And the Lord Jesus, in His last conversation with His disciples, told them six times over that prayer offered in His name would be answered ; for—

“ How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
 In God the Father's ear,
 When sinners at His throne are found
 Pleading that name so dear !”

Then how full of meaning are the words of our dear Saviour, “As the Father hath loved Me, *so* have I loved you” ! Our poor finite minds seem hardly capable of grasping this blessed truth ;

it is so great, so astonishing ! Oh, for more love—more holy, ardent love—to Jesus Christ ! May His great love to us constrain us to love Him more and serve Him better—serve Him with gladness (Psa. c. 2). Oh, that He may become more precious to us this New Year than ever before—yea, nearer and dearer to us than all besides !

Doctor Payson has supposed the various classes of Christians to be ranged in different concentric circles round Christ as their common centre. "Some value the presence of their Saviour so highly that they cannot bear to be at any remove from Him. Even their work they will bring up, and do it in the light of His countenance ; and, while engaged in it, will be seen constantly raising their eyes to Him, as if fearful of losing one beam of His light. Others, who, to be sure, would not be content to live out of His presence, are yet less wholly absorbed by it than these, and may be seen a little further off, engaged here and there in their various callings, their eyes generally upon their work, but often looking up for the light which they love. A third class beyond these, but yet within the light-giving rays, includes a doubtful multitude, many of whom are so much engaged in their worldly schemes that they may be seen standing sideways to Christ, looking mostly the other way, and only now and then turning their faces towards the light."

After reading this extract, who does not long to be amongst those who get nearest to Christ, who are in the innermost circle ? May the very consciousness of how far off we have lived only increase this desire. And surely those of us who have felt the most ignorant, helpless, and vile during the past year are the ones who really need to get nearest to Him this year, to receive of His wisdom, strength, and righteousness, that, as we have experienced "without Him we can do nothing," we may likewise experience, "through Christ strengthening us, we can do all things."

The Lord does not bless seeking ones *for* their seeking, but they are often blessed *in* that exercise, while many who so loudly complain of their lack of grace and of ability to live more to the honour of the Lord, and who seem to charge all their want of fruitfulness to the Lord's withholding grace from them, suffer loss through sloth and carnal-mindedness ; and of them it may truly be said, "Ye have not, because ye ask not" (James iv. 2). They are lively in seeking earthly treasure, because their heart is there (Luke xii. 34) ; and they are walking witnesses of that solemn truth, "To be carnally minded is death" (Rom. viii. 6). Let us, therefore, seek to be continually "looking unto Jesus," looking into His lovely face, that His bright beams may be reflected upon us (Psa. xxxi. 16 ; xc. 17). Then, if we live through-

out the year, this will make life happier, and its trials lighter; and, if we die, living very near to Jesus, it will make death easier.

May the Lord help us to watch and pray, to watch against everything that hinders prayer, so that we may enjoy more sweet and constant communion with the Father and the Son, through the Holy Spirit—

“ With God may this New Year begin,
With Him each day be spent;
For Him each fleeting hour improved,
Since each by Him is lent.”

A READER.

MEMOIR OF MARY OVERTON,

OF PULVERBACH, NEAR SHREWSBURY, ONLY CHILD OF SUKEY HARLEY.

THE life of Sukey Harley having been so widely circulated and read with so much interest, there is no doubt that some account of her only child will be acceptable to our readers. The following brief sketch of her inward life and experience was gathered from her own lips by Mr. Benson, of Pulverbach, in 1879, on her becoming a candidate for the pension of the Aged Pilgrims' Friend Society:—

When very young, I had many thoughts about my soul, and would be at times much perplexed. My serious feelings wore off only to return. Once, when quite a child, I dreamt the day of judgment was come, and I saw the sheep divided from the goats. This produced great fear, and not long afterwards I dreamt again, and I saw the Lord Jesus Christ, who looked intently on me, and said three times to me, “Your name is written in heaven.” These were only dreams, but they made a lasting impression on me.

When about twelve years of age, I was exercised with a continual fear and threatening in my soul, which I have compared many times to Jeremiah xii. 12. I seemed to have experienced the very same that is there written, and I remember soon afterwards being powerfully impressed according to the words which seemed spoken to me, “I will bring you through with a sword.” I thought from these words I should be saved, but this followed me continually—“with a sword,” and made me so afraid I could not take comfort from the thought.

I married early, and many troubles befell us. I used to feel that my mother had the true religion. I often watched her going to some quiet place to pray. She was the same in private and before everybody, and used to be much concerned for my soul. If anything went wrong in our family, she would say, “Oh, Mary,

your soul, your soul!" If I spoke to her at any time of the feelings of my mind, she would seem rather to damp than encourage me, through fear. But my own great fear, as well as hers for me, was, lest I should come short in anything. How I have felt these lines—

"Never, never may we dare,
What we're not, to say we are."

After my mother's death I was greatly cast down, and thought more of my own end. This used to follow me—

"Life's the time to serve the Lord,
The time to seek the great reward;
And while the lamp holds out to burn,
The vilest sinner may return."

One day, standing at work in my kitchen, in a moment my heart was lifted up in prayer, and such a cry went up from my soul as I had never experienced before. I exclaimed, before my family, who were present, "Oh, that's prayer!" It was nothing of my own. I never forgot that. It made me know that true religion is from above, and that I never could be justified by my own works. I have many times felt that same cry in my soul but not so strong.

In a severe illness, in 1860, when bowed down in soul before the Lord, and feeling a guilty, guilty sinner, the Lord suddenly made me know I was *saved*; and, with that sweet and powerful hope in my soul, I recovered from my illness. After another return of my heart affection, I was awakened one morning by the lines—

"The lash is steeped He on thee lays,
And softened in His blood."

Oh, how light my affliction then appeared! I did but want Him to appear, and I should be ready to soar to Him.

Another time I was low and tried, and one night slept and woke again many times. My mind was greatly tossed; and, towards morning, these words awoke me as if One spake to me, "When I have tried you, I will bring you forth as gold." I felt them very precious words to be spoken to one so vile, and I have thought much on them since with comfort, for I felt it was the Lord who spake to me. But I feel to this very day, concerning all these things the Lord has given me—

"True faith's the life of God;
Deep in the heart it lies;
It lives and labours under load;
Though damped, it never dies."

A few additional particulars concerning this aged saint and her peaceful end have been furnished by the same friend.

Mary Overton was a woman of a sorrowful spirit. Naturally reserved and silent, upon the things she felt most she would often say least. Always fearing for herself, she seemed unable, except when under the influence of some fresh touch of the Holy Spirit, at all to speak of past leadings. If she did so, her few words were always telling. She was quickly robbed of her comforts, and then, like one desolate, she "sat upon the ground," oftenwhiles a prey to many fears and doubtings. Yet nothing, during twenty-three years' acquaintance with her, struck me more than the consistency of her case, and the peculiar character of the helps she found, as showing the Lord's compassion and care over her. There was much for faith to feed upon, but with her it was a rare thing to be able to realize the blessedness of the hope which was surely hers.

Going into her cottage one day, I found her in tears. She had just felt the spirit of those lines, "My soul, thou hast a Friend on high," and "Fear not, His merits must prevail." Her table seemed spread, and yet a broken spirit, I might almost say, without the consolation, was hers. Christ and His infinite merit was everything in her esteem, but she was unworthy.

Another time I found her with her mother's Bible on her knees, and its countless pencil-marks underlining almost every word, according to Sukey's habit in reading the Book so precious to her; and Mary had been led to a passage by a pin which, more than thirty years ago, her mother had stuck into it, and which was there still. The passage was, "Thou shalt weep no more: He will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry: when He shall hear it, He will answer thee;" and, as she read, the blessed Spirit applied the word with power to her heart, and I had just come in to see the mourner rejoice, and her sorrowful face lighted up.

Another time, it was after a silent visit with her, for, though in a tender, feeling frame of spirit, she could not speak till on my rising to take leave of her. Then, in broken words, she told me what she had found. "Early this morning, I was cleaning out the ash-pit—I had but just come down—and I felt so low, such a nothing creature, I felt it before the Lord, and it came in a moment into my heart—

" ' When thou art nothing in thyself,
Thou then art close to Me.' "

"I had to drop the shovel, and sit down. I was so overcome at the thought He should speak to me."

During her last illness she was mercifully supported, and died in peace on Thursday, September 28th, 1882, aged seventy-seven years. As she lived, so she died, looking for the mercy of the Lord Jesus unto eternal life. Nothing was more apparent than the steadfastness of her faith and love. She knew the work was the Lord's, and was not left in trial to cast away her confidence.

About three months before her death, I had the sweetest visit with her I remember. A whisper from the Lord had assured her of the forgiveness of all her sins. This was to prepare her for the end and the deep inward trials that attended it. She frequently mentioned the verse of the hymn as expressing these—

“He'll cause thee to bring
Thy griefs to His throne,
But answers of peace
To thee shall send none :
Then sorrow and sadness
Thy heart shall divide,
Because He's determined
His grace shall be tried.”

Deeply mourning and sorrowful as she was, we know now she is comforted ; and, even before her departure, sweet helps were vouchsafed her. It was deeply serious, but sweet to witness the breathings of her soul in faith and patience as the end drew near. She wanted nothing earthly means could supply to ease and refresh her. It was a privilege to know and love her, and we shall long miss her. Her remains lie beside her mother's grave in Pulverbach churchyard.

Pulverbach.

R. B. BENSON.

[Many of our readers, doubtless, are well acquainted with the interesting memoir of Sukey Harley, and will read with pleasure this little account of her only child, for whom she felt a deep concern, and offered up many prayers, which a covenant God graciously answered in bringing her to the feet of Jesus, and preserving her to His heavenly kingdom. May praying parents be thereby encouraged to seek the salvation of their children, remembering that all power is His who said, “Ask, and ye shall receive;” and, even though He delays to give us our request, that time is not lost which is spent in prayer.—ED.]

WHEN thou hast truly thanked thy God
For every blessing sent,
But little time will then remain
For murmur or lament.

LINES

WRITTEN FROM THOUGHTS UPON HABAKKUK III. 17, 18.*

AH ! why this disconsolate frame ?
Though earthly enjoyments decay,
My Jesus is ever the same—
A Sun in the gloomiest day.
Though molten awhile in the fire,
'Tis only the gold to refine ;
Then be it my simple desire,
Though suffering, yet not to repine.
For what are the pleasures to me
That earth in its fulness can boast ?
Delusive its vanities flee—
A flash of enjoyment at most.
And if the Redeemer could part,
For me, with His throne in the skies,
Ah ! why is so dear to my heart
What He in His wisdom denies ?
If riches to others are given,
And in vintage and corn they abound ;
Yet, if I have treasure in heaven,
There should my affections be found.
Why stoop for the glittering sands
Which they are so eager to share,
Forgetting those wealthier lands
Which form my inheritance there ?
Dear Jesus, my feelings refine,
My roving affections recall ;
Then be there no fruit in the vine,
Deserted and empty the stall—
The long-laboured olive may die,
The field may no harvest afford ;
Yet, under the gloomiest sky,
My soul may rejoice in the Lord.
Then let the rude tempest assail,
The blast of adversity blow ;
The haven, though distant, I hail,
Beyond this rough ocean of woe.
When safe on its beautiful strand,
I'll smile at the billows that foam ;
Kind angels shall hail me to land,
And my Jesus will welcome me home.

* These lines are noticed in "The Life and Letters of the late Thomas Hardy, of Leicester," Vol. I., page 77. Mr. Hardy highly esteemed them, as conveying light on that wonderful passage, Habakkuk iii. 17, 18.

[We purpose devoting a few pages monthly, of the SOWER, to the exposing of Popery, and the deadly tendencies of those evil notions which are being spread abroad under various names, but all containing alike the seeds of infidelity and influences subversive of the interests of the rising race, both morally and spiritually. Many families could bear sad record to the spread of this Satanic poison.]

THE WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD TO BE PREACHED.

Do you believe the Bible? Then depend upon it *hell is a subject that ought not to be kept back*. It is striking to observe the many texts about it in Scripture. It is striking to observe that none say so much about it as our Lord Jesus Christ, that gracious and merciful Saviour; and the Apostle John, whose heart seems full of love. Truly it may well be doubted whether we ministers speak of it as much as we ought. I cannot forget the words of a dying hearer of Mr. Newton—"Sir, you often told me of Christ and salvation, why did you not oftener remind me of hell and danger?" Let others hold their peace about hell if they will—I dare not do so. I see it plainly in Scripture, and I must speak of it. I fear that thousands are on that broad way that leads to it, and I would fain arouse them to a sense of the peril before them. What would you say of the man who saw his neighbour's house in danger of being burned down, and never raised the cry of "Fire"? What ought to be said of us as ministers, if we call ourselves watchmen for souls, and yet see the fires of hell raging in the distance, and never give the alarm? Call it bad taste if you like, to speak of hell. Call it charity to make things pleasant, and speak smoothly, and soothe men with a constant lullaby of peace. From such notions of taste and charity may I ever be delivered! My notion of charity is ever to warn men plainly of danger. My notion of taste in the ministerial office is to declare all the counsel of God. If I never spoke of hell, I should think I had kept back something that was profitable, and should look on myself as an accomplice of the devil.—RYLE.

To seek to the second means with the neglect of the first is the fruit of a false faith.—*Bishop Hall*.

THE heir of a great estate, while a child, thinks more of a few shillings in his pocket than of his inheritance; so a Christian is often more elated by some frame of heart than of his title to glory.—*Newton*.

THE BANEFUL INFLUENCE OF POPERY.

THE influence of Popery is evil, always and everywhere. See the testimony of the most eminent men of our time.

Lord Macaulay says—"Throughout Christendom, whatever advance has been made in knowledge, in wealth, and in the arts of life, has been made in spite of her, the Papacy, and has everywhere been in inverse proportion to her power. The loveliest provinces in Europe have, under her rule, been sunk in poverty, in political servitude, and in intellectual torpor; while Protestant countries, once proverbial for sterility and barbarism, have been turned by skill and industry into gardens, and can boast of a long list of heroes, statesmen, philosophers, and poets."

The opinion of Bishop Burnet—"Learn to view Popery in a true light, as a conspiracy to exalt the power of the clergy, by offering to the world another method of being saved besides that presented by the Gospel. Popery is a mass of impostures, supported by men who manage them with great advantage, and impose them with inexpressible severity on those who dare call anything in question that they dictate to them."

Milton's opinion—"Popery is a double thing to deal with, and claims a two-fold power—ecclesiastical and political—both usurped, and one supporting the other."

Canon Melville says—"Make peace if you will with Popery; receive it into your senate, in your chamber; plant it in your hearts; but be ye certain—as certain as there is a heaven above you, and a God over you—that the Popery thus honoured and embraced is the very Popery that was loathed and degraded by the holiest of your fathers, the same which lorded it over kings, assumed the prerogative of Deity, crushed human liberty, and slew the saints of God."

JESUITS.

WE leave our readers to surmise if, and how far, the following letter may be justly applied at the present time. It was written by a Jesuit agent of the name of Fagan, to the *Sacred and Holy Society of Jesus*, at Paris, dated May 13th, 1642:—

"REV. SIRS,—We doubt not but to make a great progress in what we have undertaken. We have put the *mobile* out of conceit with Canterbury, the head of their heretical Episcopacy, and doubt not in time to perfect our designs through factions between themselves. It must not be *totally arms* that can conquer heresy, as you have advised, but *separation*, which has prevailed much of late. . . . We be encouraging the Independents

purposely to balance the sects, lest they grow too ponderous, high, and lofty; and, as we shall find them also, we shall encourage the Anabaptists, knowing all these are a distraction in a heretical monarchy. . . . We entreat you to signify to the Convent that we want wise, learned, and subtle scholars to come and assist these new sects, that they may be still at variance. . . . The old cub, Canterbury, suspects not the Church Catholic in the least, but is inveterate against the Puritan sort, and they against him. . . . We seem very civil to him, and cherish him against the Puritans, whilst we visit him, so that he dreams not how the net is spread to catch him."

[We leave our readers to reflect how far the above is literally true to-day.—ED.]

LORD QUEENSBERRY AND THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

THE Marquis of Queensberry, speaking at the opening of a branch of the Secular Union at Stockport, said that he had been excluded from the House of Lords for his opinions. This representation of his own case had led to its being said that he was an atheist, and denied the existence of God; whereas, on the contrary, he being an agnostic, had never expressed an opinion as to the being of a God, believing the problem too abstruse to be solved by man in his present state.

Well may it be asked in Holy Writ, "Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" (1 Cor. i. 20.) The above fact is one of many now frequently passing under our notice, which prove that the world by wisdom knows not God, and that even the learned and the great, untaught by the Spirit of God, professing to be wise, manifest themselves to be fools when they attempt to speak of matters which concern the souls of men. Here is a nobleman professing not to know whether there be a God, and believing it impossible for man in his present state to solve the question. Believers know that man, by searching, cannot find out God, but they also know that He manifests Himself to His saints as He does not to the world. They are brought by His teaching to know Him in His Word, feel His power, grace, love, and presence in their hearts, and by faith to commune with Him at the throne of grace, so as to be assured of His existence and His friendship, for "he that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself" (1 John v. 10). Happy are they who, receiving the remission of sin through faith in Jesus, can say, "I know whom I have believed" (2 Tim. i. 12). They are not like the poor wretches who, after having disowned and denied God and His truth, are in no better a position at the best than one who

confessed, when he was dying, that he was about to take a leap in the dark. This is the best that agnostics like the Marquis of Queensberry can hope for or promise to their disciples. May the Lord preserve our children from the teachings of all such men, whose wisdom "is foolishness with God" (1 Cor. iii. 19). Against such a know-nothing system we hope to wield our pen, and warn our readers, the young especially; and we trust that we shall have the prayers and help of all who love the Lord and wish well to their fellow-creatures.

Reader, remember that an "agnostic" is a know-nothing as to God and the future—a polite phase, this, of the soul-destroying infidelity which is spreading so rapidly in our midst. Let us seek to spread "the truth as it is in Jesus."

WHAT THE BISHOP OF MEATH SAW IN MADRID.

Norwich, October 12th, 1882.

SIR,—The following extract from *Light and Truth*, contributed by the Bishop of Meath, in the early part of the present year (during a visit to Spain and Portugal), will, I think, prove interesting to your readers, as an example of the kind of teaching still prevalent in dark, benighted Spain, and what we might expect to see in this country also, if ever we are again brought into bondage by the apostate "Mother of Harlots and abominations of the earth;" and which seems not impossible, if we go on at the rate we are now travelling, but which may God forbid!

I am, sir, yours faithfully,

E. HARWARD SMITH.

"On leaving the church, Pastor Fliedner brought me to the door of a Roman chapel, in an adjoining street, and pointed to a notice that was nailed upon it in a prominent position, so as to catch the eye of every passer-by. On examining it, I found engraved upon it the outline of the sole of a shoe, and an address to the faithful, stating that this outline was the exact measure of the sole of the blessed Virgin Mary's slippers; that it had been declared to be so by Pope Alexander XXII., and that his witness had been subsequently confirmed by another Pontiff. It was further announced in the notice that all who should kiss the engraving and repeat an *Ave Maria*, would thereby secure for themselves or for their friends an indulgence from Purgatory of three hundred years! What an example of the teaching which these poor people receive!"

THOUGH now thy heart be full of fear,
Jesus will bring His mercy near.

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.—No. XXXII.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,—Yesterday, as I sat in chapel, a thought of you came across my mind, and I felt determined to write to you again, for since I read your last two letters to me, I have been encouraged to hope there is something good in you towards the Lord God of Israel. Oh, dear friend, salvation is a wonderful thing indeed—yea, salvation is a glorious blessing. Salvation from the solemn consequences of sin and guilt, into which we are all brought through the *fall* of our first parent Adam, is a greater mercy than mortal tongues will ever be able to express or heart conceive. Oh, how far from God is the human heart gone! It reads in the Psalms, “The Lord looked down from heaven, to see if there were *any* that did seek after God; and, behold, they were *all* gone out of the way; there were *none* that did good, *no, not one*. They were *all* corrupt and become abominable.”

All men, in the state in which they are born, are vile and hateful in the sight of God, and all their “righteousness is as filthy rags,” and “they go astray from the womb, telling lies.” Oh, how exposed to the wrath of God and eternal damnation is the unrenowned sinner! Well may the great Redeemer say as He did to Nicodemus, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God;” and, again, “Except ye be converted, and become as a little child, ye shall in *no case* enter into the kingdom of heaven.” Oh, the solemn thought of being shut out! You have many times helped us to sing this hymn—

“When Thou, my righteous Judge, shalt come
To fetch Thy ransomed people home,
Shall *I* amongst them stand?
Shall such a worthless worm as *I*,
Who sometimes am afraid to die,
Be found at Thy right hand?

“I love to meet among them now,
Before Thy gracious feet to bow,
Though vilest of them all;
But can I bear the piercing thought—
‘What if my name should be left out
When Thou for them shalt call?’”

This, my dear young friend, is the language of the soul seeking salvation. He is brought to feel it is a bitter thing to sin against God; and that to die without God, without being “born again,” will leave him without hope in that solemn hour.

The weight of eternal things was laid upon my mind in a solemn manner when about nineteen years of age, at which time I

was greatly bent upon the pleasures of sin, especially song singing, and it was a trial indeed to forsake it; and, after I felt the guilt of it, I many times became ensnared, which so troubled my mind that often I have sought out a lonely spot, where *no* human eye could see me or ear hear me, there to pour forth my prayer to the God of mercy and goodness, that He would indeed have mercy upon a poor guilty sinner like me, and deliver me from the power of sin, and save my soul with an everlasting salvation, and give me grace to walk in His ways and serve Him in righteousness and true holiness. At that age I was sorely tried and tempted by the great arch-enemy of souls, "who goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." I have crept into hovels and barns, stone pits and gravel pits, under walls and hedges, into woods and plantations, and into remote corners of the fields, to call upon the great God who made heaven and earth, that He would have mercy upon and deliver me from the power of a tempting devil, and 'hold me back from the fulfilment and desires of my own wicked heart.

Oh, dear friend, how true it is, "The heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," ever prone to sin and folly! But the fear of God being put into the heart, will ultimately preserve the soul, through the blood and righteousness of the glorious Redeemer Christ Jesus, from the damning power of sin. It is written, "By humility and the fear of God are riches, and honour, and life." What can we want beside? The Scriptures are filled with many great and precious promises to the man who *truly* fears the Lord.

My dear friend, matter still flows fast, but time and space will not allow of my penning more this time. Your dear father appeared pretty well on Sunday. Our anniversary was on the 15th. Mr. D. Keevil preached. We sang our old favourite, "The Resolve." Yours to serve in the fear of God,

Milton, October 23rd, 1876.

JAMES GARDNER.

It is a vain tempting of God to cast ourselves upon an immediate provision, with *neglect* of common means.—*Bishop Hall*.

FEARFULLY and wonderfully am I made, and designed for nobler ends and uses than for a few days to eat, and drink, and sleep, and talk, and die. My soul is of more value than ten thousand worlds: "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"—*Flavel*.

ERRATA.—In the SOWER for December, 1882, page 347, fourth line from bottom, instead of "at Lewes," read, near Lewes; page 348, line twenty-two from top instead of "September," read October.

THE SOWER.

NOTES OF A SERMON BY MR. POPHAM,
PREACHED AT GALEED CHAPEL, BRIGHTON, SUNDAY MORNING,
JANUARY 29TH, 1882.

"I am Thine, save me; for I have sought Thy precepts."—
PSALM cxix. 94.

MANY a child of God present may feel that, if he possessed the world, and parting with it would bring into his soul the assurance of his being the Lord's, he would gladly part with it. Oh, what an infinite mercy we see and feel it to be, to belong to God! Well, but some may say, "We do belong to Him as His creatures." Yes, you may be saying that in your heart, yet listen to what He Himself says: "And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you." It will be a solemn matter for those who, when assembled before the great white throne, hear that "I never knew you." Being God's by creation is not enough for God's children. They want to know they are His by redemption and by regeneration; and, until they know it to their soul's satisfaction, they have no solid rest.

Sometimes we argue from cause to effect. Now, I feel my mind led to reverse that order this morning; and, in looking at the words, "I am Thine," will try to show in what respects, besides creation, God's people are His.

To begin with vital religion at once, let me say they are His by the regenerating work of God the Holy Ghost in their souls: "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." And this work is at once, though in different degrees in different cases, manifested by the state of feeling the new-born soul comes into. The desires, the confessions, the prayers, the breathings of this soul are quickly manifested, to all who have eyes and ears, to be spiritual. If born of God, you will go where God is to be found. If you know, by divine teaching, what a sinner you are, you will seek salvation in Christ Jesus. As the Spirit influences your heart, though you know not God, nor that He loves you, you will be constrained to seek an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ. God the Holy Ghost dwells in every elect person when quickened; hence, although between your soul and God there are mountains of guilt, quantities of sins, and an unbelieving heart that none but He can overcome, notwithstanding all that, you are obliged to seek Him. Your heart will cleave to God's children, though you do not feel fit to be where they are. Every

mark of grace in them you admire. You will seek the Word, go into your room, drop on your knees, and your heart will heave such sighs as only God's people know."

Here is a following after God, although the soul feels to be getting further away from Him; but there is no giving Him rest until He is found. God has got the heart, the ear, and the attention of this poor soul. Oh, what God has accomplished in a man when He has got hold of him, body and soul, so to speak!

But such a sinner says, "I am not fit to go where God's people are." Yet you belong to Him. Though guilt seems as if it would drive you into perdition, and though the delay in answering your prayers much tries you, you belong to God, and you will some day come to this—

" 'Midst all my sin, and grief, and woe,
Thy Spirit will not let me go."

Certainly, you are His by quickening grace, if this is your experience. Here is a word some of us know—

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

"Sported with death." We remember the time when our hearts said, "Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways." Oh, what enemies to God and goodness! what desperate creatures! And yet grace subdues us, and squeezes many a prayer out of our hearts.

If, then, you are God's by quickening grace, let me go a step further—you are His by redeeming blood. When I carried the burden of my sin and rebellion against God and His truth, what a bowed down creature I was, until He took the burden away by that word, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ;" clenched afterwards with this—"But I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief."

You say, "If the Lord would tell me He had redeemed me, I should want no more." Well, ask Him as well as you can. Do you find you cannot rest without redeeming blood made known to your heart, through faith? He has it for you. It will come in His own time. The brokenness of heart, the earnestness you feel in following after God, are so many graces given, and the blessing you are seeking is one God has in store for you. Then you will say, "I am Thine."

Again, "And he that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in him. And hereby we know that He abideth

in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us." Now, let us test ourselves by that for a minute or two. What spirit have you got? Do you want the world or God? Will the literature which pleases a carnal mind please you, or do you turn to the Word of God? Does a form of prayer satisfy you, or do you want to be breathing out your soul to God daily? Does sin press you down? Do you sigh for a broken heart? Do you always want to do your own pleasure? or is this rather your desire, "Make Thy face to shine upon Thy servant; save me for Thy mercies' sake"? Is that your desire, your prayer? "Hereby know we the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error." Does godly fear keep you from going wrong? Does the spirit of humility make you drop down and take the lowest place? Do you sometimes see such beauty in the mangled form of Jesus, in His bleeding, dying love, as to cause your soul to go out in earnest longings—

"Oh, that closer we could cleave
To Thy bleeding, dying breast"?

And, again—

"Rend, oh, rend the veil between!
Open wide the bloody scene"?

Have you such a spirit? You are the Lord's if you have.

Paul says, "Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things which are freely given to us of God." He is the Spirit of truth. What will the letter of truth do for us if it is alone? Nothing in a saving way. But you have felt the truth warm upon your heart, fitting your case so exactly that you have said, God must have written it expressly for you. The blessed truth has so strengthened your faith that you have felt you could go through fire for it. It is the Spirit who makes truth warm with life and moist with unction. We may, without that life and that unction, pick up truth, and afterwards have to go back and learn it by experience.

But you may say, "I cannot see the Lord Jesus—cannot behold Him as my soul desires." Now, what heaviness you feel; but when He "stands confessed," then, "or ever you are aware, your soul makes you like the chariots of Amminadib." How your arms entwine round Him! He is precious; and your language is—

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

Then you belong to Him—you are His. Did He ever hold communion with one who did not belong to Him?

If, then, we are the Lord's in this way, we may go a step further, and say we are His by eternal choice—by election. The knowledge of this truth, got in a right way, never makes the heart hard. It does not harden the heart to trace up to God's eternal choice every sweet grace—a broken heart, the tender feeling of godly fear, the hope you have in the Person of Jesus. No; but it will melt it still more. What a mercy to belong to God! Jesus said, "Thine they were." "Thine by choice." All the hope, the godly tenderness, the faith, the earnestness these chosen ones possess and feel, flow from this river of love coming from the throne of God. "And it shall come to pass, that everything that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live" (Ezek. xlvii. 9). And, when it touches your souls, you live.

"I am Thine." What a mercy to be enabled to look up to God and say that! What peace I felt one evening during the past week, and was constrained to look up and say, "I do belong to Thee, Lord!"

Perhaps there are some here who are saying they fear they shall never get the blessing they desire and seek, because they have such hard, unbelieving hearts. Friends, whoever got a blessing *for* a soft heart? Whoever obtained it *for* faith? "But my sins," says one. When the blessing of pardon comes, where are they? The blessing of God was never merited by faith. It works brokenness and contrition, and immediately it comes, faith mixes with it and embraces it.

"I am Thine." And there is another way in which we know and feel we are the Lord's. By His preserving grace and power. Where should we have gone to, since we have known the Lord's calling grace, but for His preserving grace? What gins and snares have been laid for us! What sins have bubbled up in our hearts, and yet we are preserved! "Having obtained help of God, we continue to this day." "If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, now may Israel say, if it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us, then they had swallowed us up quick." What a comfort it is to sometimes look back upon the way God has led us! "For by Thee have I run through a troop; and by my God have I leaped over a wall." Thus, child of God, you feel you are His. Well may you say—

"And can He have taught me to trust in His name,
And thus far have brought me, to put me to shame?"

Al! no. If anything could turn the Lord's heart away from us, unbelief would. If aught could make Him alter His purpose of mercy, our treachery would. But, instead, He has kissed us over and over again. What a Gospel this is! What a God we have!

So good, boundlessly good; and this goodness leads us to repent, reproach ourselves, and embrace Him.

Again, do we not belong to the Lord by reason of His many deliverances, freely wrought for us? How many, how wondrous, they have been! Oh, the depths we have gone into! the proud waters that have gone over us! What shipwrecks have God's people suffered in all ages! You have no doubt lived through Paul's journey to Rome, spiritually, in Jonah's depths: "Lover and friend hast Thou put far from me;" and, worst of all, God at a distance. "Ah!" you have said, "I cannot live through this." But you have got through; yes, and in this very place, "the place of drawing of water, you have rehearsed the righteous acts of the Lord, even the righteous acts towards the inhabitants of His villages in Israel" (Judges v. 11).

Now, has not the Lord made this known to some of you? You doubt it, but gather together, dear friends, the stones of help you have, and, even if you have no high heaps, you will not be able, in the face of those stones, to say God has done nothing for you.

But God's dear people experience many temptations. If the enemy, the devil, could dare to throw an "if" at the Lord Jesus, who knew, and was equal with, His Father, think not he will hesitate to hurl it at us. Well may we say with dear Hart—

"View that amazing scene;
Say, could the tempter try
To shake a tree so sound, so green?
Good God, defend the dry."

But yet the Lord has been pleased to rebuke the enemy, who has then left us in the field more than conquerors. Still, we are yet open to the attacks of the devil. Sometimes he will thrust hard at your hope; at others, at the Object of your hope, the Lord Jesus. Now he will stir up the evils of your heart, and then turn accuser, and say the sins of the true child of God are kept under; anon he will tempt you to try, in self-sufficiency, to do without the inward work of the Lord the Spirit, and then accuse you of that. We don't know how he may tempt us. If we are not ignorant of some of his devices, we don't know how he may come an hour hence. Yet, how encouraging to Little-Faith to look back and see what deliverances God has wrought! Thus viewing His mercy, the soul can say, "I am Thine."

And, to those who cannot say as much, I would remark, what a mercy it is to be able to put your hand on your heart, and say, "I want to be His"! Well, wait on Him. Some of us were as destitute, as dark, as lost in ourselves as you, yet He came to us and saved us; and, therefore, we say to you, "Wait on the

Lord." He never said, "Seek ye Me in vain." Go, poor souls, with the chains about your necks, and tell Him how sin and guilt oppress, and fears distress you—

"The sight will melt His piteous heart,
Soon touched with human woe."

He knows all about it, but loves His people to tell Him. Soon you will obtain what you want—forgiveness and cleansing. Of all miracles in this world, the greatest is a purged conscience, whereby the soul can look to God and say, "I'm clean, just God, I'm clean!" To such a confidence God will bear witness, and confirm all with a smile, so that the soul can say, "I am Thine."

"Save me." That seems strange to nature, and to many secure and self-satisfied professors. But we want saving repeatedly, and that down to the end of the journey; for, although we may have been plucked as brands from the fire, yet we often need to be saved from evils of various kinds. The Lord's people do not want only to get to heaven, but they desire as much of heaven, of communion with God in Christ, as they may have here; but sins and foes often interrupt and spoil them; and, when they view their enemies, both within and without, their language is, "Save me from them all, Lord!"

I must leave it now. May a kind and gracious God bless His Word, and enable His own to say, "I am Thine, save me." Tell Him, dear souls, what you want. The more you are enabled to do this, the closer you can creep to Jesus, the nearer you can live to Him, the more comfort you will find.

HOW SHALL A MAN KNOW THAT HIS NAME IS WRITTEN IN THE LAMB'S BOOK OF LIFE?

"THERE is no way," says the learned Mr. Flavel, "for men to discern their names written in the book of life, but by reading the work of sanctification in their hearts (Rom. x. 8). I desire no miraculous voice from heaven, no extraordinary signs or unscriptural notices and informations in this matter. Lord, let me but find my heart complying with Thy calls, my will obediently submitting to Thy commands; sin my burden, and Christ my desire; I never crave a fairer or surer evidence of Thy electing love to my soul. And if I had an oracle from heaven, an extraordinary messenger from the other world, to tell me Thou lovest me, I have no reason to credit such a voice, whilst I find my heart wholly sensual, averse to God, and indisposed to all that is spiritual."

W. ARMITSTEAD.

"THOU ART GOOD, AND DOEST GOOD."

I LEAVE it with Thee, Lord, whatever it be, Lord ;
Thy way *must* be better than mine ;
There seems to be sorrow in store for the morrow,
But wonderful *succour* is Thine.

Oh, how can we wonder at storm-cloud and thunder,
While sin is so rampant within ?
Thou doest no evil, though nature and devil
Charge Thee with the wrongs we have seen.

Thou lovest, and provest Thy love, as Thou movest
Before us wherever we tread ;
All wisdom and power, O Lord, is Thy dower,
And here will I pillow my head.

Our country is scorning Thy merciful warning ;
Her prestige is waning abroad ;
Her Church, in confusion, spreads far the delusion,
By God and the martyrs abhorred.

Oh, stay, Lord, its rising ; Thy power is surprising ;
The hearts of all people are Thine ;
Flash truth in their faces, and hurl from their place ;
The lovers of Babylon's wine.

Though judgments o'ertake us, Lord, do not forsake us !
Thou ever defendest Thine own ;
Be near those who love Thee, aid all who would prove Thee,
And pity the Queen on her throne.

Ah ! Lord, she is mortal ; stand Thou by death's portal,
And, as she peers through from afar,
Let Thine eyes attract her, though nations distract her ;
Be Thou of her evening the Star.

And now for ourselves, Lord, the rocks and the shelves, Lord,
'Tis hard work to battle along ;
We pine o'er our losses, and kick at our crosses,
Though confidence rings in our song.

Whatever may be, Lord, I leave it with Thee, Lord ;
Thy way *must* be better than mine ;
There seems to be sorrow in store for the morrow,
But wonderful *succour* is Thine.

MRS. T. CHAPLIN.

How slippery are the stations of earthly honours, and subject to continual mutability. Happy are they who are in favour with Him in whom there is no shadow of change.—*Bishop Hall.*

ROMANISM AND ITS FRUITS.*

IMPARTIAL history tells us that Martin Luther's journey to Rome, in the sixteenth century, did much towards opening his eyes to the abominations of Popery. That memorable visit took place towards the close of the reign of Pope Julius. Luther crossed the Alps full of faith and reverence. Italy was to him a sacred land. With its poets and historians he had long been familiar. Virgil and Horace, Cicero and Livy, had been to him like household names. To him, too, the Pope was the earthly representative of God, and Rome was the Holy City of the one true Catholic Church. No thought of resisting the mandates of the Pope or the Church had ever yet occurred to him. Had it been suggested, he would have rejected the idea as a horrible blasphemy. Rome seemed to him a haven of heavenly rest for tempest-tossed consciences, for was it not the city of martyrs? Was it not filled with sacred relics? "Hail, holy Rome!" he ejaculated, when first he caught sight of its distant towers.

But his beautiful and poetic dream was quickly dispelled. As soon as he entered Italy, he found the convents luxurious and licentious, and the priesthood openly depraved. He said the very air of Italy seemed deadly and pestilential. Sickness supervened, the effect of shame and sorrow. But he wandered on, feeble and sad, until he reached the Holy City. Most honestly he observed all the superstitious rites of the Church, determined to escape the pains of purgatory, and to win a plenary indulgence. His zeal and conscientiousness were something new and strange in Rome. His fellow-monks mocked his severe penances, and the impious clergy blasphemed his rigid purity. He made the painful ascent of the holy stairs upon his knees, when emaciated by his sufferings of both body and mind. But he found he stood alone in that great city in his scrupulous reverence for truth, and purity, and devout worship. He was horror-stricken to find that the head of the Church was a monster who revelled in vice; that the cardinals were worse than their master; and that the priests were, as a rule, profane sceptics. Amid all his soul exercises, there was one passage of Scripture which unceasingly rang in his ears—"The just shall live by faith." But this life of faith he failed to find at Rome; and, heartbroken with disappointment, he fled back to his German cell.

Such was Rome in the sixteenth century; what is she in the nineteenth? A remarkable book, published recently at Leipsic, on "The Jesuits in the German Empire," gives some very startling

* Published as a Tract, twenty-five for fourpence, at the Tract Depository, 2, Bolt Court, Fleet Street, London. W. K. Bloom, agent.

facts. In England, it is shown that one *murder* occurs annually for every 178,000 inhabitants; in Holland, one for 163,000; in Prussia, one for 100,000; in Austria, one for 57,000; in Spain, one for 4,113; and in Naples, one for 2,750; but at Rome, there is one homicide for every 750 of population! Hence, in the Holy(?) City of Rome, human life is 237 times less secure than it is in Protestant England.

The countries in which priestly control has been mightiest have always been the most degraded and criminal. In Spain, which has only of late cast off the yoke of absolute submission, the priests have had the moulding of the popular mind for centuries. They have drawn from the people a larger revenue than that of the government; and yet a more demoralized and illiterate nation cannot be found in the civilized world. Out of their sixteen millions, twelve millions can neither read nor write; only three millions can both read and write; one half their town mayors cannot read and write! Her present divided and distracted condition is the natural consequence of her ignorance and immorality. But here for centuries the Romish priests have had it all their own way—a clear stage without a rival, and the undivided favour and support of the civil government.

The truth is, the great bulk of the population, in thoroughly Popish countries, consider the observance of the rites of the Church as of immensely more importance than good morals. Let the reader take the following fact as an illustration:—

“A man came down from the hills to a Neapolitan priest to confess a sin which lay heavy upon his conscience. In the busy season of Lent, while engaged in making cheese, some of the whey had fallen upon his lips, and, miserable man that he was, he had swallowed it. “Free my distressed conscience,” he besought, “from its agonies by absolving me from my guilt.” “Have you no other sins to confess?” asked the priest. “No; I do not know that I have committed any other.” “We often hear of robberies and murders committed in your mountains. Have you never been concerned in these?” “Yes, but all of us do these things. We never account them as crimes needing confession and absolution.”

The following also illustrates the operation of the same principle:—

Two noted Mediterranean pirates were once captured, and condemned to death at Malta. It was observed that the beef and anchovies among the stores of a captured English ship had alone remained untouched. They were asked the cause of this singular procedure, and replied that it was the time of the great fast of their Church. They would not commit such a sin as tasting of fish or flesh. They were plundering and murdering men,

women, and helpless children, but they would not transgress the canons of their Church by eating meat on fast days. They looked to their strict observance of these things as a merit, for which God would grant them success in their infamous work.

Throughout, indeed, good morals and holiness of heart are esteemed by the vast majority of Romanists as of less importance than the punctilious observance of superstitious rites. This spirit operates even in the treatment of the dead. Rome formerly did a brisk trade in indulgences. According to the following report, she is now as energetic in the sale of Masses for the dead :—

“A remarkable trial took place in Paris, in August, 1872, in which a merchant and a condemned priest were indicted for swindling, having appropriated a large amount of money, paid to them as *brokers*, for procuring Masses to be said by country priests for the repose of deceased Parisians! Several hundred thousands of such Masses are annually required in Paris, and, as the number is beyond the ability of the priests in that city to execute, country priests are sought for who will agree to perform them. This firm, seeing an opportunity to make money, opened an agency for the purpose of taking criminal advantage of this demand. They were convicted, and condemned to fine and imprisonment.”

This opens up a new line of business for our speculators. Fancy men on the Exchange acting as brokers for Masses for the dead, and trying to undersell each other in the *terms* for which souls can be released from the pains of purgatory! Surely these money-changers in the temple of God need the application again of the scourge of small cords at the hands of Him whom they call Master. (See John ii. 13—17, and Matt. xxi. 12, 13.)

Rome is the only Church that pretends to the power of working miracles, but her miracles are “lying wonders.” This very claim assists us to identify her with the great apostacy. A lie told in the interests of the “Holy Catholic Church” is no sin, according to the moral philosophy of Liguori and the other doctors of Rome.

Among the curious discoveries of modern times is one which was made in Milan. It seems that in one of the faubourgs of that city was a statue of St. Madeleine, which, from time immemorial, miraculously poured its tears on infidels and heretics. After the success of the Italian revolution it wept copiously. But at length it happened that the venerated monument needed repairs, and it was necessary to remove the statue, when, behold, it was found to contain a little reservoir of water, which was heated by means of a furnace concealed in the base. The water, in evaporating, rose to the head of the statue, where it condensed, and reached to two little tubes of the eyes, when it escaped and

ran, drop by drop, over the cheeks. A very ingenious arrangement that! This discovery explains the mystery of "winking Madonnas" and "weeping saints." But what can we think of the Church that thus imposes upon the credulity of the world? Away with such a system of imposture from the face of the earth!

And this is the "mystery of iniquity" to which our free and noble England is invited again to bow her neck. But will Englishmen indeed sell the birthright of spiritual freedom, won for them by Reformers and martyrs, for such a poisonous mess of pottage as the heresies and impostures of Rome? God forbid!

Oh, Lord, how long? Arise, and plead Thine own cause! It is time for THEE to work, for men have made void Thy law by their tradition!

A VOICE FROM AFAR.

Camperdown, Australia, November 21st, 1832.

DEAR SIR,—It grieves me to see by the papers that the Catholics, infidelity, and Sabbath-breaking are so much on the increase in the Old Country, as well as here. It seems to me that we are in the latter days mentioned in the Word. I have enclosed a cutting from a newspaper, the leading Liberal paper in this colony, and I have seen by this paper that the lecturer mentioned there gets by collections every Sabbath from £30 to £40. It is in Melbourne that he lectures, but it will show you the drift of people's thoughts as generally tending to infidelity here. But we know that the Word says, "God shall bring strong delusions on them, that they shall believe a lie;" and not to believe the Bible seems to me to be one of them. Oh, it grieves me to think of it; and at times it makes me long to get away somewhere where there are no such things. But all the world seems alike. There seems to me to be a class—and a large number, too—rising up that neither fear God nor regard man. But I can at times think over those words with sweetness, "Yet verily I know it shall be well with the righteous;" and also that the Almighty has promised to be a wall of fire round about His Zion; but I fear at times that I shall not be able to stand in the fiery trial that seems approaching. I know feelingly that, unless the Lord of life and glory upholds me, I shall not stand one minute. But He knows my inmost desires—that I wish and long for Him to make me in His hands as clay in the hands of the potter.

I have written more than I intended when I began, and must conclude with best wishes for your welfare, temporally and spiritually.

To Mr. E. Wilmslurst.

JAMES S. MORRIS.

THE BAKER'S BILL; OR, GOD THE HELPER OF HIS POOR.

A FEW years since, a family lived at the East End of the Metropolis, consisting of a man and wife and four small children, who, by the dissipated habits of the husband, were reduced to the greatest extremity of want and suffering; and when the calamity of the family was at its greatest height, the man took his flight, no one knew whither, leaving his poor wife and her almost helpless babes to do the best they could.

It appears that this poor woman was a godly character, and was enabled in the midst of her deep distress to lift up her heart to God, and exclaim, upon a review of her afflicting circumstances, "Lord, help me!" "Lord, undertake for me!" and so on.

She was directed to try a small school for imparting elementary instruction, but she found this insufficient to meet her expenses, although they were of the most frugal character. She was then induced to take in washing, to add a little to her income, while, from the fatigue of the school and her own children, she had but little time or strength for this additional employment. However, with all her exertions, she could not keep out of debt, and found it quite impossible to reduce the amount of her baker's bill, four pounds, which was a great grief to her; and, although the baker never pressed for payment, but called every day with the bread as usual, it became at last so great a burden to her that she would say to herself, "How can I take in the man's bread, and not pay him for it?" When the account reached the enormous amount of six pounds, she could endure it no longer, but made up her mind to tell him that she could not think of taking in any more bread, as she could not pay for it, which she did when he next called.

"What!" exclaimed the baker, "are you going to live without bread, then?"

"No," said the poor woman in tears; "I cannot do that, but I am unable to pay you for what I have had."

"Here, come, take your bread," said the man. "You'll pay me some day, I dare say;" and, leaving the bread, went his way.

She was astonished at the man, but this was not the first time she had had to wonder at the conduct of those who gave her credit, for often had she to acknowledge their kindness, and feel surprised that they should trust her in her reduced circumstances. Doubtless she found a solution of the mystery in that blessed promise, "Thy bread shall be given thee, and thy water shall be sure."

Through the kindness of a friend, she had obtained the promise of a gratuity of four pounds per year, from a lady who was proverbial for her alms-deeds, &c., and who had directed this friend to pay it quarterly to the poor woman; and it was at the time when her mind was so exercised in reference to the baker's bill that one quarter became due. While sitting one evening, reflecting that she had saved up one pound, and being somewhat cast down in mind at the thought of five pounds still being wanting, she all at once thought of the quarter's money being due, and, bounding from her seat, said, "Ah! as Mrs. — is to pay me, I do not mind asking her for it, and that pound, with the other, will be better worth paying Mr. —," so away she repaired to the friend, who lived about three miles distant. But so the Lord would have it, her friend was out of town, and would not return for three weeks. "Three weeks!" exclaimed the poor woman, who had so dwelt upon the pleasure she should experience in paying her baker two pounds—"three weeks!" said she, turning from her friend's door. "Oh, dear Lord, what shall I do? Lord, help me!" and, being very fatigued with her journey, she slowly proceeded towards her home. "Ah!" said she, "shall I go to the lady herself? Perhaps she would not be offended. Oh, if she should, I shall lose my four pounds per year. Lord, direct me what to do!" and having proceeded a step or two farther, she made a stop, saying, "Yes; I will go to the lady herself." She immediately turned towards the West End of the town, and with a heavy heart reached — Square, nearly exhausted with the journey and her great disappointment.

With her mind greatly exercised between hope and fear, she walked several times up and down in front of the residence of Lady F—. At length, summoning all her fortitude, she rang the bell, which was quickly answered by one of the servants, who, upon ascertaining her business, spoke very kindly to her, and had her seated in the hall, that she might compose herself a little, telling her that he would go to the lady in a minute and speak for her; and, reminding her of her ladyship's great kindness, and then saying that she had nothing to fear, he withdrew. She had, previous to ringing the bell, in her heart asked the Lord to give her favour in the eyes of the lady, and the kind words of the servant seemed quite to raise her hope. When she was beginning to feel a little more comfortable, the servant came downstairs with a message from the lady, informing her that she wished to see her immediately.

"Oh," said the poor woman, while her heart sank within her, "if her ladyship is offended with me, I shall lose my four pounds a year!"

"Come along!" said the servant; "come along!" and almost

had to pull her upstairs. "Come along! I hope the Lord will give you favour in her eyes," said he; and presently showed her into the room where the lady sat on a sofa.

"I beg pardon, ma'am," said the poor woman, as she entered the room. "I hope it is no offence, ma'am; but, as Mrs. — was out of town, ma'am, I thought I would take the liberty of——"

The lady interrupted her by saying, "Oh, you did quite right by coming, as Mrs. — was out; you did quite right in coming. Here, come here, and sit by me. And so you are poor Mrs. —, are you? Well, now, let me know somewhat how you get on. God bless thee, poor creature! There, sit thee here; but stop now. Before you begin, let me pay you the pound."

Having paid her, the poor woman, after thanking her, proceeded to give an outline of the trials and difficulties through which she had been called to pass, not forgetting to speak also of the Lord's gracious interpositions on her behalf, which she had experienced many times, during the recital of which her ladyship now and then exclaimed, "God bless thee, poor creature! Thou hast seen a great deal of trouble;" and so on.

When the poor woman had finished her narrative, the lady said, "Well, now, I will tell thee a little about myself. You know I am pretty well to do in life; and, as I think it right we should do all that lays in our power for our fellow-creatures, I endeavour to do all the good I can, especially to the poor; and, as often as health will permit, I go to church and take the Sacrament—once a month at least, as I do not think we ought to be remiss in these things; and every opportunity of doing good that comes in my way, I do what I can; and you know, Mrs. —, we may hope for the best."

"Well, ma'am," said the poor woman, who did not feel very comfortable while the lady was speaking, feeling anything but satisfied with the account of herself, "I never was in your circumstances, ma'am, though I have been much better off than I am now; and, at that time, I thought as you do now—that, if I did something for the poor, and did all the good I could, that was all God required of me; and, as far as circumstances would permit, I did something for my neighbours, ma'am; but the Lord opened my eyes to see that I was trusting to an arm of flesh—that I was building on a sandy foundation, and not on the Rock Jesus Christ, ma'am."

"Give me back that pound!" exclaimed the lady; "give me back that pound!"

"Yes, ma'am," continued the poor woman, nothing daunted at having to give back the money—"to see that nothing short of Christ would do to trust to, ma'am."

"Give me back the pound!" said the lady. "Here, take two pounds! I am trusting to a false foundation. There, take two pounds! I am building on a sandy foundation."

"Ah! ma'am," said the poor woman, astonished at the turn of affairs, "if I had died in that state, my soul would have gone to hell."

"Here," again exclaimed the lady, "here are five pounds. There," putting down a five-pound note, "take five pounds! The Lord has sent thee to open my eyes, and to show me that I am building on a sandy foundation. Ah! well; God bless thee, dear soul;" and, getting up, she said, "Sit here, and take some refreshment, and then you must tell me some more about it;" and, having ordered something for her, she retired upstairs.

After some time had elapsed, the lady came downstairs with a large bundle of flannels, linen, &c., telling the poor woman no doubt she would find them useful; and then she sat down and conversed freely with her about Jesus and His great salvation, after which, having thanked the lady many times, the poor woman took her leave; and, coming downstairs, nothing could she say but "Bless the Lord! Bless the Lord! Five pounds, and the one I have at home, make my baker's bill. Bless the Lord!" and all the way home, having quite recovered from the previous fatigue, it was, "Bless the Lord! Bless the Lord!"

Having arrived at her dwelling, she soon procured the one pound, and, late as it was, she immediately went to the baker, and told him she had come to pay him his bill.

"What!" said he; "you have come to pay something off, you mean?"

"Oh, no," she replied; "I have come to pay you six pounds."

"What!" said he, "six pounds? Why, where did you get the money from?"

Now, as he was not a professing man, she did not enter into particulars, but merely explained that a kind lady had given her five pounds, and one she had saved up herself.

"Well," continued the baker, "I never expected to have received a farthing of it, and I had made up my mind that, as long as I had a loaf in my shop, you never should have wanted one. Well, here," said the baker, "take a guinea of it, and here is your bill receipted."

Having thanked him for his kindness, she made towards her home, and nothing could she say but "Bless the Lord, my baker's bill is paid! Bless the Lord!" She retired to rest that night, no doubt, with her heart full of gratitude to Him who hath said, "Trust in the Lord, and do good, and verily thou shalt be fed."

This unexpected interposition of Divine Providence, though it

was a great help to her for a time, was but a temporary relief, for she still had to struggle with difficulties and great distresses. This will (D.V.) be illustrated by a little circumstance that afterwards occurred, which will also show that she was not forgotten nor forsaken by our good and gracious God.—*From an old Magazine.*

THE FAITH OF THE OPERATION OF GOD.

"O LORD my God," cried Elijah, in his upper chamber, "let this child's soul come into him again!" "I will," was virtually the answer he received. And what followed upon this holy boldness in prayer? "The Lord heard the voice of Elijah, and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived."

This event is similar to one recorded of Luther, at Wittenberg. His friend, Myconius, lay on his death-bed, and wrote him a farewell letter. Luther, after reading the letter, immediately fell on his knees, and prayed with holy boldness that his life might be spared for the Lord's service. "Amen!" And after praying thus, he rose up and wrote to his sick brother, "There is no cause for fear, dear Myconius. The Lord will not let me hear that thou art dead. You shall not, and must not die. Amen." These words made a powerful impression on the heart of the dying Myconius, and aroused him in such a manner that the ulcer in his lungs discharged itself, and he recovered. "I wrote to you that it would be so," answered Luther to the letter which announced the recovery of his friend.

Oh, faith, faith, thou blessed companion of the children of God! Thy wondrous power deprives the wilderness of its horrors, and merges the gloom of the present into the bliss of the future. In thy light the sacred narratives seem acted over again, and our own personal history becomes a sacred record of providence. By thy voice the patriarchs converse with us in our darkness, with kindness and consolation; and by thy light we see a cloud of them, as witnesses, encamped around us, so that whatever grace they experienced is, through thee, appropriated to ourselves. Thou nourishest us with the promises made to Abraham; sustainest us with the strong consolation of the oath divinely sworn unto Isaac. Thou givest us the staff of Jacob to support our steps. Thou enablest us, with Moses' rod, to divide the sea, and, with David, to leap over the wall and rampart. All that earth and heaven possess of beauty is thine. Oh, faith, faith, thou door-keeper of every sanctuary, thou master over all the treasures of God! May He who is thine Author draw near unto us, and He who is thy Finisher bend down Himself towards us!

KRUMMACHER.

SPECIAL PROVIDENCE.

THE writer has for many years had the privilege of enjoying the friendship of a dear Christian brother, who resides in the village of R—, in Essex, whose life affords so many striking instances of an overruling providence, and so many wonderful, and indeed miraculous, answers to prayer, which, if laid before the Christian public, would tend, under the divine blessing, to strengthen the faith of the Lord's deeply-tried family, that he (the writer) has often wished for an opportunity to commit a few of the most remarkable incidents to writing, for the benefit of those who are passing through deep waters, and who may be saying, "The Lord has forsaken me." But, not having had as yet an opportunity of hearing them from his own lips in anything like consecutive order, we will content ourselves at present with one incident in particular, which goes to prove that the Christian's God is indeed about our path and about our bed, and spying out all our ways, and that His ear is ever open to the cry of all such as call upon Him faithfully.

Some sixteen or seventeen years ago, the dear friend of whom we speak had a severe fall, which injured his spine to such an extent that he has been able to do but little ever since towards obtaining "the bread which perisheth," and, consequently, has often been reduced to great straits in providence. But, as "man's extremities are the Lord's opportunities," these straits, although painful, have been the means of putting his faith to the test, and of proving to all around the truth of the dear Master's promise, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, believing, ye shall receive."

His eldest son had been a cripple from the age of three years, at which time he sustained an injury of the hip-joint from a fall, and from that time till his death (which was a triumphant one, and happened shortly after the circumstance about to be narrated took place) he continually suffered from abscesses, occasionally having several of them at the same time. Through constant and great exhaustion, caused by these abscesses, he of course required a great deal of nourishment, although it was but little that his father had the means to procure.

The dear boy had given evident tokens of being a partaker of the divine life from an early age, and at this time he was nearly sixteen years old, although in appearance quite a child, as, from the effects of his affliction, he had not grown in stature in proportion to his years.

On the evening in question, he was sitting in his little arm-chair by the fire, and his father sat on the opposite side. It was about seven o'clock. Tea (or supper, as they call it there) was over,

and the rest of the family had gone out of doors. The dear boy sat for some time in silence, evidently engaged in prayer, when presently the watchful father noticed a deathly paleness overspread his features. This was succeeded by a flush, and again a death-like paleness. Our dear friend knew the cause—it was faintness, produced by pain and exhaustion—and those only who are parents, and have watched over a suffering child, can understand the father's feelings, and how his bowels yearned over him, as he said in his homely, yet loving way, "You feel faint, Tommy. You want a drop of porter, don't you, my dear?" The suffering boy looked up with a smile of loving affection, and replied, "If I can have it, I do, father." This answer cut his father to the very heart, and, with a tear trembling in his eye, he replied, "I know you do, Tommy; but you can't have it, my boy, for I'm penniless! But you must look up, Tommy. The Lord is as able to support you without the porter as He is with it; but, if He knows it is needful for you, He can send us the means to get it." Tommy replied, "I do, father, I do try to look up;" but the feeling of pity and compassion which yearned in his father's bosom can only be faintly imagined, as there rose from the bottom of his soul the cry, "Lord, I am oppressed: undertake for me!"

Soon after this the dear boy seemed to revive, and the rest of the family returning, they sat engaged in conversation until about nine o'clock, at which time a knock was heard at the door, and, on opening it, the minister of the chapel which our friend attended stood before them. They expressed their surprise at his visiting them at such an unusual hour, and hoped he was not the bearer of bad news; but they were still more surprised when he entered, and, stepping up to our friend, said, "Mr. S—— has sent you half-a-crown, Joseph. I do not know what for, but he desired me to give it you to-night." Joseph, who was the only one not taken by surprise, asked the minister, Mr. B——, to tell him particulars, and, if possible, the exact time that Mr. S—— gave him the half-crown. Mr. B—— replied, "I took tea at B—— Hall this evening, and, after tea, while engaged in conversation, all at once your name was mentioned, I cannot tell why; and at the same time Mr. S—— put his hand into his pocket, and, taking out half-a-crown, handed it to me, expressing a wish—in fact, making me promise him—that I would leave it with you on my way home. I cannot tell the exact time that your name was mentioned, but, as it was some time after tea, I should imagine it was about seven o'clock." "That," said Joseph, "is what I want to know, for that was just the time I asked for it." Then, turning to the dear boy, he said, "There, Tommy, the Lord has sent you some porter. I knew He was able either to

support you in your sufferings without porter, or send me some money to get some."

And here for the present we will leave them, though, should we be favoured with the opportunity, we may record (I trust to the glory of God) many instances almost unequalled in the experience of any Christian of whom we have heard, with the exception of William Huntington, in his "Bank of Faith"—

"Blest is the man who feels and knows
God is his Father and his Friend ;
To whom his soul for comfort goes
When danger's near, or storms portend.

"Though to the worldly-wise unknown,
Though they excel in every art,
Yet doth He hold His awful throne
In every contrite sinner's heart."

G. N.

A FEW OF THE MANY WANTS OF A CHRISTIAN.

(Verses composed by the father spoken of in the foregoing narrative.)

I want to praise redeeming love,
I want to feel its power ;
I want the Lord to rule my heart
And keep it every hour.

I want the Lord to guide my way,
I want His presence there ;
I want my murmuring thoughts all gone,
And sweetly lost in prayer.

I want to pour my soul in prayer,
I want to embrace my God ;
I want to view my Saviour near,
With His atoning blood.

And when my soul these gifts can trace,
Springing from Jesus' love,
Of earth I feel to want no more,
I want to dwell above.

J. R.

THERE is no earthly pleasure whereof we may not surfeit ; of the spiritual we can never have enough.—*Bishop Hall.*

THE changes of weather show the unsoundness of men's bodies, and the changes of times the unsoundness of their souls.—*Flavel.*

It is impossible to churn happiness out of a chest of gold ; it will never come. You can never make unfading crowns of fading flowers.—*Case.*

THINGS WORTH KNOWING.

AN EXTRACT FROM THE MEMOIR OF THOMAS BOSTON.

IN the midst of his public and official labours, Boston watched—sometimes, perhaps, with an unreasonable degree of jealousy—over his own soul. He seems, however, amidst many scruples of conscience and many penitential retrospects, to have entertained the persuasion that he was one of the children of God. The following passage on that subject is interesting and instructive. It relates to the year 1709:—

“Last Lord’s day night I had some thoughts as to evidences for heaven, which I resumed this day.

“1. I am content to take Christ for my Prophet—to be taught by Him what is my duty, that I may comply with it. I am content to know what is my sin, that I may turn from it; and, by grace, I know something of what it is to make use of Christ as a Prophet in this case; and I desire to learn of Him, as the only Master, what is the will of God, and the mystery of renouncing my own wisdom, which I reckon but weakness and folly.

“2. I know and am persuaded that I am a lost creature; that justice must be satisfied; that I am not able to satisfy it, nor any creature for me; that Christ is able, and His death and sufferings are sufficient satisfaction. On this I throw my soul with its full weight. Here is my hope and only confidence.

“My duties, I believe, the best of them, would damn me—sink me to the lowest pit—and must needs be washed in that precious blood, and can have no acceptance with God but through His intercession. I desire to have nothing to do with an absolute God, nor to converse with God, but only through Christ. I am sensible that I have nothing to commend me to God, nor to Christ, that He may take my cause in hand. If He should damn me, He should do me no wrong. But the cord of love is let out, even the covenant in His blood. I accept of it, and at His command lay hold on it and venture. This is faith in spite of devils; and my heart is pleased with the glorious device of man’s salvation through Christ, carrying all the praise to free grace, and leaving nothing of it to the creature.

“3. My soul is content of Him for my King; and, though I cannot be free of sin, God Himself knows He would be welcome to make havoc of my lusts, and to make me holy. I know no lust that I would not be content to part with. My will, bound hand and foot, I desire to lay at His feet; and, though it will strive, whether I will or not, I believe whatever God does to me is best done.

“4. Though afflictions of themselves can be no evidence of the Lord’s love, yet, forasmuch as the native product of afflic-

tions and strokes from the hand of the Lord is to drive the guilty away from the Lord, when I find it is not so with me, but that I am drawn to God by them, made to kiss the rod, and accept of the punishment of my iniquity, to love God more, and to have more confidence in Him, and kindly thoughts of His way, and find my heart more closely cleaving to Him, I cannot but think such an affliction an evidence of love.

"I have met with many troubles, and the afflictions I have met with have been very remarkable in their circumstances. Often have I seen it, and now once more verified in my lot (1 Cor. iv. 9), 'For we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men,' &c.

"Now I am as a weaned child, through grace, in the matter. Let the Lord do what seemeth Him good."

A NOT UNCOMMON FAULT.

A LADY who was present at the commemoration of the Lord's Supper, where Mr. E. Erskine was assisting, was much impressed by his sermon. Having inquired the name of the preacher, she went next Sabbath to his own place of worship to hear him; but there, to her surprise, she felt none of those strong impressions she experienced in hearing him before. Wondering at this, she called on Mr. Erskine, and, stating the case, asked what he thought might be the reason of such a difference in her feelings. He replied, "Madam, the reason is this—last Sunday you went to hear Jesus Christ; to-day you have come to hear Ebenezer Erskine."

SENSE of the guilt of sin may consist with faith of its pardon and forgiveness in the blood of Christ. Godly sorrow may dwell in the same heart, at the same time, with joy in the Holy Ghost; and groaning after deliverance from the power of sin with a gracious persuasion that sin shall not have dominion over us, because we are not under the law, but under grace.—*Dr. Owen.*

How zealous an indignation did the Son of God express against the obdurate Pharisees! "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" (Matt. xxiii. 33.) They, in despite of all His miracles, the equal expressions of His goodness and power, resisted His authority, blasphemed His Person, and slighted His salvation. Now, though other sins are of an inferior nature and of weaker evidence, yet obstinacy added to them, makes a person unworthy and incapable of mercy. Hence the misery of the damned is without redemption, without hope, without allay for ever.—*Bates.*

THE DEATH OF AN INFIDEL.

THE following extracts are taken from an account printed and circulated by the American Baptist Publication Society :—

A youth, who had received a religious education, was sent at sixteen to a university. He was there five years ; and for the whole of that period his conduct was so becoming that he was looked upon as a blessing and ornament to his family. At twenty-one he began to study law. He then formed new acquaintances, and some of these laughed at him for his reverence for religion. At first he would say to them, "Gentlemen, you, who pretend to reason, cannot think laughter a conclusive argument. If religion is so absurd as you would have me believe it is, why don't you give me some good reasons against it?" This some of them would attempt to do. Their endeavours were at first unsuccessful ; but the poison by degrees took effect, and at last it tainted him as deeply as it had themselves. He was next received into a society of theirs, which met to lay down rules for pursuing wickedness so skilfully that the law would not be able to take hold of them.

At length he was taken ill, and found that (notwithstanding all his precautions) he had not yet shaken off the expectation of another life. This made him break forth in exclamations such as these—"Whence is this war in my breast? What argument is there now to assist me against this matter of fact? Do I assert that there is no hell, while I feel it in my own bosom? Am I certain that there is no future retribution, when I feel a present judgment? Do I affirm my soul to be as mortal as my body, when my body languishes, and my soul remains as vigorous as ever? Wretch that I am, whither shall I flee from this breast? What will become of me?"

One of his old companions, on coming in, said, "How now, brother? Why this melancholy look and posture? What is the matter?" "The matter!" replied he. "It is that you and your companions have instilled your principles into me; and that now, when I have most need of comfort, these leave me in confusion and despair. What comfort have you with which to fortify me against the fearful expectations of another life? Are you certain that the soul is material and mortal, and that it will dissolve with the body?" "So certain," replied the other, "that I venture my whole upon it."

At this moment a stranger, whom we will call Mr. A—, came into the room. He addressed himself to the sick man, and said that, though he was a stranger, yet, having heard of his illness, he thought it his duty to offer to render any service of which he might be capable. "I thank you," said the sick man,

“and would desire you to engage that gentleman who sits there, and to prove to him that the soul is not matter, nor mortal.” “That,” said Mr. A——, “is easily proved. Matter is universally allowed to be indifferent to motion or rest. If it be at rest, it will rest to all eternity, unless something else move it; and if it be in motion, it will eternally move, unless something else stop it. Now, you who think that the soul is matter, say that it first moves the animal spirits, that these move the nerves, and these the limbs; but to say this is to say that matter moves itself, which is absurd, and contrary to the maxim just mentioned; therefore, the soul is not matter, and, consequently, not liable to be dissolved as matter is.”

The sick gentleman answered only with a groan, and his infidel friend hastened out of the room. Mr. A—— was surprised to find that what he had said had such an effect on the sufferer, and desired to know the reason of his discontent. “Alas! sir,” said he, “you have undeceived me, when it is too late. I was afraid of nothing so much as the immortality of the soul. Now that you have assured me of this, you have assured me of hell. You have now sealed my damnation, by giving me an earnest of it—I mean an awakened conscience; one which brings my sins to remembrance, and makes me think of the long catalogue of them, for which I must go and give an account. Oh, apostate wretch, from what hopes art thou fallen!”

Mr. A—— stood speechless for some time at these expressions, but, as soon as he could recollect himself, said, “Sir, if you are convinced that the soul is immortal, I hope it is for a good end. If you had died ignorant of this fact, you would have been miserably undeceived in another world; but now you have some time to prepare for your welfare.” He replied, “The convictions which you have awakened are a part of my heavy judgment, for you have given me a sensible horror of my sin, by proving my soul to be immortal. Had I gone straight to hell, in my old opinion, I had endured but one hell, whereas I now feel two. I mean that I not only feel that inexpressible torture which I carry in my breast, but an expectation of I know not what change; and yet I dread to die, because the worst will never have an end.”

All this he spoke with so much earnestness, and such an air of horror, as is scarcely to be imagined. Before Mr. A—— took leave, he wished to pray with the sick gentleman. The latter, with much reluctance, consented. During prayer, he groaned extremely, tossing himself as if he were in the agonies of death. When prayer was over, Mr. A—— asked him the reason for this. He answered, “Oh, ‘it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!’ If God were not against me, I should not care if all the power and malice of man were joined to engage

me. This is intolerable! inexpressible! Ah! who can dwell with everlasting burnings? Oh, who can stand before Him when He is angry? What stubble can resist that consuming fire?"

At another time, several of his friends from the country, having received an account of his circumstances, came to visit him. One of them told him that he and several more of his relations had come to town on purpose to see him, and were sorry to find him in so weak a condition as his appearance indicated. He answered, "I am obliged, in common civility, to thank you all. But who are my relations? I may properly say that none but the atheist, the reprobate, and all such as do the work of the devil, are my relations. This little tie of flesh and blood will dissolve in a moment; but the relation I have to the damned is permanent. The same lot, the same place of torment, the same exercises of blasphemy, and the same eternity of horror will be common to us all."

His friends, who had heard that he was distracted, hearing him deliver himself in such terms, were amazed, and began to inquire what it was that made him talk in such a strain. He heard them whispering together, and, imagining the cause, said, "You imagine me to be melancholy or distracted. I wish I were either; but it is a part of my judgment that I am not. No; my apprehension of persons and things is rather more quick and vigorous than it was when I was in perfect health. Would you be informed why I am become a skeleton in three or four days? Know, then, that I have despised my Maker, and denied the Redeemer. I have joined myself to the atheist and profane, and continued this course under many convictions, till my iniquity was ripe for vengeance, and the just judgments of God overtook me. They did so at a time when my false security was the greatest, and the checks of my conscience the least. There is no other name under heaven by which we may be saved but the name of Jesus; and it is this Jesus whom I have reproached, ridiculed, and abused in His members—nay, whom I have induced others to treat in the same manner."

Having uttered a few sentences more, his voice failed again, and he began to struggle and gasp for breath. He recovered a little, and then, with a groan as dreadful and loud as if he had been more than human, he cried out, "Oh, the insufferable pangs of hell and damnation!" and expired.

Reader, how different is the lot of those who have Christ for a Refuge, and who are sheltered in Him, safe from the wrath to come!

We pray that the foregoing solemn account may be the means of warning many against the flatteries and lies of those who deny the truth of God's holy Word, which teaching can only leave

the soul in darkness and misery, when death comes upon those who imbibe such views.

May you, dear reader, be led to Christ, and find in Him a Saviour able to deliver from the curse.

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIRECTORY FOR 1883.

ACCORDING to this Directory, which is "published by the authority of the Cardinal-Archbishop and the (Catholic) Bishops of England," the total of clergy of that religion in England and Wales amounts to 2,112 priests and 17 bishops, who serve 1,188 churches, chapels, and missionary stations. Besides these, in Scotland there are six bishops and 306 priests, whose ministrations are distributed over 295 chapels. For England and Wales there is one archbishop, with 14 suffragans and two auxiliary bishops, and two archbishops for Scotland with four suffragans. These numbers are about double those which figured in the same Directory a little before the constitution of the hierarchy in 1850. There are 29 Roman Catholic peers who have seats in the House of Lords; there are four Roman Catholic Privy Councillors; there are 47 Roman Catholic baronets, the premier being the "infant" Sir Henry Alfred Doughty Tichborne, and the last in rank Sir Maurice O'Connell. The Sacred College of Cardinals, when complete, consists of 70 members; but some few "hats" are generally kept vacant. At present the college consists of six cardinal bishops, 46 cardinal priests (among whom stand the names of Cardinals Manning, Howard, and McCabe), and 13 cardinal deacons, eighth among whom is Dr. John Henry Newman. There are five vacancies, therefore, at the disposal of Pope Leo XIII., during whose Pontificate no less than 22 cardinals have already died. The Directory gives also, from official sources at Rome, a complete list of all the patriarchal, archiepiscopal, and episcopal sees, and "apostolical delegacies, vicariates, and prefectures," in Europe, Asia, Africa, America, Australia, and the Islands of "Oceanica."

[We give the above items in order that our readers may see the strides Popery is making, and we add the following to show how politicians pander to our foe.]

ENGLAND AND THE POPE.

Rome, December 31st, 1882.

THE *Voice*, remarking upon the recent negotiations in respect to an English Resident at the Vatican, says that England has not hesitated during the whole of the past year to have recourse

to the Holy Father respecting the vital questions threatening her—sometimes indirectly, sometimes quasi-officially.

The *Opinione*, commenting upon the increasing influence of the Pontiff, says—"The late Pope fulminated his excommunications, but he was isolated in the world. The present Pontiff, acting with greater calmness, serenity, and flexibility, succeeds in cementing intimate relations with all the States, excepting Italy—of which country he complains with pertinacious constancy. Prince Bismarck no sooner found that even he was unable to stand the cross fire of the Socialists on one side, and the Clericals on the other, than he bethought him of establishing, as far as possible, an accord with the Curia. The French President and his Government study to live in cordial peace with the Papacy. Even Russia bends to negotiate, if not to establish an accord; and Protestant England, under the auspices of Mr. Gladstone, the author of the famous pamphlet on Vaticanism, has sent a representative to the Pope. These facts clearly reveal the increasing influence of the new Pontiff in the affairs of the world. He has not shut himself up in solitude, like Pius IX., but has thrown his net into the troubled waters of modern society to fish for souls, and the Governments for other reasons second him. To gain this end, the new Pontiff has displayed great mildness and temperance. He presents himself as a messenger of peace, moderating exigencies, and keeping in the background his political pretensions, which he asserts only towards Italy. Herein lies the new danger, which can only be met by vying with him in moderation and *finesse*." The *Opinione* concludes by exhorting "the generous youth who shout from the Universities against this or that injury inflicted upon us, and the tribunes who drape themselves with patriotism, and hurl their invectives at this or the other head of foreign and friendly Governments, to think that perchance the Vatican may rejoice, and that their exhibitions of fury may form part in the calculations and combinations of our adversaries."

THE PUSEY MEMORIAL.

WE now give a few extracts to show what is being done by traitors to the Protestant cause in the Church of England, for the assimilating her to the Church of Rome.

A correspondent of a local paper writes as follows:—

"Well may the poor old Church of England write 'Ichabod,' when this is the man she delights to honour—one who has damaged her, perhaps, as much as ever Laud, or any other of her false sons—by subscribing thousands of pounds to perpetuate his memory."

"The estimate of the life work of the late Dr. Pusey formed by the *Ultramontane Universe* is very remarkable. 'After having,' it writes, 'indirectly led hundreds in the direction which (persistently followed) must end, at least with honest minds, in the Catholic Church, and after a labour of more than forty years, sapping every foundation of the Established Church, Dr. Pusey has remained to the last in communion with that body which, in the judgment of all, excepting a small knot of unreasoning admirers, he spent a long lifetime in endeavouring to destroy.'

"A similar opinion of Dr. Pusey's work was formed thirty-two years since by the late Bishop Wilberforce, who, writing to Dr. Pusey himself, under date November 2nd, 1850, declared, 'I firmly believe the influence of your personal ministry does more than the labours of an open enemy to wean from the pure faith and simple ritual of our Church the affections of many amongst her children.' On the 30th of the same month the Bishop wrote again to Dr. Pusey, 'You seem to me to be habitually assuming the place and doing the work of a Roman confessor, and not that of an English clergyman.' Even the bosom friend of the late Professor of Hebrew, Mr. Keble, stated in a letter written to Bishop Wilberforce on the 11th March, 1851, that 'a larger number, possibly, has seceded to Rome from under his (Dr. Pusey's) special teaching than from that of any other individual amongst us.'"

PROPOSED TESTIMONIAL TO MR. MACKONOCHIE, THE NOTED RITUALIST.

LORD EDWARD CHURCHILL presided recently at a meeting of the friends of Mr. Mackonochie, in London, the object being to promote a testimonial to him. The chairman said he had received promises of support from many desirous of taking action in recognition of the twenty years' services of Mr. Mackonochie in the parish of St. Albans, Holborn. It was agreed that a testimonial should be presented, and a committee was formed to further the object.

[We should like to see all true Protestants bound together in solemn and firm determination to oppose every Parliamentary representative who gives his support to any Government, of whatever shade in politics, that fosters either Romanism or Ritualism. May the Lord help us to stand firm against the hateful confederacy.]

A CHRISTIAN red with passion, pale with anger, furious with rage, is a most unseemly spectacle.

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.—No. XXXIII.

TO MR. JAMES SHORTER.

DEAR AND BELOVED SIR,—I hope you will excuse the liberty I have taken in writing you. I have had it upon my mind for some time.

It is my happy lot to be born of believing parents, but I only see them for a short time on Sundays. Conscience sometimes seems to say, *they* ought to be my chief advisers. It is not from want of duty or affection to them, but there seems sometimes a barrier in the way. I write these few lines to ask you a little advice and direction.

One thing that perplexes me is, the fear that I have not passed the fiery law of Mount Sinai; for, when I hear the children of God speak, or read their experience, they generally mention this as the first thing. It was rather discouraging to me last Sunday evening, when you spoke of the first affliction the child of God had. You mentioned that God brought to you John iii. 5. From this I seemed to be excluded, for never have I felt that depth of soul trouble, as if hell would swallow me up, or that every moment would be my last. I know these things have been experienced by some of the Lord's family. I remember, when about seven years of age or younger, I used to have thoughts about eternal things, read prayers out of a small book, and wished I might go to heaven, and felt I should like to speak to the minister I used then to hear. I was sent, when about ten years old, to boarding-school, and was then rather tender; but, alas! when I had been there some time, I could read story-books and paint pictures on a Sunday as much as any boy there.

In your discourse last Sunday you spoke my feelings when you said—"If you were to hear them before God in prayer, you would hear some strange things, I assure you, such as, 'Lord, what a fool I am!'" This I have often felt and said. If I am one of the Lord's, never was there a more careless, cold, and half-hearted creature. I feel far off from God, and my mind grovels so much with the things of this world. I feel so often as Mr. Hart says—

"To do what's right unable quite,
And almost as unwilling;"

and—

"I can feel no love to God,
Hardly have a good desire."

I often mourn my hardness, and I cannot do that as I wish. But perhaps you may say, "When did these things begin?" I really cannot tell. There *was* a time when I did not have such

thoughts, I know, and that I have them *now* I know, but *when* they began I cannot tell.

About a year and a half ago, one night, when I was going to bed, I begged that the Lord would show me a token for good ; and, after I arose from my knees, these words came, "Fear not : I am with thee." "Oh," I thought, "is there no other promise but that?" and I thought but little about it. But, about a fortnight afterwards, I heard you say, "Has not the Lord sometimes, in these fears, brought home such passages as these to you—'Fear not : I am with thee ;' or, 'Fear not, thou worm'?" This greatly revived and cheered me, and I thought more of that passage of Scripture, and had a hope it was from the Lord. I am sure it is the truth you set forth—that it is none but God can satisfy one of his safety in Christ. Then you will say, it is useless for me to ask your opinion and advice. This I know, but the Lord sometimes condescends to bless conversation and letters, as well as the preached Word. I have often had texts of Scripture drop into my mind, but then the query is, "Are they from the Lord?" If I thought they were, I should be more contented, for no doubt Satan can bring Scripture into the mind as well as other thoughts. Some time ago, some awful blasphemies darted into my mind. The first gave me quite a shock. Had my mouth uttered it, or had it proceeded from my own mind, I felt I must have sunk for ever. They were indeed masterpieces of Satan. I hope they came from him, and not from my own heart. I cried often to God to remove these thoughts ; and, through mercy, I have not had them for a long time. These things would make some tremble ; but how little trembling did I experience ! Certainly, I did call upon God, but so faintly. It appeared to me that Satan had injected the blasphemous darts, and hardened my heart too ; or perhaps I err in laying the latter to Satan. I am a puzzle to myself.

The Lord, in His providence, has removed your Church further away from me. I hope it will not prevent me hearing you.

About last March I heard two or three different ministers. I felt very unsettled in my mind, and reaped no profit. I thought it would be right to attend one place, and so made up my mind to hear you always. I begged of the Lord that, if He approved thereof, He would show me a token the next Sunday, by causing me to hear with comfort and profit. Your text was, "My son, give Me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe My ways." I came away comforted, and thought it was all right. A few weeks after, I tried "the fleece" once more, and asked the Lord that I might hear the Word again with profit, if I was right in attending your ministry. That Sunday you preached from, "Fear not ye : I know that ye seek Jesus that was crucified."

The things you said upon it I enjoyed, and the desires you spoke of I could say were my desires, so that I was confirmed therein. One thing I cannot deny, that is, that I love and feel a union to the Lord's people. My father has told me that is a very good evidence. If I felt as much love to God as I do to His people, I should be more happy. The Lord has said that "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord shall man live;" and I hope I have in some measure realized this, for often passages of Scripture have been sweet, and have followed me; and, like the oxen, I have chewed the cud. These words were very sweet to me a week or two back—"There is hope in thine end, saith the Lord."

About five or six Sundays ago you remarked, "I have often heard people say that they have had texts of Scripture applied to them, but I doubt it, for their outward conduct does not at all agree with what they say." This sent me into a flood of tears. I cried a good deal going home, and said, "Lord, keep the wound open;" for I hoped it was an arrow from the Lord. I once felt comforted from these words—"I will bring the blind by a way they knew not." I felt poor, blind, and helpless. I wish I had "much humility and love."

But I am running on. Do bear with me; and, if you find your mind at liberty to reply, these are my greatest puzzles—

1. Is every soul that is made alive unto grace, and is brought into fellowship with Jesus, brought to feel the law cursing them, the bottomless pit gaping upon them, and terrors by night and day following them?

2. Do children of God experience coldness, deadness, and barrenness; but worse than these, carelessness and indifference to the things of God and their never-dying souls?

3. Do children of God, though they feel their need of Jesus, yet at the same time feel their inability to trust in Him?

I remain, your affectionate hearer,

Deptford, June 11th, 1847.

THOMAS BOORNE.

[We hope to give Mr. Shorter's reply next month.—ED.]

It is very suspicious that that person is a hypocrite that is always in the same frame, let him pretend it to be never so good.—*Trall.*

To Popery a single Bible is more dreadful than an army ten thousand strong. . . . When she meets the Bible in her path, she is startled, and exclaims with terror, "I know thee—who thou art! Art thou come to torment me before the time?"—*Wylie.*

THE SOWER.

THE BLESSING OF NAPHTALI.*

(DEUTERONOMY xxxiii. 23.)

A SLIGHT SKETCH OF SOME OF THE LORD'S DEALINGS WITH
EMMA L. MAURICE.

GOD in creation is a God of variety; and, as the God of all grace, He is as various in His dealings with His people. We see it around us, we feel it in our own experience, and we read it in His Word. In no part of the latter is it so clearly defined as in the very varied blessings pronounced upon the tribes of Israel. The "ways" (Job xxvi. 14) of our Lord in providence as well as grace are there distinctly foreshown. Unstable Reuben, burden-bearing Issachar, victorious Gad, and blessed Joseph; Zebulun bidden to rejoice in his going out, and Issachar in his keeping at home; Asher blessed with children, and Naphtali "satisfied with favour," are blessed hints to God's chosen people down to the end of time. One or two, however, seem to stand out beyond the others as especially "blessed," notably Joseph and Naphtali. How comprehensive in its *perfection* is that of the latter! How can any vessel of any size be more than "*full*"? "O Naphtali, satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the Lord." This is the lot of perhaps few of the Lord's people in the present day, but was that in a remarkable degree of the subject of this notice.

Emma L. Maurice was born in 1807. Her eyes were opened to a sense of her lost condition as a sinner in God's sight when only seven years of age, the occasion, in the hand of the divine Spirit, being the death of a much-loved nurse. Her health even from childhood was bad. Long and varied attacks of illness were her frequent lot, but her diligence in study, in her earnest endeavours to make up for the lost time, was noticeable. She used to feel that, because she had received the "love of the truth" early in life, it was as incumbent on her to improve her mind and use all the opportunities for study that were put within her reach as if it had not been so. Truly one thing only is "*needful*," but many other things are right and desirable, and calculated to "*adorn*

* This sketch, by permission of the author and publishers, is abridged, with very little alteration, from a most interesting book, entitled, "*Self-Surrender*," by M. P. Hack; published by Hodder and Stoughton. It consists of a series of biographies, beginning with Anne Askew, who suffered martyrdom in 1546. Some of them are well worth perusal, especially that of Harriet Jukes.—E. M.

the doctrine of God our Saviour." The Word says, "Be pitiful, be courteous;" use hospitality, as well as "be careful for nothing." She suffered much from asthma before she was twenty, and having a dying elder sister to tend often concealed her nightly attacks from her family.

In February, 1826, she partook of the Lord's Supper for the first time. It was a day to be much-remembered, and her biographer says:—In a cottage where she dined after the service, she passed two happy hours in reading, prayer, and thanksgiving. At the evening service also, the hymns and prayers seemed for her alone, but the sermon on the "pure in heart" afforded much food for meditation. On returning home, she sat in her invalid sister Anne's room. After a few words exchanged, silence reigned, Emma meditating on what she had heard and felt, but especially on these words, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." She says that the calm peacefulness of the sick room brought them to her mind, and during an hour-and-a-half spent beside her beloved sister, she feasted upon them. She adds, "I realized indeed that 'peace which passeth all understanding.' A calm feeling of being dedicated (devoted, or 'set apart,' as the word means) to the Lord possessed my soul, and I rested on the arm of Jehovah. Unwillingly I left the sacred room to retire to rest, and, before I closed my eyes in slumber, again entreated the Lord to give me purity and holiness, by *whatever means* He might see necessary to employ. Yes, my heart said *whatever means*; and, though I trembled at the thought of *what means* might be employed, I again entreated the blessing most earnestly."

After uttering this petition, Emma fell asleep, and later awoke with difficulty of breathing. Thinking it was her usual asthma, she took a dose of ether, but it failed to alleviate the suffering. Her tender thought for Anne prevented her from disturbing the household, and in the morning it seemed to those who came to her, and saw her great struggles for breath, that she could not be restored. She said afterwards, "My mind was *more than comforted* during paroxysms of painful and dangerous oppressions of breath, by the assurance that the affliction was to *purify me*." Six weeks after, she wrote, "On the tenth day of my illness, my dear sister was worse, and, on the eleventh, left this wilderness for the paradise above.* Oh, how I longed, if but for one moment, to have looked upon her, even after death; but the Lord, in tender mercy, suffered not my desire to be accomplished. No; every

* There is a short account of this sister in the volume from which this is extracted.

rebellious thought was graciously, *most* graciously, to be purged, and this severe discipline was necessary to do so."

Much weakness and suffering followed. Speaking of what she passed through during the winter of 1826-7, she says, "Each one of His sweetest promises has been more abundantly fulfilled to me than language can express. Sometimes the sweet consolations so abounded that I was astonished to hear any say of my complaint, 'How distressing it must be!'" And again, in May, 1827, "The last six months have been the happiest of my life, for I have enjoyed the presence of my God in them. Oh, who can tell what that is? What must heaven be, if this be only earth?"

In the summer she was removed into the country. The anticipation of change of scene tried her. She loved her sick room, hallowed with her Lord's presence, and dreaded leaving it. Emma soon found, however, that He was not to be limited to place, for she writes, soon after, "'The peace of God which passeth all understanding.' Peace of God—truly it must pass all understanding; yet it is bestowed, felt, experienced, delighted in. Truly have I a goodly portion. 'The lines are fallen unto me' in more than 'pleasant places.'"

In 1828 she writes—"My earthly abode is about to be changed; perhaps, also, my pursuits and habits. I know not what is before me. My body, soul, and spirit, circumstances and lot, to the end of my life—my friends, my comforts, my earthly and spiritual all—I place in Thy hands to order for me. Take my heart, gracious Lord, and fill it with Thy love; my understanding, and fix it upon Thyself; my will, and make it Thine; my desires, and let them all go out to Thee; my wants, and make them centre upon Thee; my time, and use it for Thy glory; my voice, my strength, all my bodily powers, and let them be for Thy service, in whatever way Thou chooseth, by pain or ease, by health or illness, by ability or inability. Take my circumstances, and order them so as to maintain the nearest walk with Thee. My friends—yea, take them also, and make them to me what Thou wouldst have them to be—Thou, whose will is my sanctification."

A few days after writing the above, Emma was removed to a new residence. Thus was every earthly nest stirred, that she might rest only in "the secret place of the Most High, and abide under the shadow of the Almighty."

In February, 1829, the weight of illness was so overpowering, it seemed to those around as if the dear invalid could not survive from day to day. The suffering in the throat was very severe, and threatened suffocation. Her sympathy for those with her was very great. She sought continually to strengthen her sister's

faith, and soothe her suffering at watching such pain. In the midst of an acute attack she said, "It is not hard to bear, I assure you; the worst is to see you suffer so. With such heavenly health in my soul, this is really nothing." Another time, when her sister was cast down with the prospect of parting, Emma said, "Remember that sweet passage in Rutherford: 'Build thy nest upon no tree here; for see, God hath sold all the forest to death, and every tree upon which we would rest is ready to be cut down, to the end that we may flee away, and build upon the Rock, and dwell in the clefts of the Rock.'"

After this her health was in a measure restored, and, though always weak, she could take a more active part in the affairs of this life. Many extracts might be given from her sister's record of her, and also from her letters, but lack of space forbids.

In October, 1829, she writes, "The prospects of the winter, and all its trials and sufferings, of which you know I have partaken largely in the previous one, and of which I expect a fuller share this season, seem rather animating and cheering than sorrowful or depressing."

The accession of illness came, increased by the severe cold of the season. Scarlet fever prevailed in the family, with the addition of some other trials which were then pressing heavily.

The last entry in her journal, dated February 18th, 1830, ends thus: "I had hoped ere this to have given thanks in a world where I should have been sinless; but, if it be the will of God yet to detain me in the bonds of debility and passive weakness or suffering, let me not wish it otherwise. I do bless Him that He is subjugating, crossing, ploughing up my will. Make it quite conformed to Thine, heavenly Father. Bring every thought into captivity, every wish into subjection."

She much prized the visits of a venerable minister during the next attack of illness in June, 1830. He spoke at one visit of her extreme sufferings, and asked if she did not sometimes earnestly wish to have them removed. She answered, "Oh, no; I have not one more than I *need*." He asked, "What, then, would be the petition you would most earnestly present if you were to comprise all your wishes in it?" She replied instantly, "That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death."

The last letter she wrote was in February, 1831. She says in it, the large view she has had lately of the *freeness* of God's love shows her that her former realizations of it were but "as a grain to a mountain;" and then proceeds in these words: "Sleeping or waking, in pain or exhaustion, fainting or excited by fever, able to testify of the grace of the Lord, or too weak to articulate, and

often incapacitated from thanking Him, think of me thus, and wonder at the Wonderful One. Think of a sinner whom the Lord rescued from death, whom He has guided, kept, loved, favoured (you know a little how richly); then think of her Saviour, the 'faithful and true,' standing by her, as near to her as to the spirits in glory, supporting her and whispering peace, driving away every anxiety, sorrow, or oppression of mind or soul simply by that sweet word, 'Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself.' "

(To be continued.)

"IF I PERISH, I PERISH. I WILL GO IN UNTO THE KING."

WHETHER I live or die,
Lord, at Thy feet I'll lie,
And spread my case ;
To Thee it all is known,
And every sigh and groan
To feel Thy grace.

I am concerned to know
If Jesus' blood did flow
My soul to save ;
To whom, Lord, can I flee
For succour but to Thee,
And mercy crave ?

Do, then, most blessed Lord
Speak home Thy pardoning word
Into my heart ;
Bless me with joy and peace,
From bondage give release,
And ease my smart.

I want to know Thee, Lord,
And feed upon Thy Word
With real delight ;
I want Thy power to feel,
And have Thy Spirit's seal
To set me right.

I have been like one dead ;
In dungeon-darkness laid,
Hell seemed my place ;
It will a wonder be
If Thou dost save poor me
By Thy rich grace.

A. H.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY CONDEMNED.—If I grapple with sin in my own strength, the devil knows he may go to sleep.—*Adam*.

THE BURNING AND SHINING LAMP.

BY THE LATE HENRY FOWLER.

"Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

—PSALM cxix. 105.

THE use of the lamp is chiefly in the night-season, to assist us to see what we are about, or to find what we may have lost; to discover to us any person or thing that may be in our way, or that might injure us; to direct us to accomplish our object or design. As the lamp or candle is exceedingly useful for the above purposes, so is the Word of God useful, and absolutely necessary, to guide poor, miserable sinners into those things which lead to everlasting felicity: "For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life" (Prov. vi. 23). How base must any man be, or set of men, who would strain every nerve to conceal the light; who would let the Scriptures remain in a dead language; who would prohibit, on pain of excommunication, the reading of the Bible by the poor and unlearned! Invaluable have been the blessings attending the circulation of the holy Scriptures for several centuries in our land; and may the lamp of truth never be removed from the British Isles till day and night come to an end!

But, though we are blessed as a nation above most, it is to be deeply lamented that the lamp of Zion burns dimly. If it be not a dark night, it approaches very near it. Our lamp wants replenishing and trimming. I do not mean that the Word of God wants our wisdom to set it forth in its brightness. No; but a veil of obscurity is cast upon the Word of God by men's carnal wisdom. They have no ear to hear the voice of truth, no humility to bow to its solemn declarations. As there was confusion among the Babel builders, occasioned by their awful presumption, so there is confusion among the priests and people respecting the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, the Person of Christ, the work of the Holy Ghost, and the manner of His conducting His flock by His Word of grace, by exhortations, by cutting reproofs, by sweet invitations, by precious promises, by sanctifying their trials, and emptying them from vessel to vessel, and making them meet for the Master's use. In all the foregoing points there is a manifest deficiency in the present day. Faithfulness was never more necessary than at the present period; and he that is enabled to be faithful will be considered legal, if not an Arminian, by some; and some will say that he is an Antinomian. But men's fancies and wild ideas, uttered ever so gravely or dogmatically, must not be heeded by the servant of God. He is accountable to his Master, and not to men.

The words of Christ in Luke xii. 35—38, doubtless are designed for the whole Church on earth, down to the end of time, but especially for the ministers of Christ: "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning," &c.

By the "Word" in the text at the head of this piece we may understand the whole revelation that God hath seen fit to give unto us, comprehending His just and holy law and the everlasting Gospel; for the law is as truly the Word of God as is the Gospel. Though the law is weak through the flesh, or corruption of nature, and cannot do anything for poor ruined sinners in a way of comfort, yet in the hand of Christ it is made exceedingly useful in convicting, in stripping the poor sinner of all his fancied righteousness, and then it leaves him naked at the footstool of mercy. But how can the word of the law be said to be a lamp? By the majesty and holiness of Jehovah shining in it, and by the discovery it makes of the dark and desperate condition we are in by nature, which is what Paul means—"For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin" (Rom. vii. 14). How came Paul to know that the law was spiritual? Did he, when at the feet of Gamaliel, or when persecuting Christ in His members, know that the law was spiritual? No, indeed; he took the letter of the law as his rule of life, as thousands do now. But, when Jesus put majesty and power into the commandment, and gave Paul eyes to see, then sin revived, and he died, as he says; and the commandment which he had been expecting life from he found to be unto death (Rom. vii. 9, 10). But observe, he never calls the law sin, nor speaks of it degradingly, but quite the reverse: "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, just, and good. Is the law sin? God forbid." He saw that the light of that lamp was lost in the brighter rays of the glorious Gospel, "the glory that excelleth." The Gospel, which is the ministration of righteousness, is a much brighter lamp; for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith—"Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Rom. x. 4). The Gospel word comes nigh to poor sinners, and well suits their guilty condition, even "the Word of faith, which we preach" (Rom. x. 8). This is the lamp that goeth forth as brightness into a sinner's heart, when sent home through the preached Word by the Holy Ghost, discovering to a ruined, lost sinner the Saviour's complete righteousness and everlasting salvation (Isa. lxii. 1). By the Gospel Word, through the Spirit shining into our hearts, we are led into the knowledge of one of the greatest mysteries that God has declared in His holy Word, namely, how God can "be just and the Justifier of the ungodly," that "He is a just God and a Saviour."

Now, the Gospel, which is the ministration of the Spirit, is a lamp to our feet, directing us what to do, where to go, what to receive, and what to reject. Where are the sinner's feet rambling that has not God's light to guide him? Why, in paths of error, in darkness and delusion. The learned philosophers of Greece and Rome, who dived deeply into all natural things, were mere moles and bats as to any true knowledge of God, though some of them drop some expressions which indicate that they had some notions of the Trinity, of the soul's immortality, &c. Yet it is pretty clear that they derived their information from the Jews. "The world by wisdom knew not God." Even the Jews, who had Moses and the prophets read to them every Sabbath day, were, for the most part of them, as destitute of the true knowledge of God as the learned Gentiles. They had, it is true, the lamp; but it was the mere lamp without the holy oil; and, when the Saviour came to His own, very few of them had any light to see that He was the true Shiloh. The veil was upon their heart, and blindness upon their understanding, as it is on that people to this day, with *very few exceptions*. Many of the Jews have indeed turned to other religions, and some we have known have professed to believe the truth, and have preached some of the doctrines of Christ; but it has turned out that *money* was their object. But where God's lamp shines into the heart of either Jew or Gentile, it will show him that *covetousness is idolatry*, and the *love of money the root of all evil*. It is not a bare knowledge of the letter of Gospel truth that God's light leads a sinner into. A natural man may attain to that with a little labour; but it is the Spirit alone that giveth life. If the Holy Spirit is not a man's Teacher—if a man does not receive his doctrine from the Holy Ghost—preach what he may, and be admired as he may, even by some of Zion's children who are full of spiritual diseases, he is no further than the letter of truth, and his lamp will go out in obscurity. Paul's observation is weighty, and should be solemnly considered by every minister: "Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament; *not of the letter*, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" (2 Cor. iii. 6). In the letter of the Gospel stand many preachers of the present day, and many such are placed over different Churches where there may be many of the Lord's poor children, whose conversation, after hearing their *letter-man*, may be something like this: "Well, how have you heard to-day?" "Indeed, I hardly know what to say to your question. The preacher has certainly spoken some great truths, and I admire his manner. He has not that *coarse, blunt way* in his delivery, like Mr. —. But, though I do not wish to judge the man, and can say *nothing against what he has advanced*, really, I

have neither received reproof nor comfort. But the fault may be in me. I know I am a poor creature. I should like Mr. ——— if he were not quite so rough ; but really, he sometimes makes me *blush*, and *tremble* too. Yet, when I am very low and tried in my mind, and have gone to hear him, I have wondered how the man could so enter into all my path of trial, and I have come away under *very different feelings* to those I have after hearing Mr. ——— to-day."

Reader, if the cap fits thee, put it on. I intended it for wear. Do not suppose, because a man preaches great truth, that he is a spiritual minister. The rough, unpolished diamond is of more value than the finest polished glass, though it may have a beautiful appearance. "Prove all things ; hold fast that which is good." John had a rough garment and a rough tongue ; hence he called his hearers a "generation of vipers." But the Saviour says he was "a burning and a shining light," though his was a dim lamp compared with Paul's.

1. The Word of God, the lamp and light of truth, leads a sinner into the experimental knowledge of his fallen state. He finds, *by feeling*, what the Word of God says to be true—that he has been a transgressor from the womb, a base rebel, a child of wrath, of ignorance, and folly—and, under this supernatural power, he cries out, "Pardon mine iniquities, O God, for they are great !"

2. This lamp discovers and makes plain to a sinner, in time, his personal election in Christ. By God's light he sees that his name is written in heaven ; that he is graven on the palms of the Redeemer's hands ; that he is justified through faith in His blood, and shall never come into condemnation ; and that he shall be supplied, from the fulness of Christ, with every needful good unto the end.

3. By this lamp he sees where the ungodly world stand—in a state of blindness and ignorance, either trifling with the things of God, or openly mocking them. He sees by this light of truth that all the inhabitants of this earth, save and except God's called ones, are under the devil's control—that they are blinded by the god of this world.

4. By God's light, and the teaching of His Spirit, he sees, as if written by a sunbeam, the empty profession of the day—that it is a body without a soul—or rather, a shadow without a substance.

Lastly. This light shows him the dawn of hope, the path to bliss, and assures him that he shall stand before the Son of Man in a state of blessed immortality (2 Tim. i. 10).

All these things the Lord has shown me by the light of His own lamp. I bless Him for it, and desire to be guided by His Word

and good Spirit all my journey through. God's counsels, precepts, rebukes, and exhortations are as dear to the real child of God, under a proper influence, as are His promises. There is no real prosperity in that man that will excuse his vile flesh; nor any true wisdom in the man's speech who asserts that the exhortations of the Word, which are addressed to the saints, are *legal*. Such preaching is manure for rotten-hearted hypocrites, who soar high in false confidence, and who are confirmed therein by such wild, ranting preaching as is condemned above.

May our prayer ever be, "Keep back Thy servant from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression."

"I love the sunshine of the Lord;
Truly the heavenly light is sweet;
It gives new beauties to the Word,
And makes me lie at Jesus' feet.

"But oft, alas! I grope and mourn,
And fret and murmur and rebel;
I'd wait with patience Thy return,
To dart a ray into my cell.

"Come, heavenly light, and shine again,
And drive my darksome hours away;
Subdue my sin by Thy sweet reign,
And help me both to watch and pray."

H. F.

(Copied from his original hymns.)

WHAT doth Nehemiah with his Jews for their common safety? They pray and watch—they pray unto God, and watch against the enemy.—*Bishop Hall*.

ALL beyond actual daily bread, all which is called "wealth and prosperity," is what the "nations of the world seek after," and are the things which shall surely be added unto us if we do but seek first the true good.

A PRAYING man is a treasure and a blessing in any country. One Joseph preserved the whole of Egypt in the time of scarcity. One Moses stood in the gap, when God would have destroyed the people of Israel.—*Luther*.

It is real waste of time to bestow any great attention on the foolish and evil talking of those who find their unholy pleasure in seeking another's downfall; and one thing worth remembering is that, if there were fewer who delighted in hearing evil, there would soon be a lessening of evil speaking.

ANSWERS TO PRAYER.

"I will answer thee."—JEREMIAH xxxiii. 3.

THE Word of divine truth declares, "Ask, and ye shall receive;" therefore, we come with this message to those who know anything of the "pathway of prayer," namely, *there is nothing more certain than this, that GOD HEARS AND ANSWERS PRAYER.* His ears are ever open (never shut) unto the cry of the righteous. Whilst we write we do rejoice in the great and blessed fact that our God is a prayer-hearing and prayer-answering God. The Lord grant that some poor longing, seeking one may derive sweet encouragement by the special application of this precious truth—a truth every seeking soul shall assuredly be brought to know for himself in the Lord's own time.

But, before the *answer* to prayer is received on the part of the pleader, there is the *hearing* of that prayer on the part of the Lord. Let us look at a few reasons why God hears such petitions as the prayers of the needy and the destitute, who alone, be it remembered, are on praying ground, because they alone stand in new covenant relationship to God by Christ Jesus.

1. *Because it is His will to do so.* What a sweet foundation to start with! Who can resist His will? Not all the imperfections, the sin, the defilement, that mixes with every approach to the throne of grace (even of the most spiritually-minded saint) can prevent the performance of His purpose.

2. He hears them *because He loves His people.* The father loves to hear the voice of the child; the bridegroom loves to hear the voice of the bride; even so the Lord loves to hear the voice of His own. His language is, "Let Me hear thy voice, for sweet is thy voice" (Song ii. 14).

3. *Because He has faithfully promised it again and again in His Word*—"Call unto Me, and I will answer thee" (Jer. xxxiii. 3).

4. *Because Jesus Himself intercedes for them.* The Lord Jesus Christ is the great High Priest, "who ever liveth to make intercession for the saints, according to the will of God."

5. *Because all true prayer is the voice of the Holy Spirit speaking within the heart.* The inward motions, the bubbleings up, the longings of the soul, in which true prayer consists, are all the work of the Holy Spirit. Of prayer it may indeed be said, "It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Prayer, then, is (as it were) the voice of God in the soul, and surely the Lord will hear His own voice—

" 'Tis Thou, O Lord, hast taught
My soul to feel her sin;
And these desires are naught
But Thy own voice within."

At this point we may notice that the Lord's hearing of His people's cries is often described as an "inclining," a "bowing down" of His ear. As the mother sometimes bends to listen to the breathing of the infant slumbering at her side, thus the Lord "bows His ear," and listens to the breathings of the new-born soul. "As one whom his mother comforteth," &c.

Now, let us consider the answering of prayer. We must ever bear in mind that (as one says) *the Lord does not answer us because we are brought to pray, but we pray because He means to answer us.* Many are the lessons, both in the records of the Word and in the experience of the saints, by which they are taught the manner how, the times when, and the means by which the Lord answers His people's petitions.

When His chosen cry to Him out of the depths, He often answers *by a promise*—not by a present deliverance, wrought there and then, but by a gracious promise of it at some future time. Thus Abraham mourned because he had no seed; but the Lord did not see fit to immediately grant his request, but gave him a promise. So with Jacob. See him, a weary traveller, lying down to rest at night. The next morning, as he rises, he seems in no better plight, outwardly still a forlorn youth—apparently a houseless wanderer—without a single friend, but oh, how different is he in the feelings of his soul! Why? Because he had *received a promise.* Actual trials may not always be removed—they may even seem to be increased—yet, if the Lord gives a promise, the sting, the burden, the *bitterness* of the trial will be completely taken away. A long time, however, may elapse between the giving of the promise and its fulfilment. The word has to be tried, like the corn cast into the ground, by the snows of winter, the rain, the alternations of day and night, sometimes for a long season; then presently the seed sown in the promise springs up in the fulfilment. This was remarkably illustrated in the case of Joseph. While he was yet young the Lord revealed, in visions of the night, the high position to which he should attain; but how much did Joseph endure before he saw the realization of his dreams!

Again, the Lord answered Paul's prayer for the removal of the thorn in the flesh by the *reminding him of a fact* which the poor perplexed one is prone to overlook—"My grace is sufficient for thee." Precious truth! so literally and exactly fulfilled in the case of *every saint* that, if they are asked, as they each enter heaven, "Lacked ye anything?" they all reply, "Nothing, Lord;" and they confess that His grace *was* sufficient to support *in*, and bring safely *out of*, every trial; sufficient to comfort in every distress, to keep their heads above water when the billows rose high, and to bring them in peace to their journey's end. The glad

confession is made at last that they would not have anything altered which has befallen them in their pilgrimage.

Further, the Lord answers prayer by *contrary means*. When the blind man prayed to receive his sight, the Lord "made clay," and, strange to say, put *that* on his eyes. One would have thought this would have finally destroyed all hope of a cure. However, it was the Lord's way. Now, let us look at this fact of the contrary means by which the dear Lord often answers His people's petitions, a little practically. If there is one thing the child of God specially desires it is *humility*. Jesus was meek and lowly. Most manifestly the Lord will make His own family *humble*. Then pride and self *must* fall, that Jesus may be All in all. The believer desires to follow Jesus; he desires to be humble; and finds his greatest joys are experienced when he is most emptied of self. His happiest moments are those spent in humbly waiting at the feet of Jesus, therefore he prays most earnestly for humility; and perhaps, before an hour has passed, he will so feel within the risings of pride that he will be ready to conclude he cannot be a child of God. Presently a feeling of intense self-loathing overflows his soul; he is filled with shame and confusion of face before God on account of his pride; and, in the issue, he is thoroughly humbled and crumbled in the dust of self-abasement. Thus he creeps to the throne of grace, a poor broken-hearted sinner; and *so* the Lord answers prayer for humility. This also may perhaps teach us how "*with* the temptation the Lord makes a way for escape."

Then, again, prayer for faith is often followed by particular temptations to unbelief; for hope, by temptations to despair; for love, by the prevalence for a season of rebellion against the Lord. Ministers pray for faithfulness in the discharge of their solemn office, and are perhaps immediately assaulted by the insidious suggestions of the arch-enemy—"Why not preach smother things? Why be so cutting? Why wield the sword so much?" Well, the Lord takes care that Satan shall defeat himself. Such seasons of trial send the poor ambassador to the mercy-seat, and sometimes he comes therefrom with the feeling of Micaiah, "As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak."

But, again, the Lord often answers prayer by *giving us something better than we asked*. We ask for temporal blessings, and He often adds to them spiritual blessings. We pray for the removal of trial; He answers by granting more strength to endure. Jesus prayed, "Let this cup pass from Me." That desire was not granted, but there appeared an angel from heaven strengthening Him. The saints tread the same path, and those who are partakers of the sufferings shall be also of the consolations.

Moreover, the Lord grants His people's requests when He seems to answer them by "*terrible things in righteousness.*" How beautifully that blessed hymn of John Newton's—"I asked the Lord that I might grow"—exemplifies this!

We might now profitably consider the *times* when He answers. It is said, "Before they call I will answer"—whilst the desire is yet unexpressed—before the feeling of the soul has shaped itself into a prayer. Then, in many instances, the Lord replies *at once*. As soon as the petition has come into His presence, He has sent back the answer. "In the day that I cried Thou answeredst me." The Church prayed for the deliverance of Peter; and while they were yet praying, Peter stood at the door. But, perhaps, it is not wrong to say it is more usually God's way to *delay answers to prayer*. "The vision is for an appointed time." The Lord will be waited *for*, as well as waited *on*; and blessed are the souls that wait for Him. Though blind Bartimæus and the Syrophœnician woman seemed to get a rebuff at first, and had to cry again and again, they got the blessing at last—

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

Now we must conclude. We should have liked to have added a few words on the *reception of the answer*; but, fearing we have already unduly trespassed, can only just point out that answers to prayer may be received *unbelievingly*. The believer prays for some particular thing. After a long period, and perhaps at a peculiar conjunction of circumstances, the Lord grants it. He may then be assaulted with all manner of doubts, evil thoughts, and temptations to believe that things have occurred, and his desire been granted, merely by *chance*, as we say. Sometimes also the answer is received *ungratefully*, often *murmuringly*, because it has not come just in the way we wanted it. Oh, it is a mercy to be enabled to pray constantly, watch eagerly, and receive the answers (however they come) gratefully! The Lord help His poor, dear trembling ones to receive His own precious testimony, "*I will answer thee.*" E. C.

IN having all things and not Thee, what have I?
Not having Thee, what have my labours got?
Let me enjoy but Thee, what further crave I?
And having Thee alone, what have I not?
I wish not sea, nor land—nor would I be
Possessed of heaven—heaven unpossessed of Thee.

QUARLES.

DISTINGUISHING MERCY.

How often we see the Lord's tender care and saving grace bestowed on those who are of weak intellect ! He seems to have a special regard for such, and shows His love and compassion by implanting in their hearts the fear of the Lord ; and surely such cases show us, in a very remarkable way, the mighty power of God, and the entire separation which exists between the soul and spirit. It is a new principle imparted, which comes from God, and goes to God, whilst it leaves the poor half-witted creature quite as devoid of understanding, in natural things, as before. God does indeed "choose the foolish things of this world to confound the wise, and weak things to confound the mighty," to debase pride, and exalt His own glory.

When Dr. Kalley first visited Madeira, in 1839, he met with few who had ever seen a Bible ; but many showed a good deal of desire to read, and hear it read, and many adults went to school to learn to read the Word of God. This desire went on increasing, till, in 1842, people came in large numbers (often exceeding two thousand) to hear the Scriptures read and explained. Many walked ten or twelve hours, and climbed over mountains three thousand feet high, in coming and returning to and from their homes. The meetings were solemn. The hearers listened with unwearied attention. Now and again a hand was observed stealing up to remove a tear, and sometimes there was a general audible expression of wonder. This was especially the case when the subject of remark was the love of God in not sparing His own Son, or the love of Christ in voluntarily taking upon Himself the wrath and curse which we deserved. What a pleasing and delightful scene in a Popish country ! But the work at length provoked the open hostility of the ecclesiastical authorities, and persecution and imprisonment followed, which the subject of the following narrative participated in.

"Jeronymo was a poor fellow," Dr. Kalley writes, "who had had a severe illness when he was about seventeen years of age, in consequence of which his mind continued feeble, his hands, feet, and head tremulous, and his appearance altogether imbecile and boyish, though he was about thirty. He had learned a few words of French and English, and used them in begging from strangers. The boys often teased him, to amuse themselves with his stammering words and strange movements when in a rage. One Sabbath, in the spring of 1843, when the police were stationed at my door to prevent the entrance of those who wished to hear the Word of God, Jeronymo took a fancy to come in. One or two persons had been beaten, and two or three taken to prison for daring to enter ; but the police did not think it worth their while

to hinder him. Before the commencement of worship, Jeronymo was noticed, and, as his idiotic appearance excited the suspicion that he would cause disturbance and distract others, he was sent away without my knowledge. But He who has chosen the weak and foolish ones had purposes of mercy towards him, and when we met again in the afternoon, he was seated among the little company. His attention was riveted. His naturally unintelligent features became full of interest, as he sat with mouth and eyes open, drinking in the wonderful things of God. He returned again and again, and the result was, he became a 'new creature in Christ Jesus.' He resolved to learn to read, and, though it was very hard work, yet, by patient and prayerful perseverance, he at last succeeded, and then endeavoured to make the Gospel known, as well as he could, to others. He gave up his idle habits too, and contrived to support himself by his own labour, by selling Testaments and tracts, for which he was allowed a small profit. But he did not escape persecution for Christ's sake. Canon Telles," continues Dr. Kalley, "once gave him a terrible beating for daring to offer heretical books for sale at his door. He was also imprisoned, but that was no great hardship to him. The jail was as comfortable an abode as he was accustomed to; and his enemies, knowing that, very soon dismissed him. He was joint proprietor of the poor hut in which his sister lived, and had an equal right to make it his house; but, after remonstrating with her and her husband on the folly of image worship, and finding them incorrigibly resolved to retain their idols, he left them. When asked afterwards where he slept, he replied that he 'could sleep quite well at any door, and the Lord always provided him a piece of bread.'"

"One Lord's day," Dr. Kalley adds, "when in my room in the jail with some friends, the conversation turned upon the resurrection of the body. Poor Jeronymo, on hearing it, was observed to look down to his hands and feet, very much grieved. He had hoped that, if once dead, he would be done with the frame which he found so cumbersome; and the idea of its being raised again seemed quite to dishearten him. But, when told that the bodies of such as die trusting in the Lord will, at the resurrection, be raised like to His glorious body, the expression of his face changed. He looked again at his trembling limbs, and then upwards, his face beaming with wonder and delight at the thought of having that body made like his Lord's."

How true are the words of the Lord Jesus, that the Gospel is often hid from the wise and prudent, but revealed unto babes; and oh, how true, but sad, that the awful errors and superstition which this poor man and others have tried to withstand, and have

suffered persecution, imprisonment, and death for, should be gaining such ground in our own land ! To think that, in this so-called Protestant country, there should be so many of those abominable places of iniquity as monasteries, nunneries, and convents ; and that we, as a nation, should encourage and support them ! Oh, it is indeed appalling !—enough to make us walk softly before the Lord all our days, and, like Ezra, to say, “ O my God, I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my face to Thee, my God ; for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens.” Yes, we must confess that our many and aggravated sins justly call forth the displeasure of the Almighty God, the Creator and Preserver of us all, whilst we also pray, “ O Lord, revive Thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known ; in wrath remember mercy.”

But let us not forget or overlook the solemn truth, that we may be true lovers of Protestantism, moral and upright in our whole deportment, and be thought—and even think ourselves—true Christians, and fit for the kingdom of heaven ; and yet, if not washed in the blood of Jesus Christ, and clothed in His righteousness, we are on a level with those we pity, and shall meet with the same condemnation as the deluded Papist and professed infidel. “ If in this life *only* we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.” The Lord Jesus said, “ The kingdom of God cometh not with observation,” or with outward show ; “ for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.” It is something secret between God and the soul. It is looking by faith to the Lamb of God, who is able and willing to “ save to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him ;” and there is every encouragement in the Word of God for the vilest sinner to come to Him who says, “ Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.”

Oh, that many, through the reading of the SOWER, may, by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, be constrained to flee to Jesus Christ, and live (Isaiah xlv. 22). A READER.

EVEN the best may err, but they will not persist in it. When good natures have offended, they are unquiet till they have hastened satisfaction.—*Bishop Hall.*

FAITH gives me to see how distinguishedly this love of God hath set itself upon me. By faith I see that, though Esau was Jacob's brother, yet God loved Jacob ; that, though there were thousands more beside me, who were as good as I, yet I must be the man that must be chosen.—*Bunyan.*

REMINISCENCES OF THE LORD'S GOODNESS.

It is sometimes very sweet to look back and be enabled feelingly to say, "Thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of Thy wings will I rejoice;" and some of us can at times also sing—

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

And I think I can truly say, my motive in writing this is to extol a good and gracious God, "who hath delivered, who doth deliver, and in whom we trust that He will yet deliver us."

At the beginning of last year I was very poorly in body, and, though I kept about, I got down very low, and at times I wondered if my time here was short. I gradually got weaker, till I had very little spirit or strength for anything; yet, blessed be God, He exercised me in it, and my prayer for, I think I may say weeks, was that the Lord would sanctify the affliction for my soul's welfare; and well do I remember saying to a friend, the day before I was laid by, "I do hope the Lord will sanctify this affliction to me, for I am firmly persuaded that, if affliction comes upon us and leaves us as it finds us—or rather, harder than before—we give no proof that we are God's children; for if affliction does not soften, it will harden." For some time before I took to my bed this was my prayer almost without intermission: "Accomplish in me all Thy will, only remember I am dust." This prayer was continually going up from my heart to God during the two days I lay in bed, and little did I think that a good and gracious God was so soon going to answer it, and show me in such a sweet way what was His will in afflicting me.

The next day, being Sunday, and feeling a little better in body, I got up in the morning hoping to go to chapel; and oh, that never-to-be-forgotten morning! Just before it was time for me to start, the dear Lord spoke these words with such power to my soul: "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten;" when I was so overcome with the love of a precious Christ that I felt as if I must fall right down in the house. I sat down and buried my face in my hands, and sobbed and cried as if my heart would burst. My friends wondered what was amiss, but I was so full I could not tell them, only that I was no worse in body. I feel that for me to attempt to describe this blessed manifestation of God's love to me would be almost like trying to touch the natural sun with my hand. I was so overpowered with it that I felt it would soon have killed my poor body, and I was obliged, though very reluctantly, to ask the dear Lord to stay His hand. Oh, how sweetly did He show me

that it was because He loved me that He rebuked and chastened me ; and oh, how I could and did welcome the affliction ! All the precious promises were mine, and I could enter into the language of the Apostle, " All things are yours ; " and those words were so sweet, " All that He is or has are yours ; " also the twelfth chapter of Hebrews. Indeed, the blessed, solid reality I felt in real religion I shall never be able to express on this side the grave, and if ever I felt those words it was then—

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

I really longed to go home, to praise Him as I ought, though I felt at the same time, " Not my will, but Thine be done." After this my doctor told me I had got down very low in body and mind, and he thought a change by the sea-side would do me more good than any medicine ; but I felt I dare not go without my Father's direction. I felt just like a little child hanging all its weight on its parent, and I was rather tried whether a person in my position would be justified in going to the expense of a visit to the sea-side for a few weeks. Oh, how I begged of my Father to direct me both as to whether I was to go, and where I was to go, when these words were applied : " Is not the life more than meat, and the body more than raiment ? " So I decided to go to Brighton on the following Monday ; and, just as I was starting from home on that day, the dear Lord sweetly applied this verse to me—

" Though hosts of enemies rise up
To fill thee with dismay,
The Lord will make His goodness pass
Before thee in the way."

And truly He did, bless His dear name, in every way. After I had been waiting a little while at the station from which I was to start, a dear friend quite unexpectedly came there, who, after asking very kindly after my welfare, said, " I hope you won't be offended at what I am going to say. I don't know your position, and I have been thinking if I could help you in any way ; and, as you are going away for a change, which I hope the Lord will bless to your good, will you accept of two pounds as a token of love, for Christ's sake ? " Mind, I had not intimated to her anything of my exercises with respect to the expense, so the reader must judge something of my feelings. I was so overpowered at the goodness of my God that I was scarcely able to thank her. I was favoured to have the carriage to myself part of the way, and oh, the sweet communion I had with my heavenly Father ! How we talked together ! I kept saying, " Why me, O blessed Lord ? Why take notice of such a vile wretch as me ? " And He kindly

answered, sweetly smiling all the while, "Your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things ;" and then I sang—

"How sovereign, wonderful, and free
Is all His love to sinful me !
He snatched me as a brand from hell ;
My Jesus has done all things well.

"And since my soul has known His love,
What mercies has He made me prove—
Mercies which all my praise excel !
My Jesus has done all things well."

And I may say here, that to record a part of the goodness of my God to me in this little change from home would fill several SOWERS, but there are one or two more things I cannot help mentioning. First, the dear Lord took me to Brighton in safety, and provided me, though a stranger in a strange place, with a comfortable lodging with God-fearing people, who studied my comfort in every way, so that I had every needful thing for my body. On the Thursday evening after I arrived, I went to hear Mr. Hewitt, at St. Luke's Church, Prestonville, and had a most blessed time. I felt as though I must shout out in the church, "Bless the Lord, O my soul !" The first hymn sung was one of dear Kent's, "What cheering words are these," &c. My heart began to soften ; and oh, what a melting I had under a most blessed sermon which dear Mr. Hewitt preached from these words, "And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried : they shall call on My name, and I will hear them : I will say, It is My people : and they shall say, The Lord is my God " (Zech. xiii. 9). The dear man, by the Holy Spirit's help, like the good Samaritan, came just where I was ; and what a confirming testimony this was to me ! Though I am a Particular Baptist, that sermon was the means of forming a union betwixt that dear man and me that death will not dissolve.

I could enlarge, but I must not. Suffice it to say, the dear Lord made His goodness pass before me in a marked manner all the three weeks I was away, and brought me home better in body, though rather duller in spirit ; and now I can truly say that, though I have just as bad and mistrustful a heart as ever I had, yet I do pray for grace to keep it under ; and I hate myself that, after the Lord has so many times appeared for me, I should ever mistrust Him again. I would always trust Him if I could ; and sometimes, when I have been in trouble, the dear Lord has kindly asked me—

"Did ever trouble yet befall
And I refuse to hear your call ? "

And also, "Have I been a wilderness unto Israel?" so that I have been obliged to drop my head with shame and say, "No, dear Lord; Thou never hast left me, and I believe Thou never wilt."

I hope what has been written the dear Lord will own, to the encouragement of some of His poor tried people, and help them to cast all their burdens upon Him, for I am sure He will sustain them, according to His promise.

A. BOORMAN.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST MORE PRECIOUS THAN GOLD.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I received your letter on Saturday, and just drop you a line to say the parcel will be sent by train this morning to Uckfield station, to be left till called for, agreeable with your note.

I hope the Lord will preserve and keep you in your going out and coming in, and let *grace* reign in you, through righteousness, unto eternal life. I sensibly feel that cruel enemy of our souls' peace and comfort is ever on the alert to perplex, distress, entrap, and cast down the true followers of Jesus; and I feel it is no small mercy to be made sensible of our *danger*, and our *Refuge* too. As dear Hart sings—

"Glad frames too often lift us up,
And then how proud we grow!
Till sad desertion makes us droop,
And down we sink as low."

I must rehearse the following sacred words of his, as the dear saint broke out with such holy joy and confidence—

"But let not all this terrify;
Pursue the *narrow* path;
Look to the Lord with steadfast eye,
And fight with hell by faith."

Truly, my dear friend, I do feel it to be a *narrow, narrow* path—one that the vulture-eyed professor hath never, never seen, and which flesh and blood can never enter. This I have proved and sensibly felt ever since that sacred time (1851) when the dear Lord so powerfully won my affections, and made everything that was dear to Him to me also dear; and it is this that makes such men and women "wondered at." Oh, what *sacred, secret realities* are couched *beneath* in the blessed Word of God! And to tell you, brother John, I don't know, at times, how to be thankful enough to the dear Shepherd for ever giving me to hear His voice and to enter in,

and to know what it is now to "go in and out and find pasture." And, although the world and the concubines that surround Solomon's bed think *it* strange, and that *we* are strange characters, I would not with the world exchange; and, while my faith can keep hold of the dear Lamb of God, *I envy not the sinner's gold.*

I hope the dear Lord will bless and keep you ever feeling after and seeking for *His sweet smiles and testimony*, for *His testimonies are wonderful*, and His smiles are beyond the price of rubies—indeed, no mention shall be made of coral or pearls, or all the world calls good or great, for it is above and beyond the price of all. So sings the poet—

"Love to *Jesus Christ* and *His*
Fixes the heart *above*;
Love gives everlasting bliss,
But who can give us love?"

"To believe's the gift of God;
Well-grounded hope He sends from heaven;
Love's the purchase of His blood,
To all His children given."

And that sweet love of His, I believe, is what makes Satan gnash his teeth against those he would destroy, if their life were not in our dear and gracious Shepherd's keeping. But, when dear Little-Faith sees and *believes* the precious sayings of the dear Shepherd of Israel, that makes him

"smile at Satan's rage,
And face a frowning world;"

and can, with the dear Apostle, "count all things else but dung and dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord."

"Oh, to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be!
Let Thy grace, Lord, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to Thee."

But I must close with the dear Apostle's words, which I do hope and pray may be more sweetly and powerfully felt and enjoyed by all who love the dear and matchless name of our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and in truth: "Grace, mercy, and peace be with you, and with all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and in truth." So prays, Yours affectionately,

Croydon, June 29th, 1874.

H. GLOVER.

THE hypocrite has not a living hope, but a lying hope, and a dying hope.—*Leighton.*

ONE OF MANY; OR, THE LAMENTATIONS OF A BEREAVED FATHER.

[These lines, which we insert by request, were written after reading a report of the inquest upon the young lady who committed suicide in the beginning of 1881, having fallen into despair through reading the writings of a now notorious atheist.]

WHAT shall the ventings of my wounded heart
Pour forth? Sad sight, sad feelings. Ah! my heaving
Breast. She's gone, and did I ever think we
Thus should part, with no sweet hope of rest? I feel
Bewildered at the dreadful thought. Ah! wretched
Monster, my dear child drank deep thy deadly
Cup! How dearly bought! Those night-shade papers from
Thy hell-filled mind sank deep into her soul—
No God, no heaven, no hope—she reeled with
Torture. "Tis no use to pray! I find a
Whirlwind in my heart." Thus dark, distressed, no
Prop, no peace, the tempter hurried on the
Blasting wheel of atheistic thought; the
Mind gave way; the engendered doubts, like darts
Unbearable, stung deep, and echoed only
Misery. Now
Life's a burden—the living God first doubted,
Then denied. No place of shelter where her
Soul could stay. "Take these, the cursed things!" and,
With her nerves unstrung and faltering voice,
She flings the soul-destroying books away. But
Oh, alas! they'd left their fatal stings. "These
Hell-born papers have my ruin wrought. No faith,
No hope is left; they curse and sin have brought!"
And her young life was taken by that hand
Which oft with smiling face the Bible held.
Oh, monster at thy door my darling daughter's
Blood must lie! Devilish, indeed, must that
Vile teaching be, which leads to glory in
Another's woe. I'd ask thee, atheist,
Why thus rob, thus murder? Man, I ask thee
Why, if filth and poison filled thy spacious
Breast, why vent for other's woe? Who for
Our children henbane seed would sow? Why not
Let arrows in their quiver rest? Hast thou
Commission hell itself to cram? How many
Pillows hast thou filled with thorns? How many
Homes, where peace and quiet reigned, hast thou
Upset? Oh, cruel aim! and brought the frown
Upon a father's brow, where loving parents
And loved children met. Thy falsehoods enter; ah!
How soon they grow, and do the fatal work—
Destroying peace, and moving in the much-loved
Son bold disobedience. The mother,

Weeping, sighs and leaves the room to vent her
 Sorrows o'er that poisoned one. Who can erase
 The stain? Not frowns or grief. 'Tis God alone
 Who can. But oh, the pain! A lion loose would
 Not such mischief do. The rifle or the
 Sword could that destroy, but this destroyer
 May destroy the boy, and thousands more! His
 Words a net, so plausible to youth, and
 Few escape that, venturing near his den,
 Entangled first, then, too, reject the truth,
 Regard not counsel, love, entreaty, grief.
 But oh, this heaving! My loved child is gone!
 Now from me torn for ever! Woe is me!
 She drank the wretched atheist poison
 Up. Alas! that ruthless, cruel tongue and pen
 That made the way for her death-poison cup!
 Blind infidel, what dreadful sting's in
 Store—that solemn after-state you dare deny!
 I wish you not in endless hell to weep,
 Though plundered of that cheek I loved to kiss.
 But God you thus defy, and more, His just
 Vengeance brings; and thou, vile wretch, must sink
 Into the deep—that deep abyss—sinking, yea
 Ever sink—where woe is bottomless.

April 5th, 1881.

A. B.

THE ROMISH REVIVAL.

THE Romish press is jubilant over the increase of Popery in England, and truly not without cause. In 1840, they numbered some half a million, and had 522 churches and 624 priests, &c. In 1880, they had increased to 1,384,000 adherents, with 1,461 churches, and 2,282 ministers. This rate of progress is far beyond that of the general population, that having only increased sixty per cent., while the Romanists have increased 158 per cent.

In Australia, India, and the United States the spread of Romanism has been equally remarkable. Surely these figures ought to be enough to startle into activity every bit of zeal possessed by every true Protestant, while an earnest and united cry should be continually ascending heavenward, that the Lord would in mercy prevent the shackles of Rome being again riveted, if not upon us, yet upon our children. What is particularly striking is, that the great flow of people to Rome has not been from the Nonconformists of the land, but from the Established Church of England. Towards this, doubtless, such perverts as Manning and Newman have greatly assisted. It has been well and truly said that "*the Anglican State Church has become the greatest nursery of Romanism in the world*;" and recent appointments

of bishops and archbishop show that the Popish movement in the national Church is stronger than ever. Fifty years ago, many godly men, though Dissenters themselves, upheld the State Church, believing it to be a bulwark against Romanism; but, since the Tractarian or Ritualistic movement was set on foot by the late Dr. Pusey and his confederates, such ideas have received a crushing blow, and lead all true Protestants to feel that they must not trust in a State Church as a defence against Popery, but in the Word of God's truth, wielded by His mighty Spirit.

May the Lord speedily gird His sword upon His thigh, and ride forth through the earth, overturning these Jesuitical enemies of His truth, and convincing men and women that true religion does not consist in vestments, music, relics, fastings, masses, worshipping idols, and the intercession of saints, but in sitting as a little child, with a new heart and right spirit, at the feet of Jesus, who declared with His dying breath upon the cross, "It is finished!"

" 'It is finished!' said the Lord
In His dying minute;
Holy Ghost, repeat that word,
Full salvation's in it."

HOPEFUL.

THE SPIRIT OF THE CHURCH OF ROME.

MR. H. G. GUINNESS, in his book on "The Approaching End of the Age," speaking of the past doings of Rome and the practice of this unchangeable Church towards heretics—i.e., all who are not "Roman Catholics"—says: "They have been shot, stabbed, stoned, drowned, beheaded, hanged, drawn, quartered, impaled, burnt, or buried alive, roasted on spits, baked in ovens, thrown into furnaces, cast from the tops of towers, sunk in mire and pits, starved with hunger and cold, hung on tenter-hooks, suspended by the hair of the head, by the hands or feet, blown up with gunpowder, . . . tied to the tails of horses, broken on the wheel, beaten on anvils with hammers, bored with hot irons, torn piecemeal by red-hot pincers, slashed with knives, hacked with axes, hewed with chisels, planed with planes, stuck from head to feet with pins, choked with water-rags, . . . or mangled pieces of their own flesh crammed down their throats, shut up in caves or dungeons, tied to stakes, nailed to trees, tormented with scalding oil, burning pitch, lead, &c., &c. . . . They have been flayed alive, had their flesh scalped and torn from their bodies, . . . their heads twisted with cords until the blood or even their eyes have started out.

"To dig out eyes, tear off nails, cut off ears, lips, tongues, arms, breasts, &c., has been but ordinary sport with Rome's converters.

. . . Tender babes have been whipped, starved, drowned, stabbed and burnt to death, dashed against trees and stones, torn limb from limb, carried about on the points of spears and spikes, and thrown to dogs and swine."

It has been calculated that fifty millions of persons have been slain on account of religion by the Romish Church. As a contrast, what was the character of our Saviour? He went about doing good, healing the sick, casting out devils, speaking words of peace and good-will, and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom. Witness the palsied man, the woman in Simon's house, the woman with the issue, the widow of Nain; and listen to His own words: "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." *"Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls."* "The Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them" (Luke ix. 56). Here is a difference indeed from the Bulls of the Popes for fifteen centuries, containing "lies written in hypocrisy, with all deceivableness of unrighteousness;" full of all the malice that men, aided by the devil, could invent. Contrast the Holy Inquisition (?) for making converts with the sweet, free Gospel of Jesus; and may these things quicken us to our duty, help us to value our privileges, and to spread God's truth in every way we can, praying for His blessing upon it.

Dr. Wylie speaks to the following effect—"In the dogma of infallibility, he (the Pope) has crowned a career of unparalleled blasphemy—a blasphemy which no other being in the universe save one (the prince of the bottomless pit) would be guilty of. He has climbed up to the throne of God, robed himself in the mantle of God, and said unto the nations, 'I am God.' As a contrast, what does the Almighty say of him (the Pope—Anti-christ)? That he is 'the son of perdition,' and that our Lord will consume him with the spirit of His mouth, and destroy him with the brightness of His coming."

T. W.

THE INCREASE OF RITUALISM.

THE *Rock*, a weekly representative of Evangelical Church opinion, commenting upon the appointment of the Rev. J. H. Wilkinson to the Bishopric of Truro, remarks—"Mr. Wilkinson has been at St. Peter's a little over thirteen years, and his peculiar position in London is well known. He was, in his early years, an Evangelical; and his friends would assert that he has never given up the doctrines which he once so earnestly preached. He has, however, undoubtedly added to the creed of his youth very high views of the Church and the Sacraments, and must be considered

as, to all intents and purposes, a very High Churchman, though no doubt an eminently earnest and zealous preacher. Mr. Gladstone's policy has now nominated his fourteenth bishop, and not one is identified with the section of the Church to whose piety and zeal in the last century the Church's very existence as more than a department of the Civil Service is due. Half-a-dozen men might be named, in as many seconds, as well qualified for the Bishopric of Truro as Mr. Wilkinson—not extreme men, not members of the Church Association—but all having the fatal fault in the Prime Minister's eyes of being Protestant and Evangelical in their sympathies. It is now abundantly evident that, so long as Mr. Gladstone is in office, Evangelicals have nothing to look for but cold and contemptuous neglect."

[We should be sorry to sacrifice principle, even politically, but we would rather remain neutral than support a known wrong ; and we have long felt that Mr. Gladstone, by his patronage, has done much to make the Ritualistic, anti-reformation movement in the Church of England a success. Let our readers contrast the class of men appointed to bishoprics by Lord Palmerston with those appointed by Mr. Gladstone, and likewise remember how the latter has advanced noted Romanists to important positions in state affairs, and the anti-evangelical spirit complained of by the *Rock* will stand out in strong colours. May the Lord of hosts arise and save us from the evils which must otherwise ensue from this retrograde course!—ED.]

WHATSOEVER is dearest to us upon earth is our "Isaac." Happy are we if we can sacrifice it to God. Those shall never eat with Abraham that cannot sacrifice with Abraham.—*Bishop Hall*.

NATURE will feel and be certain before it believes, but grace will believe before it feels ; therefore nature does not go farther than its own light, but grace steps out cheerfully into the darkness, and follows the Word. Let nature think it true or false, faith cleaves to the Word.—*Luther*.

THAT thousands go in the broad way to destruction is sad beyond expression, but not strange at all ; but that in the path of heaven any should descend to hell is astonishing. That those who live without God in the world, in the profane neglect of His worship, in a dissolute, disorderly course, should fall under condemnation, is believed of all ; but that many who have appeared zealous in religion shall be at last rejected, is contrary to general expectation.—*Bates*.

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.—No. XXXIV.

[The following letter is a reply to the one which appeared in our last number, page 58.]

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,—I have read your letter with pleasure, hoping the Lord has, in infinite mercy to you, begun the good work of grace upon your soul. So far as I am able to judge from your letter, you appear to me to be under the gracious drawings of the Father of all mercies and the God of all comfort; and, if so, the result will be most blessed indeed.

In reply to your first question, the life of sin (Rom. vii. 8), the strength of sin (1 Cor. xv. 56), and the knowledge of sin (Rom. iii. 20), are by the law. But the reproofs or rebukes for sin in the conscience of an elect sinner are from the Holy Ghost (John xvi. 8), and may be longer or shorter in their duration, and deeper or shallower in the wounding inflicted; though I say with Hart—

“ Of that mighty multitude
Who of life were winners,
This we safely may conclude,
All were *wretched sinners*.”

It appears to me that, although the terrors of the law have not sunk you so low as many are sunk thereby, yet the spirit of the old covenant has taken hold upon you sufficiently to bring tormenting fearfulness upon you at times, which the Lord has sent in mercy to make you feel in some measure the infinite need you have of the dear Redeemer to save you from the bottomless pit. All the children are not chastened alike, nor to the same degree; yet the Bible declares, “He scourges every son whom He receiveth.”

Your second question is, “Do all the children of God experience deadness, coldness, barrenness, carelessness, and indifference to the things of God?” I answer, “Yes, they do.” See Psalms lxxxviii. 5, and cxix. 25; Isaiah xxiv. 16; Luke x. 41; and Romans vii. 24.

Your third question is, “Do children of God, though they feel their need of Jesus, yet at the same time feel their inability to trust in Him?” To this I also answer, “Yes, they do.” See Mark ix. 22—24; Solomon’s Song i. 4; Psalm lxxx. 3, 7, 19; and Isaiah xxxiii. 23; and the Lord, of His infinite mercy, give you understanding in all things, and to come unto Jesus, and roll yourself upon Him, just as you are. Although you may often seem not to have the spot of the Lord’s people, yet my advice is, with Mr. Hart—

“ To trust Him endeavour,
The work is His own;
He makes the believer,
And gives him his crown.”

And remember again—

“ All the fitness He requireth
Is to feel your need of Him :
This He gives you,
’Tis the Spirit’s rising beam.”

You may be as much puzzled to find a law work in you, as to find in yourself a clean heart and a pair of clean hands to come to Christ with ; and you may be equally at a loss to find within you a proper sense of your need of Jesus in any way to save you ; and yet, for all that, whether you have these things or have them not, you must come ; and come you do, I believe, when you can find none of them.

I could not, although I much wished to, write to you before this, and I have no more time now. The Lord bless you exceedingly abundantly is the desire of, yours truly and affectionately,

35, *The Oval, Hackney Road,*
June 26th, 1847.

J. SHORTER.

EASTER.*

ON SEEING A PICTURE OF THE CRUCIFIXION.

“ *Death is swallowed up in victory.*”—1 CORINTHIANS XV. 54.

I know the Lamb of God
Was nailed upon the tree ;
I know He shed His blood
For sinners—aye, for me !
But ah ! I cannot lift mine eyes
On pictures of that sacrifice !
To “ sit and watch Him there,”
“ They know not what they do ; ”
Can those who *love* Him share
In such appalling view ?
The sun withdrew, and would not see
Th’ incarnate Saviour’s agony.

“ *’Tis finished !* ” is the gracious word,
And Faith will show the way
Where I may yet behold my Lord,
As morn o’er mountains grey :
Instead of anguish, death, and strife,
“ *The Resurrection and the Life.* ”
The Life, the Light, the Love,
No water-floods could drown ;
The opened heavens above,
The glory and the crown :
Through these the Lamb, once slain, I see,
And rise with Him to victory.

Hastings, 1883.

* By MRS. JOSEPH FEARN, author of “*Plain Rhymes on the Pentateuch,*” &c.

NOTICES OF BOOKS, &c.

Episcopal Perfidy; or, Plain Words about the Mackonochie Scandal.

By JAMES MORTIMER SANGAR, B.A., Curate of Drypool, Hull. One Penny. London: W. Wileman, 34, Bouverie Street, E.C.

THIS is a bold exposure of the Jesuitical conduct of the bishops, who, instead of seeking to purge their Church of the leaven of Popery, have practically shielded one of the most notorious Romanizers in our land from the just penalty of the law he has so shamelessly defied, by translating him to another benefice, where he can still pursue his unholy course of perjury, in contravening the very truths he once solemnly vowed to defend. We could wish that every clergyman and member of the Established Church might read this little tract, and lay its plain statements to heart.

The History of a Candidate for Confirmation. One Halfpenny each, or twenty-five for eightpence. London: W. K. Bloom, Tract Depository, Castle Street, Holborn, E.C.

CLERGYMEN who prepare candidates for Confirmation, and candidates themselves, would do well to ponder the account here given, and compare themselves with the truths and teachings of the Holy Spirit, so blessedly exemplified in the case of Phœbe Galen.

The Lord's Dove. A Sermon by Mr. E. CARR. Threepence. London: J. Gadsby, 18, Bouverie Street, E.C.; and Tourle, Trafalgar Street, Brighton.

THIS sermon contains some sweet and encouraging marks of discipleship, which will, no doubt, be helpful to many who are "seeking for Jesus." We hope it will find a wide and ready circulation.

LUTHER AND THE DYING STUDENT.

LUTHER once visited a dying student, and asked him what he thought he could take to God, in whose presence he was shortly to appear? The young man replied, "Everything that is good, dear father; everything that is good." Luther said, "How can you bring Him everything good, seeing that you are but a poor sinner?" The youth rejoined, "Dear father, I will take to God in heaven a penitent, humble heart, sprinkled with the blood of Christ." "Truly," said Luther, "that is everything good. Then go, dear son; you will be a welcome guest to God."

THE SOWER.

SERMON PREACHED BY MR. BARNARD,

AT PARK STREET CHAPEL, GIRENCESTER, LORD'S DAY EVENING,
APRIL 9TH, 1882.

"Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive : Thou hast received gifts for men ; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them."—PSALM lxxviii. 18.

THESE words have been on my mind to-day, and I have ventured to read them, hoping that the Lord the Holy Spirit may enable me to utter a few things that may be agreeable to the exercises of His dear people.

We have here something very gracious and glorious in the words of the Psalmist. His song of triumph : "Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered ; let them also that hate Him flee before Him." The Psalmist here seemed to be jealous for the honour of his Lord, and he goes on to make wise and gracious declarations concerning Him whose praises he delighted to sound, and says, "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels ; the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place." Then follow the words of our text : "Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive : Thou hast received gifts for men ; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them"

Endeavouring to call your particular attention to these very precious words this evening, I would notice, first of all, that they belong to the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the character spoken of by David, and that by prophecy ; and that the Holy Spirit certainly indited these expressions of praise and thanksgiving to God in the heart of His servant hundreds of years before they were fulfilled. This morning we spoke a little of the resurrection of our immortal Jesus, and now we have the subject of His ascension ; and I desire to speak of our ascended Lord. He is the glorious Lord who overrules all things for the good of His own people ; and thus it is that they love to fly to Him, because of His greatness, for they serve a strong Lord. "He is thy Lord," says the Holy Spirit, "and worship thou Him." How blessed it is to feel He is *our* Lord ! We say, "*Our* Lord Jesus Christ." Do we feel what is comprehended in the expression ? If He is *our* Lord, we, then, are His servants ; for a Lord without a servant would be a nonentity. Abraham was called "lord" by his wife Sarah. Abraham was the head of his wife, and she

honoured and obeyed him, calling him "lord;" and this very circumstance the Holy Spirit is pleased to take notice of, and to hand down to future ages, for the instruction and consolation of His dear people.

"Thou hast ascended on high." Here is his exaltation. Also, "Thou hast led captivity captive." And here we see, by the eye of faith, the Conqueror, having triumphed over all His enemies, "led captivity captive." How glorious is His power, and how grand is this expression of praise! He is Ruler over all, and is said to "lead captivity captive," and to "receive gifts for men." In His power and glory He is the equal of His Father, but He receives gifts from the Father to distribute to His dear people. I hope to speak of some of these gifts when I shall come to them. Then the characters—"yea, for the rebellious also." The Psalmist notices the greatness of the condescension, and the surprising manner of the distribution of His gifts, even "for the rebellious also;" and the object God had in view—"that the Lord God might dwell among them."

Our ascended Lord. He, as I hinted at in the morning, submitted to death, and became the Forerunner of His people, for the Apostle Paul says, "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin." And here He became their Surety, for He stood in their place, and took upon Himself the payment of their debts. As a loving husband takes upon himself the payment of his wife's debts—and, if he be able, the whole of them—so our Lord Jesus Christ—He took His people to be His bride, His Hephzibah, His soul's delight. The Father gave them to Him, that He might become their Sponsor and Surety to all eternity. This is the position that the Lord's people all stand in, as related to the Lord Jesus Christ, and such being the case, He became responsible for all their transgressions. What a mountain of wrath met upon Him! Did it ever strike you, as Hart says—

"For all our sins we His may call,
As He sustained their weight;
How huge the heavy load of all,
When only mine's so great"?

It was thus needful that He should suffer death, because He took upon Himself the position of His people. He descended into the grave, and made it sweet, and perfumed it. His was a holy body, without a taint of sin. Though He took hold of sin, and engaged to take it away, He was not defiled by it. Satan came to Him, but He could say, "The prince of this world cometh, but hath nothing in Me." His holy soul was free from sin, and therefore His was a holy body; and, as such, it was immortal, for death was the penalty of sin, and if there had

been no sin, we have reason to believe there would have been no death. Our Lord Jesus Christ gave Himself up without a murmuring word, and He entered into the chamber of death. But His almighty power and the power of the Father raised His holy body, and from henceforth it became a spiritual body; and this is a pattern of what His people shall be. When the resurrection shall come, "the dead shall be raised incorruptible."

Though these things are doctrinal, yet there is something exceedingly precious in them. Does it ever strike you, as being raised incorruptible, that more than the strength and vigour of youth will be granted to all His people? We read in His holy Word, after the resurrection of Christ, that those who went into the sepulchre saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment, which seems to set forth perpetual youth and vigour in serving the Lord. His servants shall serve Him. It was needful that He should be a Tenant of the tomb; and there was a reason that He should rise again. He said to Mary, "I ascend to My Father and your Father; and to My God and your God." What blessed terms! What gracious assurances! How He seemed to take His people into close union with Himself! The time will come when you yourself will follow the Lord Jesus Christ, and see those things which are prepared for you.

Dear friends, how high a position the Lord's people are raised to! They feel themselves to be crawling worms. They feel themselves liable to every act of indignity and oppression. But says the Lord, "Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth; thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff. Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them; and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel." And this brings them into a close union with the Lord Jesus Christ, as they stand united to Him. He rose again, and was exalted at the Father's right hand; and we read that the Father hath "given Him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Is there a heart that desires and longs, at times, to know the sense of these things? It is said, "He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied. By His knowledge shall My righteous Servant justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities." And, again, "He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days,

and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand." This the Lord's people rejoice in, because they find that their heavenly Lord, their Redeemer, rose again, and ever lives to make intercession for them at His Father's right hand. There is satisfaction in this ; and nothing less can satisfy us, because the soul is in love with Jesus Christ, and that love makes everything else so unsatisfying. But the Father gave them to Him, and for them He was to travail. "He shall see of the travail of His soul."

"Thou hast ascended on high," now no more to fall into the hands of death. He has conquered death. He overcame it. Now it is called "falling asleep" in the Word of God. The death of the saints is called "falling asleep." It is no longer called "death." Death now stands, the spiritual porter, to let the people of God into eternal glory, and to bring them into closer union with Him who hath "brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel."

"Thou hast led captivity captive." Here is a representation of a wondrous character, having triumphed over sin, and death, and hell—binding them as dead fixtures. Of old, a conquering army bound their enemies to their chariot wheels, and dragged them in triumph through their cities. So our Lord is represented as having overcome sin, and death, and hell. The grave has lost its power to retain the saints of God, seeing Himself has burst its bonds. The graves of the saints shall be opened at the last day, and they shall be restored to everlasting bliss. Our faith seems to follow our triumphant Lord when He went through the skies, having overcome death, the grave, and sin on behalf of His dear people. "There is therefore now no condemnation" to them, seeing that Jesus endured it all. The law has spent itself upon Him. Every believer is safe in Him, and to these there can be no condemnation. So, poor sinner (you who feel perplexed by sin from time to time), the Apostle says, "If we judge ourselves, we shall not be condemned with the world." Such are wrought upon by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning ; and His people are brought to repent and believe, and to part with their sin for His sake. Their judgment takes place now ; and the Lord Jesus Christ has "ascended on high ; He hath led captivity captive" ; and now, at the Father's right hand, He sits as "a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." This is one of the gifts He received for men.

And I would speak of the gift of the Holy Spirit. This He promised to bestow upon His saints ; and Peter witnessed to it : "For we cannot but speak the things which we have both seen and heard." "I will pray the Father," said our blessed Lord Jesus. Here He is the Intercessor. "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you

for ever; even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him; but ye know Him, for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." Now, what a thing this is—to have the Holy Spirit poured out upon guilty mortals—even "for the rebellious also"! God has selected souls that had made a league with hell, but the Lord caused a storm of hail to sweep away the refuge of lies; and now, being called by divine grace, they seek their Lord and Master's will; and, being quickened into spiritual life, they are said to be "virgins," and "these are they that follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth."

Our Lord goes on to conquer, and the Psalmist says, "Gird Thy sword upon Thy thigh, O Most Mighty, with Thy glory and Thy majesty. And in Thy majesty ride prosperously, because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness; and Thy right hand shall teach Thee terrible things. Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies." And those souls that feel interested in Him, and who know what it is to feel a living union with Him, rejoice in His exaltation—rejoice in the glory and majesty of their triumphant King. He is now no longer spat upon, nor crowned with thorns, but sits at the right hand of the Father, clothed with glory and honour. When a friend hears of the well-being of a friend, how his heart beats with joy that his friend is so honoured, that his friend is loved, that his friend is prosperous! And so, as we read of our heavenly Friend, our hearts sometimes exult, and sing to Him who is the Friend of sinners.

"Thou hast received gifts for men. The Father gave the Lord Jesus Christ the Holy Spirit without measure; and now the Lord bestows upon His people the gift of His Spirit, and says, "I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplications." So the Holy Spirit is called "the Spirit of grace and of supplications," and He instructs the Lord's people in their prayers and in their thanksgivings, and He it is that leads them to the throne of grace. And how beautifully the experience of the Lord's people agrees with that hymn—

" 'Tis to hear the Holy Spirit
Prompting us to secret prayer;
To rejoice in Jesus' merit,
Yet continual sorrow bear."

Do you know what it is to turn aside in secret for a moment by the moving of the Holy Spirit? Do you know what it is to be moved to the performing of some good action? This is the hand of God's Spirit. Do you know what it is to feel Jesus set

forth in you as "the one thing needful"—as a tender, compassionate High Priest in things pertaining to God? He also shows His faithfulness, His divine sacrifice, and never-changing love and intercession before the Majesty of heaven; so we see the interests of the Lord's people are secure—

" If I am found in Jesus' hands
My soul can ne'er be lost."

Moreover, He takes the Word and applies it to your conscience; makes you know your need, gives you a true knowledge of Jesus Christ, and causes you to rejoice in the knowledge of your salvation. "Ye know Him," saith the Holy Spirit. He will take the sacred Word and apply it to your understanding, enabling you to eat the Word, as Jeremiah says, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy Word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart." This is the work of the Holy Spirit within you.

And what a blessing it is that the Holy Spirit condescends to take this office in the hearts and consciences of all the living family of God! Some may say, "I am not the character, but feel as one that is left out." When Moses went before Pharaoh to ask him to release the children of Israel, Pharaoh proposes to leave some; but says Moses, "Not a hoof shall be left behind." So with our gracious Lord—not one of His shall be left behind; not one shall escape the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit; for "all thy children shall be taught of the Lord."

He "receives gifts for men." He gave also repentance and remission of sins. This is what He received from God the Father; and the Apostle makes some blessed remarks to the Ephesians, where he says, "He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens; that He might fill all things. And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." This is a very blessed exposition of the words I have read to you as a text this evening. It is "for the perfecting of the saints, and for the work of the ministry." And the Lord makes use of these gifts "for the work of the ministry" now; and these are gifts that the Lord Jesus Christ received from the Father, that He might bestow them upon His people.

"Thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also"—they who are enmity to God, and enemies by wicked works. But all these things are no hindrance to Him. And what do we

understand by it? That His power is almighty; that He has power over sin; that He has power over Satan; that He has power over the natural propensities of His people; and that He gives them grace irrespective of their badness or their goodness. And He says, "I am that I am"; and He gives as He pleases, as a Prince and a Saviour. And He gives them, not according to their abilities, but according to the good pleasure of His will. It is an ascription to the sovereignty of our blessed Lord.

Now, His design in it all—"that the Lord God might dwell among them." Now, what a great thing this is! It seems to me unspeakable. "That the Lord God might dwell among them." What! among rebellious worms? Yes! This is what the Lord had in view in the bestowment of His Holy Spirit—"that the Lord God might dwell among them." And, because He deals in order with us, He has given these offices in the Church. It is by the order of the Lord that they have pastors, who shall feed His people "with knowledge and understanding," and so on. And these are the gifts that He bestows now upon His people, and it is "that the Lord God might dwell among them." And He deals by means—instrumentally by the means of the officers that He bestows upon the Churches. They are made instruments to keep alive the people of God. How often fresh life—how often living power—is bestowed upon them; and it is that He may go forth in His chariots "conquering and to conquer." And as He spake to Jeremiah, so He says now: "If thou return, then will I bring thee again, and thou shalt stand before Me; and if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as My mouth." Here is an honour for a mortal! And as Moses spake for God to the children of Israel, so His ministers speak for Him to them who come to hear the Word of God; and it makes the thing very sacred; and the man that dares to act lightly in the work of the ministry takes a very solemn position. The man that runs unsent goes at a very great risk; but the man that is sent by the Lord, who searches the Word of God with prayer and supplication, with many entreaties, that man is God's mouth, and he is constrained, by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, to "take forth the precious from the vile;" and Christ is exalted upon the pole of the Gospel, for, "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."

"That the Lord God might dwell among them." He is the life of His people; and you often find it so when you meet at His command, and when you, one with another, hold godly conversation. This is a gift of God, that the saints of God might talk upon spiritual things. Profit is gained by savoury conversation;

and, as we know the teachings and visitations of the Lord, by recounting them He is honoured. And it is "that the Lord God might dwell among them;" and we may well wonder at this great matter. Solomon says, and it still holds good, "But will God in very deed dwell with men upon the earth? Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee; how much less this house that I have built!" We may well be struck with wonder and astonishment.

But it is "that the Lord God might dwell among them"—not to take up a place occasionally, but, as it is written, "Here will I dwell;" that is, a daily dwelling-place. What a solemn, sacred word, "This is My rest for ever; here will I dwell, for I have desired it"! This is accomplishing His desire. When Christ sent His disciples into the city, they were to inquire for the good man of the house, and say, "The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guest-chamber, where I shall eat the Passover with My disciples?" Have you a guest-chamber for the blessed Lord? Says He, "Here will I dwell." Say you, "Can I provide a guest-chamber for Him?" Is the desire of your soul to Him? If so, then He says, "Here will I dwell;" and He is to be admired of them, loved and honoured of them, as long as time shall last. And, as soon as one generation passes away, another generation shall come, "that the Lord God might dwell among them." All the gifts and triumphs of our Lord Jesus Christ are to bring about this—"that the Lord God might dwell among them." "He has ascended on high," and taken a position at the Father's right hand, and before His throne He pleads and intercedes for His people. He also "received gifts for men, that the Lord God might dwell among them." He "led captivity captive, that the Lord God might dwell among them." What a soul-honouring object it is—"that the Lord God might dwell among them"! And He says that, when they shall cease to exist here on earth, in this time-state, they shall be with Him for ever. Oh, wondrous thing that—the scheme of redemption! "That the Lord God might dwell among them."

Do we know anything about these things, my friends? Is it only an idea, or is it a reality, that I have attempted to set forth? It is a reality. Oh, what an unspeakable favour to know anything about it! God the Father sheds forth His love in the hearts of His people, and they love Him and adore Him; and God the Son dwells among them, and makes known His grace and union to them; and God the Holy Spirit dwells among them; and thus we have God, in His Trinity of Persons, dwelling with man on this earth.

The Lord add His blessing, and His name shall be praised. Amen.

THE BLESSING OF NAPHTALI.

(DEUTERONOMY xxxiii. 23.)

A SLIGHT SKETCH OF SOME OF THE LORD'S DEALINGS WITH
EMMA L. MAURICE.*(Concluded from page 65.)*

IN the winter a new symptom showed itself. She had for years been rarely able to take meat, but now it seemed as if the powers of digestion had almost failed, and any kind of food caused acute pain. Her family thought the end must come, but a few months of her "appointed time" yet remained.

We need not detail her sufferings, which were very great, and regarded by her, as each new ailment or symptom appeared, as the loving expression of her Father's minute and gracious, "thoughts of peace" for her purification (Mal. iii. 3). The times of severest agony were often spent in secret prayer for those who were standing by. Many friends begged to see her, and while her little strength lasted she welcomed them. Many words of warning and encouragement from her sick bed will be remembered long. To a foreigner who had been much depressed at being so far from home, Emma said, "Remember that you were brought to this land to hear of a better country, even a heavenly; and when you come into the state I now am in, you will find it has been *worth while* to have left 'father, mother, and brethren, and sisters,' so that you have found Christ."

It was considered a great privilege to watch by her during the night. Notwithstanding the intense pain she often suffered, she was rarely restless, and would lie very still the first part of the night and enjoy communion with her God. When the oppression on her breathing made a change of position needful (she was too feeble to turn herself), she would beckon the watcher to come and raise her up. Then, with her arm round her neck for support, Emma would often pour out a fervent prayer on her behalf; or she would speak of her Lord's faithfulness, and seek to lead her companion to the same blessed communion she herself enjoyed.

One night, the sister who watched was lamenting the loss she would sustain by her death. Emma said, "He will give you more of Himself instead, and that will more than make up for what He takes away. Do you not find one quarter of an hour of communion with Him better than hours spent in converse with the best of His creatures?" And, on another occasion, "I dare no more indulge in anxiety about you than about what will become of this poor body when it is consigned to the tomb. Both are equally secure, for both are provided for in the covenant."

She asked to have Deuteronomy xxxiii. read to her, and then

remarked, "Yes, they all had different promises given them. It would not have done for them all to have the same; and you shall all have just according to your need—the one you want."

One day, when hardly able to speak, she said, "What a number of tools He makes use of to finish His work! What wonderful mercy and love it is, that He leaves no instrument untried to accomplish the purpose of our sanctification" (1 Thess. v. 23). After a severe attack, she said to her mother, "I am going to a land where all is rest." Her mother replied, "Ah! dearest, you have not had much of that in this world." "Then," was the reply, "I shall find it all the more delightful." One of her sisters said, "Have you a desire to depart?" She replied, "I feel less impatient than I ever did before. I do not think I so much desire to go as my Lord desires for me to be with Him." Her sister M—— said, "I fear that you are tried with all this grievous suffering in order to make us willing to part with you." She replied, "Oh, it is not the suffering that tries me. I could bear much more of that. But, if you knew how my great feebleness prevents that full and delightful communion with God which my heart pants after, you would be willing to see me depart, that I might enjoy it uninterruptedly for ever. I only hope I shall have perfect patience given me to the end." And then, "I little knew what a rebellious will I had; but I am now content, if it will glorify God, to live much longer with any added bodily suffering He pleases—yea, even in imbecility itself. I only dread the loss of communion with God, which is the only satisfying joy in earth or heaven. But, even if this be denied, He will not love me the less, and there I can rest."

On Sunday, May 22nd, her sister asked her if the peace she had felt continued. She replied, "Yes, unbroken. Think where that peace must come from that remains when I cannot pray—when the enemy would suggest that I am not in a proper frame of mind. Think who it is takes hold of Satan with a very short chain, so that he cannot come near me. This is the meaning of, 'In Me ye shall have peace.' 'In Me!' He has the peace. It is all His own. It is wrapped up in Him. Oh, it is my comfort to feel that, though I may not have any ardent love to God, He loves me just as well! I can lie down on that, and it is a sweet bed; and whether I sleep, or wake up to everlasting life, it is a downy bed on which to die."

One asked if she thought it right to pray for temporal blessings. She exclaimed, "Oh, I would not have such a reserve from my best Friend! I do not know what is a temporal blessing, but I can withhold nothing from Him; and I ask Him, if it is not good for me, not to give it."

One day she said, "I want you not to submit to my death

because you see me suffer, but because it is God's will. We have had much sweet communion together. I wish our intercourse had been more entirely of this kind."

In June, her sufferings were at times so great that it seemed as if the poor frame could not endure much longer. Her physician said to her, one day, "The mind does not seem to sink with the sufferings of the body." "Oh, no," she replied, "my heart and my flesh faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever!"

On June 8th she said, "I had no idea that there could be such weakness as I am enduring. Every breath I draw is an effort which makes me almost faint; but I hope I shall have patience to the end. I think and trust I shall. It seems to be a very long way, but there will only be the more cause for praise at the end of it. This is death indeed, but I hope no one will be discouraged, or afraid of its approach, from what they have seen me suffer for the last few weeks. The way has been all smoothed for me, and I have no cause for anything but praise."

On June 15th, her sister asked if her extreme weakness prevented her enjoyment of spiritual things. She answered, "My enjoyment, in the full sense of the word, it does, but not my perfect, unshaken peace and rest. This He does not suffer to be touched or impaired."

When suffering from thirst, some one remarked that she could, in some degree, realize the suffering contained in the words, "I thirst!" Emma replied, "Yes; but there is no gall, no vinegar. He took that all Himself."

On June 27th she hardly knew any one, and appeared to be sinking, but the next day revived a little. She said, "He knows what death is, for He has tasted it, and taken away all the bitters. It is a sweet draught now—nothing but sweet."

On the 29th she said, "Then do you think that His refusing the myrrh was different to our refusing opiates?" She was evidently dwelling on the question how far it was right for her to take laudanum to still the suffering caused by the convulsions. Her sister said she thought that Christ refused all alleviation of His sufferings because He wished to bear the whole penalty of our sins. "Ah! then you think," was the reply, "His bearing that was on purpose that we might enjoy the mitigation without sin? I think you are right; but then, if I had not that torpor, might I not be using those faculties for His glory?" Her sister reminded her that, when she was in such suffering as scarcely to be able to bear the pain, she could hardly use her mental powers, and she seemed satisfied.

For two or three days she was too weak to speak much, but on July 9th seemed brighter, and praised the Lord for a

special manifestation of His goodness with something of her natural energy. During the day she entered into the interests of those about her; but, as evening approached, her breathing became laboured, and about eight she breathed her last, aged twenty-four years.

Among her papers was a letter to her sister who had nursed her especially. In it are these words, "Suffering has been redeemed into pleasure, weakness into matter of rejoicing, and death will be redeemed into the gate of glory. Let me entreat you, as my last request, never to allow one word to be uttered of me as if I had been anything but a vile, filthy worm. Christ, Christ is All! To Him will be all the glory in heaven, and let it be given to Him on earth. It is all grace, free grace, that called me, that preserved me, and that will glorify me."

How noticeable in this case is the distinct manner in which the Lord answered her petition and her desire on that memorable evening! She begged the heavenly Refiner to purify His piece of precious metal—to polish His "jewel" by any means. He shows His faithfulness by answering her request, but "so as by fire," giving her at the same time her desire, namely, to experience the "peace of God, which passeth all understanding," in a heart-satisfying manner. Let not, however, any who may read this feel that Naphtali's blessing can only be received through such a pathway as that of Emma Maurice. The Word of God says certainly, "In the world ye shall have tribulation," and God's "*shalls*" must be accomplished; but the tribulation through which the Lord leads His people is very diverse, and the promise with which He connects it is the same at all times—"In Me ye shall have peace."

How is it, then, that so few of the Lord's people in these days seem to realize and walk *by* and *in* this peace? Is it not often because they so much neglect the blessed injunction in Philippians iv. 6, 7: "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And [this verse being in close connection with verse 6] the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus"?

It cannot be spoken what power there is in a great example, whether to evil or good.—*Bishop Hall.*

THE humility of the hypocrite and mock saint is the most arrogant pride, like that of the proud Pharisee, who humbled himself in the temple, but bespattered his humility by thanking God, "I am not as other men," &c.—*Luther.*

NIGHT THOUGHTS BY A WATCHMAN.

BROKEN SCHEMES.

CHILD of grace and heir of glory, it is labour in vain for you to make a nest or build a castle in this world, for God will burn that and cast down this as soon, or perhaps before, you have completed it. Can you prepare a nest which He cannot find out and shake to pieces? Can you erect a castle too strong for His adverse winds to blow down? You may find sweet repose in the Christ of God, and perfect security in His covenant; but you shall never find either safety or satisfaction apart from Him. Yet, is not your poor, restless heart ever anxiously preparing some scheme, which you vainly hope God will own, in order that you may have at least a little repose here?

There never was but one Eden in this world, and that was lost quickly. Be content to be guided by God's counsel, and incline not to thy own understanding, for "there are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand." Consider how many schemes have been broken, to the grief of their makers; but the Lord's way has proved steadfast, to their heart's joy. The scheme of Abraham, in calling his wife his sister, resulted in both he and her being sadly humbled by the King of Gerar. Rebekah put Esau's raiment on Jacob's body, and goat's skin upon his hands; but this did not bring peace to the tent. Jacob had to leave his parents and home with a sad heart and his brother's hatred. Then, again, not to name David's plan to hide his sin, look at King Jehoshaphat's worldly policy in making a league with Ahaziah, King of Israel, who did very wickedly; and he joined him in making ships in Ezion-gaber to go to Tarshish. "Then Eliezer the son of Dodavah of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, Because thou hast joined thyself with Ahaziah, the Lord hath broken thy works. And the ships were broken, that they were not able to go to Tarshish" (2 Chron. xx. 35—37). If God does not smile upon our undertakings, vain will be the help of man.

In looking back upon the past, you can but observe how often your carefully-laid plans have been thrown into confusion by the most unlikely, little, and yet painful things coming in the way; or, at other times, by your mind being quite changed in regard to the matter, so that what was a pleasure to you, while it was only in purpose, became a pain to you when it was realized in fact.

There is written on a gravestone in Colchester cemetery, erected in memory of a young woman who was found dead in her bed on the morning of the day on which she was to have been married, the following verse, "My days are past, my purposes are broken off, even the thoughts of my heart" (Job xvii. 11). Thus

suddenly God often snaps the thread of life, and the restless mind has at once done with time, its cares and its joys. The fearful heart no longer beats with anxiety, nor can the evil heart again take pleasure in iniquity.

My dear reader, as you look around, and behold death and dying stamped on all things here below, and on yourself with the rest, can you look up and sing—

“ My home is not here, 'tis above, where the poor,
The tempted and tried ones will suffer no more.”

“ My rest is in heaven, my rest is not here ;
Then why should I tremble when trials are near ? ”

“ It is not for me to be seeking my bliss
And building my hopes in a region like this.”

“ Come joy, or come sorrow, whate'er may befall,
A home with my God will make up for it all ” ?

Not only have we to thank God for breaking *our* schemes, but for frustrating the schemes of our *foes*, and bringing their dark designs to light. Look at Joseph and his brethren, at David and king Saul, at Daniel and his enemies, at Mordecai, Esther, and Haman ; and, if God is able to manage all the hosts of the spirits of darkness, what have you to fear ? His arm is not shortened, nor His ear closed to your cry. Watch and wait.

W. B.

“ ENOCH WALKED WITH GOD.”

Oh, blest estate ! oh, fellowship divine !
Such high, such sweet communion, Lord, be mine !
To walk with Thee, with Thee hold converse sweet,
~~The~~ voice to hear, Thy smile of love to meet.

Far from the hollow world's deceitful glare,
To bathe my spirit in a purer air ;
To lean on Thee, to trust Thy love alone,
Making to Thee my care, my griefs all known.

To meet Thine eye, to hold Thy guiding hand,
And know it safe will lead amid an alien land ;
Thy counsel seek, to Thee my all confide,
My Friend of friends, the faithful, true, and tried.

The friends of earth may change—perchance may die,
E'en where I fondest cling, most firm rely ;
From earthly shadows which evade the grasp
Unlock the heart, whose tendrils round them clasp.

My Saviour-God, oh, may Thy wondrous love
Constrain this treacherous heart no more to rove !
Be Thou my Central Star, my Guide, my Sun ;
Walk Thou with me till travelling days are done.

—Selected.

"LOOKING UNTO JESUS."

I HAVE no doubt but that you have striven against your violent temptations, against the carnal enmity of your minds, against the corruptions of your hearts, against your evil tempers and your besetting sins, with all your might ; and, after all this wearisome toil and labour, matters are still the same, and sometimes rather worse. Then you resolve, and watch, and work with more care, more diligence, and more good intention ; and the more you labour, the more the stream runs against you. Then you fret, grieve, and conclude that your family concerns and daily and unexpected trials are laid in your way for the purpose of hindering you, and that it is in vain for you to strive any more, for that you never shall obtain deliverance. All these things are against us. Seeing, then, that we gain no ground this way, let us try another. Let us see what looking to Jesus will do. Hear, therefore, what He says : "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth ; for I am God, and besides Me there is no Saviour." Here we are to look for salvation, and for all the help we stand in need of : "I will look to the hills, from whence cometh my help ; my help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth." And what did anybody ever get by this ? Why, "they looked unto Him and were lightened, and their faces were not ashamed." Is this all ? No. While we look, as "through a glass darkly," we are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord. Looking, Mary, will do more than labouring. "Let us, therefore," says Paul, "lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us ; looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith." Looking, Mary, implies believing. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness," that all that were bitten by the serpents might live, "so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but have eternal life." Looking implies hope and expectation. God has laid help upon His dear Son, who is "mighty to save ;" and, when poor sinners hear of this, they are led by the Holy Spirit to hope for it in Christ, and to expect it from no other quarter. And you know not how Jesus is charmed at poor sinners looking to Him. Hear what He says : "O My dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let Me hear thy voice ; let Me see thy face ; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely." And He adds, "Turn away thine eyes from Me, for thou hast overcome Me."—*Huntington's Posthumous Letters.*

THORNS prick us. They are the hedges which God has planted to keep us in the way of life.

REMINISCENCES OF DUGALD BUCHANAN.

"The memory of the just is blessed."—PROVERBS x. 7.

THE parish of Balquidder, the county of the freebooter, Rob Roy McGregor, gave birth to Dugald Buchanan, in 1716, at the farm of Ardoch, in the valley of Strathbogie. His father rented the farm, and was owner of a small meal-mill there, the remains of which are still standing. Both his parents were estimable persons—people of sterling Christian worth—of that class which constitutes the very bone and sinew of a healthy commonwealth.

He speaks of his mother with great veneration and affection. "I had the blessing," he says, "to be born of religious parents, who took great care to train me in the fear of the Lord, especially my tender mother, who followed all the means used for my improvement with her fervent prayers at a throne of grace for my conversion."

The following passage from his diary shows he was, at a very early period, the subject of religious impressions: "To the best of my recollection, when between five and six years of age, I went on a Sabbath day, without my mother's knowledge, and amused myself foolishly; and, after returning home, my mind was filled with heavy accusations of conscience for breaking the Lord's Day. Previously I did not pray unless pressed to it by my mother, but now I began to pray without any entreaty."

In 1722 his excellent mother died. Of the loss thus sustained he speaks with deep emotion. Her example, her instruction, her maternal solicitude for his soul's welfare, were, he says, "as the thorns that hedged up my way, on the removal of which I began to slight duty." There were, however, at certain intervals, a revival of these early impressions, after his mother's death, each constituting a link in the chain of successive convictions. Terrible visions of the day of judgment greatly frightened him, and he fancied he found himself, along with others, sentenced to everlasting burnings. For two years in succession these visions came at intervals. He thought of God only as an angry God, and from his ninth till his twelfth year he lived in a kind of stupid despair.

He closes the portion of his diary that ends with his twelfth year with the following observations:—"Instead of honouring God with my first-fruits, Satan got the first-fruits of all my labours. I did no duty to which I was not pressed by my parents, or by a slavish fear of hell. . . . When I take a retrospective view of this period of my life, I am led to see the absolute necessity for regeneration by grace for renewing our will, and conforming the soul to the image of God. Man is helpless and hopeless in himself." How true as well as touching are the

words of Samuel Rutherford—"I have nothing but my loathsomeness to commend me to Christ. He must take me as I am for nothing, or not take me at all."

Dugald Buchanan received the rudiments of education in one of the schools belonging to the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, which was founded by a few devoted Christian gentlemen in Edinburgh, in the year 1701. One of these schools was planted in Buchanan's native parish, under the charge of Mr. Nicol Ferguson, a man of Christian character. At the age of twelve Buchanan was considered qualified for the situation of a tutor, which shows that he made fair progress for one so young. He soon obtained employment as tutor in a family who were remarkable for every kind of profanity, with the exception of the mistress of the household, who was an excellent person. Before he was a month in this family he learned to speak the language of Ashdod, and shortly afterwards exceeded every one of them in uttering oaths and imprecations. "I sinned," he says, "without restraint, except when I thought of death." At this time his terrors of mind were overwhelming. He heartily resolved to refrain from committing sin, but his resolutions were soon at an end. In less than eight days he was just what he was before.

Allusions in his diary lead to the inference that he early showed a precocity of intellectual vigour that promised future eminence, and which encouraged friends to make especial efforts to promote his educational efficiency.

At the age of fourteen years he went to Stirling, probably to prosecute his education. He remained there for two years, very much in his former condition of alternate deadness and alarm. In subsequent years he narrowly escaped death from a series of accidents which are particularized in his diary. His preservation he wholly ascribes to the interposition of God's good providence, of which he was a great observer in after life.

After a stay of six months in Edinburgh, Buchanan returned home to Ardoch. He was now in his eighteenth year, and his father was anxious that he should enter upon some profession or trade. He was apprenticed for three years to a house carpenter in the parish of Kippen—a step in many respects conducive to his good. He associated with a better class of companions, and attended with greater regularity the house of God. Under the godly ministrations of Mr. Potter, minister of the parish, he profited considerably. He abandoned his former careless ways, felt brokenness of heart for sin, and found sweetness in the promise—"I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Not rightly understanding the true meaning of these words, his legal heart inclined him to put confidence in his prayers, tears, and other acts of duty.

He fell again into the same despairing state of mind, because he sought salvation not by faith, but, as it were, by the works of the law. The law cannot heal a wounded conscience, and as yet he had not attained to Him "whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in His blood."

In the twenty-fifth year of his age, an interview with a godly sister proved instrumental in emancipating him from his long-continued bondage. He was carelessly wandering in the fields on the evening of the Lord's Day, when his sister met him, and seriously remonstrated with him for abandoning the house of God. He told her he thought he had "counted the blood of Jesus Christ as an unholy thing, and had done despite to the Spirit of grace." He, moreover, remarked that he had not bowed his knee to God for four years, and would never pray again. His sister, however, who dearly loved him, and longed for his salvation, earnestly urged him to pray and humble himself before God, who would have mercy upon him as a poor condemned sinner. Her earnest and loving solicitations prevailed, by the blessing of God, and he prostrated himself at a throne of mercy. "I stood," he says, "like the publican, afar off, and said, 'God be merciful to me a sinner!'" from a real sense of guilt and misery." God, who hears prayers, not for our sake, but "for His own name's sake," heard Dugald Buchanan, and the result he tells us in the following words—"The Lord instructed me with a secret and powerful conviction that my sins were pardonable, notwithstanding their heinous aggravations, and that His name would be glorified in pardoning even the like of me." For eighteen months afterwards he was sorely exercised with mental temptations and blasphemous suggestions. These Satanic assaults renewed his despondency, and caused deep prostration of spirit. Prayer was his resource—ejaculatory prayer in the fields, and long and earnest wrestlings in the closet. At this period the Scripture, "Shall I bring to the birth, and shall I not cause to bring forth," came with overcoming sweetness and power to his soul, and peace, under a sense of the pardoning mercy of God in Christ, took hold upon his mind.

He was now in his twenty-sixth year, and compares himself to the man who had his eyes half opened, and saw men as trees walking. He went to Cambuslang, where a remarkable work of grace was then progressing, under the ministry of Mr. McCulloch and Mr. George Whitfield, the great evangelist. Here he was greatly comforted by hearing people relate their religious experiences to one another. The very large number of conversions that took place at Cambuslang during Mr. Whitfield's stay there are well-known historical facts. On one Sabbath, upwards of thirty thousand persons were present to hear Mr. Whitfield

On Sabbath, January 2nd, 1743, the Lord opened Buchanan's eyes to see the Mediator in all His offices, and his soul was overwhelmingly gladdened. On the 6th of February, of the same year, he was filled with seraphic joy as he surveyed the wonders of redeeming mercy. He says:—"I saw, as it were, the compassionate Jesus passing by me when I was wallowing in my blood, and saying to me, 'Live.' This was indeed a time of love to me, a vile man. O my soul, come and be swallowed up in admiring this love—this boundless love to thee, the chief of sinners! O my soul, wonder at the freeness of it, without any merit! Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this love! O ye angels, and saints, and redeemed of the Lord, behold the wonderful match—"Thy Maker is thy Husband; the Lord of hosts is His name." O my soul, be ashamed to meet such a Husband in the filthy rags of thy own righteousness."

"On August 6th, 1743," records Buchanan in his diary,* "my closed lips were opened, and my mouth was filled with the high praise of my God. My chains and fetters fell off, and I was set at liberty. The Lord proclaimed His name in Christ, and made all His goodness pass before me."

From August, 1748, till July, 1750—a period of two years—Buchanan was, however, deserted of God and bereaved of the comforts and joys of salvation. During this sad period he was tempted to the foulest sins—sins which he hated with his whole heart.

On the 15th of December, 1750, the Lord graciously restored to Buchanan's soul the joy of salvation, of which he had been so long deprived. At this time he, after strict examination, found in himself spiritual marks of being a genuine believer. He was convinced of the universal depravity of his nature. He found that he had received Christ in all His offices, and that his obedience flowed from a principle of love to God.

(*To be continued.*)

RELIGION is the best armour, but the worst cloak.

TAKE God into thy counsel. Heaven overlooketh hell. God can at any moment see what plots are hatching there against thee.—*Gurnall*.

THE Christian must in all his ways have three guides—Truth, Charity, and Wisdom—Truth to go before him, Charity and Wisdom on either hand.—*Hall*.

* Buchanan's diary resembles, in many respects, the autobiography of the great Thomas Boston, a work which he appears to be familiar with. The diary gives what is truly reliable, and shows that Dugald Buchanan was a man remarkably exercised anent the great matter of salvation.

EXTRACT FROM FLAVEL'S "FOUNTAIN OF LIFE."

CHRIST was deserted a little before the glorious morning of light and joy dawned upon Him. It was a little, a very little, while after this sad cry that He triumphed gloriously, and so it may be with you. "Heaviness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

"But I fear I am absolutely and finally forsaken." Why so? Do you find the characters of such a desertion upon your soul? Be righteous judges, and tell me whether you find a heart willing to forsake God. Is it indifferent to you whether God ever return again or not? Are there no mournings, meltings, or thirstings after the Lord? Indeed, if you forsake Him, He will cast you off for ever. But can you do so? "Oh, no! Let Him do what He will, I am resolved to wait for Him, cleave to Him, mourn after Him. Though I have no present comfort from Him, no assurance of my interest in Him, yet will I not exchange my poor weak hopes for all the good in this world."

Again, you say God hath forsaken you; but hath He let loose the bridle before you, to allude to Job xxx. 11? Hath He taken away from your souls all conscientious tenderness of sin, so that now you can sin freely and without regret? If so, it is a sad token indeed. If thou indeed judgest that God will never return in loving-kindness to thee any more, tell me, why dost thou not then give thyself over to the pleasures of sin, and fetch thy comforts from the creature, since thou canst have no comfort from thy God? "Oh, no; I cannot do so! If I die in darkness and sorrow, I will never do so! My soul is as full of fear and hatred of sin as ever, though empty of joy and comfort." Surely these are no tokens of a soul finally abandoned by its God. Did God forsake His own Son upon the cross? Then the dearest of God's people may for a time be forsaken of their God. Think it not strange when you who are the children of light meet with darkness—yea, and walk in it—neither charge God foolishly, nor say He deals hardly with you. You see what befell Jesus Christ, whom His soul delighted in. It is doubtless your concern to expect and prepare for days of darkness. You have heard the doleful cry of Christ, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" You know how it was with Job, David, Heman, Asaph, and many other dear servants of God. What heart-melting lamentations they have made upon this account! And are you better than they? Oh, prepare for spiritual troubles! I am sure you do enough every day to involve you in darkness.

Now, if at any time this trial befall you, mind these two seasonable admonitions, and lay them up for such a time:—

1. Exercise the faith of adherence, when you have lost the faith of evidence. When God takes away that, He leaves this. That is necessary to the comfort, this to the life of His people. It is sweet to live in views of your interest ; but, if they be gone, believe and rely on God for an interest. Stay yourselves on your God when you have no light (Isa. l. 10). Drop this anchor in the dark, and do not reckon all gone when evidence is gone. Never reckon yourselves undone whilst you can cleave to the Lord. Direct acts are noble acts of faith as well as reflexive ones ; and, in some respects, they are to be preferred ; for, as your comfort depends on the evidencing act of faith, so your salvation upon the adhering act of faith.* Evidence comforts, affiance saves you ; and surely salvation is more than comfort. Faith of evidence brings more joy to you, but faith of adherence brings more glory to God. Thereby you trust Him when you cannot see Him. You believe Him not only without, but against sense and feeling ; and doubtless that which brings glory to God is better than that which brings comfort to you. Oh, then, exercise *this* when you have lost *that*.

2. Take the right method to recover the heavenly light which you have sinned away from your souls. Do not go about from one to another complaining, nor yet sit down desponding under your burden, but search diligently after the cause of God's withdrawal. Urge Him by prayer to tell thee wherefore He contends with thee (Job x. 2). Say, "Lord, what have I done that so offends Thy Spirit? What evil is it which Thou so rebukest? I beseech Thee show me the cause of Thine anger. Have I grieved Thy Spirit in this thing or in that? Was it my neglect of duty, or my formality in duties? Was I not thankful for the sense of Thy love when it was shed abroad in my heart? Oh, Lord, why is it thus with me?" Humble your souls before the Lord for every evil you shall be convinced of. Tell Him it pierces your hearts that you have so displeased Him. Invite Him again to your souls, and mourn after the Lord till you have found Him. "If you seek Him, He will be found of you" (2 Chron. xv. 2). It may be you shall have a thousand comforters come about you at such a time, saying, "This will be to you instead of God, and that will repair your loss of Christ." But despise them all, and say, "I am resolved to sit as a widow till Christ's return. He or none shall have my love!"

* Lastly, wait on the use of means till Christ return. Be not discouraged. Though He tarry, wait you for Him, for "blessed are all they that wait for Him."

* We suppose Mr. Flavel's meaning is according to John xv. 4—6.

SHALL WE ADMIT ATHEISTS TO PARLIAMENT?

THERE has rarely been an historic period in which some men have not, with unblushing impudence, dared to deny the God who made them and who sustained them in being.

The names of Hobbes, Hume, Gibbon, Voltaire, and Paine caused alarm to the godly in their day, as the name of Bradlaugh does to-day. They attacked revealed religion, foamed out their foul shame on the fair rock of truth, but signally failed, for, like its divine Author, it remains "the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pet. i. 23).

But man aspires for progress, so, as time advances, he affects to go beyond his predecessors; and scepticism, more than superstition, seems to suit the present enlightened age; so that the man of no religion, like many of a false religion, looks for the sun of toleration to ripen his cursed fruit.

Were this encouraged by the scum of the population it would be bad, but when our statesmen, Her Majesty's Ministers, are found framing a law to relieve the seared conscience of an atheist, may we not tremblingly ask, "Lord, how long shall the wicked triumph?" (Psa. xciv. 3) and, with Ezra, weep that the hand of our rulers should be seen in such God-dishonouring work (Ezra ix. 2).

It is painful, too, to observe the supineness of many who profess to be witnesses for God. How quietly they take it! It is questionable whether they would not soon arouse if the encroachment were one which personally affected them. Still, notwithstanding all this apathy manifested by those who value their politics more than their religion, we hope many of no political bias, with a host of others holding extreme views, will make one solid phalanx to confront the foe.

Fellow-countrymen, look to your privileges! Fellow Christians, let your cries go up to heaven on behalf of our beloved country. Let us confess our individual and collective sins, and pray God, in the midst of deserved wrath, to remember mercy (Hab. iii. 2). But, as a means which, under God, we may legitimately use, let us also petition Parliament to reject the "Oaths Bill," and ask our respective representatives to employ their influence to this end.

Objections, we are aware, may be raised to this course, which we will try to answer.

Obj. 1. "This is a free country. No man's conscience should be fettered." True; but remember there are what we call "*unwarrantable liberties*." Do we want a law to loosen us from God? This would not be liberty, but libertinism—liberty run to seed.

Obj. 2. "This man, Bradlaugh, bad as he may be, is only one. He would be lost in the hundreds of other members. And, besides, by trying to keep him out of Parliament, you make him more popular, and bring sympathy and admiration on his side." Our answer to this is—All evils have small beginnings. A wedge is thin at one end, but it insinuates itself, and becomes in the hand of the artisan a great mechanical power. And, as to a fear of a man by such treatment gaining notoriety, upon the same rule we might let an insignificant murderer loose, lest his name should become famous in the annals of crime; and there are even some who have been found to sympathize with, if they have not admired, murderers.

Obj. 3. "Are there not already men in Parliament who, if not openly avowed, are to all intents and purposes practical atheists?" It may be so; but these conform to the law as it now stands, and have not so shamelessly renounced God's holy name as he who has declared that the oath would be to him "a meaningless form."

Obj. 4. "But what has Parliament to do with religion, or religion with Parliament?" Our answer is—Much every way. Our Queen is bound by oath to defend the cause of God and religion. In her opening speeches to Parliament, she commends her senators to the Almighty God. Every day the House sits the blessing of God is invoked. On every panel of the House of Commons are the words, "GOD SAVE THE QUEEN;" and in the pavement of the Great Hall is this striking inscription, "*Unless God build the house, they labour in vain that build it; the God by whom kings reign, and princes decree justice, and from whom cometh all counsel, wisdom, and understanding.*" Let atheists legislate, and we may look for further desecration, and final deprivation, of the Christian Sabbath, and the abolition of the Bible from our schools, which would raise a seed of evil-doers.

Obj. 5. "It is too late—indeed, useless—to protest. Roman Catholics were long opposed, but at length they obtained the Emancipation Act. Jews had long to wait, but at last their political disabilities were removed; and so atheists will win their way and gain the day." It may be so. We confess we fear it, yet let us rather die defeated than live retreating.

Obj. 6. "Why should godly men petition their fellow-men?" We might reply by asking another question—Why should godly men vote representatives into Parliament? We, as men, have one common interest in the well-being of the nation. Paul, when needful, used his privilege as a Roman citizen, and yet fully relied upon the Lord to deliver him from every evil work (2 Tim. iv. 18).

May God, in His mercy, help His people to lay these things to

heart.* Let once the law be altered to permit the renunciation of God's name, what national blessing could we expect from Him? Admitting that thousands have used the present Parliamentary Oath without having any commensurate thought of Him whose hallowed name they have taken into their lips, shall we therefore drop the form? What right-minded person would like to see the legal ceremony of marriage dispensed with? and yet to many we know that it is a mere form, if not a farce. If "the form of sound words" is to be held fast by God's ministering servants (2 Tim. i. 13), they that are appointed as kings, justices, and rulers should be bound by a proper obligation to Him "by whom kings reign, and princes decree justice," and who indeed are "God's ministers" for such a business (Rom. xiii. 4).

We conclude with this cry, "Arise, O Lord; let not man prevail" (Psa. ix. 19).

MAYNOOTH.—FALL OF THE QUEEN'S CROWN

[The following paper from *The Protestant* has been put into our hand, and we give it insertion in the SOWER, hoping that the conduct of those who encourage Popery, and seek to admit an avowed atheist into the House of Commons, may be deprecated by all who fear God and desire to uphold the Crown and our Protestant Constitution; for, if the plans of these God-dishonouring designers succeed, we may expect that the Crown will be cast down, and our dearly-bought privileges destroyed.]

SIR,—I have read with much interest Mr. Bateman's letter to the Chairman of the Church Association, but I have been told by a friend to whom I showed the letter that Mr. Bateman's statement in regard to the fall of the Royal crown has been contradicted by one of the newspapers. Perhaps you may be able to tell me whether this be the case or not.

I remain, sir, yours, &c.,

ANNE BABINGTON.

Heathfield Lodge, Pitteville Lawn, Cheltenham, Feb. 16th, 1881.

[We forwarded your letter to the author of the pamphlet to which you refer, and he has kindly sent us the following reply.—ED.]

My knowledge of the singular catastrophe that befell the British Crown at the close of the memorable session which witnessed the passing of the Bill for the permanent endowment of Maynooth was derived entirely from the *Record* newspaper; and, on turning over a file of that journal—permission to do so having

* A form of petition may be had by applying to Mr. Wileman, 34, Bouverie Street, or to Mr. Wilmshurst, Blackheath.

been courteously accorded me at the office in Fleet Street—I am glad to find that my recollection of the circumstance, and of the editorial comments it elicited, was strictly accurate. The hateful Bill was passed in the session of 1845—having been read a third time in the Commons on the 23rd of May—and it received the Royal Assent on the 30th of June. On the 9th August, the Queen in person prorogued Parliament, when there occurred the notable circumstance to which the *Record* referred as follows in its leader of the following day :—

“There was one remarkable occurrence at the very close of this remarkable session of Parliament to which we have hesitated to advert particularly in this place. When all was over, and the Queen, surrounded by the first personages of the realm, was retiring from the closing scene, her crown was dashed with violence to the ground, some of its brightest ornaments were scattered over the floor, and the crown itself was bruised and defaced, and thus dishonoured it was given up to the custody of the minor officials. . . . It may be occasionally difficult to decide how to regard certain passing events. Is such an event to be regarded as a sign from heaven, or as a purely fortuitous occurrence? We read in Scripture of signs in heaven—in the sun and moon and stars, among the kings and constituted authorities of nations, which demand our attention, and are intended for our warning and instruction. The present is a remarkable occurrence. It never happened before. It could not have happened without the permissive providence of God, without which not a sparrow falls to the ground. It occurred in circumstances the most significant. It occurred when a national act had been perpetrated which our great ancestors would have considered as a proceeding directly tending to national apostasy. . . . We do not see from Scripture but that God may have given this sign fitted to impress the popular mind—if not now, at least when coming events shall be manifested.”—*Record*, August 10th, 1845.

In the next number we have further particulars :—

“ACCIDENT TO HER MAJESTY’S CROWN.—On the occasion of the ceremonial proceedings in the House of Lords, to open, to prorogue, or dissolve the Parliament, Her Majesty wears a tiara of diamonds, and is attended by an officer of state with the crown on a cushion. Every visitor of the jewel-house in the Tower is aware of the novel arrangements and beauty of such crown, it having been, to a considerable extent, reconstructed for Her Majesty. That crown, on Saturday, was borne on a rich cushion, from the robing-room to the throne in the House of Lords, by the Duke of Argyle. His Grace is an elderly gentleman, and frequently evinced his anxiety regarding his forthcoming duty

by perambulating the Royal Gallery along which Her Majesty had to pass to the robing-room (the Lords' library) whence the Queen proceeded into the House. His Grace duly appeared in the procession. Her Majesty having delivered the prorogation speech, preparations were made for her quitting the House. The Duke of Argyll had to bear the crown from the presence of the Queen, it still remaining on the cushion; but, as the flooring of the throne-chair is raised above that of the House, he had to descend two steps. Receding from the Queen's presence without turning, his Grace appeared to have forgotten that there were two steps behind him; and, consequently, missing the first step, he *stumbled, the crown rolled off the cushion, and in its fall several diamonds were knocked out.* The consternation occasioned among the state officers and others about the throne may be imagined, though not easily described. The Duke's *mal a propos* position no doubt was severely enough felt by himself. The Queen soon perceived the disaster, and, with great readiness and calmness, desired that the Duke would not concern himself on account of the accident, and hoped that his Grace was uninjured. As soon as search could be made it was instituted; and the belief was that all the diamonds that had been knocked off in the fall were secured. As soon as the Queen quitted the throne, the house-keeper appeared in front of it, thus taking charge of the position, and civilly preventing other parties from too nearly approaching it. Officials connected with the House were also placed within its immediate vicinity, further to guard against any improper searching for diamonds, &c., that might be lost. The Queen having quitted the House, the event became the subject of still more earnest conversation. The Duke of Wellington remained for some time in the long, or Royal Gallery, by which the Queen had passed from the House of Lords, explaining the untoward event, and the consoling address of Her Majesty to the Duke of Argyll, to various Peeresses as they passed. The Earl of Shaftesbury, Sir A. Clifford (Black Rod), &c., were quite as much engaged in the body of the House in explaining the circumstance."—*Record*, August 14th, 1845.

In the succeeding number appeared the following most interesting letter from "A Watchman," headed

SIGNS.

SIR,—Whilst the attention of the public is fixed upon the untoward event which befell Her Majesty's crown at the close of the present ill-starred session of Parliament, it may not be uninteresting to notice a few cases of a somewhat similar character recorded in the annals of our own country.

1. Of King Charles I., on his trial, Echard the historian

relates, "The king's deportment was very majestic and steady, and though his tongue did usually a little hesitate, yet it was free at this time, and he was never discomposed in his mind, as he declared to Bishop Juxon, who attended him afterwards; yet he confessed to him that one incident shocked him very much, for, while he was leaning in the court upon his cane, which had a head of gold, the head broke off on a sudden without any visible reason. He took it up and seemed unconcerned, yet told the Bishop it really made a great impression upon him, and he never could possibly discover how it should happen."

2. Dr. Hickes, in a letter preserved in the Bodleian Library, mentions "the omens that happened at the coronation of King James, which [says he] I saw, namely, the tottering of the crown upon his head; the broken canopy over it; and the rent flag hanging upon the White Tower when I came home from the coronation. It was torn by the wind at the same time as the signal was given to the Tower that he was crowned. I put no great stress upon these omens, but I cannot despise them; . . . especially those which regard the fate of kings and nations." This is dated January 23rd, 1710.

3. They who are familiar with the accounts of the coronation of King George III. will well remember that a jewel fell from his crown in Westminster Hall; and, when we connect this circumstance with the well-known reply to those who advised a yielding policy in regard to the American colonies—"What! give up America? Why, it is the brightest jewel in my crown!"—we cannot but conclude that there is something more than coincidence in the occurrence. Nor is there anything unscriptural in the supposition. When King Saul, in order to detain him, laid hold of the mantle of the Prophet Samuel, *it rent*, and the incident was prophetic of the loss of his kingdom, for Samuel said, "*The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day.*" Most readers of history must have observed that great changes in the state of nations have generally been preceded by events symbolic of their character.

A WATCHMAN.

The last remark of "Watchman" is very striking, and passing events will tend to increase its significance. The fulfilment of Lord Eldon's prophecy (made at the time of the passing of Catholic emancipation) seems almost to be brought "within measurable distance." Neither ought we to forget that, as the passing of Catholic emancipation was followed by pestilence (*i.e.*, the cholera, then spoken of as "a new plague"), so the permanent endowment of Maynooth was immediately succeeded by the appearance of a new vegetable canker (the potato-rot), which produced the terrible Irish famine of the winter 1845-46. This

again precipitated the repeal of the Corn Laws and the fall of the minister (Sir Robert Peel) by whom the passing of that measure, as well as the endowment of Maynooth, was effected. Yet many of the Conservatives voted for the latter rather than dislodge Peel, and so, as they thought, bring about the former. Never was retribution more striking or complete ! Had the Conservatives done their duty, the Bill for the endowment of Maynooth would have been triumphantly rejected, as will at once be seen if we study the division list on the occasion of the third reading of the Bill (May 23rd), when the same was carried by 319 against 166. Of this majority 150 were Conservatives ; and if these, together with 74 who absented themselves from the division, had been added to the minority, the figures would have stood thus—for the Bill, 169 ; against, 410. The present Premier voted for the Bill, the late Premier against it. The names of Lord Shaftesbury (then Lord Ashley) and the late Mr. Colquhoun also appeared in the minority.

J. B.

A SEPARATED ONE.

I was a stricken deer that left the herd
 Long since ; with many an arrow deep infixt,
 My panting side was charged, when I withdrew
 To seek a tranquil death in distant shades.
 There was I found by one who had Himself
 Been hurt by th' archers. In His side He bore,
 And in His hands and feet, the cruel scars.
 With gentle force soliciting the darts,
 He drew them forth, and healed, and bade me live.
 Since then, with few associates, in remote
 And silent woods I wander, far from those
 My former partners of the peopled scene ;
 With few associates, and not wishing more.
 Here much I ruminate, as much I may,
 With other views of men and manners now
 Than once, and others of a life to come.
 I see that all are wanderers, gone astray
 Each in his own delusions ; they are lost
 In chase of fancied happiness, still woo'd
 And never won. Dream after dream ensues,
 And still they dream that they shall still succeed,
 And still are disappointed ; rings the world
 With the vain stir. I sum up half mankind,
 And add two-thirds of the remaining half,
 And find the total of their hopes and fears
 Dreams, empty dreams.

COWPER.

FACE doth not more answer to face than punishment to sin.—
Bishop Hall.

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.—No. XXXV.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,—I have to thank you for your very kind present of the handsome pair of shoes you sent me; but what a mercy it is to have one's feet shod with the Gospel of peace, by being justified by faith in the Lord Jesus! This is what will do you good in life, enabling you to face the troubles of it by the way, and to meet death at the end. May it bring such comfort to your heart as it did to the Apostle's, who looked beyond all these things, saying, "I know whom I have believed."

The Scriptures are ever speaking to us, saying that "one thing is needful," which is, Christ in us. Oh, that you may find Him; and you will find Him to be health to your soul and joy to your heart. All short of Him is "vanity and vexation of spirit," and ends in death. But Christ is food, physic, and clothing—nay, to sum it all up, He is "All and in all." May you be brought to feel your need of Him, and to seek after Him until you find Him for yourself. No friend like Him, so true, loving, and faithful—the only One that can do us good when heart and flesh are failing. Time is short! Death is on the road! Eternity is before us!

May the Lord make my young friend wise unto salvation, and that will rejoice the heart of her sincere friend,

Croydon, September 30th, 1872.

F. COVELL.

[Since the departure of dear Mr. Covell, it has rejoiced the hearts of those who know her that his young friend has been brought to the feet of Jesus, and now finds Him to be the "one thing needful," her "All in all."]

TEMPTATIONS are as necessary to the saints as eating and drinking, that they may abide in fear and humility, and learn to cleave alone to the grace of God.—*Luther.*

A HYPOCRITE is one who neither is what he seems, nor seems what he is. A hypocrite is the picture of a saint; but his paint shall be washed off, and he shall appear in his own colours. A hypocrite is hated of the world for seeming to be a Christian, and hated of God for not being one.—*Mason.*

How valiant were the martyrs in expressing acts of love to Christ! How boldly did they encounter death, that interposed between them and the sight of His glory! Their love was hotter than the flames that consumed them. They as willingly left their bodies as Elijah let fall his mantle to ascend to heaven. And how does it upbraid the coldness of our love, that we are so contented to be here, and to be absent from our Saviour!—*Bates.*

NOTICES OF BOOKS, &c.

Our National Bulwarks. 1s. 6d. per 100, 12s. per 1,000. London : W. Wileman, 34, Bouverie Street, E.C.

THIS four-page tract is issued with the hope that it will be widely spread abroad, and prove a means of stirring up many to a prayerful resistance of the attempt to remove an ancient landmark in our Constitution for the purpose of admitting an avowed atheist into the House of Commons; and we sincerely hope that all who fear God and value their privileges will use every lawful means, by petitioning, &c., to oppose this unholy and God-dishonouring act. We have no desire to curtail the rightful liberties of any subject, but God forbid that we should ever put our hand to the work of removing a barrier which resists the exaltation of avowed atheists to a place in the councils of our nation; or, in other words, cast that divine name we love and reverence from our Statute Book at the bidding of a vile blasphemer.

We will now give a few brief extracts from Mr. Wileman's tract, and commend it to the notice of our readers, hoping that they will spread it as widely as possible :—

“Our national greatness and power are built upon our acknowledgment of Him by whom kings rule and princes decree judgment, and our attachment to His Word. Yet, one by one, the barriers to the encroachments of Romanism and infidelity are being removed; and it is now proposed by special means to open wide a floodgate that shall deluge the land with atheism, socialism, and legalized immorality.” “It must be very clearly borne in mind that the proposed Affirmation Bill is *not* for the relief of such as have a conscientious objection to an oath. Such scruples are provided for by the law as it now stands. It is a measure based upon a pretext, not upon a principle. Its introduction is to meet the clamour of a man who has both morally and politically disqualified himself to sit in Parliament. He has professed readiness to take the oath, though the words of it are to him ‘a meaningless form.’ Yet the nation is now asked to make easy, and assent to, the admission of men who not only deny God, but despise all dominion except their own, and who would, were it in their power, demoralize society, subvert the throne, and plunge the country into socialism and avowed profanity.” “The legalized presence of atheism in our Parliament would offer a powerful impulse towards the total repeal of the laws for the due observance of the day of rest, God’s good gift to His creatures, and of any laws that stand in the way of a blasphemous and immoral press.” “Atheism has in all ages been the ruin of nations. License to the creature at the expense of the Creator is the first step in the path to reproach and destruction.”

THE SOWER.

THE SUBSTANCE OF A SERMON,

PREACHED AT GALEED CHAPEL, BRIGHTON, BY MR. BOORNE, ON
SUNDAY MORNING, JULY 24TH, 1881.

"For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."—ROMANS i. 16.

WHAT a vast amount of shame and contempt was poured upon the followers of Christ in the first days of the Gospel dispensation! It was no easy thing then to profess Christianity, for it often meant confiscation of goods, loss of liberty, and forfeiture of life; and Paul had taken his part in persecuting the saints, as he says he did "even unto strange cities." This he did "ignorantly and in unbelief." But, after God called him to be a witness for that faith which once he laboured to destroy, he found that it was given to him to suffer for Christ's sake, that he might "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ for His body's sake, which is the Church" (Col. i. 24). And, as Christ showed His disciples His wounds when He said, "Behold My hands and My feet," in proof of His identity, so Paul could show the wounds he had received in his Master's service. Thus, writing to the Galatians, he says, "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus" (Gal. vi. 17)—literally punctures in his flesh.

Do you sometimes mourn because there is so little life and power now among the children of God? Think, then, at what a cheap rate we can make a profession of religion to what they could formerly. Some of us can look back at the time when our religion cost us something—and it costs us something still—but, compared with many of our forefathers, our sufferings are a mere trifle. Some might say, "Well, if more liveliness entails more suffering, we had better remain as we are." If so, I neither envy you nor approve your decision. However, though our path in these days may be comparatively easy, we have many inward trials, such as you have been just singing of (hymn 295, Gadsby's), and it is in these things that most of the children of God fill up their measure and weight of suffering—

"Saints who feel the load of sin,
Yet come off victorious,
Suffer martyrdom within,
Though it seems less glorious."

Now, I believe the saints of God who were martyrs for the truth were not troubled with doubts and fears, carnality, dead-

ness, barrenness, and unbelief, as we are. They were richly endowed with the Spirit of God, and strengthened by the power of God, and had all the help they needed for their day of distress and suffering. And yet no true-born child of God would prefer ease to trouble. Like Moses, he "chooses rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season" (Heb. xi. 25). If there be true union, one member of the body suffers with that which is more afflicted. Some of you here are in a good position in life; but, when you see an afflicted child of God, you feel for and try to help that one, and so share in the affliction, because you believe he belongs to Christ.

In considering our text, note—

I. The Gospel, or Word of God, faithfully preached, is God's power by which He works salvation.

II. That Word which is thus attended with divine power saves lost man.

III. That believing in Christ is included in salvation—"salvation to every one that believeth."

IV. Paul's glorying in the Gospel, and despising its shame—"I am not ashamed of the Gospel."

I. "The Gospel of Christ!" What a theme! What an important subject! The great manifestation of God's power! His power is seen in creation. You cannot walk abroad without viewing it. Last evening, as I was looking round on the hills, the trees, and the sea, I thought of the lines which some of you that are children know—

"I sing the almighty power of God,
That made the mountains rise;
That spread the flowing seas abroad,
And built the lofty skies;"

and I could but admiringly weep at the goodness and grandeur of God in these things, wherein are manifest "His eternal power and Godhead," so that man is without excuse for his infidelity (Rom. i. 20).

Then God's power is seen in providentially maintaining His creation, feeding all His creatures, and upholding all things by the word of His power. But these are only parts of His ways. He has magnified His Word above all His name (Psa. cxxxviii. 2).

The same almighty power that spake the world into existence is needed in turning a sinner from death to life, from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God. When John had a view of his glorified Redeemer in Patmos, he saw that "out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength" (Rev. i. 16); "and

when he saw Him, he fell at His feet as dead." Paul, when writing to the Hebrews, shows the close connection there is between the written and the incarnate Word: "The Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight; but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do" (Heb. iv. 12, 13). Therefore, this sword comes from the mouth of Christ. This is often the case when the Gospel is preached discriminatingly by His servants, as the Lord said to Jeremiah, "If thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as My mouth" (Jer. xv. 19). And not only are hearers of truth thus divided, but the sinner's heart is opened and laid bare; and this Word, says God, "shall accomplish that which I please, and prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isa. lv. 11).

God also makes weak means powerful to His end and design—men who, by the Spirit of power, are made "mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds" (2 Cor. x. 4)—and while "the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Cor. i. 21). Thus says Paul (verse 25), "The foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men."

The power of the Gospel was prophesied of in Psalm cx. 2—"The Lord shall send the rod of Thy strength out of Zion; rule Thou in the midst of Thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power." By this the will of the sinner is broken down and bent Godward.

The Lord compares His Word to a hammer: "Is not My Word like a hammer?" (Jer. xxiii. 29.) But for this having been used upon us by God Himself, our hearts had to this day been as hard as the nether mill-stone. So the Lord compares His Word to a fire. This burns up our creature strength and self-righteousness, and tries "every man's work of what sort it is."

Other figures the Holy Spirit uses—rain and snow: "As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth" (Isa. lv. 10, 11). In seasons of drought you may water your garden, but you cannot make it soft as the showers do, nor can you produce the fertilizing effects that the rain does. So, spiritually, when God's doctrine drops as the rain, and His speech distils as the dew, signs follow it. The snow lies upon the ground, and soaks into

the soil later on ; so, in hearing the Word preached, no real profit may be felt for days.

The Word of God is described, too, as "the Word of His grace" (Acts xx. 32), which He implants in the heart, and by which the soul is established ; and this is the expression of His favour. Who can give us it, or put us into it, but the God of all grace whence the Word comes ?

II. *That Word which is attended with divine power saves lost man.* It is the Gospel of our salvation. How many of you can look back at the time when you could not call it the Gospel of *your* salvation, from an experimental and felt knowledge of salvation by it ! There are many still who are ready to subscribe to it being the Word of salvation, who dare not call it theirs. It is a great thing to be saved. So few feel this, because so few know their lost condition. It is a great thing to know our lost estate—that we have no power to save ourselves or exercise faith—indeed, we have no faith to exercise, for this is God's free gift—"it is the gift of God." The poor awakened sinner will try to seek a refuge here or there ; but the Lord will follow him up, to bring him down lower and lower, that he may know himself to be lost, ruined, and undone, and that he may justify God were He to send him to hell. Some of you may have thought, since you have been in this chapel this morning, that, on account of your sins, you ought now to have been in hell. I have many times had such thoughts. I felt so only yesterday. I believe that none who feelingly justify God in their condemnation will be condemned ; these He will deliver from death and destruction. Our covenant with death and hell He disannuls ; but He declares, "My covenant shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure ;" and it is His good pleasure to save poor lost ones. The early cry in such is often, "What must I do to be saved ?" Now, remember how you tried, and could not save yourself. At last God brought you to see and feel power in that very salvation you despised in the ministry you heard, or in a neglected Bible. Now it was not a question whether you would believe it or not. You were constrained to believe that Christ was *able* to save you ; the question was, would He ? And upon this power you hung on to Him. You felt He was "able to save to the uttermost." Before, you might have thought you could be saved at your own time ; but when God made you willing to be saved, you feared His unwillingness to save you.

Still, there is a being brought to feel that He is able, willing, and ready to save. From a view of Christ by faith we learn that He that is just has salvation with Him (Zech. ix. 9). And when He came and wrought salvation in your heart, and you saw and felt His saving power, you being taken, and this and that one left,

like Zacchæus, you rejoiced that salvation had come to your house ; and, with Manoah and his wife, you could look on while the Angel of the Lord did wondrously. David's words now were your words, "Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that Thou hast brought me hitherto?" (2 Sam. vii. 18.) This works humility and love, and the soul will no more be able to help hoping that he will be saved, than before he feared he should be lost. And with this there will be things that accompany salvation—a desire for secret communion with God, searching the Word as the charter of his salvation. He will rejoice in God's Word as one that finds great spoil. He will be a different man altogether. People will take notice of it, without him speaking of it ; and he will wish to

"tell to sinners round
What a dear Saviour he has found."

And, though he thus loves the Gospel, it will not lead him to despise the law. Jesus magnified it and made it honourable, and we must consent with Paul that the law is holy, just, and good, though we know there is no salvation there. This Gospel sets him free from sin, and the more a man knows of the grace of God the more he feels his need of it. He needs it now as much as he did when first called. He finds so much opposition that he requires grace to save him from his fears and his failings ; for although, like Simeon, he may have said, "Mine eyes have seen Thy salvation," he will find his salvation not complete while he has a sinful nature, and he within the gunshot of the enemy. But when the child of God comes to die, he may say, "Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ" (Rev. xii. 10). The receiving of the salvation of our souls as the end of our faith will prove that our faith has been of the right kind.

III. *Believing in Christ is joined to salvation.* The Gospel was first preached to the Jews, in accordance with the commission of our Lord, "beginning at Jerusalem," and so in Antioch, Paul said to them, "It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you ; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." This gladdened the Gentiles, and we read that "as many as were ordained to eternal life believed" (Acts xiii. 46—48). You may believe there is a God, and do no more than devils do. "Thou believest that there is but one God ; the devils also believe, and tremble" (James ii. 19). But, where the Word is received in an honest and good heart, there will be a godly trembling, and a precious faith dwelling in the heart, as was the case with Timothy, his mother Eunice, and his grandmother

Lois. Though this is not hereditary, it was manifest there in three generations. What a mercy for you parents to discover this in the hearts of any of your young ones! Seeing so many are shut up in unbelief, what a great thing it is to have that faith which looks to Christ alone for salvation! At first you believed in your sinnership, in a heaven and a hell. But you could not settle in a knowledge of this, or in the holiness and justice of God, nor could you rest upon Christ until He was revealed. Then, viewing His precious atoning blood, His imputed righteousness, and His boundless grace, you could enter into rest, as Paul says, "We which have believed do enter into rest" (Heb. iv. 3).

Some one may say, "I was a believer so many years ago, and found peace." But true believers have revivals and renewings, by which, as it were, they afresh enter into rest. And thus—

"Own with contrition the deeds we have done,
And take the remission God gives in His Son."

Faith looks to, and lays hold of Christ: "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else" (Isa. xlv. 22). Again, Christ said to Nicodemus, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John iii. 14, 15). Some may complain that they have not strong faith, but the weak in faith are to be received (Rom. xiv. 1); and those that have but little faith are not despised by Christ (Matt. xiv. 31).

There are different degrees of faith. Our concern should be not so much as to the amount as the reality of our faith. If you are a true seeker, you have faith which leads you after Christ, and makes you a follower of Him, and this will work by love and be accompanied by repentance. And although this faith may be in you, as it were, like a grain of mustard seed, yet it will grow and bring forth fruit after its kind. Nor will you rest without a knowledge of the true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent; for the promise is, "They shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more" (Jer. xxxi. 34). "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark xvi. 16). "For by grace are ye saved, through faith: and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. ii. 8, 9).

IV. *Paul's glorying in the Gospel, and despising of its shame.* I have been surprised at hearing of some men who have left the work of the ministry, after it had been hoped that they were called to it. I have often feared God would lay me aside as one

unapproved. It is well to die in harness. It is a great thing not to be ashamed of Christ's livery. They are not servants of men, but of God. A more honourable position we cannot have than that of being an ambassador for the "King of kings and Lord of lords." Paul could look back on his former life and see much of which he was now ashamed, but nothing in Christ, His Gospel, or reproaches for preaching that Gospel, was he at all ashamed of, for he felt it was "the power of God unto salvation." Nor should any man sent of God blush at being so employed. I have heard of some men who hold secret or private sentiments, but a true man must renounce "the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commend himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God" (2 Cor. iv. 2).

And, if the minister is not ashamed of his calling, would you of being associated with such? Don't be ashamed of your colours, of your little faith, or your small experience. It is a mercy to have a little of that which is so scarce. Don't be ashamed of the Lord's ordinances. Some we hope to meet in heaven seem to be. Let not this move you; still follow on, as you have been taught. Paul rejoiced that Onesimus was not ashamed of his chain, which, as Nero's prisoner, he wore at Rome. Don't be ashamed of the afflictions or of the appearance of the Lord's poor people. Associate with them; and if, as a "brother of high degree," God has called you by His grace, rejoice that He has laid you low. We are members one of another, and know not what sufferings may overtake us before we die, even for the sake of the Gospel. I have the remembrance of many things that I hope ever to be ashamed of, but I would desire to follow Paul's advice to Timothy, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth" (2 Tim. ii. 15).

THE remembrance of former mercies puts an argument in the mouth of prayer, a glass to the eye of faith, and a harp in the hand of thankfulness.

Go where you will, your soul will find no rest but in Christ's bosom. Inquire for Him, come to Him, and rest you on Christ, the Son of God. I sought Him, and I found in Him all I can wish or want.—*Rutherford*.

IN the doctrine of justification, I will neither listen to Moses, nor to the Pharisees, but Christ shall here reign alone, and be everything; and, like Mary, I will sit at His feet and hear His Word. Martha may remain outside, and go about the kitchen, and do the housework, and leave the conscience at ease.—*Luther*.

A VESSEL OF MERCY.

EXTRACTED FROM A LETTER TO MR. R. LINK.

DEAR FRIEND FOR THE TRUTH'S SAKE,—Your welcome letter, dated June 16th, was duly received. Nearly thirty years have passed since I parted with the dear friends at Eden Street, that never-to-be-forgotten chapel, where I have experienced many castings down and many liftings up. Yes, there I have been enabled to say, with a joyful heart, under the preaching of the Word, "How beautiful upon the mountains!" &c., although I have come away at other times fearing I had no part or lot in the matter. How prayerfully I then went up to the house of God, hungering and thirsting, and begging God to bless a word, by His servants, to my soul!

Through mercy I can say, my religion has been, from the first, an every-day religion. I say it not boastingly, but to the honour of that free and sovereign grace which, through mercy, I have received. It is my constant companion morning, noon, and night, through all the changes that come over my mind. Still I have not attained to that my soul is seeking after, although I have not been permitted to be carried away by the world, or the errors of some professors in it, praise be to God's holy name, who alone is worthy.

You ask me about my beginning, and that I feel to be a very important question, which I will try to relate, as briefly as I can. I often have to say, "Lord, decide the doubtful case." "What!" say you; "no further than that all these years?" No, dear friend. I find the publican's prayer as suitable now, and that daily, as I did at the beginning; and to be found at the feet of the Lord Jesus Christ, looking upon Him "whom I have pierced, and mourn," &c., is my greatest desire; and, as you say of yourself, so say I also, "May He be made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." When I get looking into myself it is dreadful; but, when I can look to the Lord, I get some relief. Little-faith is strengthened, hope revives, and, for the time being, everything is right. I often think of dear old Mr. Cowper, in Eden Street pulpit—how he shook his dear old grey head, and said, "*He* [meaning Satan] is an unwearied foe—at least, I find him so;" and so, my friend, do I to this day, but my greatest foe is my own vile, wicked, hateful self.

But now I must tell of the Lord's work in my heart. To enter into all the particulars of my sinful, wicked life, before stopped in the downward course, would fill a volume, but would not be very profitable to either you or me. Suffice it to say that I did, in the strictest sense of the word, live according to the course of this world. At the time when I hope the Almighty sent conviction

into my heart, I was working at the Duke of Devonshire's, in Piccadilly. On Saturday night, having received our wages, I and others, as was our custom, went off to the public-house to spend them, and make ourselves worse than beasts. On this occasion we were all huddled together (being drunk) until the morning, this being Sunday, when it was proposed that we should go bathing in the canal, and away we went, my eldest brother being one of our number. I was the first in the water, and, after swimming some distance, heard the cry from my companions, "A man drowning!" I swam back to the place, when they on the path, pointing to the spot, said, "He went down there." I dived under the water, but could find nothing, so I swam to the side, and they then told me it was my brother. I was so amazed I thought I should have sunk, and cannot tell how I got on to the path. Some had gone for the drag, and by this time they had brought him out, but life had fled; for, having dived into the water head first, the blood rushed to the head, and he was suffocated.

I cannot describe my feelings as I walked up and down by the corpse, now lying on the grass; but one thing I cannot forget. Those words kept running through my mind, "One shall be taken and the other left;" and, from that time, I have felt something in my breast which has never left me since, and I was effectually killed to my sinful life, and cut off from all my former companions. Having no longer any relish for the sinful pleasures of this world, I did indeed prove the truth of that Scripture, "He setteth the solitary in families." My long-neglected Bible was now my chief companion, and although it was to me, as Nathan was to David, always condemning my sins, saying, "Thou art the man!" yet I was compelled to cleave to it, night and day, and I felt it lost time even while eating my meals unless I had my Testament by me to read while I took them, so eager was I for mercy, and to find some encouragement from the Scriptures of truth. I was sure that there was a blessing in it; and, although it seemed only to condemn me, yet I was helped to read, and pray for God's blessing upon it, for oh, my past sins, the actual sins of my life, all previously forgotten, came up before my mind as a dreadful army, and I could not see how God could have mercy on one so desperately wicked, and I truly thought God was about to deal with me as my sins justly merited. Still I could not keep from crying to Him. Often have I been obliged to leave my work and crawl into some place away from every human eye, to call upon Him from my deeply-tried soul. The heavens seemed as brass, and I could not believe the prayers came from my heart, which almost sank me in despair. At other times I felt my heart softened to pour out my prayer before Him,

and then I felt encouraged. But still the guilt of sin hung heavy on my soul, and the way of salvation by Jesus Christ was hid from my mind. I used to go groaning about and thought everybody saw me as I felt myself—a miserable being.

How long I was in this state I do not now remember; but one morning, going up Gray's Inn Lane to my work, with as heavy a load of guilt as ever any poor creature could bear up under, the words came with sweet power into my poor disconsolate heart, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Oh, blessed words! The recollection of them brings tears to my eyes now, while I am writing. Blessed words! and I could then, and can now, say of my Lord, "Never man spake like this Man."

May we be enabled to cleave to Him with full purpose of heart, and seek His glory in all we say or do. Vile self will try at times to rob Him who alone is worthy of all praise. Mr. Hart says, "Preserve us chiefly from ourselves."

"Crafty is the foe and strong;
Saviour, do not tarry long!"

When we read, or pray, or speak—

"May we with constant care,
Keep Jesus Christ in view;
Trusting wholly to His death
In all we say or do."

Amen and amen. If the Lord will, I may give you a further account of the way I have been led.

Love to all inquiring friends, and may the Lord bless you with every needful spiritual and temporal blessing. Adieu.

Yours sincerely,

June 30th, 1878.

A. ABBOTT.

WE are so to know Christ as to live to Him in the strength of His grace and unto the praise of His glory. "If ye know these things," saith He, "happy are ye if ye do them." It is our privilege to know them—a great privilege—but it is our blessedness to do them. When men content themselves with the notion of spiritual things, without endeavouring to express their power and efficacy in the practical conformity of their minds and souls unto them, it proves their ruin. That Word which is preached to us ought to dwell in us. See what it is to learn Christ in a due manner (Eph. iv. 20—24). There is a miserable profession, where some preach without application, and others hear without practice.—*Dr. Owen.*

REPLY TO AN ENQUIRER.

A. NYE, with an enclosure of two shillings for the "Clifton Coal Fund" (acknowledged in February numbers of SOWER and GLEANER), asks my thoughts on John x. 9 and 26, "as one longing to know whether she believes aright." I cheerfully send my thoughts as requested. They are purposely brief to avoid confusion.

John x. 9 : "I am the Door ; by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved." As the door is the way of entrance to a house, so through Christ alone can we gain access to God. He is the only Way of approach to the Father, the only Mediator between God and man. By Him alone have we access into the grace wherein we stand. To obtain salvation, we must enter through Christ the Door, seeing that there is salvation in no other ; and "it has pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell." In Psalm cxviii. He is called the "gate of the Lord, into which the righteous shall enter." He is the Way of everlasting life. To be saved from eternal death, and to gain everlasting life, we must enter this Gate or Door. There is no other way ; but he that enters this Door *shall* be saved, for He is able to "save to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him." The entrance into the sheep-fold—the visible Church—wherein is found sweet pasture in the ordinances, Gospel truths, and precious promises, and wherein is enjoyed "the communion of saints," and whence the soul is led by the Good Shepherd to feed on the everlasting hills, &c., is only through this Door.

How, then, is this Door entered ? It is by faith. Notice the numerous passages in the New Testament which declare that "he that believeth shall be saved." "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." Those, then, who believe in Him with all the heart as the only Way, assured that, without an interest in His salvation, they must perish—confident that He is able to save them—that, if He will, He can make them clean—those who thus come to Him, the Door, for mercy, He "will in no wise cast out." Indeed, such, by faith, are in Him already, and to such He says, "Ask, and ye shall receive ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Knock at this Door, ask and seek admission, and it shall be opened. The simple meaning is, that all who feel their need of salvation, and come to God through Christ to obtain mercy, shall be saved. Such are His sheep. They shall never perish.

Verse 26 : "Ye believe not, because ye are not of My sheep," was spoken to the unbelieving Jews who rejected Christ, and therefore is no discouragement to true believers, who, far from rejecting Him, would gladly receive Him into their hearts. The passage is

rather full of encouragement to all who long to win Christ and to be found in Him ; for, as unbelief is put here to show who are not Christ's sheep, it follows that those who do believe *are* His sheep. Such believe because they *are* His sheep. The Holy Spirit has taught them their need of salvation, and has pointed them to Christ, the Door, as the only, but sure and certain, Way of salvation.

F. MARSHALL.

CONSTRAINING LOVE.

"The love of Christ constraineth us."—2 CORINTHIANS v. 14.

THE love of Christ constraining,
We count all things but loss,
And bear without complaining
The heavy daily cross.

Though faint, yet still pursuing,
The heavenly race we run ;
That love our strength renewing,
The conquest shall be won.

His love appoints each sorrow,
His love decrees our pain ;
We'll trust Him for the morrow,
We know He can sustain.

With cheerful resignation
We'd learn to do His will ;
Be this our consolation,
His love supports us still.

That precious love, transcending
The utmost stretch of thought,
From heaven the Lord descending,
Hath our salvation wrought.

Our love to Him oft falters,
And does diminish too ;
But Jesus never alters ;
His love to us is true.

What though we suffer anguish,
And woe, and pain, and fear ?
What though we faint and languish,
As pilgrims oft do here ?

For Jesus' sake we suffer,
Temptations sore endure ;
In Jesus' name we conquer,
Our hope is firm and sure.

We know the "rest remaining"
Will make amends for all ;
And so, His love constraining,
We follow at His call.

REMINISCENCES OF DUGALD BUCHANAN.

"The memory of the just is blessed."—PROVERBS x. 7.

(Concluded from page 109.)

IN 1749, Dugald Buchanan married Margaret Brisbane, daughter of Mr. Alexander Brisbane, land steward to the Earl of Loudon, at Lawes, near Crieff. She was a worthy helpmate, endowed with superior social and domestic qualities, as well as sincere personal religion.

In 1753, he was appointed schoolmaster at Drumcastle, in the district of Rannoch, by the Barons of Exchequer, to whom he was recommended. Rannoch, at that time, was in a wild and lawless state, little restrained, and far less subdued by living Christianity; and Buchanan—eloquent in address, evangelical in doctrine, and full of zeal for the salvation of souls—was the very man to do the work of an evangelist and teacher, to which the Great Head of the Church had called him. Right nobly, by the blessing of God, was the work done. The following extract from the records of the Presbytery of Dunkeld, and bearing date May 1st, 1753, is the earliest notice of his appointment that is known:—

"Mr. Dugald Buchanan, who has been appointed by the Barons of Exchequer as schoolmaster at Drumcastle, being present, attending the Presbytery, produced his testimonials, with which the Presbytery were well satisfied; and he declared himself willing to submit to the directions of the Presbytery, according to the Word of God, the Confession of Faith, and the rules of this Church."

The committee appointed to examine Mr. Buchanan reported that they had "obeyed that appointment, and were satisfied with his knowledge and sufficiency for his office, which the Presbytery considering, they recommend to him to be as diligent and useful in his station as possible." The condition of the people of Rannoch at the time of Buchanan's settlement among them was very much the same as that of the people of Anwoth, when Samuel Rutherford assumed the pastorate of that parish.*

The first Sabbath after his appointment as teacher, Buchanan found the people playing football, instead of going to the house of God. He remonstrated with the people, and sought to persuade

* Rutherford was settled at Anwoth in 1627. There is still a piece of ground shown on the farm of Mossrobin, in that parish, where the people assembled on Sabbath to play football. He repaired to the spot, warned them of their sin, called the inanimate objects around them to witness against them, should they slight the warning, especially two large stones hard by, which have ever since borne the name of "Rutherford's Witnesses."

them to join him in the worship of God, as more becoming the day of rest than their sinful amusements. He prevailed upon a few to join him that very day. In the course of a year these Sabbath pastimes were entirely discontinued, and such an interest awakened in divine things that the school-house at Drumcastle could not contain all who came to hear the Word of God. In good weather they met on the banks of the Tunmel, and there is a mound still there on which Buchanan is said to have stood while addressing the crowds that came to hear him. His services at this time were accompanied with remarkable power. There was a deep and widespread revival among the people.

Two years afterwards, he was appointed catechist by the Presbytery of Dunkeld, who, after examination, judged him fit to be so employed. The recognition of him by the Presbytery gave a new impulse to his zeal. In the following year the Presbytery attested as to Buchanan's "diligence and attendance on the dual offices of schoolmaster and catechist, and certificates thereof were given him."

In those days there were feuds and petty animosities between tribe and tribe in Rannoch. There was a bitter feud between the people of two contiguous districts at the head of Loch Rannoch, where Buchanan occasionally held meetings. So bitter was the feud that the people could not trust themselves in close proximity, even to hear the Word of God; and yet, singularly enough, both parties were willing to hear the evangelist. Buchanan took his stand on a large stone in the channel of the stream that divided the contending parties, and from this position addressed the audience. The address of that day was so powerful, so owned of the Lord, that the people were quite melted down. They confessed their faults mutually, and that very day parted as friends. This is an example of Buchanan's power of touching audiences; and, in this instance, an audience little prepared by previous training to receive impression. By a series of such triumphs, this man of God gradually wrought quite a revolution in his field of labour. "Instead of the thorn came up the fir tree, and instead of the briar came up the myrtle tree." A missionary tour made by the evangelist to the braes of Glenmoriston, Invernesshire, was also attended with spiritual results of a most gratifying character.

About this time, Buchanan was associated with James Stewart, of Killin, in publishing an edition of the New Testament in Scotch Gaelic, the Irish translation of Bishop Bedell and O'Donnell being the one in use in the Highlands previous to the year 1767. Mr. Stewart performed his work in an able and scholarly manner, showing thorough acquaintance with the idiom and vernacular of the Gaelic language. Dugald Buchanan was

quite abreast of the Gaelic scholars of his time, and he superintended the work while passing through the press in Edinburgh.

During his stay in the metropolis, he frequently addressed the Highlanders there in their native tongue, and, it is said, with results similar to those of his Rannoch ministrations. So highly did the Highlanders appreciate his gifts, that they proposed to have him settled there as minister of a Gaelic congregation. With this view he attended classes at the University, while superintending the work of the printers. The Church, however, declined to dispense with the usual curriculum, and the proposal was not carried out. It is, however, an interesting fact that the first nucleus of a Gaelic charge in Edinburgh was formed by Buchanan—a charge over which so many able and excellent ministers have since presided.

Whilst in the metropolis, Buchanan was introduced to many of the celebrities of the city—among others, to David Hume, the historian. It is said that Hume enjoyed the freshness and originality of the evangelist's conversation, and condescended to have a chat with him concerning the beauties of authorship. Hume observed it was impossible to pen lines more impressive or sublime than the following, by the great dramatic poet Shakespeare—

“ The cloud-capped towers,
The gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples,
The great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherits, shall dissolve,
And, like the baseless fabric of a vision,
Leave not a wrack behind.”

Buchanan admitted the beauty of the passage, but added that he could quote a passage from another Author which even the philosopher himself would admit to be superior to that of Shakespeare. Hume smiled incredulously, and requested that the passage should be repeated. Buchanan recited with solemn emphasis the words of Revelation xx. 11—13—

“ I saw a great white throne,
And Him who sat on it,
From whose face the earth and heaven fled away,
And there was found no place for them.
And I saw the dead, small and great,
Stand before God.
And the books were opened,
And another book was opened,
Which is the book of life.
And the dead were judged out of those things
Which were written in the books,
According to their own works.

And the sea gave up the dead which were in it :
And death and hell gave up the dead which were in them :
And they were judged each man
According to their works."

It is said that Hume acquiesced in Buchanan's estimate of this passage of Divine Writ, and he asked who the author was, the historian not being apparently familiar with the sacred writings.

In 1766, the first edition of Buchanan's "Sacred Songs" was published. He did not live to see a second. He died two years after, of an epidemic fever that was prevalent in the country, aged fifty-two years. The fever was a lingering one, and he was frequently delirious. While his mind wandered, he often repeated with great fervour favourite passages of Scripture, especially that which describes the Lord Jesus as "the Lamb in the midst of the throne." In lucid intervals he expressed his full, firm hope of salvation through the redeeming blood of Jesus, and his desire to "depart and be with Christ." His death made a deep impression, and caused profound sorrow. Every family in the district of Rannoch mourned as if one of their own number were taken away. Fourteen years of Dugald Buchanan as schoolmaster and evangelist had wrought a wonderful change among the people of that part of the Highlands of Perthshire, and not a few of them realized how sore a loss they had sustained by his removal.

In personal appearance, Dugald Buchanan was above the average height, of dark complexion, dark hair, and large expressive eyes. In his latter years he wore knee-breeches, a blue great coat, and a broad blue bonnet. In earlier years he wore the kilt. Even ministers, in those days, officiated in the Highland costume.

Buchanan's "Spiritual Songs" are full of excellent poetry and thoroughly evangelistic matter. They comprise—"The Majesty of God," "Christ's Sufferings," "The Day of Judgment," "The Dream," "The Hero," "The Skull," "Winter," and "The Prayer." Some of these are very long. "The Prayer" is full of the richest devotional feeling and evangelical sentiment. Buchanan's own interest in the atoning blood of Christ is expressed in the stanza, of which the following is a prose translation—"In His atoning blood, the blood that satisfied inexorable justice, the blood that fell on earth from Calvary's cross—in it I put my trust, O King ! my King ! that for its sake my soul Thou wilt absolve from guilt."

ORIGINAL sin cannot be driven out either by law or punishment—no, not if there were ten thousand hells—but the grace of God only must drive it out, cleanse our nature, and create it anew.—*Luther.*

A BRAND PLUCKED OUT OF THE FIRE.

ON Monday, January 22nd last, a young woman, a vicar's daughter, called upon me to ask if I would visit a Miss Townsend, who resided in the house with her, and was dying of consumption. I asked what state of mind she was in. "Oh," she replied, "in very dreadful distress, fearing she will be lost! Will you please come?" I said, "Why does she wish me to come?" Her reply was, "An aunt of her's, some months back, came from the country, and found the chapel in Thistle Grove, and told her of you. I have had great trouble to find you. Will you come soon?" I then said, "To-morrow morning I hope to see her."

When I went to visit her, the first interview gave me some hope there was life in her soul, but *she* was hopeless, and her distress was great. I felt liberty in testifying of the grace of the Gospel, but she could not receive it. I often saw her after this, but no change, only that she appeared to grow worse in her feelings. My wife and I called upon her alternately, and a young member of our Church, a German convert from Catholicism, saw her twice, and told her what great trouble of soul fell upon him, and how the Lord delivered him, which she appeared glad to hear. Yet still her bitter cry was, "Mercy! mercy! None for me!" The Church clergyman called at the house, and he told her that she had no faith, which she said she painfully knew and felt. She told him that she felt her sins were too great to be pardoned. He said, "Then you make Christ a liar." After this interview she did not—indeed, would not—see him any more. Then she fell into the despairing thought that she had sinned against the Holy Ghost, but I endeavoured to show her, by the Word of truth, that it was impossible to have sinned that sin, and yet be suing for mercy at the feet of Christ, as she was.

When I next saw her, I said, "Now, my child, do you feel that you have sinned that sin?" She said, "No; that is taken from me; but the sins of my life are heavy upon me. Do you think God will have mercy upon me?" I said, "How sorry should I be to encourage any false hope in you, but I believe He will." Yet, how my faith in her case was dashed upon every visit, as she was worse and more hopeless every time! Her mother is an honest-minded woman, and has light in the truth (her mother was a gracious woman, and suffered much persecution for the truth's sake), and would say to me at the door when leaving, "Well, do you see any change? I am sure she will perish in her sins, if she dies in this state;" so I left the house every time with a burdened heart, not knowing if she would live through the day.

Thus she continued until Monday, February 26th, when I felt very tried about her. I may say I travailed in pain for her soul,

and said to my wife, who had just left her, "My mind is much upon Matthew xviii. 19. I should like to get Mr. B—— and Mr. G—— [two of the members of our Church] to meet me, and pray for her deliverance." But my wife said, "I fear it is too late. She is so weak, and appears sinking." "Well," I said, "the place does not signify."

The next day, Tuesday, she was still alive, and, being prayer-meeting night, those two very men only, as praying men, were there, except a young member, and I named the case, and the trial of it, hoping it would be laid on their minds; and it was, for they both prayed very earnestly for her. When we came out, I said to Mr. B——, "How glad I was to see you there this evening!" He said, "Well, it is a wonder that I was, for I made up my mind to stay with my aged father, as he is ill; but I had a feeling come over me to be here, and so I went, and asked the landlady to see to my father while I came." I felt and said, "Now, I hope the Lord is in it for mercy."

The next morning I saw the poor girl, and for the last time; but, to my sorrow, she was more troubled than ever, and piteously exclaimed, "I am dying, and am lost!" My heart was too full to say much, but I said to her, "Christ came to save the lost, and there my hope rests;" and, with a look of farewell left her, feeling, "Oh, if she sinks to hell, what endless groans and misery!"

At eight o'clock that evening, she clasped her hands, looked up, and said, "And wilt Thou not forgive a dying sinner?" Her mother said, "Maude, do you feel to have any hope?" She replied, "A little, a little; but oh, so little!" She lay quiet until two in the morning, and then, in the most bitter agony, broke out in shrieks of anguish that (although she lay in a back room) could be heard in the street. "Hell! Misery! I am falling into hell! No mercy for me!" and these bitter cries continued an hour and a half, and, with wringing her hands, her nails went into her flesh. At half-past three she clasped her hands, looked up, and, as for the last time, cried out, "Wilt Thou not have mercy? Wilt Thou not forgive? Hast Thou no love?" and then she became still. Her countenance changed. All appearance of sorrow and despair left her, and a smile of delight was on her face. Her mother said, "My dear, what is it?" She replied, "God's light and love are come! Oh, it is heaven! it is love! Do send for Mr. and Mrs. Brandon. I have much to tell you all now. Oh, mother, I have much to tell you, but am so weak!" She then laid her head on the other side, and, before the clock struck four, she was gone to be "for ever with the Lord." She was just twenty-one years of age.

It was with a feeling of deep thankfulness I laid her in the grave on the following Wednesday. How good the Lord is! He

does not come too soon to prevent profitable exercise for His glory and our soul's good, and never comes too late to save.

"Dear dying Lamb, Thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power
Till all the ransomed Church of God
Be saved to sin no more."

"How true is the Word and how blest is the will !
And Christ the Lord lives, His Word to fulfil ;
Your Father in heaven has said it for ever,
'These little ones perish ! no, never ! no, never !' " *

Chelsea.

A. BRANDON.

ORIGIN OF THE WORD "TRIBULATION."

THE Latin "tribulan," from which we derived our word "tribulation," was the threshing instrument whereby the husbandman separated the corn from the husks ; and tribulation, its primary significance, was the act of this separation. Thus adversity (being the appointed means for the separating in men of whatever is light and trivial from the solid and the true) has been called "tribulation." The following graceful composition, from the pen of George Withers, a poet of the seventeenth century, is quoted as being an excellent illustration of the expansion of this word—

"Till from the straw the flail the corn doth beat,
Until the chaff is purged from the wheat ;
Yea, till the mill the grains in pieces tear,
The richness of the flour will scarce appear.
So, till men's persons great afflictions touch,
If worth be found, their worth is not so much ;
Because, like wheat in straw, they have not yet
That value which in threshing they may get ;
For, till the bruising flails of God's corrections
Have threshed out of us all our vain affections—
Till those corruptions which do misbecome us
Are by Thy sacred Spirit winnowed from us—
We shall not up to highest wealth aspire ;
But then we shall, and that is my desire."

OH, the waste of prayer for things not worth praying for ! Abundance may be the worst thing for us spiritually and eternally. Give us all needs for our true good ; only let all lead us to Thee and away from self. Raise us higher in the true scale—in Thy sight.

* Matthew xviii. 14.

A BROTHERLY EPISTLE.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—“The Lord be with thee, even the Lord who hath chosen Jerusalem.”

I am glad that I do possess a place in the affections of your people, although I do not see why it should be, nor how, for I do indeed feel myself quite unworthy of such a tender habitation. I am also glad that the enemy is not allowed to put the glass of jealousy before your eye. I do indeed see no *spiritual* reason why we should be jealous in this respect. The holy angels feel no jealousy among themselves, and holy men have said, “I must decrease and He must increase.” “He that hath the bride is the Bridegroom, and the *friend* of the Bridegroom rejoiceth greatly because of the Bridegroom’s voice; this my joy therefore is fulfilled.” If we are labourers together with God, and fully know that we can do nothing only as God useth us, we shall lose sight of our own honour, as coming from *one another*, and seek the honour that cometh from God *only*. If I could always work upon this principle, and act according to this rule, what a host of pains I should be spared; but, alas! I am often snared in the work of my *own hands*. “*Meditation*”—how this hinders my faith in Jesus! “How can ye believe that seek honour one from another?” You perhaps have long ago got a great victory over these things, yet you must bear with the simplicity of a child. I find it a very difficult thing to lean *wholly* upon Christ, to look *singly* to Him, and entirely away from every other object—to be *indeed* dead. How happy I should be if I could wholly cease from myself! I do indeed feel that I need Christ in His intercessory work at the golden altar of incense as much as at the altar of burnt offering, to bear the iniquity of my *most* holy things. Oh, for that living practical knowledge of Him which enables those who possess it to make that use of Him that God intends! . . . May the Lord of hosts furbish and sharpen His sword, and teach you how to use it.

Yours very sincerely,

March 29th, 1881.

J. W. W.

HYPOCRISY.—A true Christian and a hypocrite may both of them come to a stand in their course, through temptation; but there is this difference—the true Christian is like a watch that was going right, but some dust clogs its wheels. Directly it is removed, the watch will go right again. The hypocrite is like a watch which is so badly made that it stands, or goes wrong from its very nature; and the only cure is to give it a new inside.—*Salter*.

EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT.

[The following extracts are taken from a tract sent us by the author, a clergyman of the Church of England, who had it printed for private circulation only. We hope many deluded ones may feel the power of those truths which are here so plainly stated.—Ed.]

THIS doctrine, so plainly set forth in Scripture, is in these last days denied by many, and even by some who *seem** to be taught of God, and who profess to teach to others the truth of God, as revealed in His Word. One would think that, without any argument at all on the subject, some few plain passages of Scripture would prove the truth of “everlasting punishment” for sin, and therefore also the eternal existence of such as are punished.

Perhaps there is no place of Scripture stronger to the point than that in Matthew xxv. 46 : “These shall go away into *everlasting* punishment, but the righteous into life *eternal*.” Here the eternity both of the “punishment” and of the “life” is expressed by the same Greek word, so that both must stand or fall together. Any argument to lessen the force of “everlasting punishment,” as applied to the unrighteous, will equally lessen the force of “eternal life,” as applied to the righteous.

But this plain text as to the eternity of punishment is further strengthened by the Lord’s solemn words in Mark ix. 43—48, where He thrice makes mention of “*hell fire*” as the portion of offending sinners, adding this, “Where their worm dieth not, and the *fire is not quenched*.”

Again, in 2 Thessalonians i. 8, 9, the Holy Ghost tells us by the Apostle that “*everlasting destruction* from the presence of the Lord” shall be the portion of such as “know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Again, in Jude 7, the sinners in Sodom and Gomorrah are spoken of as “set forth for an example, suffering *the vengeance of eternal fire* ;” and in the same Epistle, after a solemn mention of sinners and their sins, it is added, “to whom is reserved the *blackness of darkness for ever*” (ver. 13).

It may be added that the parable of the rich man in the torments of hell (Luke xvi. 23) would lose all its force, all its intended instruction, if he were not in torments out of which he could never pass—from which he could never be delivered. And why had it been good for Judas if he had never been born (Matt. xxvi. 24), supposing there were any termination to the punishment due to the enormity of his sin ?

Now, these few Scriptures are more than sufficient to convince such as do simply submit themselves to the Word of God, laying

* The Spirit of God always teaches sterling truth.

aside all notions of their own, that there is an *eternity of punishment* for sin and sinners, and, therefore, that they who suffer it must needs themselves eternally exist.

But since error, and prejudice through error, do so cling to our fallen estate, even while professing to be in subjection to what God has declared in His Word, it may be well to enlarge a little on this solemn subject of the *eternal punishment* due to sin.

Man, at his creation, received a three-fold nature, not a two-fold nature only, like the beasts that perish. Man is made up of body, soul, and spirit (1 Thess. v. 23), though between soul and spirit the Scriptures do not clearly distinguish, nor can any do so but God Himself (Heb. iv. 12). Man thus created was made a "living soul" (Gen. ii. 7; 1 Cor. xv. 45), not subject to death so long as he perfectly obeyed the law, or commandment of God, and so retained the perfect image of God in which he was created.

But man did not continue in obedience to the law of God. Adam disobeyed in one single command only, offended "in one point," and so became "guilty of all" (James ii. 10). Thus did he corrupt his whole nature, body, soul, and spirit; yea, thus did he corrupt the whole family of man, so that Adam and all his posterity, from the beginning to the end of time, did become, through one single sin, lost, ruined, undone sinners.

Thus, too, the whole family of Adam were brought under *that* sentence of death, "Thou shalt surely die," and became subject to *death spiritual, death natural, death eternal*. Hence we learn what an infinite evil sin is—one sin alone corrupting the whole human race—and hence, therefore, we are the more surely prepared to learn and to believe that such an infinite evil cannot but deserve an infinite or eternal punishment.

* * * * *

It may here be asked, whence is it more difficult to believe in the eternal punishment of sinners of mankind, than to believe in the eternal punishment of the angels that sinned? But God, in His sovereign will and pleasure, has displayed the riches of His love and grace and mercy towards fallen man, so as He has not displayed them towards fallen angels. Of *all* the angels that fell it is written, "God spared them not." But, as to fallen man, the Scriptures show, what the seventeenth Article of the Church of England so clearly expresses, that "predestination to life [*i.e.*, eternal life] is the everlasting purpose of God whereby (before the foundations of the world were laid) He hath constantly decreed by His counsel, secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom He hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honour." Thus did God, by His own purpose, and for His own glory, secure the deliverance from eternal punishment of

a great multitude of sinners of mankind, a "multitude" such as no man can number, "out of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues" (Rev. vii. 9, 10). Yea, He did secure their eternal salvation, with eternal life in Christ.

But at what a mighty cost was this deliverance and salvation of sinners secured! For this end Christ, who was very God, did become also very Man, taking upon Him the likeness of man's sinful flesh, and did, as God-Man, live a whole life upon earth—a life of sinless obedience and perfect righteousness, yet a life of temptation and sorrow, of grief, suffering, and sighing. For this end also Christ did agonize in Gethsemane, and die the accursed death on Calvary, shedding His own most precious blood; bruised, put to grief, and deserted of God Himself, and enduring in a few moments of time all the everlasting hell and curse and wrath and damnation due to the sins of that countless multitude of sinners whom He came into the world to save, and in whose place He stood, for whom He lived, and suffered, and died.

Now, can it really be believed that all this sinless, suffering obedience of this eternal Person, even of Christ, very God and very Man, was paid and endured—all that agony and bloodshedding and curse and wrath and death was suffered—only to deliver sinners, for whom He was the Substitute or Surety, from some temporary imaginary punishment for sin, to be inflicted after the resurrection and judgment, and that then they should be annihilated, and death and suffering for ever cease? What a dishonour to God, who spared not, but gave His own dear Son, and "delivered Him up for us all," because it was impossible that sin, with all its malignity and deserts, could in any other way be atoned for! What a dishonour to Christ! What a depreciation of the necessity for, and the power of, His suffering life and accursed death! What a dishonour to the Holy Ghost, whose office it is so to convince sinners of the deadly, soul-destroying nature of sin that, being brought into bondage "through fear of death" (yea, unmistakably of *eternal* death) (Heb. ii. 15), they may, by His power, betake themselves to Christ, and find pardon, peace, and liberty through His everlasting salvation! What a dishonour to the law of God, which pronounces that dreadful curse (even "everlasting fire with the devil and his angels"—Matt. xxv. 41) upon every soul that "continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them" (Gal. iii. 10). And may it not be added, what an encouragement to sinners to go on in their sins, neglecting both the terrors of the law and the everlasting mercies of the Gospel, when they are encouraged to believe, from the pulpit or through the press, that, whatever be the punishment for their sins after death, yet it is not everlasting, but shall end in their own annihilation for ever?

But how plain do the Scriptures make it to every obedient and willing mind, taught by the Holy Ghost, that the punishment of sin is and must be *eternal*, such as could not possibly be turned away from sinners but by the substitution of an eternal Person in their stead, even the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by His obedience unto death, hath for them abolished death, and "brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel."

* * * * *

Southborough, 1883.

W. T.

THE BISHOP OF LICHFIELD ON THE CAUSES OF NATIONAL DISTRESS.

THE Bishop of Lichfield has issued a letter to the Archdeacon of his diocese, sanctioning the use of a prayer for fine weather. His lordship, after referring to the widespread depression both in trade and agriculture, and the succession of wet and abnormal seasons, says :—

"Is it not true that, as a nation, for many years past we have been more and more denying and dishonouring God, by depriving Him of his rightful place in our national life? We have practically ignored Him in our national education, alike in our ancient universities and in our elementary schools. By the facilities afforded for divorce we have already made one disastrous breach in the safeguards by which He has surrounded the sanctity of married life, and we are proposing, it would seem, to make another. As a further step in the same downward course, it is now proposed to abolish in the Legislature itself the oath which recognises God, and this for the scarcely disguised purpose of admitting to the national councils one who boldly proclaims a disbelief in His very existence. . . . The tendency of all our legislation is to get rid of the religious element, or, in other words, to do without God. The recognition of God is felt to be not a duty, but a difficulty; and, accordingly, as a matter of political expediency, it is dispensed with. The will of the people is accepted as the ultimate authority—the *vox populi* instead of the *vox Dei*."

THE AFFIRMATION BILL.

SOME Christians may not even yet appreciate the greatness of the issue involved in the Affirmation Bill. Men who refuse to acknowledge the existence of God are not equally ignorant. Speaking at a Positivist assembly recently, Mr. Henry Crompton

leaves us in no doubt as to his intelligent appreciation of the approaching struggle. He said :—

“What I wish to point out is, that this struggle is by far the most important work that has been done in Parliament for many years, because it has been gradually instructing the mass of the people, who had never thought on the subject, what the real nature of the transition is. The lesson is being taught throughout the kingdom and throughout Europe that all theological restrictions and theological rule have almost ceased to be ; that theology henceforth has nothing to do with government, either industrial or political—nothing, in fact, to do with the direction of human activity. So far from wishing for a speedy settlement of the question, the prolongation of the struggle has been most desirable, as preparing and ripening the public mind for the great changes that lie before us in the future.”

If it is right to be taught by an enemy, we may advantageously ponder these words.

ROME AND THE BIBLE.

THERE are two deadly combatants in the world, Rome and the Bible. Rome hates the Bible, and we may say that the Bible hates Rome. One of these two combatants must eventually fall. Rome is too shrewd to always show her hatred, and nowhere will you hear more eloquent words spoken in favour of the Bible than in the Romish Church. She says “the Bible is the Word of God. She puts it into her pulpits, and into the hands of the priest when he is ordained, who is made to swear that he will read it.” This may be thought grand, but it is a cunning affair. Here is the trick. The priest is made also to swear that he will never interpret the Bible according to his own conscience, intelligence, or judgment, under pain of eternal damnation, but will only explain it according to the Church of the Holy Fathers. Now, the Holy Fathers consist of 250 volumes, and cost from three to four hundred dollars, and would take fifteen years to read through ; consequently, very few priests have them, and those who do read them find that they contradict one another, and very frequently a Holy Father will contradict himself, writing one thing at one time and contradicting it at another. So the Scriptures are given up ; and, as they must have an infallible guide of some kind, they make the Pope infallible. There are some honest men amongst them, but blind. They have great zeal for their faith, which Protestants have not for the truth. It would be well if they were as earnest.

If an Irishman were to ask his priest for a Bible, he would be told that he could not understand it if he had one, and it would be pointed out how those who have the Bible are all disagreeing one with another, and fighting like cats and dogs, the confusion amongst them being so great that it is like another Tower of Babel, while the Church of Rome is all one. But let us remember what Christ says: "I am the Vine; ye are the branches." Look at the vine—no two branches are alike; some large, some small, some straight and others twisted; some grow up and others down; but all bear fruit, and all are in the vine. So Protestants may differ in some things; and we know that they only are one who abide and unite in Christ. But is it not an insult to say that Peter, and Paul, and Christ Himself, could not speak plain enough for their words to be understood, so that their sayings must only be received through the medium of the priest, who has received his instruction from the perusal of the Holy Fathers, if he happens to possess them?—*From a Lecture by Pastor Chiniquy.*

[And does not the Church of Rome, and do not many Protestants also, greatly dishonour the Holy Ghost, who teaches and guides believers into all truth, by setting human agency before and above His almighty power? Men will talk of and seek after any agency rather than the Holy Ghost, and we need not look for a better state of things in the Church of Christ while the Holy Spirit is so little honoured and desired. May praying souls be led to implore the outpouring of the Spirit upon Zion.]

"UNDESIRABLE COLONISTS."

UNDER the above heading, the *Melbourne Age* and other Australian papers just received contain the following statement:—

"Among the passengers by the *Austral*, lately arrived in our port, were twenty-two Roman Catholic priests, including a bishop and his chaplain. The conduct of the clergy, with the exception of the bishop, was most distasteful to the other passengers, and also to the crew of the vessel. Upon any toast being drunk to the health of Her Majesty the Queen, the most marked disrespect was shown by the Catholic priests referred to, who would remain seated and covered. The same course was also pursued when the National Anthem was being played. On one occasion, the bishop, who always rose and uncovered at either toast or loyal anthem, called upon a priest near him to do the same, but was point blank refused compliance; whilst a young priest, who did remove his hat, was openly rebuked

by the others. Nearly all these clerics were from Maynooth, and their disloyalty was a subject of conversation amongst all the passengers and crew of the *Austral*, the latter being so exasperated as to threaten, but were deterred from inflicting, summary punishment upon the offenders. The twenty-two priests are a contingent to reinforce the Roman Catholic staff in the colonies."

A FAIR RETORT.

REPLYING to the charges that the Church Association acts the part of a persecutor, the *Rock* writes:—

"Now let us see how the other side have acted. Deliberately they have resisted every legal authority, and refused to obey any court, as well as their own bishops. They base their objection to obey on the constitution of the courts, which, say they, are purely secular. Now granting, for argument's sake, what we have often disproved, that the courts are purely secular, and that the Church ought not to be bound by them, let us see how much honesty there is in our opponents' tactics. What are we to say to the present state of affairs at Miles Platting? The Bishop of Manchester, in exercise of his solemn functions, and as a spiritual power, declines to institute an unsuitable nominee to a benefice, and lo! these virtuous gentlemen, who would go to prison rather than obey a secular court in matters affecting the Church, immediately apply to a secular court on the purely secular point as to a layman's right of property to overrule the spiritual chief's decision on a spiritual question of the fitness or unfitness of an avowed law-breaker to undertake a spiritual charge! This has always been the way. Whenever the Ritualists thought they could gain the smallest advantage, they would rush to these much-abused courts at once. When they knew they had not a leg to stand upon, they defied the courts, and villified them and all who desired to see the majesty of the law sustained."

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.—No. XXXVI.

[A sequel to the narrative, "Special Providence," in February SOWER, page 47.]

DEAR SIR,—On reading in the SOWER for February the narrative, "Special Providence," which was written by myself about fourteen years ago, it struck me that I had never given any account of dear little Tommy's death, and that perhaps the Lord had so ordered it that it might be blessed to some (I trust *many*) of the readers of the SOWER now.

Tommy's father is still alive, and, on reading the account in the SOWER for February, he said it brought every circumstance before him as vividly as ever. He then went on to describe how the dear little fellow lingered, sometimes better and sometimes worse, and the many blessed hours he had spent in conversation and communion with him. The father, from the effects of the injury to his spine, was obliged to sit indoors a good part of his time. He usually sat on one side of the old-fashioned country fireplace, and Tommy, in his little arm-chair, on the other; and here, unseen by, and practically unknown to, the busy, bustling world outside, but not unknown to God, these two sufferers sat and mutually helped and comforted each other.

At last, one Tuesday morning, on his father approaching his bed-side to see if he was ready to get up, Tommy, with a face radiant, as from the presence of some heavenly vision, said, "Father, I shall spend my Sunday in heaven this week." His father said, "What makes you think so? You have been dreaming, Tommy;" and being, as he expresses it, "touched close home," he became visibly affected, which Tommy observing, said, "Father, you can spare me for a little while. You have been a kind earthly father to me, but my heavenly Father wants me to spend next Sunday with Him, without this suffering body, and you will join us soon." His father was too much affected to continue the conversation, but, like Mary of old, he hid these sayings in his heart.

During that and the following day, Tommy seemed about as usual, and his father began to hope that his stay would still be prolonged; but on Thursday, the wounds in his side appeared irritated, and during the day inflammation set in. From this time till just before his death, on the following day, his sufferings were very great, and, during every interval of ease, he begged his father to pray for patience, saying, "Oh, father, I thought I could bear to die; but oh, pray for patience for me to bear the pain!"

On the Friday morning, on his father re-entering the room, after being absent a short time, Tommy called out, "Oh, father, can you help me a little—only a little?" His father replied, "No, my dear boy, I am afraid I cannot. I would willingly bear part of the pain for you if I could; but the Lord can and will help you to bear it." Tommy then, looking up into his father's face, said, "Oh, father, if *this* is not dying, how *can* I die?" His father replied, "I believe that, before you die, Tommy, mortification will set in, and your sufferings will abate."

Forsome time after this he sat by the bed-side, earnestly wrestling with the Lord in prayer, that He would give the dear boy some relief from pain; when presently Tommy said, "My pain is all

gone, father. Do you think I shall die now?" His father took up one of his little delicate hands, the finger-nails of which had turned almost black, and, holding it before him, said, "Do you see this, Tommy? Do you know what this means, my dear?"

On relating the circumstance to the writer, the father said, "Never did I see a country child going to a fair look more delighted than Tommy did, as he replied, 'I see, father. It is death. I am going to spend my next Sunday in heaven. Do not fret for me, father. You will soon come too, and we shall be with Jesus there.'" He continued in this happy frame for some few minutes, when, nature being completely exhausted, he fell into a kind of stupor, which continued for about an hour, and then, without recovering consciousness, passed away, to spend an everlasting Sabbath with the Lord.

In conclusion, I may mention, for the benefit of my young readers, and to give the stamp of truth to the narrative, that Tommy's name was Richardson, and he lived in the village of Ridgewell, in Essex, where his father for many years acted as clerk at the Baptist Chapel; and in the graveyard adjoining, Tommy's mortal remains now lie. Mr. Bridge, the minister who brought the half-crown to Tommy's father from Birdbrook Hall, has lately passed away, and all the dear boy's relatives, his father included, have removed to London. Still there are many persons in Ridgewell who remember the circumstances here narrated, and who cherish Tommy's memory with the deepest love.

I remain, yours very truly for Christ's sake,
Gravesend, March 8th, 1883.

G. NEWMAN.

P.S.—The following verses were written by my dear old friend, Joseph Richardson (Tommy's father).—G. N.

I love my Saviour's gracious name,
 His Spirit and His power;
 I love Him for Gethsemane,
 That soul-oppressive hour.

I love Him as the Bread of Life
 On which my soul hath fed;
 I love Him as the great High Priest,
 While He—the Victim—bled.

I love Him for His gracious words,
 While on this earth He trod;
 'Twas not the righteous that He called,
 But sinners, unto God.

I love Him for those blessed words,
 While on the cross He hung—
 "'Tis finished!" there the Saviour cried,
 The special work is done.

JOSEPH RICHARDSON.

NOTICES OF BOOKS, &c.

Three Letters on the Immortality of the Soul and Eternal Punishment.

By the late J. C. PHILPOT, M.A. Price three-halfpence.

E. Littleton, Baptist Minister, Withyham, Sussex.

THESE letters were written some years ago to one who denied the immortality of the soul and the eternal punishment of the wicked, and they are now reprinted and sent forth as affording an answer to a similar objector, who has openly espoused the cause of erroneous men by advocating dogmas which we know are altogether contrary to the Word of God and the teaching of the Holy Ghost. It is solemn to see the gradual declining from truth which we sometimes witness in persons of whom better things were hoped, and the fearful decline from vital godliness which is unmistakable in the professing Church. Let every seeker after truth beware of the snares of Satan and erroneous men. Mr. Philpot, in the reply to a correspondent, from which we give the following extracts, says:—

“We may arrange your sentiments under these three heads:

1. That the soul of man was not created immortal. 2. That the eternal life to be enjoyed by the saints in heaven is the express gift of Christ to His people, whereby He makes their souls immortal. 3. That the punishment of the wicked, at the day of judgment, is not a state of eternal woe, but a positive death or destruction, so that they cease altogether to be.

“In addressing ourselves to these three points—

“1. Let us first, then, consider, in the light of the inspired Scripture, and of fair inference from it, the doctrine of the immortality of the soul of man by original creation and constitution. . . . It is very plain that there was a creation of man's soul by the power of God's breath, for the sacred historian shows in the same verse the formation of man's body and of man's soul as two distinct acts of creative power, and tells us also the natural and original constitution of both: ‘And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground.’ The body, therefore, was formed of a material, visible, earthy substance. But the soul was not formed of any such natural, material, visible substance. God breathed expressly into man's nostrils out of His own fulness the breath of life, and under His creating, forming breath there was produced a living soul, for ‘man became a living soul,’ which he was not before, but had merely a body formed from the dust of the ground. Now, this soul, as being breathed into him by one act of divine volition, was not material like the body, or made up of parts and particles, flesh and bones, and distinct members, but immaterial, and so far, a pure spiritual substance.”

(To be continued.)

THE SOWER.

THE SAVIOUR'S INTERCESSION AND THE STRANGER'S PRAYER.

A SERMON BY THE LATE SEPTIMUS SEARS.

"Moreover concerning a stranger, that is not of Thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country for Thy name's sake (for they shall hear of Thy great name, and of Thy strong hand, and of Thy stretched out arm); when he shall come and pray toward this house: hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling-place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to Thee for."—1 KINGS viii. 41—43.

THESE words form a part of Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the temple, which he built according to God's promise to David, and by divine direction. Solomon was a lively type of the Lord Jesus. His very name is blessedly applicable to Christ—the word "Solomon" signifying *peaceable, perfect, or who recompenses*. And truly *Jesus is peaceable*; His errand to earth was an errand of "peace" (Luke ii. 14). He is emphatically called "*our peace*" (Eph. ii. 14). The covenant of which He is the Surety is designated a "covenant of peace" (Isa. liv. 10); the legacy He has bequeathed to His people is a legacy of "peace" (John xiv. 27). What a mercy for those who can truly say of Him, "He is our peace"! All of us who have a hope of peace with God ground our hope upon something. Rotten in itself, and perilous to the soul, is every other ground of peace but Jesus.

Jesus is indeed perfect. As a Person in the ever-adorable Trinity, He is perfection itself. As Man He is perfect; nothing of human perfection was absent from this "fairer than the children of men" (Psalm xlv. 2); and nothing of human defecation (to use an obsolete word) was ever, or can ever be, present in this "holy, harmless, and undefiled One" (Heb. vii. 26). As God-Man, or God and Man in one glorious Christ, He is perfect. "He is the Rock; His work is perfect" (Deut. xxxii. 4). Oh, how perfectly fitted for His work! Was *obedience, human obedience*, called for? The *obeying Man* could give it. Was *human suffering* demanded? The *bleeding Man* could endure it. Was *infinite worth and almighty power* required? *God* in human flesh had it. How perfectly fitted was this glorious Christ to pay, in human flesh, an infinite debt, to satisfy infinite justice, and exemplify and open a free and righteous channel for the outpourings of infinite mercy! And how perfectly suited is this glorious Christ to heal the gaping wounds, cleanse away the guilty stains, clothe the naked soul, and fill the empty heart of a poor sensibly-lost and

ruined sinner ! Truly Jesus, the great Solomon, is the "perfection of beauty" ; and, in His Person, work, names, offices, and fulness, He is indeed to every sensible sinner suited, "let his wants be what they may."

Christ mystical, or Jesus, the Head, in union with all His members, is for ever perfect. "Clear as the sun, fair as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners" (Sol.'s Song vi. 10). *Jesus, the anti-typical Solomon, is truly One that "recompenses."* He made, by His obedience and suffering, recompense or reconciliation for the sins of His chosen people ; He restored that which He took not away (Dan. ix. 24 ; Psa. lx. 4) ; and the Holy Spirit brings all the elect to be so sensible of the breadth of the holy law, and their own exceeding vileness, that they can hold up nothing else before the throne of God's holiness, and at the bar of equity, but Jesus for a recompense. And truly, when the soul has faith to lay hold of, and shelter in, this blessed Solomon as his own, it is a sweet recompense for all the painful stripping and humbling work that he has been led through. Oh, then he admires the wisdom displayed in all the Lord's dealings with him, and is thankful that ever he should have been wounded by conviction, to be cured by such a balm as Jesus' blood ; stripped of his filthy rags, to make room for such a glorious dress as Jesus' righteousness ; and brought off from every other foundation, and driven from every other shelter, that he might realize the blessedness of being built upon this precious foundation, and find in this great Rock, this sweet Hiding-Place, a refuge from the wind and a covert from the tempest. (Isa. xxxii. 2). And will He not be, in the kingdom of eternal glory, an endless recompense for all the toils of the desert ? One wave of the tide of immortal bliss, flowing from His right hand, will for ever efface the deepest print that tribulation has made upon our hearts while in the desert, as the rising tide obliterates every foot-mark from the sandy beach which it covers. Oh, when He comes, "He will come with a recompense ;" and "we shall be satisfied when we awake with His likeness" (Isaiah xxxv. 4 ; Psalm xvii. 15).

We might, now we are upon Solomon's name, as applicable to Christ, add His name, Jedadiah, "*beloved,*" or Lemuel, "*God with them,*" each sweetly applicable to "Immanuel, God with us," the Beloved of the Father, the beloved Object the Holy Ghost reveals, the Beloved of the heart of saved sinners, and the beloved theme of the heavenly songsters ; but this we will forbear enlarging upon, and draw nearer to the text.

Solomon was a lively type of Christ in building a temple for Israel and Israel's God to commune in, and to be the object upon which God's eye should rest and Israel's eye be directed to. And the Greater than Solomon, by His incarnation, and by His resurrection,

has reared a place of meeting for poor sinners and the Majesty of heaven,* and it is upon this glorious temple that God's "eye" and God's "heart are perpetually, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year" (2 Chron. vii. ; Deut. xi. 12). And it is to this blessed point that the seeking soul is bidden to look : "Look unto Me, and be ye saved" (Isa. xlv. 27). And the saint is exhorted to keep this temple in view : "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus" (Heb. xii. 2).

And not only did the building of the temple, and the temple itself, with all its ornaments, utensils, and ordinances, preach Jesus, but *Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the temple sets forth the intercession of Jesus*, who once, as our great High Priest, made atonement by sacrifice at the altar of burnt offering, and now makes intercession at the altar of incense. And, while Solomon's prayer was on earth, and for an earthly people, and chiefly for earthly blessing, Jesus' prayer is in heaven, and for a heavenly people, and for heavenly blessing—that is, for a people whose names are written in heaven, whose religion comes down from heaven, and whose "inheritance is reserved in heaven," and consists of "heavenly things." We may add, as Solomon's intercession exhibits the intercession of Jesus, so *the people interested in it set forth the people interested in the prayer of Jesus* before the throne.

In looking through this prayer, how much one is reminded of the prayer of Jesus, in the seventeenth of John, which is left us as a pattern of His intercession in heaven ! Solomon prays for Israel brought out of Egypt, and brought into the land of promise ; and Jesus prays also for believers gathered out of the Egypt of this world, and brought into the Canaan of Gospel rest : "I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest Me : I pray for them" (John xvii. 6, 9). But Solomon does not forget to pray for the poor "stranger to the covenants of promise," and "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel" (Eph. ii. 19), who, hearing of Israel's God and Israel's blessing, should be brought to say to Israel, as Ruth, the Moabitess, "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." So Jesus does not forget those who spiritually shall "take hold, out of the languages of the nations, of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you" (Zech. ix. 23). "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word" (John xvii. 20).

Now, the words of our text are a prayer of Solomon for the strangers—those who were not of the Lord's people Israel—and, in my

* "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. But He spake of the temple of His body" (John ii. 19, 21).

mind, they set forth the intercession of Jesus for those spiritual strangers who, though objects of the Father's love, and the purchase of Immanuel's blood, are still "afar off," and in the "far country" of nature's darkness and death. Such are, in the Lord's time, quickened to feel their position, and brought to come out of this "far country" for the Lord's new covenant "name's sake," having "heard of His great name, and of His strong hand, and of His stretched out arm," and to come and pray toward Jesus, the House of the Lord. For the typical strangers Solomon prayed in the temple, and for the anti-typical strangers Jesus intercedes in heaven: "Hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling-place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to Thee for."

Now, regarding this text as setting forth the ever-availing intercession of Jesus, and the character here described as setting forth one interested in the intercession of Jesus, I will try and expound it by—

I. Taking notice of *the character prayed for*—"a stranger, which is not of Thy people Israel."

II. Taking notice of *the important things said of this stranger*—that he "cometh out of a far country for the Lord's name's sake," &c.

III. *Enquiring what are the things that the stranger "calleth to the Lord for;"* and,

IV. Observing *the success attending his request*, or the blessings which are sure to be given him, in answer to the Saviour's prayer, "Hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling-place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to Thee for."

I. *The character prayed for is a stranger.* When man was created he was no stranger to God. No sinful distance, no guilty shyness, had then intervened betwixt him and his Maker; no cloud of darkness then overshadowed the human understanding; man was then no stranger to his Creator. But, alas! sin has estranged him from God, and now in his natural state he is a total stranger to the true character of his Maker—a stranger to the real misery of his condition—a stranger to himself as he is—a stranger to real peace and happiness—in a word, he is a total stranger to everything that is worth the intimacy of an immortal soul, though he may have much acquaintance, yet blind to their deformity, with those things that are in truth, the best of them, vain and fading, and the worst of them worse than madness, poison, and death. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. ii. 14). But many among the human family who are still thus strangers, and not manifestly of the Lord's people Israel, have an interest in the prayer of Jesus before the throne; and, when the Lord's time has

come to make manifest the individual stranger for whom Jesus is spreading out His interceding hands before the Father, he is quickened to feel, and enlightened to see, his alienation and strangership. And truly it is a solemn sight for a sinner to see that, up to the present moment, however wise he may have been concerning evil, he is a stranger to all that is good—a stranger to true peace, and to a right foundation for eternity—and it is a painful thing for a soul to feel, who knows that he is fast hastening into an eternal world, that, although God has a “people Israel,” who will be saved and happy through eternity, he knows nothing of being put among those children; and, dying without what he feels destitute of, this is stamped upon his conscience, “Not of Thy people Israel.” We will now proceed to take notice—

II. Of the *important things said of the stranger prayed for*. We must remember that Solomon did not pray for every Gentile stranger, but only for such as the text describes; nor is it for every stranger that Jesus intercedes, but only for such who bear those marks which this text puts upon the individual prayed for.

1. The stranger in the text is said to “hear of God’s great name.” A sinner must not only be convinced of his distance from God, and of his awful state, to *drive* him to seek mercy, but he needs to hear of something in the name of God that appears amiable and attractive to *draw* him to seek mercy. The poor woman with the issue of blood is an illustration of my meaning. She had been diseased for many years. This *drove* her to seek a cure from many quarters, but all were vain. All proved in her case “physicians of no value;” but “when she heard of Jesus,” she had faith given her to believe that, if she could but come in contact with Him, all would be well. One touch of Him she believed would be healing. This was a strong attracting cord upon her heart, and *drew* her to press, notwithstanding all her weakness, through the crowd that surrounded Jesus, and kept her from resting until she obtained the healing touch (Mark v. 25—34). So the stranger whom God makes no longer a stranger to guilt, but sensible of his entire strangership to pardon, is prone to “spend money for that which is not bread, and labour for that which satisfieth not” (Isa. lv. 2). But the Lord has His eye upon him, and, by whatever means He pleases, gives him to “hear of His great name,” His new covenant name in Jesus. “The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, and forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin” (Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7). Hearing this, and being no longer a stranger to the utter inefficacy of all other means for his soul’s cure, he is glad to hear that there is “balm in Gilead,”

that there is a "Good Physician there" (Jer. viii. 22); that "there is bread enough" in Jesus, the "Father's House," and "to spare" (Luke xv. 17); that, filthy as he is, and deep as are his stains—

"There is a fountain filled with blood,
 Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
 And sinners plunged beneath that flood
 Lose all their guilty stains."

This brings him to resolve, with the prodigal, though he be in a "far country," and though exceedingly unworthy of the Father's regard, to "arise, and go," and lay himself, a vile and guilty beggar, at Jesus' gate, waiting for mercy's falling crumbs.

2. But the stranger not only "hears of His great name," but also of *His strong hand, and of His stretched out arm*. He hears that Jesus, the Arm of the Lord, has been the power of God to the salvation of many poor lost souls, and this encourages him to apply for that Arm to be stretched out in his case. He has heard that the King of Israel is a merciful King. This emboldens him to come, though thoroughly sensible of his unworthiness of the least favour, or of anything but death. He comes with a "rope upon his head." How often has the report of the Lord's *saving arm*, revealed to a Saul, or Magdalen, or a thief upon the cross, been made sweetly encouraging to poor sensibly "far off" sinners to "fly for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before them" (Heb. vi. 18).

3. Hearing thus of the Lord's great name, and of His strong hand, and of His stretched out arm, *the stranger "cometh out of a far country"*—comes in sighs, desires, and wishes after Jesus towards Him, the true Temple; flees from sin and wrath to the pardoning blood of Jesus; flees from Sinai's thundering mount towards Calvary's peaceful cross; escapes for his life from the Sodom of this world to the mountain where the Lord commands the blessing, "even life for evermore;" flies from his own righteousness, and longs for the righteousness of Jesus; and thus "cometh out of a far country for the Lord's name's sake," that he may know in power the Lord's *Zion name*, "merciful and gracious," &c. He knows His Sinai name, "a jealous God, who will by no means clear the guilty." This has wounded him, and drank up his spirit. Now he is coming for acquaintance with His Zion name to heal his wounds; and, having heard of the Lord's mighty hand, and of His stretched out arm, in conscious neediness he stretches out his hand toward, and pleads alone the finished work of Jesus, the true Temple; and toward this House, all his expectation being from thence, and all his plea being Jesus, he makes known his many wants.

(To be continued.)

TO AN ENQUIRER.

WE are very glad to hear that the Lord has separated you in spirit and in walk from such nominal professors as you describe in your note. They cannot know the truth of Christ, nor the Spirit's work in the heart, or they would not speak as they do. It is true we have no positive declaration in the Scriptures of Solomon's repentance, but we believe, as the persons you name acknowledge, that he was a partaker of divine grace, and the gift of divine grace is the gift of eternal life. "By grace are ye saved" (Eph. ii. 5); and the Lord Jesus says of those to whom He gives eternal life, "they shall never perish" (John x. 28). Numbers of Scriptures might be adduced to show that this view is according to the analogy of divine truth. Nevertheless, God has positively declared that, though He will not cast away His people who backslide and commit iniquity, yet He will chasten them, and bring them to repentance (see 1 Cor. xi. 32; Heb. xii. 5—11; Rev. iii. 19; also Isa. lvii. 16—18; Jer. xxxi. 18—20).

Now, all this agrees with what the Lord said of Solomon (2 Sam. vii. 14, 15). Can it, therefore, be believed that he whom God owned as a son, whose prayer He heard at the dedication of the temple (1 Kings viii.), and of whom it is said (Neh. xiii. 26) that he "was beloved of his God," and who was inspired by Him to write parts of the holy Scriptures—can it be thought that he was left to die without repentance for the sins he committed, and without pardon manifested to him by the God of truth and grace? This would be contrary to the whole tenor of divine truth, as we have briefly shown.

Then, again, it is generally understood that the Book of Ecclesiastes was written by Solomon after the Lord had restored him from his fall; and the experience of sin and folly, with the counsels and warnings, there given, go to show that Solomon had been brought to repentance, after having proved the vanity of all carnal pursuits (see from twelfth verse in first chapter to eleventh verse in second chapter) and the bitterness of sin (xi. 9); and that he then felt, too, the mercy of being joined to the living (ix. 4).

We are compelled to be brief in stating our view of the case, but we hope you may be able to trace the line of thought suggested, and find something helpful therein against the cavillings of those who have no better a foundation for their hope than conditions to be fulfilled by the creature. We may give something more on the subject in a future number.

EDITOR.

WE should pray *in* the Church, *with* the Church, and *for* the Church. Three things preserve the Church—faithful teaching, diligent prayer, and patient suffering.—*Luther*.

A PASTORAL VISIT.

MANY years ago, I visited an aged woman in the city of Bristol, at the request of her son. He told me that his mother had been a constant attendant on my ministry, but was now very aged and infirm, and at the point of death.

It was the afternoon of the day when I reached her house, which was at some distance from my own. Following my guide, I ascended to the topmost room, and found it meanly furnished. I saw, lying on a bed before me, an aged woman, with her grey hair matted about her head, and her eyes dim with age and disease. "Mother," said her son, "I have brought the gentleman to see you." "Who is it?" she mumbled; "I don't know anybody, and can hardly see at all." "I thought," said I, turning to the son, "that she would not know me." At the sound of my voice she started, and aroused herself, saying, "Oh, yes, but I do! Ah! you are the gem'man that I ha' walked so many a weary mile to listen to; and, after my walk on my old legs, I had always to stand in the aisles, as you call 'em, for want of room; but I didn't mind. Oh, often is the time when I waited to pull you by the sleeve as you came down from the pulpit and passed me, that I might tell you how I loved you for talking so much about my old friends and acquaintances!" "Your old friends and acquaintances?" I inquired. "Whom do you mean? You and your friends are quite strangers to me." "Why, I mean," said she, "Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and them like. Dear me! didn't you often tell me how the good old man walked with God when he went out, not knowing where he was going to? and how poor old Jacob lost his son, dear Joseph? They bound him fast in the prison, and the iron entered into his soul; and," continued she, as if talking to herself, "I've got a Joseph. He's far away from me, and I shall see him no more; but I shall leave him this Book [a large folio Bible, which had been purchased in separate parts, and which was lying before her]. I bought it for him a long while ago. I have got no other book, only the 'Holy War.' Them be all I ever had; but this [directing her attention to the Bible] I will give him. He'll find it wetted in many places with his old mother's tears. Ah! don't you remember," she continued, "that poor, dear creature who went into the house after Him, and stood at His feet, and washed 'em with her tears, and wiped 'em with her hair? I got no hair to wipe 'em, but I could wash 'em with tears too; and they would not be tears of grief—no; but of love, like her's was, for He said to her—oh, did not His dear lips say to her?—'Your many sins be all forgiven you;' and has He not forgiven mine, quite as many as her's? and don't I love

Him?" Then the big tears rolled down her furrowed cheeks, and her strong emotions almost choked her utterance, while her hands were clasped together and lifted up, as if she would have embraced something which she alone could see. So graphic were her descriptions, and so animated was her manner, that I stood beside her listening, as it were, entranced, and unmindful of all around me.

The son had quitted the chamber, and left us alone; but she, as if heedless of the presence of any one, and occupied with her own musings, went on, and once or twice spoke as if she saw before her the very individuals about whom she was conversing. "Yes," she exclaimed; "the ill-natured Pharisee (ah! them be always ill-natured to poor folks and sinners like me) buffed her, and said, if the Master knew her, He would not have let her come so near Him. Wouldn't He? Ah! he did not know Him, bless His dear lips and His tender, loving heart! 'No,' says He; 'she has much forgiven her.' And did not He look into her heart, and tell her to 'go in peace'? Why, they put Him between two thieves—they thought to disgrace Him; but He took one of them to heaven with Him. Did not He make a jewel of him? Ah! and He can make me one of His jewels. But, ah! sir," said she, just then recognizing my presence, "how I have been talking, and you here, who I have so wanted to hear talk again! Oh, do tell me more about my friends and acquaintances [meaning the Old Testament saints], for I think about them all day and night, and I go about with them, and hear their tales, and see how they wept and how they prayed; and I see the angels, too, coming and talking to them; and then I talk to them, and they to me; and I think it will not be long before I talk to them *really*." So she went on till, having to attend an evening service, I reluctantly left the room, promising to see her the next day.

My mind was so full of the images and personages she had brought up before me that they formed the whole matter of my address that evening; and, at the close, I told the friends what I had seen and heard. Some godly women requested the address of the aged saint, and repaired next morning to her humble abode. "Ladies," said the person whom they saw, "she scarcely spoke after the gentleman left her, but folded her hands upon her breast, and died in the night."

"She was not, for God took her." In her lowly path she had walked with God, conversed with angels, and held intercourse with "the spirits of just men made perfect," for whose society she was, as far as man can judge, prepared far above many of her superiors in gifts and privileges.—*Dr. Leifchild's "Selection of Remarkable Facts."*

“LORD, REMEMBER ME.”

“*And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise.*”—LUKE xxiii. 42, 43.

OH, what a precious Saviour is Jesus! Here was a poor dying man, a guilty man, a miserable thief. He had been caught, was found guilty, was imprisoned, and now crucified. It seems he keenly felt his solemn condition—just about to pass out of time into eternity. Oh, “where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?” Who could befriend him now? To whom could he look? What could he do? How can we but adore the great and gracious God, who poured out upon him “the Spirit of grace and supplication”? His eyes were opened, whereas those about him were blind, and saw “no beauty in Jesus that they should desire Him;” but this poor thief, he saw Him in His glorious saving power, and oh, how he desired to be mercifully remembered! “*Lord, remember me.*” Others saw Him, and despised and derided Him; but this poor thief saw Him as the glorious King of grace, coming to a kingdom. “He was despised and rejected of men, a *Man* of Sorrows, and acquainted with grief;” but this poor man saw Him as “*Lord* over all: rich unto all that call upon Him.” *Man*, as it were, said of this poor man, “*Let him die.*” But oh, how different was the mind of Jesus! His gracious answer to the poor man’s petition bespeaks His loving heart—“*Let him live for ever.*” *Man* said, “He is not fit to live with us;” but Jesus as much as said, “I will take him to live with *Me.*” *Man* as much as said, “Let him die, and his name rot;” but Jesus will graciously remember him for ever.

The poor man’s prayer was short; its answer is everlasting life, everlasting joy. Hung upon the cross, who can help him now? But the poor man’s Saviour was there, his Lord and his God was there, his atoning Priest was there, his sin-cleansing Fountain was there. Oh, what will not a God of grace do for praying souls? “The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth.”

Ah! dear readers, are we better than this man? He was counted a thief by men; we have robbed *God*. Have we loved Him with all our heart, and mind, and soul, and strength, which is His right? Nay, we *have not*. We have not “rendered to God the things which be God’s.” We, then, are thieves. We have sinned. There is no hope but in Jesus. He was crucified. “He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.” In Him is our only hope; and oh, the

mercy, He is the same Jesus to-day! He listens to poor petitioners still. He loves to hear their prayer. May His gracious dealings with others encourage us more and more to come to His feet with all our sins and sorrows, pleading for mercy there. Hannah of old poured out her soul in prayer to the Lord; she begged to be remembered by Him. He graciously remembered her, granted her desire, and sweetly she sung, "My heart rejoiceth in the Lord," &c. What a blessed song! Who can teach to pray or teach to praise like the Lord? Read another precious note in her song (1 Sam. ii. 8): "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory." Oh, bless ye God for this sweet record of His merciful manner in days of old.

See, again, in David's prayer (Psalm xxv. 6, 7), "Remember, O Lord, Thy tender mercies and Thy loving-kindnesses; for they have been ever of old. Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to Thy mercy remember Thou me for Thy goodness' sake, O Lord." And did the Lord turn a deaf ear? Did He despise that prayer? Bless His name for ever, He did not. What he there prayed for the Lord granted unto him, and how sweetly was he made to *sing praise* for the blessings he had *prayed* for! Yes, for tender mercies, and loving-kindness, and transgressions forgiven, and mercy remembered, he was made to *sing*, many, many times, "How excellent is Thy loving-kindness, O God;" "Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin;" "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities;" "Who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies;" "Who remembered us in our low estate, for His mercy endureth for ever," &c.

And, reverting again to the poor dying thief, man's mind was, "*Punish him.*" The mind of Christ was, "*Pardon him*"—"Father, forgive," &c. Man had *imprisoned* him; Jesus makes him "*free indeed.*" All the mercy that man ever showed him was come to an end. The mercy of God "*endureth for ever.*" Man saw him as a sinful, wicked wretch; Jesus receives him, and places him "*without fault* before the throne of God." Oh, the wondrous mercy and grace of our covenant God!

But, dear reader, there was another thief expiring too; and how dreadfully solemn to think, with no grieving for sin, no pleading for mercy, but rather a hardened, scoffing spirit! He, too, dies "*in his sins,*" "*died without mercy.*" Oh, can we think—can we *at all* think—what it must be to be a *lost soul*? Here we solemnly see *that* Scripture, "The wages of sin is death." On the other hand, we see those gracious words fulfilled, "But the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Which portion, think you, belongs to ourselves? The Lord help us

prayerfully to bow at His throne of grace, and say, "*Lord, remember me*"—

"Hast not *Thou* for the sinner bled ?
This is my only plea ;
Thou holy Lamb, to slaughter led,
Then, oh, '*remember me*' !

"Did justice smite, with iron rod,
In sad Gethsemane,
Thy spotless soul ? Then, oh, my God,
My God, '*remember me*' !"

Sturry.

B. B.

COVENANT LOVE.

THERE is nothing in us to draw God into a covenant with us. Many a man seeks after the unmarried virgin, but there is beauty, or there is dowry, or there is something or other which draws on the man ; but there is no such thing in us. This made David say, "Who am I, O Lord God ?" (when he heard of God's covenant with him and his) "Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that Thou hast brought me hitherto ?" "And is this the manner of men, O Lord God ? O Lord God, Thou dealest familiarly with me, as a man dealeth with man ;" or, as it is elsewhere, "Thou hast regarded me as a man of high degree." It would make any such cry out that deeply weighs the freeness of this covenant, "O Lord, what is man, that Thou art mindful of him ? or the son of man, that Thou visitest him ?"

We are, by nature, no better than others that are without God and without covenant. What makes the difference betwixt us and them but this free grace of God ? Is there any reason in us why one is taken into a covenant and another is not ? Nay. I'll tell you a wonder—so it pleaseth the Lord, that sometimes chooseth the worst, and leaves them that are better than they. We read that publicans and harlots were taken in, and the righteous generation, which justified themselves, and were justified by others, were passed by. Surely, God respects none for anything in them ! His desire is, that the freeness of His grace might be seen in those He takes to Himself. Hence the Apostle said, "God chooseth the foolish things of this world, base and despised things," whilst, in the meantime, He passeth by the wise and mighty and things of high esteem, that all men might see it is the grace of God, and not anything in men, by which we are taken into covenant with Him.

AMBROSE.

It is a fearful problem for any man to try with how little religion he may be a real Christian.

NIGHT THOUGHTS BY A WATCHMAN.

A NIGHT AT LUZ.—*Genesis xxviii.*

THERE are no after-thoughts with God, nor mistakes in His government. Painful as are the various and strange providential leadings by which the Good Shepherd removes His flock from place to place, they all are right and always right. To be thrust out from near and dear friends, in order to walk a lonely and dark path with a sad heart, is the lot of not a few of the beloved of the Lord. But usually in those solitary spots the Lord is found to be very near; and here it is He endears Himself to them by speaking to their heart, and delivering them from their fears. Luz has often been turned into Bethel when little expected by them.

Separation and solitude is more or less the lot of all Zion's travellers. No one can fully enter into the cares, sorrows, doubts, and depressions of the sheep of Christ but He who is their Shepherd and Guide. The most sympathetic and faithful friend and fellow-pilgrim cannot always understand and bear with the "Ready-to-halts" and "Fearings" found in the highway to the "Celestial City." There is one "Great-Heart," and but One, who can fully know and constantly attend the lame, the halt, the burdened, and the bound—

"His heart is made of tenderness,
His bowels melt with love."

When Jacob left his father's tent, although he had his father's blessing, he had doubtless a heavy heart. This would make his feet move slowly along the unknown way towards his uncle Laban's abode. With a faint heart and with weary feet the ground and the stone formed a welcome resting-place. He would not seek company. A wounded spirit desires to dwell alone—alone from strangers at least. He is alone here by the appointment of heaven. In this condition the God of his father finds him. Oh, how seasonable are the Lord's favours! Always undeserved, and often unasked and unexpected, He comes with a hope-inspiring vision and a faith-confirming word of promise.

Sleep is a good, although a fitful, remedy for many of the ills and cares of life. Continued wakefulness is one of the most painful afflictions the human frame can endure. Sleep is one of the constant favours, but little prized, which His good hand bestows. Both the evil and the good partake of this rich provision. Reader, do not be unmindful of and unthankful for the blessing of nightly sleep.

By sleep we are shut out from the pains and pleasures of life, but not from God. He has access to the mind even when deep

sleep falleth upon man. By word and sign He has often instructed, corrected, and comforted His anxious and erring people; and, indeed, sometimes rebuked His and their enemies in a dream. Dreams are to be valued by their effects, by the impressions they leave upon the mind, and by the result they produce in the life. Most dreams are most worthless, and have sometimes been misleading to the dreamer. However, the Lord does teach by visions and voices down to the present time, but always in accordance with His revealed will in the Book of God. To follow a dream, or voice, or vision, which is not in harmony with the written Word, is to be led by the deceiver, and will end in shame and confusion. Do not receive or reject all dreams, but weigh and measure them by the divine standard.

Jacob saw in his dream at Luz a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven. The ladder was of the proper length, reaching from earth to heaven; it was in the right position—heavenward, and in constant use—the angels of God ascending and descending on it. Here is a vision of abiding truth, namely, that God is in constant correspondence with men upon the earth. He has not cast off His people, neither is He unmindful of His covenant. He will show Himself nigh at hand to bless in the hour of deepest need. Jacob did not need this vision while in the tent with his mother, and under the directing counsel of his father; but now, away from both, in a strange place, with the painful and cutting remembrance of his brother's hatred and evil intention, he was surely in the most suited condition to appreciate a vision of mercy and a word of consolation.

Oh, this painful preparation work! How heartrending it is! How soul-humbling all these times are! What sighs, what tears, what gloom and terror they cause, none but those who are called to pass through them know. While in these places the language of the heart is, "Oh, that I never were born!" "Oh, that I could hide myself from all below, or cease to exist!" One in this condition is ready to believe that they never can be happy again. While here, all creation is to them a blank. Even the things which should give ease and hope rather have the opposite effect. To look back on the past causes grief and regret; and to think of the future almost produces despair. The plough and the harrow are thus preparing the ground for the good seed. The weeds are being rooted out and burnt up. Wait but a little while, and the springing blade will be seen. There must be this "preparation of the heart" before there can be the fruits of love, joy, and peace. The one is linked with the other.

But the morning cometh. Oh, what a joyful morning when Jacob called the solitary spot "Bethel"! There was beauty all around and a holy calm within. Luz and Bethel are not far

apart. You may fall asleep in the darkest and most dismal place, and awake to find it quite the reverse, as he did. However, Jacob's joy was not the result of a vision of hope only, but precious words of consolation and promise also. What more could the Lord say to His chosen one than He did, in order to give him perfect rest of mind? First, He made Himself known as his father's God; second, He promises the land of Canaan and a numerous seed; third, He assures him of His presence and protection in every place; fourth, that He would not leave him till He had done it all.

Now, look at the effect of this gracious appearing of the Lord to His young and isolated servant. His heart seems burdened with a sense of the divine presence and goodness. This was perhaps the first time that God had spoken to him. Ah! these first visits—these first whispers of His love—these first-applied promises! How they impress the soul! How they enlarge the heart and win the affections! See with what unaffected sincerity he accepts and approves of the Lord's words! With what devotion he sets up the pillar as a pledge and a memorial! With what simplicity he makes his humble vow! His "if" was not an "if" of doubt in regard to the power or faithfulness of God, but, the promises being so great, he could not grasp them all with a steadfast faith. His was not an "if" of unbelief, but of inability; an "if" of trembling, not presumption. Such an "if" is by no means dishonourable to God nor to His Word.

What, then, are we to gather from this visit at Luz? What are its lessons?

1. Do not fear to be driven out from men, nor tremble to be removed from dear ones on earth, but rather seek to be alone with the Lord sometimes.

2. When separated and sad, expect a word from the Lord. Be on the look out for His appearing. He will cause you to change the hardest pillow into a monument of mercy, and make the darkest room a house of God.

3. Look back to the places where and when you have been helped, and remember the Lord is ever the same toward you, and does not forget His promise to you, although He may try your faith exceedingly, and cause you to wait a long time.

4. Bear in mind the fact that your daily life and all your paths are under the eye and hand of God. The cup you drink is measured out to you in its sweets and its bitters. All is most needful—all shall end well, for the Lord will perform all His words.

W. B.

ALTHOUGH we banish God out of our little spot of time, He will meet us when we enter His eternity.

LIGHT AT EVENING-TIME.

THINKING it may perhaps prove a comfort to some of the Lord's tried people, I now send you a short account of the last illness and death of my dear mother, Mrs. Hodges, who peacefully fell asleep in Jesus on the 8th March, 1883. Her health had been gradually failing for some time, and for the last few years she was scarcely ever able to leave the house during the winter months. This was a great trial to her, because, for a great portion of the year, she was thereby deprived of the privilege of going to the house of God; and she being one who greatly prized the means of grace, it can readily be understood that this was a real cross for her to bear.

Like many of God's dear saints in the present day, my dear mother was for many years "a hopper" in the mercy of God, and a sincere seeker after salvation through the merits, blood, and righteousness of Jesus Christ, God the Father's co-equal and co-eternal Son. In fact, from her childhood she had felt her need of a Saviour; but she was often much exercised because she had never been brought to see her calling and election sure, nor could she speak positively of the time when the Lord first began the work of grace in her soul. However, she always showed by her life, walk, and conversation that she was one who feared the Lord. Especially was this manifested by her readiness to help the poor and needy of the Lord's family; and, now that she has been taken home, many who are left behind will miss her greatly.

Several years ago, the Lord gave her this sweet promise, "At evening-time it shall be light," and she therefore looked hopefully forward to the time when the Lord would, in much mercy, clearly manifest His love towards her.

One evening, about a fortnight or three weeks before she was taken home, I went in to spend an hour with her; and, as soon as I saw her, she said how glad she was that I had come, as she wanted to tell me a little of the Lord's goodness to her, for He had that day spoken home these sweet words with comforting power to her soul, "Thou art all fair, My love; there is no spot in thee;" and she had since felt so happy that she now longed "to depart, and to be with Christ." She could then feelingly say—

"Oh, glorious hour! oh, blest abode!
I shall be near and like my God."

Her tongue seemed now unloosed, and she was enabled to speak freely to me of the goodness of the Lord, and of His many mercies He had bestowed upon her, both as a God of providence and as a

God of grace. She then said that, looking back, she could remember the time when she was quite a child, and whilst she was living with her grandfather, Mr. Green, who was then one of the late much-respected George Abrahams' deacons, that, one night, after having been put to bed, she felt herself to be such a great sinner in the sight of a just and holy God that she could not go to sleep, fearing, if she did so, she should wake up in hell. Her distress of mind was so great that she dressed herself again, and went downstairs; and, when her grandfather saw her, he seemed at once to understand her case, and told her to sit down, as they were just about to have family worship. He prayed very earnestly for her, and she afterwards returned to bed, and fell quietly asleep.

This was evidently the time when the Holy Spirit commenced the work of grace in my dear mother's heart, although she herself could never before see this to her own satisfaction; but this was clearly proved by her after life, walk, and conversation, for, even when a girl, she was more fond of being with her aged grandfather and grandmother, and hearing them read God's Word and good books, than of playing about like other children; and, in after life, as before remarked, she was one who showed her love to the Lord by being always ready to help His poor and needy children.

After the Lord had set her soul at liberty, she longed to be gone; and the Lord granted her this her desire by taking her to Himself according to His promise (John xiv. 3).

May I "die the death of the righteous, and may my last end be like hers."

April 28th, 1883.

JOHN HODGES.

"O ARM OF THE LORD, AWAKE!"

(ISAIAH li. 9—11.)

| | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| "Arm of the Lord, awake!" | |
| Let Israel's God arise; | Psa. lxxviii. 1. |
| The Lord of hosts, whose mighty power | 2 Sam. vii. 26. |
| Shone wondrous in their eyes! | |
| "Arm of the Lord, awake!" | |
| As in the ancient days, | |
| As in the generations past, | |
| And Thine shall be the praise. | |
| "Arm of the Lord, awake!" | |
| Put on Thy hidden strength; | Isa. xlv. 15. |
| O Lord, Thy glorious arm reveal, | Isa. lxiii. 12; liii. 1; lii. 10. |
| And make it bare at length! | Isa. lii. 10. |
| The arm that Rahab cut, | |
| And Pharaoh wounded sore, | |
| When, venturing close in Israel's wake, | |
| They sank to rise no more. | |

| | |
|---|----------------------------|
| That God is still as strong ; | 2 Sam. vii. 28. |
| The God of Israel reigns ; | Isa. lii. 7 ; Rev. xix. 6. |
| Not shortened is His arm of power ; | Isa. lix. 1. |
| His hearing ear remains. | |
| Come, then, ye saints of God | |
| Who say, "Thy kingdom come ;" | Luke xi. 2. |
| Let your petitions mingled rise | |
| With His before the throne. | Rev. viii. 4. |
| Say not, with unbelief, | Judges vi. 13. |
| "His miracles are past ;" | |
| Nay ; "greater works" shall yet be done ; | John xiv. 12. |
| Your cause on Jesus cast. | |
| Almighty power to work, | |
| An Advocate to plead, | |
| A Helper in the Holy Ghost, | Rom. viii. 26. |
| Ye cannot but succeed. | |
| Take, then, the rod of God, | Exod. xiv. |
| His word of promise small ; | |
| Stand still to watch ; the Lord shall fight ; | |
| His enemies shall fall. | |
| The lambs, His Word declares, | Isa. xl. 11. |
| Are gathered by His arm— | |
| Nay, even in His bosom placed— | |
| Saved thus from every harm. | |
| The wanderer shall return ; | Luke xv. 6. |
| Lost sheep of Israel named ; | Matt. xv. 24. |
| Redeemed from the lion's mouth, | 1 Pet. v. 8. |
| The lame, and blind, and maimed. | Jer. xxxi. 8. |
| By no man's word or power, | John i. 1. |
| But by Jehovah's sword— | Eph. vi. 17. |
| The sword that fought for Israel then, | |
| For therefore saith the Lord. | |

ANON.

SORROW, absolutely exclusive of the faith of forgiveness, is legal, and tendeth unto death. Assurance, absolutely exclusive of godly sorrow, is presumption, and not a persuasion of Him that calleth us. But Gospel sorrow and Gospel assurance may well dwell in the same breast at the same time. Indeed, as in all worldly joys there is a secret wound, so, in all godly sorrow and mourning, considered in itself, there is a secret joy and refreshment ; hence it doth not wither and dry up, but rather enlarge, open, and sweeten the heart. I am persuaded that generally they mourn most who have most assurance ; and all true Gospel mourners will be found to have the root of assurance so grafted in them that, in its proper season (a time of trouble), it will undoubtedly flourish.—*Dr. Owen.*

NOTICES OF BOOKS, &c.

Three Letters on the Immortality of the Soul and Eternal Punishment.

By the late J. C. PHILPOT, M.A. Price three-halfpence.
E. Littleton, Baptist Minister, Withyham, Sussex.

(Continued from page 150.)

WE have felt induced to give more lengthy extracts from these letters than we at first purposed doing, hoping that they may prove useful to many of our young friends especially, as a warning against the plausible, but unscriptural teaching of the great bulk of general professors in the present day, who show but little reverence for the Word of God, and do not spare to cavil strenuously against His righteous government and the threatened reward of the impenitent. The Word of the Lord declares that "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2 Tim. iii. 13).

Reader, do not trifle with the Word of God, neither listen to those who do. The awful reality of "eternal judgment" will be no trifling thing to those who harden themselves against it now. May we be found in Jesus, who obtained eternal redemption for His Church from eternal death.

After having spoken of the creation of the soul of man as being entirely distinct from that of the body, Mr. Philpot goes on to say:—

"Pure immaterial spirit, as thus created, cannot die, . . . that is, cannot cease to be, because, not being compounded of material particles, it is not incident to those mutations which befall the body. As a proof and example of this, we may adduce the angels, both good and evil. God made them spirits (Psa. civ. 4; Heb. i. 7), and as such immortal. When, therefore, the apostate angels kept not their first estate, sin did not destroy their immortality. Satan is as immortal as Gabriel—as immortal in wickedness and woe as his once fellow-angel is in holiness and happiness. So we hold it is with the soul of man. By the fall, man lost the image of God, in which he was created, and in this sense, the soul died in the same day that it sinned (Gen. iii. 17); but it did not cease to be, for Adam lived more than nine hundred years after the fall (Gen. v. 5). . . .

"The breath of God did create, for under its creative power man became a living soul; in other words, a living soul was formed in, and added to, the body of man. He was thus distinguished from the animal creation, to whom God gave life, but not a distinct, rational, immaterial, and, as we believe, immortal soul.

"But we will now adduce another argument, which we think you will find difficult, even according to your views, to refute.

You admit that a man has a soul distinct from his body, and you admit that this soul can exist distinct from the body, for you speak of the day of judgment, and of the punishment of the wicked in that day. Now, if we can show from Scripture the separate existence of the soul of man after death, we establish the original immortality of the soul; for the fact of its subsistence after death proves that what is called death does not destroy it. The soul must be mortal or immortal. There is no medium between the two. If mortal, it would die when the body dies; but if immortal, it will still live, though the body dies. If you will not admit this, you have got to prove why it subsists after the death of the body. . . . In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, the rich man is represented as being after death in a tormenting flame, and apprehensive that the souls of his brethren would also come to the same place. His soul, therefore, evidently subsisted distinct from his body after death. Judas is said to have gone to his own place (Acts i. 25), a testimony clearly showing that there was a place where the soul of Judas went. Now, if you believe that Judas will have to be judged for his sin in betraying Christ, where has his soul been all this time, and where will it continue to be until the day of judgment? If in its awful place, that proves that the soul of Judas has already existed nearly two thousand years. Does not that simple fact prove the immortality of the soul? for, if it has subsisted already two thousand years, why should it not subsist to all eternity? . . . Is the soul of Judas kept alive by perpetual miracle, which it must be, if, being naturally and inherently mortal, it still maintains a separate existence? or does it subsist because, like the souls of other men, it is essentially immortal? According to the same line of argument, if Cain is to be judged for the murder of Abel, his soul has subsisted, say, near six thousand years, since he slew his brother; and, if it has already so existed for six thousand years, that fact would show a principle of immortality naturally inherent in it. So "the spirits in prison" (1 Pet. iii. 19)—that is, the souls of the antediluvian sinners to whom Noah preached by the Spirit of Christ, but preached in vain—testify to the separate existence of the disobedient, who are reserved to the judgment of the great day. Thus we have proof upon proof from the Scripture to the separate and present existence of the souls of the wicked—a fact which you will not deny, though you may dispute our inference from it evidencing the original immortality of the soul.

"Now, it is worthy of observation that the Word of God makes no difference, in point of expression, between the souls of the righteous and the souls of the wicked, when it speaks of them as in a separate state of existence. It calls both of them by the

same term, 'spirits.' Thus, in the case of the righteous, we read of 'the spirits of the just men made perfect' (Heb. xii. 23); 'Into Thy hand I commit My spirit' (Psa. xxxi. 5); 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit' (Acts vii. 59). So the souls of the wicked are called 'the spirits in prison;' and similarly, when the Word of God speaks of the soul of man generally, without deciding on its state as godly or ungodly, it uses the same word 'spirit.' 'Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it' (Eccles. xii. 7). The word 'spirit' being used thus indiscriminately of the soul of man, evidently shows that it is a spiritual subsistence, and that, whatever be its ultimate state of bliss or woe, neither sin has made it mortal nor grace immortal. Being a spirit, it returns at death to God who gave it, and maintains a separate existence in death and after death. Now, this of itself goes a long way to prove its original immortality; for, assume the contrary, that the soul is not necessarily immortal, because spiritual and immaterial, there at once arises the question, 'How, then, does it subsist, and that for thousands of years after death?' If it be answered, 'Because it is upheld in being by the special power of God,' we demand proof from the Word of God that He Himself, by a perpetual miracle, keeps the soul alive after death; for, if not naturally immortal, it must be naturally mortal—that is, every moment subject to death, even if it do not die with the body, and can only be kept from dying by the special intervention of the Almighty. Name chapter and verse where such a doctrine is even hinted at, or is deducible by fair inference, if not plainly and positively revealed.

"Another argument for the natural and the original immortality of the soul may be drawn from the declaration of the Word of truth that 'God created man in His own image, after His own likeness.' This image of God was not merely the possession of a soul endued with those moral and intellectual qualities in which man resembled his Maker, but in its being a copy also of His eternal duration. If the soul of man were created mortal, it could not subsist distinct from the body, but would pass away, and cease to be, as is in the case of mere animal life. Whatever qualities, then, it might possess of reason or conscience, it would not be a representation either of the moral and intellectual qualities, or of the life of God. It would be like an image impressed on the sand, not a stamp upon a lasting and durable material, and would be only a higher order of instinct, such as guides the bee to make its cell, or the bird its nest. Passing away like a fleeting breath, how could the soul of man resemble Him who liveth for ever and ever? But, as created separately from the body by the very breath of God, it became endued by the power of this divine

afflatus, not only with those intellectual and moral qualities which are faint representations of the wisdom, holiness, and goodness of God, but with that immortality which gave it a capacity for the eternal enjoyment of Him. . . . This immortality of the soul, therefore, made man capable of restoration. A mortal soul would have died like mere animal instinct; but, being naturally immortal, it survived the wreck of the fall, and was capable of such a restoration as would make it meet for the inheritance of saints in light."

Having treated upon the subject of the soul being created immortal, Mr. Philpot then proceeds to show that the eternal life given to the believer by Christ is something other than what is stated in the second objection to be the gift of immortality. On this point he thus forcibly argues:—

"2. That Christ has brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel (2 Tim. i. 10); that He gives unto His sheep eternal life (John x. 28); that He came that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly; and that 'the gift of God is eternal life' (Rom. v. 23)—all this is as plain and undeniable as revelation could make it. But the question is not whether Christ came to give His people eternal life, for on this point we are fully agreed, but what is the *nature* of this life eternal? According to your views, it is the making of the souls of His saints immortal which were naturally mortal. Now, this we deny. Our blessed Lord has fully settled the question of what this eternal life consists in, in that memorable prayer which He offered up to His heavenly Father (John xvii.): 'As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him. And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent' (John xvii. 2, 3). There our gracious Lord most clearly declares that this eternal life which He gives to as many as the Father has given Him is not the making of their souls immortal, which previously were mortal, but that it consists in a knowledge of the only true God, and of Jesus Christ, whom He hath sent. The souls of the elect were already immortal by natural constitution, but all true knowledge of God was lost in the fall, through the moral death which then seized them. When, then, the gracious Lord regenerates the soul by His Spirit and grace, He does not thereby turn a mortal soul into an immortal one, which would be as great a miracle as the raising of the mortal body, and changing it into a glorious body at the last day, but quickens it into a new and spiritual life. This is called by our blessed Lord a second or heavenly birth (John iii. 3—5); and by the Apostle, a being delivered from the power of

darkness, and being translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son (Col. i. 13, 14); and elsewhere, an opening of the eyes, and a turning from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God (Acts xxvi. 18). This divine work upon the soul is also called 'a new creature,' or 'a new creation' (2 Cor. v. 17); 'a new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness' (Eph. iv. 24); and 'a being renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him' (Col. iii. 10). But all this is totally distinct from working so thorough and radical a change in the very constitution of the soul as to make that naturally immortal which was before naturally mortal. It is the communication of spiritual life; a giving of faith and repentance, of hope and love; a renewing of the image of God in which Adam was created, but which was marred and defaced by the fall; a gracious knowledge of the mind, a conformity to the image, and an obedience to the will, of Christ; an implantation of grace here, to expand into glory hereafter. But all this is very different from altering the very constitution of the soul, and changing it from a mortal to an immortal fabric. There is not an expression in the Scriptures, whether they describe the fall and its consequences, or the recovery and its effects, which hints at any such change as would transmute a mortal into an immortal soul. When they describe, for instance, the effects of the fall, and what we are by nature, they tell us that we are 'dead in trespasses and sin;' that we have 'the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in us;' that we are 'without God, and have no hope in the world;' are 'alienated and enemies in our mind by wicked works;' that Satan blinds our eyes and takes us captives, &c.; all which expressions, though they describe fully and forcibly a state of ruin and misery, of death and alienation of will and affections from God, yet clearly intimate that there was room for a recovery, for they are generally coupled with the work of Christ in redeeming and reconciling, and the work of the Holy Ghost in regenerating and renewing the elect of God (see Eph. ii. 1, 12—18; iv. 18—21; Col. i. 21, 22; 2 Tim. ii. 26). Similarly, when they describe the work of Christ in the flesh, they represent it as a redemption from captivity, a putting away of sin by the sacrifice of Himself, a making atonement for transgression, a reconciliation of aliens and strangers, a justification of the ungodly by His obedience, &c.; all which expressions imply, not making of that which is mortal to be immortal, but a removing of those barriers which sin had made between God and the soul. So, when they speak of the work of the Holy Ghost, they describe it as a quickening from a death in sins—that is, evidently, a moral death—a renewing of the soul

in knowledge after the image of Him who created it ; a sanctifying of it, and a dwelling in it, by His presence ; a helping of its infirmities, and a witnessing in it as a Spirit of adoption, &c. ; all which expressions show that the work of the Holy Ghost is not to change and transmute a soul naturally and originally mortal into one that becomes immortal by His operations and influences, but to restore and repair the image of God in it, which had become marred and defaced by sin original and actual

“ View the atoning blood, finished work, and meritorious sacrifice of the Son of God, as healing the breach, reconciling aliens and enemies, fulfilling the law, glorifying it, and making it honourable, and thus opening a way and providing the means whereby God can be just and yet the Justifier of him who believeth in Jesus. How harmonious is all this with the Scriptures, and the experience of the saints ! Here there is no jarring sound. Here we see, in the most striking colours, both the justice and the mercy, the goodness and the severity, of God. We see the souls of all men alike immortal, but some saved and others lost ; some pardoned and regenerated, others left to fill up the measure of their iniquities, and dying as they lived, in enmity and alienation ; some liberated and sanctified by the knowledge of the truth, and others allowed to drink down and harden themselves in error.”

(To be continued.)

“THE GROANING OF THE PRISONER.”

(PSALM cii. 20.)

BLESSED Saviour ! Friend of man !

Who canst all creation scan ;

Who the hearts of all doth know,

And dost feel for mortals' woe ;

Blessed Jesus, look on me !

From my burden set me free !

I am bowed to earth with grief ;

Send, oh, send me sweet relief !

Ease my sorrow-smitten mind !

Thou who art most good and kind, ;

Raise my soul up from the dust !

In Thee, Lord, I put my trust.

I am weak, but strong Thou art ;

Unto me Thy strength impart ;

I am sick, Physician Thou ;

Endless honours crown Thy brow ;

Lift Thy hand, rebuke the wave,

And from all my troubles save.

Margate.

G. H. M. READ.

"THE TWO BABYLONS."*

[It has often been remarked how much the services of the Roman Catholic Church resemble the idolatrous worship of the Pagans. The following extracts will show how the Papists have introduced into their system practices that were found among Pagans, evidently for the purpose of easily winning over the latter to their Church. The writer of the book named in the foot-note has searched out and exposed the abominable connection of Pagan legends and rites with a professedly Christian religion. The following extracts will show the points of resemblance to be so strong that the writer may well ask—]

"What would even the old Pagan priests say, who left the stage of time while the martyrs were still battering against their gods, and, rather than symbolize with them, 'loved not their lives unto the death,' if they were to see the present aspect of the so-called Church of European Christendom? What would Belshazzar himself say, if it were possible for him to enter St. Peter's, at Rome, and see the Pope in his pontificals, in all his pomp and glory? Surely he would conclude that he had only entered one of his own well-known temples, and that all things continued as they were at Babylon, on that memorable night, when he saw, with astonished eyes, the handwriting on the wall, 'Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin.'"

We shall give some of the leading points of resemblance between the idolatry of the one Babylon and the Christianity of the other, as they are exhibited to us in this volume.

Whence the worship of the Madonna and Child? The reply is, from Babylon. Semiramis, the founder of that city, was there worshipped as a goddess; and Nimrod, whom she had aided in his conquests, by a mythological fiction, was worshipped as her infant son. According to Jeremiah, she was styled "The Queen of Heaven." The Venus, and her son Cupid, of the Greeks, and the great goddess of Diana at Ephesus, were parts of the same idolatry. With these figures, emblematic traditions of the woman's seed that was to bruise the serpent's head were mingled. "In the uppermost storey of the tower of Babel, or temple of Belus," says the book under consideration, "Diodorus Siculus tells us, there stood three images of the great divinities of Babylon, and one of these was of *a woman grasping a serpent's head*. Among the Greeks the same thing was symbolized; for Diana, whose real character was originally the same as that of the great Babylonian goddess, was represented as bearing in her hands a serpent *deprived of its head*. As time wore away, and the facts of

* "The Two Babylons." By the late Alexander Haslop. Partridge and Co., 9, Paternoster Row, London, E.C.

Semiramis' history became obscured, her son's birth was boldly declared to be miraculous, and therefore she was called '*Alma Mater*,' the *virgin* mother. That the birth of the Great Deliverer was to be miraculous was widely known long before the Christian era. For centuries—some say for thousands of years—before that event, the Buddhist priests had a tradition that a *virgin* was to bring forth a child to bless the world. That this tradition came from no Popish or Christian source is evident from the surprise felt and expressed by the Jesuit missionaries, when they first entered Thibet and China, and not only found a mother and a child worshipped as at home, but that mother worshipped under a character exactly corresponding with that of their own Madonna, '*Virgo Deipera*,' the virgin mother of God, and that, too, in regions where they could not find the least trace of either the name or history of our Lord Jesus Christ having ever been known." The circle round the head of the Popish virgin, as descriptive of luminous rays, is also taken from the heathen goddess. How easy was the transfer from the heathen Madonna and her son to the Virgin Mary and the infant Jesus, in the endeavour to effect a compromise between Paganism and Christianity!

Whence the festivals of the Roman Church? The reply is, from Babylon. Whence the Christmas festival? "It is admitted by the most learned and candid writers of all parties that the day of our Lord's birth cannot be determined, and that *within the Christian Church* no such festival as Christmas was ever heard of till the third century, and that not till the fourth century was far advanced did it gain much observance. How, then, did the Romish Church fix on December the 25th as Christmas Day? Why, thus: long before the fourth century, and long before the Christian era itself, a festival was celebrated among the heathen at that precise time of the year, in honour of the birth of the son of the Babylonian queen of heaven; and it may fairly be presumed that, in order to conciliate the heathen, and to swell the number of the nominal adherents of Christianity, the same festival was adopted by the Roman Church, giving it only the name of Christ." "In Egypt, the son of Isis, the Egyptian title for the queen of heaven, was born at this very time, 'about the time of the winter solstice.' The very name by which Christmas is popularly known among themselves—Yule Day—proves at once its Pagan and Babylonian origin. 'Yule' is the Chaldee name for an 'infant' or 'little child'; and as the 25th of December was called by our Pagan Anglo-Saxon ancestors, 'Yule Day,' or 'Child's Day,' and the night that preceded it 'Mother-night,' long before they came in contact with Christianity, that sufficiently proves its real character." "The candles in some

parts of England lighted on Christmas Eve, and used so long as the festive season lasts, were equally lighted by the Pagans on the eve of the festival of the Babylonian god, to do honour to him; for it was one of the distinguishing peculiarities of his worship to have lighted wax candles on his altars. The Christmas tree, now so common among us, was equally common in Pagan Rome and Pagan Egypt." "The yule log is the seed stock of Nimrod deified as the sun-god, but cut down by his enemies; the Christmas tree is Nimrod *redivivus*—the slain god come to life again." Even the mistletoe-bough was derived from Babylon. "The mistletoe was regarded as a divine branch—a branch that came from heaven, and grew upon a tree that sprung out of the earth. Thus, by the engrafting of the celestial branch into the earthly tree, heaven and earth, that sin had severed, were joined together, and thus the mistletoe-bough became the token of divine reconciliation to man, the *kiss* being the well-known token of pardon and reconciliation." Even the Christmas goose proves the union between the Old and the New Babylon. "Yea, 'the Christmas goose' and 'yule cakes' were essential articles in the worship of the Babylonian Messiah, as that worship was practised both in Egypt and at Rome."

Whence Lady-day? It is celebrated by the Roman Church in commemoration of the miraculous conception of our Lord, but without any evidence of its accordance with it in regard to time. The real reason of this festival is thus stated—"Before our Lord was either conceived or born, that very day now set down in the Popish calendar for the 'Annunciation of the Virgin' was observed in *Pagan* Rome in honour of Cybele, the mother of the Babylonian Messiah."

"Then look at Easter. What means the term 'Easter' itself? It is not a Christian name. It bears its Chaldean origin on its very forehead. Easter is nothing else than Astarte, one of the titles of Beltis, the queen of heaven, whose name, as pronounced by the people of Nineveh, was evidently identical with that now in common use in this country. That name, as found by Layard on the Assyrian monuments, is Ishtar. The forty days' abstinence of Lent was directly borrowed from the worshippers of the Babylonian goddess. Such a Lent of forty days, 'in the spring of the year,' is still observed by the Yezidis, or Pagan devil-worshippers of Koordistan, who have inherited it from their early masters, the Babylonians." It is also observed in Egypt and Sabea. The Easter buns even, and their very name, may be traced to Chaldea. Jeremiah, alluding to these, says, "The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven."

Whence the observance of Midsummer Day? "When the Papacy

sent its emissaries over Europe, towards the end of the sixth century, to gather the Pagans into its fold, this festival was found in high favour in many countries. What was to be done with it? Were they to wage war with it? No; this would have been contrary to the famous advice of Pope Gregory I., that by all means they shall meet the Pagans half way, and so bring them into the Romish Church. The Gregorian policy was carefully observed; and so Midsummer Day, that had been hallowed by Paganism to the worship of Tammuz, was incorporated as a sacred Christian festival in the Roman calendar. But still a question was to be determined. What was to be the name of this Pagan festival? . . . If the name of Christ could not be conveniently tacked to it, what should hinder its being called by the name of His forerunner, John the Baptist?" "Now, having fixed on the 25th of December for the celebration of the birth of Christ, and John the Baptist having been born six months before, the Pagan festival of the 24th of June was styled, 'The Feast of the Nativity of St. John.'"

Whence baptismal regeneration? This also comes from Babylon. "So far as heathenism is concerned, the following extracts from Potter and Athenæus speak distinctly enough. 'Every person,' says the former, 'who came to the solemn sacrifice (of the Greeks) was purified by water, to which end, at the entrance of the temples, there was commonly placed a vessel full of holy water.' How did this water get its holiness? This water was consecrated, says Athenæus, by putting into it a *burning torch* taken from the altar. . . . Now, this very same method is used in the Romish Church for consecrating the water for baptism. The unsuspecting testimony of Bishop Hay leaves no doubt on this point: 'It' (the water kept in the baptismal font), says he, 'is blessed on the eve of Pentecost, because it is the Holy Ghost who gives to the waters of baptism the power and efficacy of sanctifying our souls, and because the baptism of Christ is with the Holy Ghost and with fire.' In blessing the water, a *lighted torch* is put into the font."

Whence purgatory and prayers for the dead? Again, we reply, from Babylon. "In every system, except that of the Bible, the doctrine of a purgatory after death, and prayers for the dead, have always been found." "Plato, speaking of the future judgment of the dead, holds out the hope of final deliverance for *all*; but maintains that, of 'those who are judged,' some must *first* proceed to a subterranean place of judgment, where they shall sustain the punishment they have deserved." "In Pagan Rome, purgatory was equally held up before the minds of men; but there, there seems to have been no hope held out to any of exemption from its pain. The Paganism of the Christianity

of some Protestants may be discovered here." "Prayers for the dead ever go hand-in-hand with purgatory."

In this way we might proceed to show that all of Papal Christianity, except the name, is borrowed from the idolatrous customs which had their origin in ancient Babylon. The Pontifex Maximus, the infallibility, the sacrifice of the Mass, the processions, the conclave of cardinals, the power of the keys, the mitre, the crosier, the priestly celibacy, the monks and nuns, the worship of images and of relics, the fastings and penance, the tonsure, the rosary—in fact, all Romanism—is Paganism under the Christian name. Well might the reading of the Scriptures be prohibited to its votaries, since none of its requirements could be found there. Its reference to ecclesiastical traditions is purposely intended to put enquirers upon a wrong scent. The fact can no longer be concealed that Romanism is the reproduction and perpetuation of the old Babylonian idolatry, and it is so in all—even its minutest—particulars. This calls for the most serious consideration, not of the Church of England merely, which retains many features of resemblance to the Church from whence it came, but of many Protestant Churches, which are but one more remove both from the old Babylon and the new. "What concord hath Christ with Belial?" All are either of Christ or of Belial. There can be no union of the two. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

[The foregoing extracts are given to our readers, believing that they will prove very interesting to many who may not have seen them before. We have taken them from a tract published at the Tract Depository, Castle Street, Holborn, London, E.C. W. K. Bloom, agent. Price one halfpenny, or twenty-five for eightpence.]

MOST of our readers no doubt have rejoiced with us in the fact that the Affirmation Bill has been thrown out, because nearly all of us feel sure that it was introduced for the purpose of helping Mr. Bradlaugh to a place in the House of Commons, therefore we could not sympathize with those who would thus "help the ungodly" (2 Chron. xix. 2); and we desire to feel heartily thankful that our God has heard the prayers of His people, and overturned the devices of those who would lay our liberties at the feet of men whose avowed purpose is to overthrow them. We hope that this signal interposition of the Lord of hosts will greatly stimulate His people to constant prayer.

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.—No. XXXVII.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,—I was very pleased to hear from you, and glad to find your health is improved. I hope, if the Lord will, that you may soon be strong enough to return home. I shall be very pleased to see you again, dear.

I feel sure you would like to read the account of Emma Farrer. I think I never read a more delightful account of any young person. I read it to the dear girls at school. Oh, that God would grant that they each may know for themselves that precious Saviour in whom Emma Farrer trusted! I often wish that I could see them more interested in reading the Word of God, and anxious about their souls' salvation, for we all need a Saviour, and every one must be brought to feel their need. How solemn is the thought that those who despise this Jesus, the only Saviour of poor sinners, must perish for ever; for the Word of God says that "there is no other name given under heaven whereby we must be saved but the name of Jesus."

I am very glad, dear, that you are anxious to know this precious Jesus as your own God and Saviour. The Lord has promised that all who seek Him shall find Him. May He deepen this anxiety in your soul, and help you still to seek His face! Do not forget His own words, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." How encouraging to a poor, sin-burdened soul! Oh, my dear girl, there is nothing else worth our seeking; indeed there is not, for what is all the world without *Christ*? It is all vanity! But, if we possess the Lord Jesus Christ, in Him is all we need for time and for eternity—

"In Him my treasure all contained;
By Him my feeble soul sustained;
For Him I gladly all things leave;
To Him, my soul, for ever cleave."

Dear Miss Lee died on Saturday, at Attleborough. She was buried here in the cemetery. Mr. Sinkinson, from Bedworth, gave a very nice account of her. He said, "I believe that dear girl is sleeping in Jesus, and those who sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him."

My dear girl, may this be your chief concern—to know your interest in this precious Jesus. This is the prayer of,

Your affectionate friend and teacher,

Coventry, June, 1867.

M. B.

How little of the sea can a child carry in his hand! As little do I take away of my great sea—the boundless love of Christ.—*Rutherford.*

THE SOWER.

THE SAVIOUR'S INTERCESSION AND THE STRANGER'S PRAYER.

A SERMON BY THE LATE SEPTIMUS SEARS.

"Moreover concerning a stranger, that is not of Thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country for Thy name's sake (for they shall hear of Thy great name, and of Thy strong hand, and of Thy stretched out arm); when he shall come and pray toward this house: hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling-place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to Thee for."—1 KINGS viii. 41—43.

(Concluded from page 156.)

III. *We are to enquire what are the things that "the stranger calleth to the Lord for;"* and here we can only notice some of the many requests of the stranger, the sum and substance of which is, that he may know those things to which he is a stranger. He is no stranger to guilt, but he is a stranger to pardon; he is no stranger to nakedness, but he is a stranger to being clothed; he is no stranger to condemnation, but he is a stranger to justification; he is no stranger to distance from God, but he is a stranger to nearness; he is no stranger to pollution, but he is a stranger to cleansing; he is no stranger to God in a broken law, cursing sinners, but he is a stranger to Jesus revealed in the Gospel, blessing sinners; he is not a stranger to the "sound of the trumpet and the alarm of war" (Jer. iv. 19), but he is a stranger to sweet victory and peace. The bondage of Egypt he has groaned under, but the blessed "land flowing with milk and honey" he has not yet set his foot upon. The "yoke" he understands, but the anointing he is still without. Weariness, hunger, and fear he is no stranger to, but he is a stranger to rest, satisfaction, and "joy and peace in believing." Hence, the substance of what this sensible stranger calleth to the Lord for is—

1. *Pardon.* He feels himself a guilty sinner, and he knows well that, without his sins being pardoned, he can never see the Lord's face with joy. He feels himself indeed "tied and bound with the chain of his sins," and is thus obliged to come over to the great Cyrus, as it is written, "The labour of Egypt, and the merchandise of Ethiopia, and of the Sabeans, men of stature, shall come over unto Thee, and they shall be Thine: they shall come after Thee; in chains they shall come over, and they shall fall down unto Thee; they shall make supplication unto Thee" (Isa. xlv. 14). And thus it is that this stranger comes in the

chains of his guilt, and, making supplication unto Jesus, cries, "Pardon mine iniquity, for it is great" (Psa. xxv. 11). He comes with the prodigal's confession, "I have sinned," and longs for the sweet "kiss" of pardoning love. He "acknowledges his sin unto the Lord, and hides not his iniquity," and longs and begs to know the "blessedness of the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered, to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile" (Psa. xxxii. 1—3).

2. He calleth to the Lord for *justification*. He has been arraigned at the bar of a broken law. There the sentence has come forth against him. There he stands condemned, and upon the ground of works can look for nothing but the curse. But he is now making his appeal from the throne of justice to the throne of grace. He is now turning his face from "the mount that may be touched, that burneth with fire, and blackness, and a tempest, and from the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words," and is looking toward "Mount Zion, to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling" (Heb. xii. 18—24), and to the finished righteousness of Jesus, begging to be delivered from the condemnation of Sinai, through the atonement of Jesus, the King in Zion. He wants the "sentence" of acquittal to come forth from the Lord's presence in the "blessed mount where He commands the blessing, even life for evermore" (Psa. xvii. 2; cxxxiii. 3). He wants that blessed faith that enables to fly from the burning mountain in the deserts of Arabia to the rich and glorious mountain, Calvary, where Jesus, and pardoning love and blood, are food for dying souls. He is "black as the tents of Kedar" in himself, but begs for faith to put on the righteousness of Jesus, that he may be "comely as the curtains of Solomon" (Solomon's Song i. 5).

3. He begs for the rich privilege of entering into the holiest, washed in the Saviour's blood, clothed in His righteousness, and with the sweet Spirit bearing witness with his spirit that he is a child of God (Rom. iii. 16). He wants to "draw nigh with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having his heart sprinkled from an evil conscience, and being washed with pure water" (Heb. x. 22). He wants to be able to say, "Abba, Father," without a wavering tongue. In a word, he wants and begs for his filthy soul to be washed in Jesus' blood; his naked soul to be clothed in His righteousness; his lost soul to be saved with His salvation; his hungry soul to be fed with His bruised body; his diseased soul to be healed with His balm; his refugeless soul to find refuge in Him. He wants Calvary's cross for his shade; Calvary's wounds for his refuge; Calvary's atonement for his peace. He wants to be built *on* Christ as a foundation; to dwell *in* Christ as a temple; draw nigh to God *through* Christ; live *through* Christ; live *upon*

Christ ; live *to* the praise of Christ ; and at last live *with* Christ for ever, to praise the sacred Three in everlasting hallelujahs of joy, peace, and triumph. These, then, in substance, are the things that "the stranger calleth to the Lord for." But—

IV. *We have to observe the success attending the stranger's errand, or the blessings which are sure to be given him, in answer to the Saviour's prayer.* Whoever may find his prayers unavailing, Jesus, the great Solomon, will never find His so. If the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man be *much* availing, surely we may assert that the effectual fervent prayer of Jesus is *all* availing. The cries of the spiritual stranger must come up into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, because the great Angel of the covenant, on his behalf, officiates at the golden altar (Rev. viii. 3), and adds to his anxious breathings the sweet incense of His own sacrificial and intercessory work. Indeed, there are several immutable things to secure the success of the supplicating stranger. The *will* of the Father is on his side, and it is "according to the will of God" that the Holy Ghost "makes intercession" for the stranger (Rom. viii. 26—29). There are the "*yea and amen promises*" (2 Cor. i. 20) as well as the never-to-be-forfeited "*oath*" of a covenant God on his side (Heb. vi. 17, 18). But the point of security which the text makes most prominent is, the *intercession* of the Greater than Solomon. Oh, Jesus is looking, coming stranger, with a heart full of tenderness and compassion upon thee, and looking to the Father with an authoritative and confident cry, "Hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling-place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to Thee for." As if He should say, pointing to the poor, guilt-stung, coming stranger, and lifting up His eyes to the throne of the Father, "Look upon an object of Thy everlasting love. See, there is one whom Thou gavest Me to redeem. I bought him with My invaluable blood. His name is on My breast, and deep engraven on the palms of My hands. Now, taught by the Holy Spirit, he sees his strangership ; he feels his helplessness ; he feels his ruin ; but he sees the way of pardon, justification, and access. His eyes are upon, and his hands are stretched out toward, the place of meeting, Myself, the true Temple. Hear his humble confession, 'I have sinned' ; listen to his supplication ; read his wants in his earnest looks, his deep sighs, his heart-felt cries ; read his heart, see its woes, mark its wants, and do according to all that he calleth to Thee for." Can we doubt the stranger's good success with such an Advocate with the Father, who, though—

" With cries and tears He offered up
His humble suit below,
Yet with authority He asks,
Enthroned in glory now " ?

No; indeed, there can be no Scriptural ground to doubt the success of the coming stranger. He may not have his requests granted him just in the manner and measure, nor at the time, nor by the means he has desired and hoped. God displays the absolute sovereignty of His character in all His dealings with the heirs of salvation; but, while the exercise of sovereignty gives endless and admirable diversity to His handiwork in the souls of His children, the immutability of His will and the stability of His Word secures to them all the blessings of pardon, justification, and access to the Father. In the reception of the blessings the stranger seeks, God alone is the efficient cause, although the blessing is received by faith; but still, that faith is "not of himself," but is "the gift of God" (Eph. ii. 8).

Since Jesus, with His obedient life, and atoning death, and justifying resurrection, is the only channel of pardon and peace, and the only way of access that the Scriptures reveal, he that thinks he is pardoned, and may draw nigh to God, and yet his pardon was not gained by "looking unto Jesus," is deceiving his own self. Hart might well say—

"Worship God, then, in His Son,
There He's love, and there alone;
Think not that He will or may
Pardon any other way."

When God's time of blessing the stranger has arrived, he is enabled, by whatever means the Lord pleases, to go, a poor, guilty, black and hell-deserving sinner, to a law-fulfilling and sin-atoning Saviour; and, notwithstanding all his guilt and wretchedness, to believe that he is welcome to Jesus, and that He "will in no wise cast him out" (John vi. 37); and so drop with all his load of sins and woes upon the atonement of Jesus, and so believe Him to have stood in his law-place, to have paid all his debts, and to have endured all his hell, that his conscience becomes unburdened and clean, his soul is in sweet rest and peace, and his heart is enlarged with the "love of God, shed abroad therein by the Holy Ghost" (Rom. v. 5). And truly most blessed is the effect of this believing sight of Jesus "making peace" for him "through the blood of the cross" (Col. i. 20). The law is no longer his terror, for he sees that, in his blessed Surety, it is "magnified and made honourable" (Isa. xlii. 21). Justice no longer seems against him, but on his side; yea, every perfection of Deity is for him. The wretched hardness of his heart is taken away, and softened, meekened, humbled, happy, and free, he can draw nigh to the mercy-seat, and feel no terror nor guilt; he can lift up "holy hands, without wrath and doubting" (1 Tim. ii. 8); he can "serve the Lord without fear, in holiness and righteousness" (Luke i.

74, 75). "Perfect love" has "cast out fear" (1 John iv. 18). "The mount that may be touched, that burns with fire, and blackness, and darkness, and a tempest" (Heb. xii. 18), is now far behind him in the desert, and "Mount Sion" is full in view. The righteousness of Jesus is now his dress, and glitters in his eyes with ten thousand lovely charms. The blood of Jesus is exceedingly dear. Christ is the "Chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely." Fair are his prospects, great his possessions, rich his inheritance, and clear his title; and now he can indeed say that the wilderness and the solitary place is glad; the desert rejoices and blossoms as the rose. The lame man now leaps as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb man sings; for in the wilderness waters have broken out, and streams in the desert (Isa. xxxv. 1, 6). This mighty and happy revolution makes his old title obsolete, for he is now "*no more a stranger* and a foreigner, but a fellow citizen with the saints, and of the household of God; and is built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief Corner-stone" (Eph. ii. 19, 20). He now not merely prays "*toward*" Jesus, the Temple of the Lord, but he prays "*in this house*," and there, "in the secret place of the Most High, he dwells and abides under the shadow of the Almighty" (Psa. xc. 1); and is there—

"No more a stranger, or a guest,
But like a child at home."

And well is he taught to know that to God belongs all the praise of the great things that are done for his soul; and, indeed, all is to be traced to the dateless love of the Father *toward* him, the precious work of Jesus *for* him, and to the mighty power of the Holy Ghost *in* him; and it, therefore, well becomes him, and is every way congenial with his feelings, to "give thanks unto the Lord, whose mercy endureth for ever" (Psa. cxxxvi.); and well can he respond to the Psalmist's exhortation, "O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto Him with psalms. O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our Maker; for He is our God; and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand" (Psa. xcv.); and happily can he join the blessed song, "The Lord liveth; and blessed be my Rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted" (Psa. xviii. 46).

But, although all the Lord's people in *this life* know something of this sweet change—the oil of joy given for mourning (Isa. lxi. 3)—yet a complete and full donation of the stranger's requests is reserved for *another* and a better *life*. There the stranger will

indeed be satisfied. There every power of his soul, unembarrassed by sin and the mortal tabernacle—and at the resurrection, his body, too, immortal and spiritual—shall find endless employ to contemplate and gaze upon, adore and feast upon, Jesus, the true Temple and eternal All of the chosen.

Now, my hearers, in conclusion, permit me to remind you that you are either in a state of entire strangership, or in a state of sensible strangership. In other words, you are either dead in sin, or quickened to feel the burden of sin, coming to Christ for the pardon of sin, or have found rest in Christ, the Saviour from sin. Examine yourselves with that carefulness, and conclude with that conscientiousness, that becomes you upon so momentous a subject, remembering, if you are in the former of these states, you are journeying to an endless hell; if in the second, the Gospel calls you to Jesus, and points you for help to the “Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world”; if in the third state (coming to Jesus), the Gospel promises and God’s oath, with Jesus’ intercession, are on your side. But, if you are resting on and believing in Jesus, all the blessings, promises, ordinances, precepts, and cautions of the Gospel are your’s, with heaven at the end of your race. Indeed, “all things are your’s, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are your’s; and ye are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s” (1 Cor. iii. 21—23).

“HOW DID YOU LIKE THE SERMON?”

LET us, if only for the sake of variety, change this trite commentary on our Sunday engagements. How did you enjoy the prayers? How did the reading of God’s Word affect you? How much reality did you feel in confessing your sins? How many of your sick, weary, sorrowful, and sinful friends did you remember on your knees? How much did your thoughts go with the hymns you sang? How much did you pray that the servant of God might be blessed in His Word, and that your own soul might be humbled and assured in the love of Christ? And how far has the prayer been answered? “Oh,” but you say, “these are really private questions!” Then put them to yourself, dear friend.

EVERY man blameth the devil for his sins; but the great devil, the house-devil of every man, that eateth and lieth in every man’s bosom, that idol that killeth all, is himself. Oh, blessed are they that can deny themselves, and put Christ in the room of themselves!—*Rutherford*.

ZACCHÆUS.

ZACCHÆUS was a little man, but he could, and did, climb up into a tree "to see Jesus." Thus Immanuel and the sinner, loved *from everlasting to everlasting*, were now to meet in God's appointed way and means. The "set time" to favour an heir of Zion had come. He who had seen Nathanael "under the fig tree," knew all about the poor sinner who "sought to see Jesus, and could not." How like the case of many a poor mourner now who seeks to see Jesus, but whose desire is not yet granted! But, in this case, the set time being come, the dear Redeemer seemed to have (for the time) no eyes for any that pressed around Him, having fixed His whole attention on the loved one in the tree who wanted to see Him. The word of the King of kings was about to be spoken with power to a poor, sinful man. "Zacchæus, make haste, and come down; for to-day *I must* abide at thy house." It was as if the loving heart of the blessed Redeemer yearned over him who was "ordained to eternal life," to bless him, and to reveal to him his interest in His great salvation. "Make haste, Zacchæus! Don't delay to come down!" and it is said he "made haste, and came down, and received Him joyfully." And so it is now. If the Lord graciously deigns to bid a poor sinner "make haste" to seek Him, that sinner will need *no coaxing* to "come to Jesus," being "made willing" in the day of God's power; and, if my dear reader is of little stature (spiritually) in his own eyes, and has been brought by divine teaching *to feel* and to know that

"None but Jesus
Can do helpless sinners good,"

why, then, He has in substance said to you, "Make haste, and come down!" and, sooner or later, you will sup with Him here, and be ultimately brought to one of the "many mansions" in the "Father's house," all of which favours are the effect of being "loved with a dateless love." D. F.

"One view of Him that bled and died
Is better far than all beside."—*Daniel Herbert.*

A CORRUPT heart is like an ants' nest, on which, while the stone lieth, none of them appear; but take off the stone, and stir them up but with the point of a straw, and you will see what a swarm is there, and how lively they be. Just such a sight would thy heart afford thee, did the Lord but withdraw the restraint He has laid upon it, and suffer Satan to stir it up by temptation.

THE CHRISTMAS DINNER.

THE following narrative is a further relation of the goodness of God to the poor woman for whom He so graciously provided the money to pay her baker's bill.*

It was very near Christmas Day, when, one evening, the children who had been playing with their little associates came in, and with very gloomy countenances surrounded their mother. One of them sorrowfully looked up at her and said, "Mother, I don't think that your Jesus Christ is so good as you say, for there is Henry — says he is going to have such a nice plum-pudding, and beef too, mother; and you know we shan't have any." "Yes," said another little one, "and Sally — says her mother has got such a bouncing leg of mutton." The poor woman, who found this appeal from her dear children almost too keen to allow her to speak for a time, presently said, "Oh, my dears, what are you saying? You know I generally get you nice bread and butter, and now and then a rice pudding. You should not be discontented. Remember, my dears, how God sent His judgments among the children of Israel in the wilderness for murmuring against Him."

Not long after this, a knock was heard at the door, and when it was opened, a person inquired for Mrs. —. The poor woman told him that was her name, when the person said he was directed to leave a hamper which he had with him, but did not say, nor did she know, from whom it came. Upon examination, it was found to contain a quantity of vegetables and a fine leg of mutton. She immediately called her children around the hamper, and reminded them of their recent discontent, when one immediately exclaimed, "Oh, mother, pray to God for us, that His judgments may not come upon us for murmuring!" "Oh," said another, "what a bouncing leg of mutton, ain't it, mother?"

She doubtless did not fail to take advantage of this remarkable providence to impress upon their minds that her Jesus was as good—nay, infinitely better—than she had ever been able to describe Him. Yes, and that precious Saviour says still to all His needy family, "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things."

After a considerable lapse of time, a relation died, leaving her property yielding her a sufficient income to live upon comfortably, when her own brother disputed her title to it, and it was thrown into Chancery. Here was another trial for faith. Her brother, being in easy circumstances, could employ counsel, and obtain every necessary assistance, while she was almost penniless. Ah!

* See the SOWER for February, page 42.

but she had a powerful and never-failing Advocate in heaven. It was Jesus to whom she betook herself. Oh, what has that cry of necessity done? Has it not moved the Great Omnipotent Himself to rise from His throne, and, as it were, hush for a time the harps of glory while He made bare His mighty arm on behalf of His suffering people? See it in the case of the suffering sons of Jacob, detained in cruel bondage by their oppressors. Hear the great Jehovah exclaim, "Surely I have seen the affliction of My people, which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry, by reason of their task-masters; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians."

It was at the time that the case remained undecided that her heartless husband, of whom she had heard nothing for years, came home, having ascertained that some property had been left to his wife. Here, then, was a sore trial. A new scene of discomfiture indeed had opened to her view, as he was the same abandoned character still; yet she was constant in prayer to God, and sought His direction and protection; and, as she could not think of living with her husband, she eventually offered to allow him a certain sum if the cause was decided in her favour, which he refused, saying, "No; I shall do as I please with it." However, in a short time, the judge, contrary to all expectation, decided the case by saying, "The property evidently belongs to Mrs. —, and she shall have it;" and, almost at the same time, before she had realized any income from the property, the Lord removed her husband suddenly by death. Here, then, was a complete deliverance, and this person was favoured to live in peace and comfort, as a monument of the goodness and constant care which an unchanging God exercises towards His believing and redeemed family.

Oh, my soul, art thou not able, while ruminating on this account, so glorifying to thy God, to bring to remembrance a long train of deliverances which thou hast already experienced? And canst thou ever doubt thy God again, when He has so often said to thee by those providences, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee"? Wilt thou in future complain at every renewed trial of thy faith, instead of adoring in gratitude the boundless compassion of thy heavenly Father, and confiding in His untiring watchfulness and care, as manifested towards thee?

Oh, how often hast thou, in answer to the enquiries of kind friends as to thy welfare, been full of words expressive of thy physical and mental suffering, and not one word of thankfulness and praise to thine almighty Friend has escaped thy lips; and how frequently have the effusions of thy friends' hearts, warm with the love of God, been chilled with a long catalogue of thy complaints, as if none were tried like thee; whereas a kindred feeling in thy

own breast might have caused us to exclaim, "Did not our hearts burn within us while He talked with us by the way?" Oh, then, may the Lord help us to sing—

"Dear Jesus, let me lie and rest
Within Thy arms divine;
Thy daily care to make me blest;
To love and praise Thee mine."

—*From an old Magazine.*

"SUFFER THE WORD OF EXHORTATION."

ONE thing I shall earnestly request all the people of God into whose hands this shall fall—that now, at last, they will be persuaded to end all their unbrotherly quarrels and strifes among themselves, which have wasted so much precious time, decayed the vital spirit of religion, . . . and increased and confirmed the atheism of the times, and now, at last, opened a breach at which the common enemy is ready to enter, and end the quarrel for us to our cost. Oh, put on, as the elect of God, bowels of mercies, and a strict charity and forbearance, if not for your own sakes, yet for the Church's sake!

I remember it is noted in our English history, as a very remarkable thing, that when the Severn overflowed part of Somersetshire, it was observed that dogs and hares, cats and rats, to avoid the common destruction, would swim to the next rising ground, and abide quietly together in that common danger without the least discovery of their natural antipathy.

The story applies itself; and oh, that Christians would everywhere depose their animosities—that the hearts of the fathers might be turned to the children, and the children to the fathers—lest God come and smite the earth with a curse! Oh, that you would dwell more in your closets, and be more frequently and fervently upon your knees! Oh, that you would search your hearts more narrowly, and sift them more than ever, before the day pass as the chaff, and the Lord's fierce anger come upon you! Look into your Bibles, then into your hearts, and then to heaven, for a true discovery of your conditions; and, if this poor mite may contribute anything to that end, it will be a great reward of the unworthy labours of thy servant in Christ,

JOHN FLAVEL.

WE darken the cages of birds when we wish to teach them to sing. For the same reason, it may be, God sends dark shadows over the hearts and homes of His people. Affliction is God's "Hush!" bidding us be still and listen to Him.—*Culross.*

THE OLD SOLDIER AND THE RENT DAY.

SOME years ago, there lived in a cold damp cellar an old soldier, who had lost one of his legs in fighting for his country. This, however, did not afflict him; no, nor yet his deep poverty, nor his damp, dark lodging. But his wife was ungodly, and this lay as a heavy burden on his heart. He had a trifling pension, which, with the scanty product of a mangle, scarcely sufficed for their maintenance. They had fifteen-pence per week to pay for the cellar, where rats ran over their wretched bed at night.

The simple faith and piety of the old soldier at once won my heart. I often visited him, to be refreshed and edified by his remarks while reading the Word of God to him.

One morning, the post brought me a letter from a friend to whom I had written about this aged couple, and, being much interested with their history, sent me five shillings for them, to be laid out as I might judge best. I set out at once to carry them the good news. In vain, however, did I stand at the top of the dark stairs, and call aloud to Mrs. G—— to open the door, that I might find my way down. It was of no use. She was scolding aloud, and was deaf to every other sound. I groped my way, and, making for the door, gave a loud rap, which soon brought Mrs. G——'s voice to a momentary hush, and an expression of regret that she had not heard me. I replied that I was greatly surprised and troubled to find her scolding so loudly. "It is enough to provoke a saint," she said, "to see him go on as he does." "Oh, don't trouble the lady with them things," said her husband; "let's have some of the words of God, for truly we need them this morning." Mrs. G—— was not, however, to be so silenced; she would give vent to her anger that swelled her breast.

I will relate her grievance in her own words: "Now, here's a man for you, ma'am, without a bit of care for his wife. The other day we had only one penny in the house, and I sent him to get us a bit of bread. But, instead of that, he goes and gives it away to a tramp he knows nothing of." The old soldier looked deeply grieved, and, addressing me, said, "There are two ways of telling every story;" and then, with much emotion, he gave me his version. It was very true. The penny was all he had, and he was proceeding to the baker's, when a travelling man, with his wife and three children, sitting on a door-step, arrested his attention. He found that, like himself, they were natives of Scotland, sick and hungry. He spoke to them words of consolation from the Bible, and found, to his joy, they were fellow-believers in the Lord Jesus. On parting, he slipped his penny, with a thankful heart, into the hand of his afflicted brother. It was not until he had

done so that he remembered, with dark forebodings, "What will my wife say?" Here Mrs. G—— interrupted him with an exclamation that "He must be a pretty husband who would rob his wife to give to a stranger." "Let me finish," said he; "and you shall see, ma'am, how the Lord returned the little offering tenfold." He then went on to relate that, not daring to go back empty-handed, he walked up and down, asking the Lord to supply his need, not for himself, for he was now no more hungry, but for his wife's sake. While walking to and fro, a gentleman inquired of him the way to the Post Office. The soldier offered to show him the way; and, while walking together, the gentleman entered into conversation with him, and asked if he were not old G——, whom he had known years ago. G—— replied that he was, upon which the gentleman put a shilling into his hand, and bade him God speed. "Now," added this old Christian, "is not our Master true to His word? and does He not bless a hundred-fold all we do for His sake?"

I was deeply touched with this narrative, and felt solemnly impressed with the fact of God's individual providence, and with the wondrous links in the great chain of life which reveal, to those who look for them, the unceasing care and love of Jesus for His people. I recalled to mind also, the letter I had received this morning, so I inquired what was their present trouble. Here Mrs. G—— once more broke forth in complaints. The landlady had demanded their rent by twelve o'clock that day, as she had a payment to make up. They had but a few half-pence in the house, and the old woman was for hastening off her husband with some things from the mangle, which would bring them six-pence more. "But I could not get him to go," exclaimed she; "for he said he must first ask the Lord; so, instead of doing as I bade him, there he has been sitting over the Bible; and, as if he had not lost time enough already, he must needs go down on his knees, and all my shaking and scolding him could not get him up till just before you came, and now it is within half an hour of twelve."

Old G——, I should have observed, was standing with his stick and hat in hand, and a bundle under his arm, when I came in, as if ready to go out. "How much do you owe?" I inquired. "Just five shillings," replied she. "It's fifteen-pence a week, as you know, ma'am; and it is just four weeks last Saturday." I said nothing, but opened the letter. I read to her that portion which related to her husband, and then gave him the five shillings' worth of stamps.

It was a moment never to be forgotten. The old man stood speechless with joy, with his beaming eyes lifted up in sweet thankfulness to his heavenly Father; while Mrs. G—— sank

down upon a chair, and, covering her face with her hands, wept tears of shame and sorrow. "May God forgive me!" said she. "I am a wicked woman! Yes, I see it all now. I didn't believe it, but it is just as G—— read it out of that very Bible, not half an hour back, 'Before they call I will answer.' Oh, I didn't believe it! I didn't believe it! May God forgive me!" God's love had at last melted her stubborn heart, and the overpowering sense of the fact, "Thou God seest me," made her tremble with fear for her unbelief.

From this time a brighter day began to dawn upon old G——'s night of sorrow. His wife, so long the hinderer of his peace, and the object of his agonizing intercession, would now often sit by his side when he read the Bible, which had become more needful to him than his daily bread; accompany him to church and the weekly service; and, when I left the parish, I had the comfort of believing that this work in her heart was the work of the Holy Spirit.—*Gospel Magazine*, 1860.

"UNTO YOU WHICH BELIEVE HE IS PRECIOUS."

How sweet and precious is the place
Where Christ unveils His lovely face,
And sheds His glory all around!
That spot is sacred, hallowed ground.

Saints favoured thus their Bethel raise,
While on His faithfulness they gaze;
Love, mercy, truth, and grace combine
All other objects to outshine.

Christ is become their chief desire;
His beauty sets their souls on fire;
They long to run the heavenly race,
To gain the prize, and see His face.

Chiefest among ten thousand He
Who died to set His people free;
To save them from the powers of hell
He rose, that they with Him might dwell.

And now He sits at God's right hand,
Their Intercessor, Saviour, Friend;
Clothed in His righteousness divine,
As stars they shall for ever shine.

F. B.

LEONARD KEYSER, who was burned at Scherding, in 1527, as a Protestant, when he came near to the stake, exclaimed, as he looked at the crowd, "Behold the harvest! Oh, Master, send forth Thy labourers!"

“I WILL BE AS THE DEW UNTO ISRAEL.”

MY DEAR BROTHER,—It is a long time since any communication passed between us, and no doubt you sometimes wonder how I am getting on, and I am sure you will be glad to hear from me again.

Changes have taken place since we heard from one another, and I am not even certain where you may now be stationed, although I heard from one and another of your leaving L——, . . . but I have not heard particulars. I trust that an abundant measure of the favour of our God has accompanied you to the sphere of your present labours, wherever that may be; and that you are permitted to see fruit to gladden the heart.

As for me, I have been blessed, I may say, abundantly above my most sanguine expectation—above all I had dared to hope for.

Just two years ago, an extraordinary work began almost simultaneously at one of my stations and one of Mr. H——’s (my colleague). It began with distinct blessing in our own souls. “I am come that they might have life”—we had the life—“and that they might have it more abundantly”—we were blessed with an increase of spiritual life.

To speak of myself, although a converted and saved character, and seeing some genuine fruit from my preaching, I was feeling far from satisfied. I was conscious that my testimony was marred by much failure in my own life and work. I longed for “the victory that overcometh the world,” and cried to the Lord that He would show me how I might be uniformly victorious over besetting temptations.

One day, while on my knees before God, the words came strongly into my mind, “I am the Way.” I thought I had always understood that Christ was the Way, but now I felt there was far more in these words than I had ever grasped. But how to get the advantage of Christ being the Way so as to be helped out of the trouble I was in was my difficulty.

I went on for about a week longer, and then a tract fell into my hands, entitled, “Abiding in Christ.” It proved to be “a word in season” to one who was feeling much discouraged. It said, “Abide in Me” was not merely a command—it was equally a promise—a promise that Christ *would* be our abiding-place, where we might dwell, and walk, and lie down in quietness and rest of soul. But the entrance into this hiding-place was by faith. Faith alone could take that mighty step out of self into Christ, and by faith alone could we abide there. Very simple this may seem, but it was just what I felt I wanted; and then and there I was enabled to draw near to God afresh, and to ask Him to make me feel that my abiding in Christ was a reality,

and it was done. Victory over besetting sins followed *immediately*, and I became conscious of the possession of such a peace of soul as I had hardly known even at my best times.

These results abide now. I told my people what a blessing I had received, and exhorted them to seek the same. Many of them did so, and very soon a glorious revival broke out. Believers were quickened, and the careless awakened to a serious concern about salvation. Scores of the latter were savingly converted and added to the Church.

At the same time, and without any communication that I know of between the two places, a similar awakening took place at one of Mr. H——'s stations, and then the work spread to all our stations and surrounding districts. It has been going on ever since, and is as vigorous now as ever. . . .

We have not confined our efforts to our own stations, but have gone everywhere preaching the Word. In these expeditions we are usually accompanied by some of the converts, who give their personal testimony in support of the truth preached, telling what they were, and what, by the grace of God, they are. God gives His most signal blessing on their testimony; and, as many of them were members of different Churches before they were converted, they are very useful in speaking to others in the same condition, and the name of such is legion. . . .

I am sure you will unite with us in praising God for so much blessing, and also in praying that He may bless us more and more.

I am sending this to father, who is still at Luss, . . . to find out your address, and forward. I am thankful to say that I enjoy fairly good health. I hope you too are well. Kind regards to dear Mrs. F—— and Miss F——. I shall be so glad to hear from you soon again. Yours affectionately in Christ,

H. M. PHILLIPS.

Farm Cave Valley, P. O., Jamaica, February 17th, 1883.

[We are always glad to hear of the power of the Holy Spirit being known and felt among ministers and people who are called by the name of Christ, therefore we cherish the hope that the work related above may prove the beginning of a very genuine and gracious outpouring of the Spirit in our West Indian possessions, and that the influence may, like the blessed Comforter, *abide* there. We are justly jealous of much around us which is attributed to the Holy Spirit, that is, we fear, merely sensational; but we have long felt that the Lord's ministers and people lack that zeal for God and love for souls which characterized the early Christians, and which so enlarged their hearts and filled their souls with missionary spirit and enterprise.]

DEATH SWALLOWED UP IN VICTORY.

"I AM better, and hope I shall soon be quite well." Such was the reply of a young man who was fading away under that dreadful malady, consumption, on being asked the condition of his health, as we sat down by the side of his bed. In the last stage of consumption, at the grave's mouth, on the brink of eternity, yet he could say, "I am better, and hope I shall soon be quite well." What a paradox to the unregenerate! How plainly it shows that the divinely enlightened are truly led to appreciate above all the things of time and sense—yea, even life itself—the blessings and presence of Him who is able to "make a dying bed soft as downy pillows are."

How could this be? Was he not born in sin? Most decidedly! We must either admit that, or deny the testimony of the Word of God and our own experience. Then how could it be? According to his own statement, it was the Lord's pleasure to convince him of sin when in the Sabbath-school. Being afflicted, he was, about six years ago, taken to the hospital, Cambridge, and, not knowing whether he should end his mortal career there or recover, he became more deeply impressed with his condition as a sinner in the sight of the heart-searching God, which led him to lift up his heart in prayer to God. Speaking of the event, he said, "When father left me in the hospital, I believe I spent the whole night in prayer, being deeply convinced that I was a sinner"—

"A sinner is a sacred thing;

The Holy Ghost hath made him so."

Reader, do you know you are a sinner, by the renewing and teaching of the Holy Ghost? If so, you will get no solid—no permanent—peace until you know the Saviour of sinners. "For two years," said our young friend, "I laboured and toiled, thinking I must do something and be something to inherit eternal life." Is this your case, reader? Then cease from all such expectations or thoughts—

"Cease from your own works, bad or good;

Seek cleansing in the precious blood—

The blood of Christ, the Lamb once slain—

Oh, seek for shelter in His name!"

Well might the wise man say, "The labour of the foolish wearyeth every one of them, because he knoweth not how to go to the city" (Eccles. x. 15). So our departed friend found it, for two years' legal labour did not bring him within the precincts of that city which is named "the possession of peace." But it was the pleasure of the Holy Spirit, in His own time, to give him clearer views of the way of life. Speaking of the case, he said,

"After two years' labour, Mr. —" (the minister he sat under) "took for his text Psalm xxxiv. 7: 'The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them.' It was made a great blessing to me, and relieved my soul of the distress I had been in. The description of those that 'fear Him' was much blessed to me, and my heart went up in praise to God for what He had done for me." But that state did not long continue. He soon sank into a dark state of mind. "Being," said he, "in the field one day, I was in great trouble about my soul. I crept behind the hedge, dropped upon my knees, and tried to pray, when these words came, 'Son, be of good cheer; thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee;' and that quite delivered me."

It was at that period our young friend began to listen to the ministry with much interest; and during his affliction he mentioned many texts he had heard spoken from with profit to his soul, among which are the following: Psalm xxv. 17; John vii. 46; Psalm ciii. 9; Psalm xxvi. 8; 1 Peter iv. 12; Isaiah xxviii. 16; and on one occasion, when Psalm xxiii. was read, and a little said upon it, he said he should never forget how precious he felt the love of God to be to his soul.

During the first part of his affliction he was very quiet, and said but little. One night, soon after he was kept from his work, his mind became much exercised upon the subject of saving faith, when the Holy Spirit led his soul to meditate upon those brought before us in the Word of God who possessed saving faith, and to compare his own with theirs, when he was much encouraged by the case of the woman who said, "If I may but touch the hem of His garment, I shall be made whole." Speaking of this encouragement, he said, "If ever I had a manifestation, that was one, which I never can forget." After he was confined to his bed, a very happy state of mind was granted him, which continued to his dying day, with but little exception.

One night, after the prayer-meeting, I received a message requesting me to go up to his father's, as he wished to see me. Entering his room, I found him very ill, and apparently very near his end. Asking him how he was, he said, "I am better, and get better every day. I am happy." "That is a mercy. The Lord does favour you," said one present. "Yes, He does," was his reply. "I shall not need the light of the sun there." "No," said one sitting by his bed, "the Lord will be the light thereof." He said, "I am sure I shall go to heaven. I am sure I shall be happy. I would not change places with any one, not with that rich man Mackie. Why, if I am the King's son, I can't be more than that!" "You have met with us many times below. You

loved to go where the people of God met," said a friend. "Yes, I did, but they used to laugh at me" (meaning worldly young men); "but I knew I wanted something they could not bestow, and which I could not get among them. They may laugh now. The devil is beaten now. I have conquered—at least One has for me." "That is very much better," said one to him, "than if Satan had left of his own accord, because, had it been so, he would have taken the key himself, and then he could have returned and entered at his leisure." "I am happy! I am full! I long to be gone! I hope it won't be long, but I wish to be patient," said the afflicted one. A friend said to him, "You are going to see Him whose presence you have enjoyed here, and in the house of prayer, where you have often tried to hide your feelings." That made him smile, and he said, "Yes; and I used to think I never prayed, but I don't think so now, for 'only while we pray we live.'" One said to him, "You will soon enjoy what the poet has said—

" ' There you will see His face,
And never, never sin ;
There, from the rivers of His grace,
Drink endless pleasures in.' "

"Yes," he said, "and no end." "Is it not wonderful," said one present, "that the Son of God should have come into this world, become a Man of Sorrows, take the place of His people, die for them, and present them as pure in God's sight as He is Himself?" He looked up, and said, "What a mystery! It is all of grace. Nothing else will do for me. It is grace first and grace last. 'No man can come unto Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him'—

" ' 'Twas grace my wayward heart first won,
'Tis grace that holds it fast ;
Grace will complete the work begun,
And save me to the last.' "

"That verse has been very sweet to me since I have been afflicted."

On one occasion, he said to his grandmother, "I have such a blessed view of heaven, it is impossible for me to stop long in this world." Many other things he said to the many, many friends that went to see him. About the last utterances were, "Jesus, my All, to heaven is gone," &c. "Lord Jesus, do come quickly, and fetch my poor soul away! The Lord's time is best."

So passed away Walter Golding, once a teacher in the Particular Baptist Sunday-school, Oakington, aged twenty years. May each teacher of that school have a like blessed end, if the Lord will.

J. P.

A PLAIN TESTIMONY BY A PLAIN MAN.

TO S. SILVER.

SIR,—I was thinking what a blessed thing it is to hear that blessed name of Jesus preached in the church of Wilbraham ! Who could have thought it ? Who knows what the Lord is going to do ? But it will be a savour of life unto life, or death unto death ; and methinks what a blessed thing it is that you preached not unto us “another Jesus.” I would tell the blessed Apostle himself that I would have no other Jesus, for I will have Him or none, for He is that blessed Person that suits such poor, lost, ruined, sin-sick, broken-hearted souls as us, carrying about with us a body of sin and death, for we are constrained and made willing to believe what the Lord saith is true, and He saith that I am wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores, from my head to the sole of my foot ; and I know that to be truth, that my heart “is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked ;” and I know that is truth, that my own righteousness is as filthy rags. I am, like Joshua, clothed with filthy garments ; but we also know that blessed truth, “Their righteousness is of Me, saith the Lord ;” and, again, He is called, “The Lord our righteousness,” and “whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.” He “came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” And what a merciful gift of God it was, that He sent Him to heal the poor broken-hearted—to hear their poor groans and cries, and to set the prisoners free ! And what a Pearl of great price He is made, to be called “Wonderful ;” and He shall be wondered at. Oh, what a blessing hath God given us in His blessed Son ! The blessing is so great that no comparison can be made, and we are forced to speak, with the blessed Apostle, “Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.”

I am a poor man, and you are a gentleman, and I am not worthy of your coming under my roof. But Lazarus was a son of Abraham, as well as the rich man—yea, more, for he was one of Abraham’s faithful children—but to complain of want I cannot in the least, for—

“The Lord is our support,
And He that doth me feed ;
How, then, can I want anything
Of what I stand in need ?”

“He that is down need fear no fall ;
He that is low no pride ;
He that is humble ever shall
Have God to be his Guide.”

The blessed Lord was poor, a Man of Sorrows, and well

acquainted with grief. He loved poor humble souls. Mary Magdalene lay at His feet—a blessed school. The valley of humiliation is a blessed place to walk in. I have thought that you might see the Lord's footsteps there; but poor souls are not always there, for they have darkness to go through as well as light, which makes light much the sweeter. David said, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, Thou art with me." That was a comfort to poor Christian in his narrow path, so dark as it was, and so narrow that, if he stepped his foot one side, he was in the ditch, and on the other side, in the quagmire. Into this King David fell, and, had it not been for great mercies, he would have perished there. David was a man of many sorrows and great grief. Poor man! He found it so when he lay on the ground with heart-feeling sorrow, mourning to God for his offspring; but he sowed in tears, and reaped in joy. He brought his sheaf with him. He said, "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." Hezekiah was a good man, and it pleased the Lord to afflict him, and He sent the prophet to tell him that he should die, and not live. He did not ask the prophet to kneel down and beg of the Lord for him. No, not a word; but turned his face to the wall, and knocked so loud and hard at mercy's door, with such deep-felt sighs and groans, many of which the Lord could not deny—it had the right sound. He came to "buy wine and milk without money and without price." It would have been a disgrace to the Lord to deny it, for He hath proclaimed Himself to be the Lord of great mercies. Such groans and cries are feeling things, and the Lord knew it; therefore, the door of mercy was opened, and the prophet told to go back and comfort Hezekiah. Hannah's lips moved. Eli saw it, and thought she was drunk, but she answered, "I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit." Nathanael thought he was not seen under the fig-tree, but the Lord saw him, and heard his groans and cries. Thus the Lord bears our grief; and, though the wrath of angry men, sin, and devils nailed Him to the cruel, cursed tree, yet His tender heart moaned and groaned to His Father for His poor, needy few, with deep groans and cries, and mercy's door was forced to fly open, and love and mercy, flowing out through that blessed Person, broke down the middle wall of partition, some drops of which, I hope, have in great mercy reached me.

Little Willbraham, 1848.

GEORGE BRADY.

"Is the sermon done?" it was asked of one who returned from the church sooner than usual. "No, not yet," was the answer. "It is preached, but it still remains to be done" (James i. 22).

THE SECRET OPENED.

SOME years ago, a farmer in the West of England, being at what is usually called the parish church, was struck with the following text of Scripture, which was read by the clergyman—"Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

"The entrance of Thy words giveth light," saith the Psalmist, and he now saw the darkness he was in. Restless and distressed, he left the place; and, as soon as he reached his home, desired his wife to inform him what was meant by being "born again," for he had heard at the church that he could not "see the kingdom of God" unless he was "born again." The Bible was brought, and there were found those words which had caused this uneasiness. She confessed she did not know the meaning of the words, but advised him by all means to go to the churchwarden, as the likeliest place to be informed what was meant by them.

After dinner, the farmer walked to the churchwarden's house; and, being introduced, told his errand, and begged to know what was meant by the words, "Ye must be born again." The churchwarden honestly confessed he could not tell, but advised him, as he was distressed, to go to the minister.

After some time (and not getting better), he assumed courage and knocked at the clergyman's door. After bowing low, and making many apologies, he ventured to tell his errand. "Get you gone! Get what money you can, live a moral life, and do not trouble yourself about such things as these," was the answer he received; and he left the clergyman as unsatisfied as he went.

His distress still remaining, God had appointed the means of information. Going to A—— on a Saturday to market, the weather was so uncommonly stormy that he was forced to remain all night. In the morning, walking about the town, he heard singing, and seeing people entering a place of worship, he walked in, and, leaning over a seat, was all attention. But judge of his surprise when the minister named his text. It was the very words which had so distressed him. The preacher, a Mr. F——, described the feelings of a soul that was born of God—how sin was his burden; his ignorance of things caused him shame; what desires were wrought in the soul; what thirsting after peace with God, through Christ, &c. The poor man heard, and heard his own character described. After service he rode home, and told his wife he knew now what it was to be "born again."

His wife was called by the Holy Ghost through his conversation; his family attended, and it was hoped that six of them had a knowledge of Christ Jesus, "the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

NOTICES OF BOOKS, &c.

Three Letters on the Immortality of the Soul and Eternal Punishment.

By the late J. C. PHILPOT, M.A. Price Three-halfpence.
E. Littleton, Baptist Minister, Withyham, Sussex.

(Concluded from page 174.)

WE now complete the extracts from these excellent letters, and our prayer is, that the solemn truths which are there so ably set forth may find their way into many hearts, and be the means of doing much good. Mr. Philpot having shown, first, that the soul of man was created immortal, and, second, that the gift of eternal life by Christ is something other than making the soul immortal, he now goes on to prove, in the third place, that the punishment of the wicked is eternal. He says:—

“3. The rebelliousness of your heart against the eternal duration of the punishment of the wicked was, you confess, the first step which led you towards the adoption of your present views. In this point you are not singular. Instead of submitting with a child-like spirit to the simple statements of divine revelation on this important point, you, like many others, rebelled against them because they crossed, or seemed to cross, your mental judgment or natural feelings, not seeing that to rebel against the light is the first step to judicial darkness, and that the mind, once become so warped, naturally bends to its crooked shape well-nigh every text which it handles, in order to strengthen and confirm itself in the position which it has taken up. . . .

“Though you admit of the term ‘eternal punishment,’ you mean by it a ceasing eternally to be by an act of violent destruction. To prove this from the Scriptures, which you profess as well as we to take as your only guide and standard, you bring forward a number of passages in which ‘death’ and ‘destruction’ and similar terms are made use of to denote the punishment of the wicked, all which you consider should be literally, not figuratively, interpreted; and, therefore, that as death natural means or implies a ceasing to be in time, so death eternal means or implies that those on whom it is inflicted cease to be in eternity. We think we have fairly stated your views; and now let us see whether they stand or fall by the testimony of the Word of truth.

“Now, in the first place, as Bishop Butler has most ably shown in the first chapter of his Analogy, there is nothing in what we see or know of death which necessitates a ceasing to be. It may be so in animals and vegetables, but the analogy does not apply to sentient beings, who possess a soul, which they do not. Death removes men out of our observations; but, as possessing a soul

which lives after death, death is not with man a ceasing to be. On the contrary, so far as we can judge, death may introduce us to a new and higher state of being, according to the Apostle's figure of the grain which dies, when committed to the earth, that it may pass into a higher state of life. If this argument be sound and Scriptural, it cuts away at once the very foundation on which all your theory rests. . . . The term 'death,' therefore, does not carry with it such a destruction as means or implies a ceasing to be. In man it is a separation of body and soul; and, as the soul of the rich man passed at death into torment, and that of the believing thief into paradise, in neither the lost nor the saved does it necessitate a ceasing to exist.

"But we have surer ground than this to go upon. As we find in the Scriptures, as we showed [under the former head], a clear explanation of what is meant by 'eternal life,' so we find in them also a clear declaration of what is meant by eternal death. In both cases eternal duration is assumed, built, as we hold, on the original immortality of the soul. Thus, in Revelation **xx.**, we have a solemn and awful description of the last judgment. We find, first, the judgment passed upon Satan: 'And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever' (Rev. **xx.** 10). Observe the words, 'and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.' This fixes eternal torment as the doom of Satan. Now comes the judgment of the raised dead: 'And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it: and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works' (Rev. **xx.** 12, 13). And observe their punishment: 'And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire' (Rev. **xx.** 14, 15). By 'death and hell' here we may understand the first death and the grave (see margin), and by their being cast into the lake of fire, that, for the wicked, there is no more a first death or the grave, but a lake of fire which will be to them a second death. Now, if Satan is to be cast into the lake of fire, there to be tormented for ever and ever, and the wicked are cast into the same lake, the inference is clear that they partake of his eternal torment. Were the second death, as you believe it to be, an annihilation of body and soul, a destruction of both, so that they cease actually to be, what is the meaning of being cast into the lake of fire? But how clear and explicit

is another declaration of the Word of truth : ' And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark on his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation ; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb ; and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever ; and they have no rest day nor night who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name ' (Rev. xiv. 9—11). Can anything be more clear and strong than the solemn words, ' And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever ' ? This is not death in your sense of the word, for total annihilation is not the smoke of a torment which ascendeth up for ever and ever, but a fire which dies down and is quenched in eternal night.

" But how strong and decisive are the words of the Lord Himself, and that thrice repeated by Him, to give them greater force and emphasis : ' And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off ; it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched ; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched ' (Mark ix. 43, 44). What is the simple, plain, meaning of the words, ' To go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched ' ? According to your view of annihilation, the fire is quenched, for, when it has burned up and perfectly destroyed a mortal body and a mortal soul, it must be quenched for want of materials. Similarly, John the Baptist testified, ' Whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into His garner : but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire ' (Matt. iii. 12). What is the meaning of ' unquenchable fire,' but a fire that is never to be extinguished ? And why an ' unquenchable fire,' if the wicked are so burned up by it, when first cast into it, that they as much cease to be as a bundle of straw which is cast into a burning oven, and vanishes into flame and ashes ? ' An unquenchable fire ' necessarily implies that there is always matter to feed it, either fresh, which in this case is inadmissible, or because that which it ever burns is indestructible.

" In the final judgment of the goats and the sheep, our Lord declares : ' And these shall go away into everlasting punishment ; but the righteous into life eternal ' (Matt. xxv. 46). How plain and decisive are His words : ' These shall go away into everlasting punishment,' where the word ' everlasting ' is the same in the original as that translated ' eternal ' life. If, then, the life into which the sheep enter is of eternal duration, of equally eternal

duration must be the punishment of the goats. To say that their punishment is everlasting because their doom is to cease for ever to be, and that this is all the punishment inflicted upon them, is but to quibble with words, and, in fact, to contradict the blessed Lord Himself. Jude declares of those who perish, 'to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever' (Jude 13). What is the meaning of the words 'for ever,' and how can the wicked be thrust into this outer darkness (Matt. viii. 12; xxii. 13; xxv. 30) for ever, if with them, as soon as thrust into it, it comes to an end, as it must do if they cease wholly to be? Again, the Holy Ghost testifies by Paul of those 'that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,' that 'they shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power' (2 Thess. i. 9). Why should the Holy Ghost use here the words 'everlasting destruction,' unless the destruction which will fall upon them shall pursue them in its awful weight and consequences to all eternity? If they were merely to be destroyed, and then cease to be, the simple destruction would have been sufficient, but the addition of the word 'everlasting' shows that it is such a destruction as goes on destroying for ever and ever. The angel declared to Daniel, 'And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt' (Dan. xii. 2). If some awake 'to everlasting life,' and some 'to shame and everlasting contempt,' the inference is undeniable that the 'contempt' must be as 'everlasting' as the life, for precisely the same word is applied to both.

"Now, when we take the accumulated weight of all these testimonies, with what power and force do they bear on the question of the eternal duration of the punishment of the ungodly! It is not an isolated passage or a dubious text which determines the question, but a whole cloud of witnesses, all of which speak in the same clear, positive language, and all pronounce the same unanimous decision.

"But the question may now arise, 'Why is the punishment of the wicked termed in the Scripture death or destruction?' It seems to us for the following reasons: 1. Death is a separation of body and soul; so the second death is the full, final, and eternal separation of the soul from God. Where He is, the lost soul can never, never come. 2. Death is also the opposite of life. Thus, as eternal life embraces all that knowledge and enjoyment of God, all that happiness and holiness which form the bliss of the saved, so eternal death implies everything which is miserable and wretched, everything that is unholy and ungodly, everything which is the exact opposite to all the glory, honour, and joy unspeakable which will fill the saints for ever and ever, as pos-

sessing the life of God, and living for ever with Him and to Him. 3. And, again, as spiritual death consists in the utter alienation of the soul from God and desperate enmity against Him, so the second death implies that, in the midst of the torments of hell, the souls of the wicked will ever be alienated from God, ever at enmity against Him, and that all they can and will do is to blaspheme His holy name and curse and hate Him to all eternity.

"The misery of hell is, that its torments are for ever and ever, and this makes it so dreaded. But you who have persuaded yourself, and would gladly persuade others, that, after all, the doom of the wicked is not so dreadful as they have been always taught it is—that, at best or at worst, it will only be annihilation—a sudden shock, and then all over for ever—you, with one foot in the grave, and calling yourself 'a lover of truth,' to offer such a premium to sin, and so to harden sinners in their crimes, by telling them that the Bible holds out no such doctrine as the natural immortality of the soul and the eternal punishment of the wicked, and that all preachers and teachers who hold and teach these doctrines are liars, and deluded of Satan—what can we say of you? But our controversy is not with you, but with your errors; and, if we have devoted so much space to them, it is not for your sake, of whom we have no personal knowledge, but as believing that too many are infected with the same errors who do not state them with the same clearness, or avow them with the same unblushing boldness."

[Reader, ponder these weighty truths, as one who must soon appear before the judgment-seat of Christ.]

So lightly did God esteem burnt-offerings and sacrifices, that He did not at all value them in comparison of that inward frame of spirit which He had required by the moral law, that being given before the law of ceremonies obliged them, in the first place, to an observance of its precepts. These sacrifices seemed to be below the nature of God, and could not of themselves please Him. None could, in reason, persuade themselves that the death of a beast was a proportionable offering for the sin of a man, or ever was intended for the expiation of transgression. In the same rank with these are all our bodily services under the Gospel. A loud voice without the spirit, bended bulrushes without inward affections, are no more delightful to God than the sacrifices of animals. It is but a change of one brute for another of a higher species—a mere brute for that part of man which hath an agreement with brutes. Such a service is merely *animal*, not spiritual.—*Charnock*.

LINES

WRITTEN BY THE LATE BAPTIST NOEL, AT THE TIME OF THE PASSING
OF THE MAYNOOTH GRANT.

STORMS are gathering in the sky,
Vengeful thunders hover nigh ;
Plague-spots in the Church appear,
Filling every heart with fear.
Shame and sorrow she must know ;
She must drink the cup of woe ;
She is wandering from her God,
On her brow write "Ichabod."
Mystic fingers on the wall
Trace her sin, and bode her fall ;
Warning voices through the gloom
Tell us of our coming doom.
He who should preach only Christ,
Now a semi-papal priest,
Would the Church's lord appear,
Not its lowly minister.
Calling all men, great and small,
Down before the *priest* to fall ;
Priests forgetting, in their pride,
He who for our ransom died,
Bid us on *our* works depend,
Not on Christ, the *sinner's* Friend.
Priests, ambassadors of heaven,
Now pronounce our sins forgiven ;
Since, whate'er their want of sense,
They the gifts of grace dispense ;
And, ordained by Heaven, possess
Apostolic power to bless.
Mean compared to these are kings ;
Dynasties but mushroom things ;
Priests had won their rightful throne
Ere the crown of England shone ;
They had risen to princely state
Long ere England's senate sat ;
And when empires fade away
They shall hold their steadfast sway.
Devotees around them wait
To exalt their lordly state :
See them sit in chancels proud,
High above the vulgar crowd ;
See them, when their prayers they say,
From the people turn away,
Muttering hidden words of prayer
That the vulgar may not share.
Then at altars rich and high,
Bow and cross, we know not why.
What is wanting? Incense bring,
Morn by morn the matins sing ;

Faldstool and sedilia place,
 Hang upon the altar lace ;
 There the dying figure fix,
 Knelt before by Catholics ;
 Then dispense the wafer bread,
 Sing due Masses for the dead ;
 Chant the dirges, slow and sad ;
 Sacred copes and banners add ;
 Candlesticks and glittering glass,
 Credence table, rich reredos ;
 Pictures round the table set,
 Then the show will be complete.
 Woe to thee, my country, woe !
 Thou canst bear this Papal show ;
 Thou canst tamely sit and see
 This advancing mummerly :
 Forms exalted to the skies
 While God's Word dishonoured lies.
 Rome is fondled as a child,
 Martyrs scorned and saints reviled ;
 Truth is bound with priestly chain,
 Charity and candour slain ;
 Pastors who their country warn
 From their grieving flocks are torn ;
 From the Church they loved at heart
 Crowds indignantly depart ;
 While triumphant errors stand
 Lords of the bewildered land.
 Oh, for an hour of Luther now !
 Oh, for a frown of Calvin's brow !
 Once they broke the Papal chain,
 Who shall break it now again ?
 Lord, Thou seest us weak and cold,
 Rise as in the days of old ;
 Bare Thine own almighty arm,
 Save THY Church from every harm :
 And may truth the victory win
 Over falsehood, blood, and sin.

If Rome was "fondled" by Protestants when the above lines were written, what shall we say now, when the multitude of professors divide their sympathies between her and Bradlaugh, and many are gone wild in their love to her idolatries who have sworn to oppose them in their ministry ? Is it not a scandal that the idolatry of the Mass, as practised by the Romish Church, should be allowed to be imitated by clergymen in the Church of England ? Hear the blasphemous lies such men seek to introduce into their service.

A Romanist Bishop, when preaching at the Church of the Sacred Heart, Brighton, June 3rd, said of the Lord Jesus :—

"He redeemed man, but His sacred heart was not satisfied without a further outpouring, for, in the excess of His love, He was pleased to institute the sacrifice of the altar. So now He is pleased to remain under the sacred species in the Holy Eucharist. That divine heart is beating and throbbing in the sacrifice in the Holy Eucharist. . . . If we only have a lively faith, only believe, Jesus is as really present in the sacrifice of the Mass, body, blood, soul, and divinity, as really as He was by the grave of Lazarus."

Let Englishmen blush with shame that such unscriptural, God-dishonouring, and senseless stuff should ever be entertained in the minds of men whose forefathers shed their blood for the purpose of destroying this idolatrous yoke. "Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered."

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.—No. XXXVIII.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,—I hear you can't sleep in the night-season. This is not a common occurrence with persons of your age. May I ask what ails you? Is it some trial of a temporal nature that distresses you? or are you brought feelingly to know that you have a soul which must appear before a holy God?

I well remember the time, nearly thirty years ago, when I felt God had entered into judgment with me, and I feared I should never find mercy. I felt the eye of God was upon me, and sometimes feared the earth would open and swallow me up. I had lived all my life careless of God and His ways, and now I thought He was about to cut me off from the earth, and make an example of me. I used to feel sometimes as if I should go distracted. It was in vain my friends tried to comfort me. I could believe the people of God would be saved, but I feared that I was not one of them—feared that I had not the right teaching. I used to think there was something peculiar in my case that others could not see. I thought, if they could see me as I felt myself to be, they would have nothing to do with me. But those friends who had been where I was knew more about my case than I knew myself. I used to wish I had never been born, and to envy the beasts, that had no souls to be lost. The words "eternity" and "lost" were indeed solemn words to me. I never considered them before.

Do you, my dear young friend, feel any of these things a trouble to you? Do you feel yourself to be a "lost sinner"? I know it is a solemn place indeed to feel to be "without hope and without God in the world." But, if you really feel that you must perish,

unless the Lord bestows mercy and grace upon you, I believe it is the Lord Himself who has taught you to feel that you are for ever undone without Him, and it is only such poor sinners that Jesus Christ came to save. May He enable you to cry mightily unto Him, for "He heareth the poor, and despiseth not His prisoners." Satan will try hard to stop the mouth of prayer by telling you that you do not pray aright; but, if you have life in your soul, he cannot stop your sighs and groans, nor will the Lord disregard them.

Be constant in searching the Scriptures, though they cut you through and through. Job said, "When He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." We have need of the "sword of the Spirit," to cut us off from all false hopes and false refuges. Pray to the Lord for the right teaching. Be in earnest for Him to show you the worst of your case. We have need to be rightly wounded before we get a sound healing—

"Sinners can say,
And none but they,
'How precious is the Saviour!'"

I should like a few lines from you, to tell me what it is that troubles you. Write freely, for I have a feeling of sympathy for poor sin-burdened souls. I am not glad to see any one in trouble literally, but I am truly glad to see any poor soul brought to feel their true state by nature and practice, and to seek the Lord, especially in their youth. It is an unspeakable favour to be taught of the Lord, and to bear His yoke in one's youth.

May the Lord give you grace to seek Him continually, and keep you from all evil, is the desire of,

Your soul's well-wisher,

Rotherfield, July 25th, 1882.

J. E. RUSSELL.

[We are glad to hear that the young friend to whom this letter was written has since been brought into the liberty of the Gospel.]

THE Hindoos, when gathering in their harvest, before it is removed from the threshing-floor, always put a portion aside for their gods. Do they not shame many—would not truth say, most?—living in a Christian country?

THE best act of our souls towards Christ's love is admiration—astonishing admiration—till the heart is overwhelmed with it—till our thoughts and understandings are, as it were, lost. The soul is taken out of itself, and laid in the dust as nothing, to be swallowed up in a holy contemplation of the unspeakable, inconceivable love of Jesus Christ.—*Dr. Owen.*

THE SOWER.

SERMON PREACHED BY THE LATE MR. SINKINSON,

AT PROVIDENCE CHAPEL, BATH, APRIL 17TH, 1870.

"And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?"—LUKE xxiv. 32.

It is a great privilege to have the communion of saints, and it is a mercy if you and I have been led to prize it. Some of you have, perhaps, been talking together recently about the Son of God, and your faith in Him has become stronger. You have been led to know more of His power in your hearts, and you do believe from your very soul that He only is your rock and your salvation, your fortress and your defence. What a good thing it is to talk with each other by the way about these things. The Lord has mercifully provided these means for the edification of His body the Church. You read together, pray together, converse about better things, and come to God's house in company to hear His Word read and expounded—which course is all right and Scriptural. "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together as the manner of some is; and so much the more as ye see the day approaching" (Heb. x. 25).

I like to feel a holy boldness in the things of God, and perfect freedom in speaking of the Saviour when I am with the Lord's people. It is a blessed thing to be brought sweetly by faith to the Lord Jesus Christ. He will support, comfort, and cheer you. He says, "Let not your heart be troubled." How kind, how gracious, He is to poor distressed ones. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. 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." He is gone and is making ready for you, poor, distressed, trembling one; and by-and-bye He will come and receive you to Himself, that where He is there you may be also.

The worldly man talks about worldly things, such as the market, and what profit there is on this or that article, or whether it would be a profitable speculation to take up a certain matter, and what amount of interest he will be likely to realize by such and such an investment. Worldly minds pursue the world; not so the children of God. If they get entangled with the world they do not like it; they feel something about it that tends to distress and embarrass them. It is a dangerous position when

a child of God is getting allured with the fashions and pursuits of the world. What a mercy when you are led to have a little conversation with a lover of God. The world then is nothing to you, and you will see how blessed it is to "set your affection on things above." Where is your affection? Which is the object of your love, the world, or Jesus? Have you, have I, any love to Christ? Have our hearts been humbled, and brought to His blessed feet, to "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world"?

These two disciples spoke together, and said, "Did not our heart burn within us, while *He* talked with us by the way?" They were obliged to speak to each other of the love of Christ, because they felt it and had tasted of His resurrection power. "He was known of them in breaking of bread." He broke bread to them on the first day of the week, then their eyes were opened to know Him, and "He vanished out of their sight."

The two disciples were going to Emmaus, when Jesus appeared to them. The Jewish Sabbath was past, and the Lord's day had come, the day the blessed Redeemer rose from the dead, and this day we commemorate that fact—being reminded of His resurrection. I consider this to be an essential doctrine of the Gospel; yea, it is the ground of our hope. Paul says, "If Christ be not risen, our preaching is vain, and ye also have believed in vain." It is, therefore, the foundation of our hope, and we can't allow it to be done away with. Paul says, "He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." He made it manifest to His own chosen people after He rose from the dead; He appeared to them, He appeared to these two disciples and conversed with them by the way. They did not know Him, their eyes were holden, but when the Lord warmed their hearts, and opened their eyes, they saw and believed that He was the Son of God.

Oh, if you have been led in that way—to see Christ as your risen Saviour, as the ascended One at the right hand of the Father. If you have been led to look on Him as your Advocate with the Father, He is now at His right hand, for He ever liveth, and He knows all His sheep, and the needs of all His people. He strengthens the weak, gives life to the faint, and revives the drooping. "He ever liveth to make intercession for us." Your Redeemer liveth. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, is not the God of the dead, but of the living; and He says, "Because I live, ye shall live also."

Oh, poor soul, if you have felt that living power, if the Lord has brought you into life, and given you to feel your sins are all forgiven, the load is taken from your conscience; for they that believe in a glorified Christ have the witness in themselves, the

Holy Spirit takes of the things that are Christ's, and reveals them unto them. This is an indubitable evidence that you have passed from death unto life, because you love the brethren. Oh, that love is a burning principle. Those of you who have felt the fire of God's law, and the burning of God's love, will never be satisfied without a whole Christ as the foundation of your hope, and that is a sure foundation. You feel very fickle, and when doubts and fears begin to rise, it is a trying time. "Can I deem myself a child? Have I really an interest in a risen Christ? Has He put away my sin?" How you feel that you sin with your eyes, your feet, and your tongue. You can't keep your heart right; "The thought of foolishness is sin." Oh, what a wandering mind you have. How you have been tempest-tossed, lifted up, and cast down, and have wondered where the scene would end. It has, perhaps, been a rough journey you have had lately; you were not aware at the commencement of the work that you would be troubled as you have been. But oh, what a mercy that God has led you through. He, in His mercy, has been your Guide, your Helper, and your salvation; and He will be to the end. He is everything to you; therefore, seeing you have these Gospel wants, you come to Him. Is not that right? Where else can you go? Sometimes people run to other sources, but Simon said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." The carnal professor runs away, exclaiming, "These are hard sayings, who can bear them?" like many of His professed disciples once did who walked no more with Him; but you have had your ear bored at the door-post; you can't go away. He has been a source of comfort to you in many a trying hour, and He has not left you yet; but loves you still, and will for ever, for He rests in His love.

I daresay some of you are desirous just now to feel more of that love, for God's religion is an inside work; it is not an outside thing, like putting on your Sunday coat, dressing the parson in a fancy dress, or decking the place of worship with flowers, but it is a meek and quiet spirit that is in the sight of God of great price. Ah! bless you, if the Lord has made you humble, and led you to see that your beauty is all in Christ, He is now your all and in all. The precious Christ, which we preach to you to-day, is "of God made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." "He is the Rock, and His work is perfect." He is the foundation; yea, the every thing to His people. These two poor disciples were brought to feel it, and I hope you may feel this same love burning in your hearts; the Lord appeared to them, and He is not far from you.

Perhaps you have come here, saying, "We would see Jesus." Oh, that is a good feeling, and the Lord will satisfy you. You

have been looking at other things, such as your children, friends, outward circumstances, business, &c., but how often have you been led to look to Jesus? How many hours have you spent with Jesus, leaning on the arm of your Beloved? How sweet those moments are when you can in confidence draw nigh to the blessed Redeemer, when you see His blood is the fountain opened for all sin and uncleanness. That is something the world is a stranger to; it knows nothing of this intercourse, communion, and fellowship with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ, or the divine movement of the Holy Spirit in your heart, encouraging you to draw nigh to Christ. Poor though thou art, He says, "Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out."

"Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way?" Amazing condescension! "By the way." It does not matter where you are. You may be going up the hills alone, and all at once you feel as if a blessed risen Christ was with you, drawing you out in sweet communion with Himself. Sometimes you are busy in the kitchen, and He comes and gives you a word, lets a word drop into your heart when you are not thinking of Him. He comes, your heart is melted, and you can say with John, "We have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." You know that, because you have felt it. When the blessed Spirit revealed the truth to you, if there had been a thousand devils you could have said just then, "I know whom I have believed." It is an experience that is strengthening and encouraging.

"By the way." They were going to Emmaus, and you have been in the way. It was a right way, although they were so doubtful; they were looking for something temporal, but the Lord condescended to go down to their lowest state, yet He did not leave them without a reproof. How slow they were to believe. Some people say, "How easy it is to believe!" but man, in his natural state, has no spiritual capacity to believe in God; he has neither will nor power to do anything acceptable in the sight of God; therefore, when a poor sinner is led to feel the power of God, it is the Lord's doing. It was God who stopped you, and opened your eyes to see; your teacher was God the Holy Ghost. What a blessed view you had of the Trinity in Unity then; you had heard a voice, saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it," when you were turning either to the right hand or to the left.

"By the way." Oh, if the Lord should speak a word this morning, if you should hear Him calling, "Mary, Mary," it would cheer you; or, as Martha said, "The Master is come, and calleth for thee." You would have a burning heart, that is, a loving

heart, an affectionate heart, a kind benevolent heart, a feeling courteous heart, prepared by the blessed God. Oh, for that loving heart ! You can't of yourself prepare your heart, for "the preparation of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord." Thus, to believe in Him makes the heart to burn ; if some men were to lose their heads, their religion would go with them, 'out not so with God's people. The naturalist says, "it is in the head, in the brain," but the text says, "it is in the heart." God looks at the heart, not at the outward appearance. Oh, what a mercy you have felt your poor heart to burn and glow ; while you have been musing, the fire has burned. God was giving you a foretaste of His everlasting love, and you could scarcely think why it should be so ; you felt a little humbling of the heart at the thought that God should set His love on such a guilty, ruined one as you. You said—

" Why was I made to hear Thy voice,
And enter while there's room ;
While thousands make a wretched choice,
And rather starve than come ?

" 'Twas the same love that spread the feast
That sweetly forced me in ;
Else I had still refused to taste,
And perished in my sin."

That is the way ; it is accounted for on that principle and no other. Thus, if the Lord has talked to you by the way, and opened to you some of His secrets, you know what these secrets are. It is not everybody that can tell what they are. It is like a poor man I knew, who found a sovereign in a field when he was in great need, and when he found it he began praising and blessing God. His workfellows said, "What's to do ?" He said, "It's I that knows ;" and, when God lets His love into your hearts, you know. It is a precious thing to feel as the Word says, "We love Him, because He first loved us." "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life." What a merciful God. You, who love Him, are in the way now ; you are travelling on, and it may be the Lord is working faith in your heart with power while I am speaking ; your heart is led to the Saviour, and you say, "That is all I have, that is where I want to be found ;" so do I. You have "seen an end of all perfection ;" you know that—

" If ever your poor soul be saved,
'Tis Christ must be the way."

You have had many struggles in your time, and have proved, as the poet says—

“ The more I strove against sin’s power,
I sinned and stumbled but the more ;
Till late I heard my Saviour say,
‘ Come hither, soul, I am the Way.’ ”

They were in the way when Jesus came up with them, and the Lord is with you in the way, and will bless you. Abraham’s servant could say, “ I, being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master’s brethren.” Go pray before Him, He answers your prayers. Has He not done so many a time, in a wonderful way? Has He not led you on wonderfully in a way of providence, though you have been plunged into the deeps? The Lord has been with you in the storms of persecution and temptations, in trouble or bereavement in your family ; when you thought you could not endure it another hour, then the dear Lord gave you strength. How He comforts you ; what blessed tokens He gives to poor needy sinners. He says, “ Oh thou afflicted, tossed with tempest and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and thy foundations with sapphires.”

“ And they said one to another.” I do not want for us to be ashamed of these things. God forbid we should ; these things are eternal things, these things are connected with the eternal settlements of a Triune Jehovah, as the first-fruits are gathered through Christ’s resurrection that guarantees the harvest. Christ has redeemed soul and body, and His dear people shall be raised again, and enjoy heaven with Him. Let us be more friendly, don’t let us be ashamed of one another ; if a man has two or three thousand pounds, sometimes it puffs him up. Why should it? It is better to come down and see a poor friend that has not a shilling, and if the Lord inclines your heart to go and give him five shillings, it is a good thing ; the Lord will restore it sevenfold into your bosom. The Lord, speaking by Paul, says, “ Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.”

Now these disciples were in the way, and their hearts burned within them ; the love of God was planted there, and I hope, my dear friends, you may feel the love of God in your hearts, and follow Jesus in the way. Look at Him who has gone before, who was made the Son of David, bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh. What a mercy, if you are led to believe in His death and resurrection ; that is the foundation of the Gospel, as Paul says in the fifteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians, “ I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures ; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures.” Oh, what a testimony. How could they help preaching Jesus? It was burned into them. They stood up before the people,

declaring that Jesus, the Son of God, had appeared in our nature, that He was crucified outside the walls of Jerusalem, that He died, was buried, and rose again; this they preached through faith in His name. If your hope of salvation is there, He will guide you, and be with you in all your ups and downs. I have proved that. Truly He is a precious Saviour, a kind Saviour.

"Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?" He opens the Scriptures; you can't open them. He also opened Lydia's heart to receive His truth; He caused her to feel that she was a wretched sinner, and she was led by the blessed Spirit to receive Paul's testimony of Christ. That was the song of the Apostles, "Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness, but to them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God." There is power and life in Him. If you only felt it, it would lift you above everything to the contrary. There is power to believe, to trust, to walk, and it is all of the Lord; it all comes from the fountain head. The Lord gives these gifts freely, "according to the riches of His grace."

"While He opened to us the Scriptures." To know them in verity and truth, to prove that they are indeed the truth of God, the Lord said to His disciples, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." It is a blessing to know, to have an understanding of the truth. Christ is the embodiment of truth, the fulness of truth. All power is concentrated in God's dear Son, that all men may adore, honour, and worship the Son even as they do the Father. He opens, and none can shut; He shuts, and no man can open. He has produced all those sweet feelings of love to Him in thy heart. Oh, how pleasant it was when thy mind was stayed upon Him, when thou could'st leave all in His hands, when you could say, "Not my will, but Thine be done." Outside things will never produce it; it is the work of the blessed Spirit of God in your soul, bringing you to acknowledge that whatever you have that is good is from God. And such a soul is led at times, even under bereavement, to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord." He that commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts. That eternal God, who made the sun, moon, and stars, and all the beautiful things spread abroad on this earth, has shone into your mind, and when He came you saw things very differently from what you had seen them before; when you saw Him by faith, He was the chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely.

I like, when I am at home, to get among some of our old friends, get into their cottages, and sit on a three-legged stool;

when they begin to talk about the Friend of sinners, it kindles such an affection in the breast that you could embrace them. All distinctions are laid aside when you hear the poor pilgrims tell how God has helped them, and you have communion one with another, and God's people are led to prove the necessity for it. Some people say, "I will keep it all to myself, I will say nothing to anybody;" but where the love of Christ is, they will not put it under a bushel, they will want to talk one to another, at the prayer meeting, in God's house, and by the way. How sweet it is to have fellowship and communion one with another. "And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?" I hope He will open the Word of God more fully to you and me, that we may taste of that love that is without a bottom, or a shore—

"Oh, love, thou bottomless abyss,
My sins are swallowed up in thee;
Covered is my unrighteousness,
From condemnation I am free.
While Jesus' blood, through earth and skies,
Mercy, eternal mercy cries."

May the Lord add His blessing. Amen.

"HE IS ABLE TO SAVE TO THE UTMOST."

LINES SUGGESTED BY THE FOLLOWING TEXT, LORD'S DAY
MORNING, MAY 27TH, 1866.

"Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them."
—HEBREWS vii. 25.

WHAT heavenly voice I hear resound
Forth from the sacred Word!
A more transporting, blissful sound
No mortal ear hath heard.
To sinners helpless, wholly lost,
How sweet the voice which cries,
"Able unto the uttermost
To save, is Jesus Christ!"
All who by Him to God draw near,
Reception blest shall meet;
No wrath'ul thunderbolts appear
Around the mercy-seat—
Seeing He ever, ever lives
For them to intercede;
He smiles, and peace and pardon gives
To all His blood-bought seed.

M. B.

THE PILGRIM AND HIS DWELLING-PLACE.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Through mercy I arrived safely home from L—— yesterday. I felt much tried before going, but had some helps which encouraged me, and enabled me to go cheerfully. The evening text was Isaiah xxxiii. 16: “He shall dwell on high,” &c. A traveller *dwells* not in the desert he is passing through. His dwelling-place is his home, where those are whom he loves—where his treasure is, for he takes not his treasure with him, only his spending money, so that, if he falls in with robbers, and loses his ready cash, he cannot lose his treasure. That is safe where he dwells. Distance does not prevent his dwelling there in his affections: “Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” God will not entrust His people with their treasure here in the wilderness. He will choose for them, and remit to them continually what He sees needful for them. “Give us this day our daily bread.” “Thy bread shall be given thee, and thy water shall be sure.” As the manna fell in the wilderness day by day—no stock allowed to be kept on hand—“it bred worms and stank.” It would breed pride, independence, forgetfulness of God, and would make the poor soul loathsome to his own senses. Sufficient evil always dwells within us to make us abhor ourselves. The Lord loves to hear often from His children. If they were allowed a stock in hand, He would hear from them but seldom.

If it is to be “day by day our daily bread,” need we be surprised if we so soon lose the comfortable feelings we are favoured with at times? Our comforts and helps are generally preceded by deep feelings of our poverty, and going in that state to a throne of grace is very humbling to our proud nature. We should prefer going in what we think would be a more becoming way, namely, not so empty and poor; and, when we are helped again, we are apt to think we shall go better next time. But no; we have still each time to go as poor and needy as ever—the same in grace as in nature, in this respect. We take our food to-day, and are satisfied; but, if we are in health, we shall be as hungry and as needy of our food to-morrow, as to-day. The evil is, spiritually, we are so often out of health, through feeding on carnal things. We come too full, and then is fulfilled that word, “He filleth the hungry with good things, but the rich He sendeth empty away.”

As the “Bread” is Christ, on whom the Christian lives by faith, so I understand the Water to be the Spirit proceeding as a river constantly flowing from Christ: “The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of living water, springing up into everlasting life.” “This spake He of the Spirit.” This differs from the Bread, which may be given at intervals. This Water is ever

well up. The spirit of a man is his life. If there were to be a moment's cessation of his spirit dwelling in him, there would be a cessation of life. He is then dead. So there must be a constant abiding of the Spirit of Christ in a Christian, otherwise he must be dead, and perish, which is impossible, for, as Christ has declared, "They shall never perish," so here the means by which they are kept from perishing, and the cause why they cannot perish, is the continual influx of the Spirit, "the Water of Life."

May we still press on after more knowledge and enjoyment of this Bread and Water of Life, until "satisfied" (Psa. xvii. 15).

I am, yours affectionately,

January 13th, 1874.

E. MORGAN.

THOUGHTS ON REVELATION VII. 14, 15.

(BY THE LATE AUGUSTUS TOPLADY, M.A., SLIGHTLY ABRIDGED.)

"These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple."

THE Scripture particularly sets forth these three things, namely, first, what we are by nature; second, what we must be made of grace; and, third, what those who are possessed by grace shall be in glory.

St. John had a blessed vision of the latter, of the glory of the saints in light, and of the delightful employ in which the spirits of just men, made perfect, are engaged. Their number exceeded the utmost arithmetic of angels and men, yet are they all minutely numbered by the Omniscient Being who wrote their names in His book, and whose praise they celebrate in ceaseless songs of adoration, harmony, and love. They stand before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms of immortal victory in their hands. Do we ask, "Who are these that are arrayed in white robes, and whence came they?" A heavenly intelligencer will inform us. Pause then, my soul, a moment. Fix thy meditation on the solemnly delightful subject, and may it have a happy tendency to raise thy affections to things above.

First, "they came out of great tribulation." The words signify very grievous oppression, affliction, and trouble of every kind. The distresses of God's people are various, and flow from a vast multiplicity of sources. They are tried by the world outwardly, and inwardly by their own corruptions. A believing man's greatest foes are often those of his own house, and especially the

many evils that are in his own heart. How pathetically did St. Paul complain of the body of sin and death which he carried about with him, and how deeply did he groan, being burdened ! The Christian is frequently, like Gideon's men, "faint, yet pursuing." God is pleased sometimes to hide His face ; then are the souls of His people cast down and disquieted within them. But a great (perhaps the greater) part of their trouble and distress arises from a consciousness of their own barrenness, ingratitude, and want of fervour in their Redeemer's service, although—

Second, they are enabled to wash their robes, and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. By their robes, I presume, we are not here to understand the robe of imputed righteousness, in which they are justified, and stand perfect before God, for that robe does not need washing, being no less than the complete obedience of God incarnate. Their own best duties, services, and religious performances, of any and of every kind, were the robes in which they visibly appeared before men, and by which their faith was made manifest to the world ; for, though good works do not procure (so far from it, they have no share in procuring) a believer's justification in the sight of God, yet they follow after the grace of Christ, and are pleasing to God and profitable to men. This is also agreeable to St. Peter's strain of arguing.*

Moreover, the blood of the Lamb, in which the righteous wash their robes, is and must be a very different thing from the robes themselves. May not this be the simple meaning ? True believers, after all they do and suffer, trust not in their doings and sufferings, either in whole or in part, but in the atonement made by Immanuel's blood, and in that work of vicarious righteousness which Immanuel accomplished by His obedience unto death.

Third, their bliss and exaltation are described in these charming words—"therefore are they before the throne of God"—not because they "came out of great tribulation," but because they and their robes were washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. Being freely interested in Jesus, they are saved by grace, and the God of grace has all the glory.

LYING AND TRUTH.—Truth is always consistent with itself, and needs nothing to help it out. It is always near at hand, and sits upon our lips, and is ready to drop out before we are aware ; whereas a lie is troublesome, and sets a man's invention upon the rack, and one deceitful trick needs a great many more to make it appear good.—*Tillotson*.

* 1 Peter iii. 3, 4.

“WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?”

THIS important question, which the Pharisees of old found so difficult to answer, is well worth the consideration of every thinking mind.

What a number of thoughts, both sensible and foolish, pass through the mind in one day; but among the best of them how small a proportion are profitable thoughts concerning Christ! Thoughts are an excellent barometer by which any one may test the love or hatred that they may feel towards another, and what can be a better test whereby to judge our estimation of Christ than by gauging our thoughts concerning Him?

“ ‘What think ye of Christ?’ is the test
To try both your state and your scheme;
You cannot be right in the rest,
Unless you think rightly of Him.

“ As Jesus appears in your view,
As He is beloved or not,
So God is disposed to you,
And mercy or wrath is your lot.”

Let us, first, briefly consider these who have *wrong* thoughts concerning the Son of God.

First, *many have mean thoughts of Christ*. To all such He is but “a root out of a dry ground, and without any form or comeliness, having no beauty that they should desire Him.” The *infidel*, who professes to deny even the being of God, not only blasphemous the Most High, but also shows his mean thoughts of Christ by holding up His blessed work of redemption to scorn and ridicule. The *Unitarian*, while professing to admire His blameless life, and speaking many eloquent words in praise of His perfect manhood, yet thinks so meanly of Him as to deny His blessed divinity. The *Pharisees* (and of such there are as many now as formerly) are so pleased with their own supposed goodness, that they despise the righteousness of Christ by going about to establish a righteousness of their own, which the Scriptures declare to be only like unto filthy rags (Isa. lxiv. 6). The *worldling*, in his love to the pleasures, the riches, and the glory of this present world, shows very plainly how mean are his thoughts of Christ, for he puts a far higher estimation upon the vanities of time than upon the eternal and unfading riches of eternity, to which Christ has raised His saints by His toilsome life and agonizing death.

Secondly, *some have changeable thoughts of Christ*. When Jesus was entering Jerusalem, shortly before His crucifixion, the people formed a triumphal procession, and the air was rent with cries of “Hosanna to the Son of David!” but, a few days afterwards,

when He was taken prisoner, the same people changed their song of praise into an awful clamour for His blood, shouting, "Crucify Him! crucify Him!" So there are many, even in this day, who just as easily change their thoughts of Christ. When they are in the company of the godly, who think well of Him, they, too, are ready to sing "Hosanna!" but no sooner do they find themselves in the company of those who revile His name, than they go with the stream and join with these blasphemers in their unholy work.

Thirdly, *some have occasional thoughts of Christ.* When Joseph interpreted the dream of the chief butler, and told him that in three days he would be restored to the king's presence, he asked this favour of him, "Think of me when it shall be well with thee." Doubtless the butler promised that he would, and intended to do so whilst he was with Joseph in the prison; but when he obtained his liberty, we are told, "Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him."

How many act in this manner towards Christ, when in trouble or affliction—lying, perhaps, upon what they fear is their death-bed! They think of Christ, and cry to Him for deliverance, vowing they will never forget Him again if He will but grant them their requests; but, alas! no sooner do they obtain the desired deliverance than they act the part of the chief butler, and think no more of their Benefactor till their next trouble arises; and they thus go on sinning and repenting till the end of the chapter, unless God, in His sovereign grace, interposes, and grants them repentance unto life.

We come next to consider what it is to have *right thoughts* concerning Christ, and truly there are many who do think well of Him, whether their lot be one of affliction or of prosperity, whether they are in the company of Christians or of the world, and that in spite of anything the enemies of truth may say to the contrary, whether they rank themselves amongst the religious or the profane.

It is said that one of the native converts in Madagascar could never mention the name of Christ without his eyes filling with tears. One who observed this expressed his surprise, and asked him how it was, to which he replied, "*How could it not be when He died for me?*" Would not our hearts be filled with gratitude to one who, at the risk of his own life, had delivered us from death? Should we not have many kind and loving thoughts concerning our deliverer? If this would be our feeling towards one who delivered us from a natural death, still more should it be so with those who can truly say of Christ, with the good Malagasy, "He died for me!"

It may help to test our love to Christ by examining what our

thoughts are concerning *His Word, His people, His ways, and His work.* *What think ye of His Word?* Alexander the Great was so much in love with the works of Aristotle that he used to sleep with them under his pillow; and, upon one occasion, when a beautiful jewelled casket was taken amongst the spoils in battle, he declared that it should be used only to contain the works of his favourite author. Thus we see what great value was placed upon the writings of a heathen philosopher; but we have to do with the words of Him “who spake as never man spake,” and who inspired holy men of old to write down those blessed truths which have been for the caution, counsel, and comfort of the people of God in all ages. “Oh, how I love Thy law,” said one of old; “it is my meditation all the day” (Psa. cxix. 97). “Yea,” saith he, “Thy law is within my heart”—a far better receptacle for the Word of God than honouring it with a place in the jewelled cabinet or costly library of a king.

“Oh, that I could have a Bible,” said Martin Luther, “and I would crave no other gift!” When he obtained a copy, he showed his love for it by reading it through for years twice every year. But what think *we* of His Word? If a letter comes to us from one upon earth that we love, how carefully it is read and re-read! Every line is noted, thought over, and, if possible, acted upon. Does the Word of God receive from us that same attentive and loving reading? Do we feel that it is the Word of One we love, and whose commandments it gives us real pleasure to obey? If so, it is one evidence that we think well of Christ—

“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.”

What think we of His people? Some esteem the saints “as the filth and offscouring of all things,” and many are the attempts that have been made by wicked men to persecute them off the face of the earth: but, though they are despised by the multitude, they are highly esteemed by a few who look upon the people of God as the excellent of the earth. They love them with their hearts, and frequently manifest that love at times by kind and loving actions, when they see them pressed down with care and sorrow. Obadiah, we are told, took one hundred of the Lord’s prophets and hid them by fifties in a cave, feeding them with bread and water. This he must have done at the risk of his own life, as doubtless Ahab’s wrath would have fallen upon him had his kind action been discovered. He also did it at a considerable

expense, for it was done in a time of famine. What caused him to act thus? Was it not love to his God, who hath said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of these, the least of My disciples, ye have done it unto Me"?

Yes, in all the children of God there is a family feeling, which leads them to love one another as brethren, remembering how their Elder Brother, Christ, has set a glorious example for them to follow. Well might the Apostle John set down love to the brethren as one of the best evidences of the new birth—

" Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above ;
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love."

What think we of His ways? "Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." Jesus Christ is the true wisdom, and all who walk in His ways find them in the end both peaceful and pleasant. *Repentance, prayer, faith, love, and obedience* are the paths by which the children of God, in all ages, have travelled to the Celestial City.

But the all-important question is, *What think we of His ways?* Do we, like Nathanael, love to meet Him in prayer beneath some sheltering fig tree? Do we love to weep tears of repentance at His feet, as did the poor woman in Simon's house? Have we faith to believe in His power and willingness to save to the uttermost all that come unto Him, like the centurion, who said, "Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed"? (Matt. viii. 8.) Do we, like Mary, love to sit at the feet of Christ and listen to His heavenly teaching, while He opens to us the Scriptures concerning Himself? If we have been thus led to love His ways, it is another proof that we think well of Christ—

" Jesus, Shepherd of Thy people,
Lead us through this desert land ;
We are weak, and poor, and feeble,
Yet we trust Thy mighty hand :
Strong Protector,
By Thy power alone we stand."

What think we of His work? The patriarch Isaac loved to go out into the field to meditate or pray at eventide, and what more helpful to prayer than a sweet vein of meditation upon the work of Christ? In His work of creation alone there is a wondrous field for thought. His work of providence is still more wonderful, and, in tracing its marvellous workings, we can but say with the prophet, "O wheel."

But the work of redemption is the greatest of all His wonders—a work so stupendous that even the angels desire to look into it, but these sinless beings cannot dive so far into the mystery as the saints of God are enabled to do, and even they are only able *in measure* to comprehend the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge (Eph. iii. 19)—

“ Stronger His love than death or hell,
Its riches are unsearchable ;
The first-born sons of light
Desire in vain its depth to see,
They cannot reach the mystery,
The length and breadth and height.”

It is said that, when Richard Whittington was Lord Mayor of London, he invited King Henry V. to a grand banquet at Guild-hall. In the centre of the hall blazed a fire of fragrant cedar wood, which was presently rendered still more fragrant when the wealthy mayor took the bonds owing to him by the king for the amount of £60,000 (present value, £900,000) and cast them into the fire, thus releasing the monarch from his heavy, and at that time insurmountable, liabilities. May we not see in this incident a type of the wondrous work of Christ, who took the handwriting that stood against His saints and nailed it to His cross, thus cancelling their mighty debt and opening to them the gates of heaven, which otherwise must for ever have been closed against them? To meditate in spirit upon this wondrous work, under the influence of the Spirit of all truth, will cause the hardest-hearted sinner to fall down with tears of love and contrition at the feet of a precious Christ, and feelingly say with the poet—

“ Suffering Saviour, Lamb of God,
How hast Thou been usèd !
With the Almighty's wrathful rod
Soul and body bruised.

“ We would with Thee sympathize
In Thy bitter passion ;
With soft hearts and weeping eyes
See Thy great salvation.

“ Bid us call to mind Thy cross,
Our hard hearts to soften ;
Often, Saviour, feast us thus,
For we need it often.”

Do we, in these respects, think well of Christ? Can we see a beauty in Him, and all that concerneth Him, which language fails to describe?

The Church in the Canticles draws a wonderful picture of

what she thought of Christ, comparing Him to all that is most beautiful and precious in the world, such as flowers, spices, gold, precious stones, marble, ivory, and the cedars of Lebanon ; but failing to fully set forth His worth, she said, "Yea, He is altogether lovely!" and this is the feeling of all saints when the glories of Christ are opened to their view.

Those who truly think well of Christ are led to do so because He has first thought well of them. Yea, so precious were they in His eyes that He died to redeem them, and is now gone to prepare a place for them, that where He is there they may be also ; and, for the encouragement of all that *think* upon His name, He has declared that they shall be His in that day when He makes up His heavenly jewels (Mal. iii. 16, 17)—

" Jesus, the very thought of Thee
With sweetness fills my breast ;
But sweeter far Thy face to see,
And in Thy presence rest."

Reader, what think you of Christ ?

HOPEFUL.

THE TWO NATURES.

A WELL-KNOWN missionary tells us of a poor African woman who once said to him, groaning heavily, that she had two hearts, a new and an old, and they were so constantly contending, the one saying, "Come to Jesus," the other saying, "Stay away"—the one bidding her do good, and the other bidding her do evil—that she knew not what to do. He read to her the seventh chapter of the Romans, and showed that the Apostle felt the same things. When he came to the verse, "O wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me from the body of this death ?" she said, "Ah ! massa, that me, and me know not what to do ;" and when he afterwards added the words, "I thank God through Jesus Christ," and explained them, she burst into tears of grateful joy. What comforted her may well comfort all similarly tempted and sorrowing ones.

ROBERT MACDONALD.

THERE is no affliction, how great soever, though, with respect to natural means, unremovable and unmitigable, yet, if it be sanctified by divine grace, a Christian, even while he is so afflicted, has more cause of joy than grief—more reason to bless God for it, than to repine and complain. "In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Thess. v. 18). He turns afflictions into benefits, and our affectionate praises are due on that account.—*Bates*.

DIVINE PRESERVATION AND HELP.

"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: He that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is thy Keeper: the Lord is thy Shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: He shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore."—PSALM cxxi.

WE have in this Psalm a sweet view of our safety. Nothing can by any means hurt those whom the Lord keeps. Dangers, both temporal and spiritual, stand thick in our way, but the Lord is our Keeper and our Shade; and, though spiritual dangers are, no doubt, principally intended in this Psalm, yet I cannot but think that temporal dangers are also included.

This day, May 2nd, 1819, the Lord most wonderfully preserved us from imminent danger while going to His house. Going down hill upon a swing trot, the horse made a beat, and down it came in an instant. We—that is to say, my husband, myself, and poor infirm child—all fell out of the cart. In a moment of time I found myself lying upon the horse, and felt one, if not both, my companions roll after me. I felt an ejaculation arise in my mind thus, "Lord, preserve us!" I lay upon the horse until my husband was up and secured the child, and then as quick as possible came to my relief, for I had but one hand to help myself with, having lost the use of the other for a time by my rheumatic complaint. When we were all up, we found that neither of us had received the least injury; no, not the slightest injury imaginable. Neither had the horse cut its knees; it received a slight injury on the chest and shoulder, but nothing further. It is worthy of remark that the poor animal lay as still as possible, till my husband took hold of her to lift her up, as our safety greatly depended upon this as a means. Nor were either of us very much frightened. This also I consider a great mercy, but the Lord's surprising goodness seemed to take off the fright altogether. Thus did the Lord preserve man and beast, to the great display of His omnipotence and omnipresence, for if we had fallen upon a bed of down, we could not have received less injury. "Bless the Lord, O my soul." Ye saints who love His name, bless Him with me. I have by this providence learned that "it is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man;" yea, that "it is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes."

A few days before, I had rode out with an acquaintance who

drove the same horse, and going down hills. I felt a little fear because it was not my husband who drove, but when we started this morning I felt very comfortable, not seeing the least danger, because the reins were in my husband's hands. Alas ! that we should so forget that our safety *alone* depends upon Him that keepeth Israel. May I from henceforth put my trust in the Lord. If I had trusted in Him instead of my husband, I doubt not but He would have kept us from falling ; but as I was vain enough to look to an arm of flesh, He taught me my folly, and yet *graciously* preserved me. "Who is a God like unto Thee?" How full of compassion, how kind and tender, while at the same time He will not give His glory to another ! "O bless our God, ye people ; make the voice of His praise to be heard." Amen.

I would now look a little upon this Psalm in a spiritual sense. David begins this Psalm as though he were in trouble, for if he had felt altogether safe and comfortable, why look out for help ? Is he surrounded with enemies ? He tells us where he will look : "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help." If this had been all he had said, perhaps some would have thought he intended the city of Jerusalem, or rather the mountains that guarded that city ; but, lest any should mistake him, he adds, "My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth." Every Christian is upon an equality here with David. It is true we have numerous troubles to encounter, and hosts of enemies to fight against, both outward and inward. If we trust our own strength, we shall surely be overcome ; but, with David, we do not look to grace already received to preserve us, but "lift up our eyes"—that is, look quite away from everything but the Lord. When we are thus enabled to act, we never miss of succour, but surely find our "help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth."

In the next verse, we have an assurance of safety : "He will not suffer thy foot to be moved : He that keepeth thee will not slumber." In the fourth verse, we are called upon to pay particular attention to this : "Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." As the mountains guarded the city of Jerusalem, so in a far superior manner does the Lord guard His Church collectively, and His people individually. He here condescends to sustain the character of a Watchman. He keeps His people with a watchful eye, with an unwearied eye. "He will neither slumber nor sleep." It is again repeated, in verse five, "The Lord is thy Keeper : the Lord is thy Shade upon thy right hand." What for ? To keep off those evils that so closely pursue us. Sixth verse, "The sun shall not smite thee by day." Perhaps by "sun" is here intended fiery trials of all kinds, especially persecution. Our Lord, when speaking of the seed sown, or rather

that fell upon stony places, says, these soon sprang up, "because they had no deepness of earth : but when the sun was up, they were scorched ; and because they had no deepness of earth, they withered away." In the explanation of this parable, He says, "He that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the Word, and anon with joy receiveth it ; yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while : for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the Word, by and by he is offended" (Matt. xiii. 20, 21). Those have no root in themselves, they have no true love to God, but have merely their passions stirred ; therefore, they cannot endure the scorching beams of persecution. But those whom the Lord vouchsafes to keep are shaded by Him from its blighting influences. "The sun shall not smite thee"—that is, it shall not have power to deprive of life. It may beat very hot upon our heads, till we feel almost ready to faint ; but it shall not smite us, because the Lord is our Shade. He will keep us from deadly harm, and support us in every fiery trial, whether of outward persecution or inward conflict with the powers of darkness. "The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night." We are in as much danger from a cold and lifeless frame of soul as we are from the scorching beams of persecution. If left to ourselves, we should forsake our colours under the heat of one, and lie down and die under the chilling influence of the other. Thus we owe all our safety to our Keeper. And that we may not give way to fear, it is added in the seventh verse, "The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil : He shall preserve thy soul." He will not only preserve from the sun and moon, but from all evil, let it arise from what quarter it may. Should earth and hell conspire to take away our life, they shall be defeated. "The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil," &c. If we could always see our safety, how might we triumph over our foes, even in the worst of times. And that we may not suppose this safety is only for the day, it is said in the eighth verse, "The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore." What rich security ! Oh, for a larger measure of faith, that we might live up to our high calling as sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty ! If the Lord is on our side, what have we to fear ? He will preserve us while journeying through this howling wilderness ; He will preserve us when we go out of it : yea, He will preserve us safely to His heavenly kingdom ; and what can we wish for more ? Be it, then, our one concern to glorify God with our body and spirit, which are His, and to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, which is but our reasonable service. "Lord, increase our faith."

Old Sampford, May 3rd, 1819.

A TOKEN FOR GOOD.

DEAR FRIEND,—May the Lord bless you and increase you, and cause His face to shine upon you. How great is His goodness to such a sinner as me! At times it causes the tears to flow from my eyes when I consider what I was, have been, and now am. None know how vile I see and feel myself to be; yet, how sweet to know and feel that God has a favour towards me! At times when this is enjoyed in my soul, oh, how I love the Lord, and then I feel I could die for His name and cause! None know but myself how long-suffering He has been towards me. Oh, grace, grace, what a debtor am I to grace! What a mercy I am out of hell! And then to have a good hope springing from the blessed persuasion that He has put away my sins by His own dear Son is indeed cause for gratitude, love, and praise. Oh, that I could render it as my soul desires, but He knows my heart and what my desires are!

But where am I running to? I just drop you these lines to say that seven of us met in my vestry and there gave ourselves to the Lord and to each other, and thus formed ourselves into a Church; and blessed be God for the opportunity. I had many fears and much trembling of mind about it, having never seen anything of the kind. I was so fearful of doing wrong or being too fast, but at the time the sweet access I found in prayer, the testimony of God in my heart, by His shedding abroad His love in my soul, was such that I hardly slept all night; and I have seen some of the others since, and they found God's blessing as well as I. This has caused us to rejoice and bless God for the opportunity. Oh, how good is the Lord Jesus to poor, sensible, seeking sinners!

How glad I have felt that you did not come, because had you come, the service would have rested with you, and thus I should not have proved as I have done His goodness towards me. I thought you would like to hear of us, which is the cause of my writing this.

I should be glad of a line from you at any time.

Croydon, December 9th, 1851,

Yours truly,

F. COVELL.

To Mr. TIPTAFT.

ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON, one day returning from church, saw a funeral coming. On reaching home, one who had been confined to the house inquired, "Well, have you heard a good sermon?" "I have *met* a good sermon," was the reply.

A BRIEF MEMOIR OF THOMAS SMITH.

THOMAS SMITH, who died a short time ago at Fingeringho, in Essex, was a hard-working, steady-going man, and thought himself to be as good as most men ; but he was a constant Sabbath-breaker—indeed, Sunday was a special day, in a sinful sense, to him. Living on the marshes where various kinds of sea-birds were often to be seen, and having obtained a punt and a gun, he spent the most of each returning Sabbath in shooting and maiming all the birds he could ; and sometimes, with his large punt gun, he either killed or injured a great number during the day.

However, the time of mercy drew near, for God had designed to show His loving-kindness and power to this hardened sinner, not to offer him salvation, but to save him ; not to strive with him, but to conquer him, and cause him, in the spirit of a little child, to enter the kingdom of heaven. This He did without the aid of the so-called means of grace.

One day, in a most powerful way, these words were sounded in his ears, and fixed upon his heart as though spoken from heaven. "Flee from the wrath to come ;" and such were the terrors and sorrow he endured in his soul that he could not go to his usual work on the farm for several weeks. His wife and friends thought he had gone out of his mind ; and this report was soon spread abroad. The doctor was consulted, and he prescribed medicine, but to no purpose. He needed the healing which cometh alone from Christ.

At this time a fellow-workman, by the name of Baker, who had been a seeker after God for several years, called to see him, and soon found that the cause of his sorrow and depression of mind arose from a wounded spirit. It was not a disease of the head, but a wounded and contrite heart, which produced his sadness.

Smith now began to go with Baker in the ways which all Zion's travellers tread. They went to the house of God in company. He, however, did not obtain peace and rest of soul for some time after this. But one Lord's Day, a plain man, who had been taught of God, came, in his preaching, into the very place where he was, burdened and bound. The text was, "Her countenance was no more sad" (1 Sam. i. 18). Under this sermon he was blessed and enlarged in his soul, and rejoiced in the knowledge of the forgiveness of his sins. To use his own words, he was "made like a new man."

He had, while walking in the way of the ungodly, thought and believed his master had wronged him by keeping back part of his wages. In consequence of this, he took a tool belonging

to him and kept it; but he could not endure to see it in his house now, so, rising one morning very early, he took it back unseen.

Now, instead of being pitied as one "wrong in his head," he was hated, charged often with being "mad about religion," and avoided as such; yet he was, notwithstanding, very highly favoured in his soul for some time, and was a surprise to many who attended the same chapel. However, as he could not find food for his soul at the chapel where he before had been blessed, for men came to preach who knew nothing of the plague of their own heart, neither had they felt the same sorrow and joy which he had, he therefore went from chapel to chapel, and from church to church. His friend Baker once advised him to join and settle with some Church, but his reply was, "I am afraid to join any people lest I should break out again, and walk in my old ways, and bring disgrace upon the Church." This fear was no doubt intensified by the recollection that he had, when a young man, made a profession, and manifested some religious zeal, but he soon gave it up, and returned to his old ways again.

In going to the chapel where he usually attended each Lord's Day, he had to cross a ferry. The charge for being put across was one penny. Being a poor labouring man, he was, one Lord's Day, quite destitute of money; but, being very anxious to attend the place of worship, he, nevertheless, prepared to go, and started on the way; and, when getting near the ferry, still penniless, he noticed something bright lying in the lane. He picked it up, and, to his great joy, it proved to be a sixpenny piece. This enabled him not only to cross and re-cross by the ferry, but also to obtain a dinner.

After many years of trial and sorrow, as he was returning home one Sunday along the same lane, he fell down in a fit, and remained in that condition for several hours before he was discovered. He was brought home, and survived only a few days. Seeing his family weeping, he said, "Don't cry about me; it does not matter to me how soon the Lord takes me home. I am all right. Give my love to Baker, and tell him we shall meet again above." But this meeting has not yet taken place, Baker being still below, in his eighty-third year. He was highly favoured in attending to the ordinance of baptism when in his seventy-ninth year, and is an esteemed father in Israel.

Colchester.

W. B.

Lord, all my sins confessing,
I humbly ask Thy love;
And then that better blessing—
To dwell with Thee above.

THE SCEPTIC HUMBLLED.

COPY OF A LETTER WRITTEN BY A LATELY DECEASED CLERGYMAN,
WHICH APPEARED IN "THE RECORD," OCTOBER 20TH, 1862.

SIR,—You well observe, in a recent article, that the public is becoming accustomed to the strange vagaries respecting the Bible into which men of learning and high position in the Church seem so constantly falling.

I should be glad to express, through the medium of your columns, what appears to me the secret of all this; and I the rather desire to do so, because I am myself a monument of the delivering power and mercy of God in this very matter.

It may be observed that almost all the men who have thus notoriously erred from the way of truth are men of some kind of eminence in natural ability. The errors of Mr. Maurice, Mr. Heath, and especially Bishop Colenso, cannot be attributed to any confusion of mind as to things which differ. Besides, I know from past experience in the same gloomy school, that the possession of very considerable natural acumen does not in the least degree aid a man whose mind is perplexed about the foundations of Bible truth.

As to the objections to the generally received views of Scripture, and the doctrines which flow so immediately from its simple and spiritual acceptance as the Word of God, sceptics know as well as we do that they are hackneyed, and as old as our fallen nature, but then that does not remove them. They cannot receive the simple accounts of Scripture because they have not divine faith. I remember when I first began to read the Bible (and I thought I was sincerely seeking the truth), I was miserable because I could not believe it. I dared not reject any statement I found there, but I could not fully believe it was true. The Bishop of Natal just expresses what I felt; and the fact that we took exactly the same University honours (in different years of course) draws forth my peculiar sympathy.

My own history was just this: I had read and studied deeply in mathematics; had mastered every fresh subject I had entered upon with ease and delight; had become accustomed (as every exact mathematician must do) to investigate and discover fundamental differences between things which seem to the uninitiated one and the same; had seen my way into physical astronomy and the higher parts of Newton's immortal "Principia," and had been frequently lost in admiration of his genius, till St. Mary's clock warned me that midnight was three hours past. I had, in fact (as we say), made myself master of dynamics, and become gradually more and more a believer in the unlimited

capabilities of my own mind. This self-conceited idea was only flattered and fostered by eminent success in the Senate House, and by subsequently obtaining a Fellowship at Trinity, and enjoying very considerable popularity as a mathematical lecturer.

It would have spared me many an hour of misery in after days had I really felt what I so often said, namely, that the deeper a man went in science, the humbler he ought to be, and the more cautious in pronouncing an independent opinion on a subject he had not investigated, or could not thoroughly sift. But, though all this was true, I had yet to learn that this humility in spiritual things is never found in a natural man.

I took orders, and began to preach, and then, like the Bishop among the Zulus, I found out the grand deficit in my theology. I had not been taught by the Holy Spirit myself; and how then could I speak "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power"?

In vain did I read Chalmers, Paley, Butler, Gaussen, &c., and determine that, as I had mastered all the other subjects I had grappled with, so I would the Bible, and that I would make myself a believer. I found a poor ignorant old woman in my parish more than a match for me in divine things. I was distressed to find that she was happy in the enjoyment of the Lord's mercy to her, and that she found prayer answered, and that all this was proved sincere by her blameless and harmless walk amongst her neighbours; whilst I, with all my science and investigation, was barren, and unprofitable, and miserable—an unbeliever in heart, and yet not daring to avow it, partly from the fear of man, but more from a certain inward conviction that all my sceptical difficulties would be crushed and leaped over by the experience of the most illiterate Christian.

I was perfectly ashamed to feel in my mind like Voltaire, Volney, or Tom Paine. I could claim no originality for my views; and I found they were no comfort, but a constant source of misery to me.

May we not compare this kind of state to that which God speaks of in Jeremiah xlix.: "Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine heart"? And observe what follows: "Hear the counsel of the Lord. . . . Surely the least of the flock shall draw them out."

It may now be asked how I came ever to view divine truth differently. I desire to ascribe all praise to Him to whom power belongeth. I desire to put my own mouth in the dust, and be ashamed, and never open my mouth any more, because of my former unbelief. I cannot describe all I passed through, but I desire with humility and gratitude to say, I was made willing in

a day of Christ's power. He sweetly melted down my proud heart under a sense of His love. He opened my blind eyes to behold Him as my Saviour. He shut my mouth for ever from cavilling at any difficulties in the written Word; and one of the first things in which this great change appeared was, that whereas before, preaching had been a burden to me, now it became my delight to be able to say, without a host of sceptical or infidel doubts rushing into my mind, "*Thus saith the Lord.*" Oh, I am quite certain no unconverted man can see the things of God; and I am equally certain he cannot make himself to do so. "It was the Lord that exalted Moses and Aaron," said Samuel; and "By the grace of God I am what I am," said Paul; and so, in a modified and humble sense, I can truly say.

It used to be a terrible stumbling-block to me to find so many learned men, so many acute men, so many scientific men, infidels. It is not so now. I see that God has said, "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble." I see, as plainly as it is possible for me to see anything, that no natural man can of himself receive the things of the Spirit of God. Hence I expect to find men of this stamp of intellect coming out boldly with their avowals of unbelief in the written Word of God. The only answer I give to them is, "God has in mercy taught me better;" and never do I sing those beautiful words in the well-known hymn, but I feel my eyes filling with tears of gratitude to the God of all grace—

"Jesus sought me when a stranger
Wandering from the fold of God."

So it was with me; so it must be with every proud reasoner, if ever he is to know the truth in its power, or to receive the love of the truth that he may be saved.

I feel very much for the young of this generation, remembering the conflicts I passed through in consequence of the errors of men of ability. I hope the Lord will graciously impress on many hearts the serious truth of the words, "*Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit;*" and "*The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.*" My own way of explaining this to myself and others, when required to do so, is by saying, "It is not a naturally cultivated *intellect*, but new affections, which receive true religion. 'Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.'"

Apologizing for occupying so much room,

I beg to remain, my dear sir,

Your obedient servant,

A FORMER FELLOW OF TRIN. COLL., CAMB.

Wymeswold Vicarage, Loughborough, October 15th, 1862.

Robert Walker

THE INTOLERANCE OF POPERY.

WE have often thought that the late Joseph Irons, that champion of truth, spent too much of his sermons in cautioning his people against Romanism, but we have lived to see our error, and do hope that every minister of the Gospel will imitate his noble example. What would the good man have said to see and hear of his son, Dr. Irons, the Ritualistic rector of St. Mary's Woolnoth? and what, too, would good John Newton have said to see his pulpit occupied by such an one? *

The relentless spirit of the Church of Rome is ever manifested, and on no occasion more so than when, through the authority of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, it passed a sentence of forty-six months' imprisonment in a dark and dismal dungeon, with hard labour, on Rosa Madiai, for reading the Word of God, and fifty-four months' imprisonment in a similar dungeon on her husband for the same offence. The following is a letter, written the day after the sentence was passed, by Rosa Madiai to her husband, June 7th, 1852 :—

“MY DEAR MADIAT,—You know that I have always loved you, but how much more ought I to love you now that we have been together in the battle of the great King, that we have been beaten but not vanquished! I hope that, through the merits of Jesus Christ, God our Father will have accepted our testimony, and will give us grace to drink to the last drop the portion of that bitter cup which is prepared for us with returning of thanks. My good Madiat, life is only a day, and a day of grief. Yesterday we were young, to-day we are old; nevertheless, we can say with old Simeon, ‘Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation.’ Courage, my dear, since we know by the Holy Spirit that this Christ, loaded with unjust opprobrium, trodden down and calumniated, is our Saviour; and we, by His holy light and power, are called to defend His holy cause, and Christ who died for us, receiving His reproach, that we may afterwards participate in His glory. Do not fear if the punishment be hard. God, who made the chains fall from Peter, and opened the doors of his prison, will never forget us. Keep in good spirits, let us trust entirely in God. Let me see you cheerful as, I trust by the same grace, you will see me cheerful. I embrace you with my whole heart.—Your affectionate wife, ROSA MADIAT.”

R. F. R.

* Since this was written, Dr. Irons has gone to meet his Judge.

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.—No. XXXIX.

MY DEAR WILLIAM,—Yours of the eighth came safely to hand, and I perused it with the deepest interest, and with mingled feelings of pleasure and sympathy. It affords me pleasure to find that you are not altogether insensible of the importance of the subject to which I have called your attention, for when I wrote I was so unacquainted with the state of your mind, that I knew not whether my epistle would meet with a favourable reception. I sympathise with you in the feelings, exercises, and fears you express, being not altogether a stranger to them. Like you, I was from my infancy instructed in those principles which discovered to me the evil consequences of transgression, and the awful prospect that is presented to them who die in their sins; and in early life I had occasional convictions, which, soon subsiding, left me for a time in a state of awful insensibility. But He who has declared that His “people shall be willing in the day of His power” would not leave me in this state. When I was aroused by God’s effectual grace, and my mind was enlightened to discover the exceeding sinfulness of sin, I was constrained to call upon the Lord and to seek His face. During this time my mind was subject to many ebblings and flowings. My sense of the importance of spiritual things was not always alike vivid, nor were my desires always alike fervent; and it was some time before I was brought to a sole reliance upon the blood, righteousness, and grace of the Son of God. Yet the Lord despised not my groan, He rejected not my cry, nor would He break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax.

I believe it is often very gradually, and after many inward conflicts and variable emotions of mind, that convinced sinners are enabled to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Your mind appears to be exercised and distressed because you are not more deeply sensible of your situation, and continually influenced by the solemn realities that in your judgment you believe to be true. It is very desirable to have the mind so powerfully impressed with a sense of the everlasting value of the salvation of God, as to be influenced to seek after it earnestly and perseveringly, and to count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus; and I would fervently pray that He who can alone take away the heart of stone and give the heart of flesh, and by whose effectual teaching and gracious operations sinners are made truly sensible of their fallen, helpless condition, and are influenced to call upon the Lord Jesus, may so impress upon your mind the all-important verities of which you speak in your letter, that you may feel yourself constrained to pour out your soul unto Him who heard with

acceptance the publican's prayer, "God be merciful to me a sinner!"

But do not suppose that the terror of mind, and the long-continued distress which some have been subject to, are essential to real conversion, nor consider conviction alone an evidence of the possession of the grace of God. If you had the most vivid sense of the awful state of a sinner condemned by the law of God, and could realize that you were in that condition, that would not produce any real hatred to sin or love to God, neither would it lead one step nearer to the only Source of help, the cross of Christ. The expressive lines of Hart on this subject are corroborated by the testimony of all who have an experimental acquaintance therewith—

" Law and terrors do but harden
All the while they work alone ;
But a sense of blood-bought pardon
Soon dissolves a heart of stone."

The only remedy for all the evils and miseries entailed upon us by the fall is found in the Lord Jesus Christ. In accomplishing His covenant engagements He became incarnate, that He might save His people from their sins. His holy life and sacrificial death are a full satisfaction to the law of God for all that believe in His name. The sins of all His flock were borne by Him, and He suffered the penal consequences of their transgressions. The infinite dignity of His Person gave everlasting value and efficacy to His obedience, blood-shedding, and death. Here alone is salvation ; and believing views of Jesus dying for sin, and a sense of the love He therein manifested, will melt the heart, make sin odious, and produce love to Him who died to save.

You will perhaps reply, "I know all this, but what can this avail me unless I am interested in it?" My dear friend, I set these things before you, because the faith that manifests interest in Christ comes by hearing of His great salvation, and I would urge you to search the Scriptures, which testify of Jesus. The application of the Redeemer's work to the souls of His ransomed people is in the hands of God the Holy Ghost, who, in fulfilling His covenant office, secretly communicates life to the soul, and by various means makes them sensible of their need of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, draws out their desires after it, and discovers to them its perfect suitableness to their ruined circumstances. He makes them willing to be saved in this way, and shows them that the blessings of the Gospel are designed for such as are totally helpless, and that they are given without money and without price. Thus the objections arising in their minds on account of their supposed

unfitness for such favours are removed, and the almighty Comforter, in His own time, brings those whom He graciously instructs to place all their dependence upon the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ for their acceptance with God, to rely on His sacrifice for pardon, and to look to His grace and strength for all needful supplies to enable them to do and suffer the will of God on earth, and to fit them for His presence in glory. Faith receives that which God has already prepared, and this faith is wrought by divine power. If, then, you discover that you need salvation, not only from inherent evil and guilt contracted, but also from the hardness of heart and insensibility of mind you deplore, may you be encouraged and enabled to approach the throne of mercy, where Jesus is seated, and to wait at the footstool of the God of all grace, and you will prove that none ever sought His face in vain.

I shall receive with much interest your reply to this, and in the meantime remain,

Yours very truly,

JOHN DANE PLAYER.

Saffron Walden, September 18th, 1833.

“THAT I MAY KNOW HIM.”

SUN of Righteousness divine,
Shine into this soul of mine;
Dark without Thy rays am I;
For Thy presence, Lord, I sigh.

Thou my light and glory art,
Now irradiate my heart;
Bid again the darkness flee,
Let me my Redeemer see.

Zion's glorious Lord art Thou;
Lo, I at Thy footstool bow,
Wondering Thou shouldst condescend
To become “the sinner's Friend.”

Thee to all I would prefer;
On me light divine confer,
That I may Thy beauty see,
And in love absorbed may be.

More of Thee I long to know;
Let me in Thy courts grow;
Fit me for Thy courts above,
There to bathe in seas of love.

ALFRED.

THE SOWER.

NOTES OF A SERMON BY MR. F. COVELL,

PREACHED AT PROVIDENCE CHAPEL, CROYDON, ON SUNDAY
MORNING, DECEMBER 9TH, 1860.

"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!"—
SOLOMON'S SONG iv. 9, 10.

THIS Song is called the "Song of Songs," and we may indeed say it is the very best, for in it the Son of God has, as it were, opened all His heart, told us all His thoughts, and made known His mind and will. In it we may read of His delight in His poor people, and such things as He said in it to them that, unless *He* had said it, we could not have believed it. "It is too good," we should have said, "to be true;" but He makes us believe it by speaking to our heart, and this brings us to say, "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift."

"Thou hast ravished My heart, My sister, My spouse." When? When she was lying in her filth, guilt, and blood; when there was no eye to pity her, no heart to compassionate her. Then He tells her, "I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood. I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live;" for, says He, "When I passed by thee, thy time was a time of love, and I spread My skirt over thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, and thou becamest Mine." Then "it was not for good deeds, good tempers, or frames." No, my friends, but springing from His rich and sovereign love, in which He makes known that truth, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and be gracious to whom I will be gracious;" so He passed by angels, more lofty spirits than ours, and laid hold of and had a delight in dust and ashes—sinful, vile, and guilty worms. "And is this the manner of man, O Lord?" Will God open His eyes upon such an one? Will the blessed Son of God have His heart so taken with such creatures as us as to say, "Thou hast ravished My heart?"

And, my friends, He will make us believe this is true. Blessed for ever be His matchless name that "His ways are not as our ways, neither are His thoughts as our thoughts." But, till He came to make this known to you and me, saying, "My son, give Me thine heart," we were in love with self, sin,

and the world, and wedded to the law; and the language of our heart, when the blessed Son of God came to make Himself known to us, was, "We desire not the knowledge of Thy ways." In our hearts we wanted Him to depart from us. We were so in love with ourselves and other things, that we had no room nor desire for Christ. But, "determined to save, He watched o'er our path." Determined to do us good, He hedged up our way with thorns, and made a wall, that we could not find our own paths. He had determined to bring us to heaven, so He turned all other lovers out, and has brought (or is bringing) us to bow at His feet, and to say with our heart, "Set me as a seal upon Thine heart, as a seal upon Thine arm, for love is strong as death."

Ah! my friends, it is true, and there are some of you know it. As I have just said, when He comes to woo us, and to espouse us to Himself, He finds our hearts running after other lovers—in love with ourselves, our own righteousness, resolutions, and performances. But, my friends, He has plunged you and me in the ditch, and made our own clothes to abhor us. Has He not made you feel that all your "righteousnesses are as filthy rags," so that at times you have loathed your own works, and felt it was of the Lord's mercies you were not consumed? It is His work to drive us out of self and to win our hearts; and why? Because—

"Partial service is His loathing;
He requires pure desires,
All the heart or nothing."

He will have it; and, my friends, when He begins to work thus in the heart, the sinner is willing for Him to have it; but when the blessed Spirit begins to show the man what a heart he has, his trouble is, lest the Lord will not have it. This makes the poor thing cry out, "Cleanse the very thoughts of my heart, and renew a right spirit within me;" so He comes thus to take our heart, that He may let us know how He loves us. He throws down this lordly self, with all its pretty works, in the dust, and down falls that Dagon god before the blessed Son of God. Poor thing, has He done it for you? Do you know what the poet means when he says—

"Drove out of myself, my own righteousness loathing,
To Christ, my dear Saviour, for shelter I go?"

What a mercy for you if you do! Well, while He has been doing it, there has been fear, anxiety, and trouble in the heart about it; nor could you believe at times that these were tokens of love to thee. But whom He loves He rebukes and chastens;

and it is to bring thee to say, with all thy heart, "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life;" for He is so jealous of His people's heart, He will bring them to confess this—"Other lords beside Thee have had dominion over us, but by Thee only will we make mention of Thy name." Thus He will "circumcise our heart to love the Lord our God, that we may live;" and as His love flows out to us, our hearts will run up to Him.

"Thou hast ravished My heart, My sister, My spouse." But He finds our hearts set on the world. What a multitude of pretty things there are in the world, just suited to a carnal man and woman! Its gold and silver, its fashions and pride—take away these, and they would be ready to say, "You have taken away my gods, and what have I more?" How many are there even now before God in this little company that have thought more how to ornament themselves this morning than how their heart stood before God? How many were longer at the glass than they were upon their knees? If we were to take away this god, what have you else? "A meek and quiet spirit in the sight of God is of great price." That is not much in the world's estimation; but to see a man coming to Christ with a feeling, contrite heart, is in the sight of God of great price. Therefore, when the Son of God comes to take His spouse, who has been in love with the world, He takes away this god, and what has she left? When the Holy Ghost convinces the poor thing of sin, how it tarnishes all created things, and the soul feels and says, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity!" "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" What will riches profit in the day of wrath? What will an outside appearance avail a naked soul before God? How the world begins now to go down in the poor sinner's feelings, and "What shall I do to be saved?" comes up. What a change is now wrought! In God's light we see light, and we see the world will be burned up, and all things therein, and then, "what shall it profit a man, though he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" How he begins to feel that "one thing is needful," and down goes the world, and he begins to look after and longs to know something about a crucified Jesus, a suffering Lord Jesus, a bleeding Jesus, a Saviour that can have mercy upon him, that can save him, and "deliver him from going down to the pit." Now his affections begin to run towards God's dear Son, but he cannot see all this while God is drawing him by His grace. Hence God says, "I taught Ephraim to go," but he did not know that it was by God's power he was going; so it is God's power that draws the sinner from the world to Jesus' blessed feet, to acknowledge Him as Lord of all, and to bless the Lord for His dear Son. Do you know

something of this? If so, you begin to find out how little a place Jesus Christ has had in your heart, and what a slave you have been to sin.

Again, when the Son of God thus comes to espouse His dear people, and tell them what is in His heart towards them, He finds them all wedded to Moses. They are born under that covenant, and to their first husband they will cling, though they find they never can please him; and, unless God by His grace and power divorced them from him, they would live and die under his condemning rule and power. Old John Berridge has it perhaps better than I can put it forth. When the blessed Spirit laid hold of his heart and began to draw him to Himself, then John found he was wedded to Moses. He says—

“ His snarling I bore for many a year,
Which grieved me sore, and drew a sad tear;
One folly committed no pardon will find,
And though much entreated, he still is unkind.”

That God's people all know and sensibly feel, but they are so wedded to him they cannot give him up.

But the Son of God will have all the heart: “Thou hast ravished My heart.” But we think, while feeling these things in our heart, the Son of God will never have us in this condition. We want Moses to recommend us to the Lord Jesus Christ. Not so, my friends; the Son of God will have the whole heart, and will thus throw down everything but His blessed Self, and bring us to feel that He loved us because He would love us, and that, when we had no other to take us, help us, and save us, He would do it to purpose. This gets Him such a name in our hearts that I tell thee, if the blessed Son of God has not made Himself known to thee as thy King and Lord when He does so, He will get Himself such praise in your soul that you will say, “Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.” You will feel what it is in reality to say, “Crown Him Lord of all”; and you will call upon every feeling of your heart to bless His matchless name for saving such a wretch as you feel yourself to be. If He has given you to see and feel what He is to you, and has thus scattered all other gods, and in His love and mercy won your heart and affections, your heart at times has leaped at the sound of His name, and you have felt with the poet—

“ Jesus, I love Thy charming name;
’Tis music to my ear.”

This could not be till all others were scattered, till you were driven from the world, and divorced from Moses; and then, when

you least thought about it, He dropped His love into your heart. In the words of the text, or the substance of it, "Thou hast ravished my heart." How clearly you saw and felt that by grace you were saved, through faith, and that not of yourself; it was the gift of God. What a place Christ has now got in your affections, and you can sing right heartily, "None but Jesus"; for it is His own right hand and holy arm "hath done it; not by might, nor by power, but by His own Spirit." This is the way He conquers us by His grace, wins us to Himself, and we fall at His blessed feet, made willing in the day of His power. So you know something of what is wrapped up in the text, "Thou hast ravished My heart, My sister, My spouse."

What a blessed union this is betwixt the Lord Jesus and His people! He calls them "His sister," "His spouse"; and, as He is Son and Heir of God, so we are joint-heirs with Him; and as He is set down on His Father's throne, so we shall sit with Him on His throne. Thus He makes His people to know again and again that He is a "Brother," and one born for adversity too; and that there is an union betwixt Him and His people, according to that word, "I am the Vine, and ye are the branches." As He is the Son, so we are sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, we in Him, and He in us. Thus there is a blessed relationship existing between us, and God receives us in His name and for His sake. What a mercy it is to feel somewhat of the same spirit in our heart that was in His!

In the days of His flesh, when some of His friends came to Him and said, "Thy mother and brethren stand without, desiring to speak with Thee," He looked upon His disciples, and said, "Who is My mother and My brethren? I say unto you, that whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is My brother, and sister, and mother." The Spirit that was upon the Son of God was "never to depart out of His mouth, nor out of the mouth of His seed, nor out of the mouth of His seed's seed, from this time forth, even for ever;" so it ran from the blessed Son of God to all His seed, whereby they are united to Him in faith and love, and drink of the same Spirit.

If you want to know whether you really have any claim to relationship with God's dear Son, I ask you, Has God conquered your will? Has He made you willing to be saved by Jesus Christ? Has God so swallowed up thy will in His will that thy will is God's will? What a great thing this is! And beyond all this, is there not, at times, a falling into the hand of the Lord—"Shall I receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall I not receive evil"? And while at times you may find another will opposing this will, how does thy mind feel about it? Do you say, "I want my will swallowed up in God's, but I find

another running against it, so that I cannot do the things that I would ; and God knows," say you, "that it is so" ? Then thou art His sister, if thou hast thus drank into His Spirit. God has subjected thy will, though thy faith cannot lay hold of it. It requires a strong hand to lay hold of eternal life. But, though you cannot say that the Son of God acknowledges you to be His sister, it is far better to tremble about it than to say it in a presumptuous way. He will enable you to call to Him as your life and the length of your days. You shall taste His love and grace, and shall feel assured that you have an union to the Son of God. Thou art His sister, and though at times Satan may object many things against this, and tell thee to look at thyself, remember that he does this when we are in a bad state, when there is in us no softness of heart or humility of feeling. "Look," he says, "what likeness have you to the Son of God, that you dare claim relationship to Him ? These are none of the marks of it." Then, if we have thought we had presumed in speaking upon these things, we have taken to ourselves a low place, and been ashamed of it. But all that Satan and our unbelief may say stands for nothing. After all this, I ask thee, have you not felt such a moulding of spirit, and conformity to God's will and way, that you have dropped before Him, child-like, saying, "Lord, guide me ! Lord, teach me ! Lord, uphold me" ? And you have thus so drank of the Spirit of the Son of God that you could say, "Not my will, but Thine be done."

I was reading a little while back the life of Cowper, and when I read it, I could not at that time say what he did about consenting, if God so willed, to be banished from Christ, nor have I been able to say so since. But I have often felt that, if I stood at the solemn bar of Christ, and He should frown and say, "Depart !" I could not go. That is what I felt when I read of this man, and I said "If he were right, I have something yet to learn." God, I know, brings our will to accord with His ; and say, "Not mine, but Thine be done." What a mercy for you and me that this Scripture is left ! "If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath." If God the Holy Ghost has gained your heart, there is a willing mind to be what God would have you to be. Has He not, at times, made you kiss the Son, and bow to the will of thy God ? If so, you are the character He is speaking to, though you may not be able confidently to lay hold of the relationship He bears to thee.

"Thou hast ravished My heart, My sister, My spouse." There is not only relationship as a sister, but, as if that were not close enough, He adds, "My spouse." Why, my friends, how "slow of heart" we are to believe all the Lord has said ! While some of us are enabled to say and believe that our Maker is our Husband, "the

Lord of hosts is His name," yet we are apt to fear that we have a good deal more affection for *our* wives than the Son of God has for His. But He tells us, "All things work together for good;" and again, "I will do you good with My whole heart, and with My whole soul. I will never leave nor forsake you." Then He comes again and again, and asks her, "Has anything failed of all God has promised?" No; yet we are so suspicious about His care towards us, whether He will not let us die in a Union, and bring a public disgrace on our name and profession, as if we had more care for ourselves than He has for us. The Son of God cares more about you than you do for yourself, for has He not often made you prove that, if He had let you have your way, you would have cut your fingers; and you have felt sure that, if He had let you alone, you would have run into the pit of destruction? But, "in His love and pity, He redeemed you, and carried you all the days of old;" and many times since then He has made His love known to your heart. When you have in your feelings and ways run away from Him, how He has come and reproved you, and brought you to acknowledge that you made crooked paths for your feet. Still He calls you, "My sister, My spouse." If you and I had but faith to believe what we do believe, how we should be enabled to drop our care upon Him, and feel, "He cares for us!" But, you see, we have not faith enough in His blessed Self. We sensibly feel what we read, that "without Him we can do nothing." How slow of heart we are to believe; but notwithstanding this, we shall find, and prove too, that He watches over us and delights to do us good; and we shall have to confess at last that "goodness and mercy hath followed us all the days of our life," and, as we prove His faithfulness and loving-kindness to be better than life, we shall be willing to go to heaven to praise Him for it all.

"My sister, My spouse." And this is the mercy to every true believer, that there can be no divorcing them from Christ. None can disannul what God hath united. "Thine they were," says the Son, "and Thou gavest them Me;" so there can be no separation. Satan may object, but that is nothing with Christ, who loves everlastingly. Has God united thee and His Christ together? What think you of Christ? What saith thy heart about Him? I ask whether, in faith, Christ is "All and in all" to thee? "Yes," say you, "He is." Has the Holy Spirit made you believe that Christ loves you? "Why," say you, "I have felt sure sometimes in my heart that God loves me." Then God has united you to Christ, and nothing can ever separate you from Him. You may lose the comfort of it, and you may have many things to object against it, and question whether it will stand. But, my friends, the Son of God once said, "What God hath

joined together, let not man put asunder." The Lord, the God of Israel, saith that He hateth putting away; so it still stands, and will stand, "My sister, My spouse." And, notwithstanding all our hard thoughts at times against Him, His love has never altered from everlasting. Though you and I cannot at times believe it, He is doing us good with His whole heart and soul. He is crucifying us to the world, and bringing us to cleave closer to Him, that He may be our All in all; and as the Lord brings you and me again and again into trials and troubles, He brings us, in the long run, to drop them all upon Him, and in feeling to cleave closer to Him. "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her Beloved?" As we come into these things, we get more into His heart, and He gets more into ours; so that we come, in a little measure, to understand what Paul says, "Having a desire to depart and to be with Christ;" and He says, "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!"

THE BELIEVER HATH ALWAYS NEED OF CHRIST.

HAVING received Christ, he is still to make use of Him, by walking in Him. Habitual grace will not do his business without actual grace. The believer is like the ship; it is not enough that he have the sails of grace implanted, but he must have the wind of the Spirit filling his sails, otherwise he cannot make way towards the heavenly port. The believer is like a branch that hath nothing of its own, but what it receives from the root, even as itself doth so spring from the root. He is like the moon which, as appeareth from the eclipse, hath no light of itself, but increaseth and cometh to full as it receiveth from the sun. Let none think that believers have no further use for Christ, after their first believing and receiving of Him—nay, as Christ is the Author, so He is the Finisher of faith; therefore, "as ye have received Him, so walk ye in Him." RALPH ERSKINE.

If poor sinners were not fearful of falling, they would not hold so fast by Christ. You may pull some people's heads off before you can make them let go their hold when they are in danger of falling from a great height. I pray God the danger you are in may make you hold fast by Christ.—*Hill*.

THE NEW COVENANT.*

"But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be My people."—JEREMIAH xxxi. 33.

Of all the promises divine,
Not one, O Lord, doth brighter shine
Than that whence sinners comfort draw,
Pertaining to Thy perfect law.

'Twas good, indeed, when first made known,
And written by Thy hand on stone;
But ah! how soon its precepts then
Were set at nought by sinful men!

Thy broken tables, as they fell,
Had crushed the rebels down to hell,
If Thou hadst not Thy servant seen,
Who knew Thy wrath, and stood between.

Partakers of their guilt are we,
For all have gone astray from Thee;
Though many strive, but strive in vain,
To mend Thy broken ten-link'd chain.

* * * * *

Almighty Sov'reign of the skies,
Thy vengeance was our due;
But Jesus saw with pitying eyes,
And to the ransom flew.

A Prophet unto us was raised
Whom God the Father saw;
That holy One—His name be praised—
Himself fulfilled the law.

Nor only did He magnify
Th' Eternal's righteous will,
But "once for all" He came to die,
And bled for sinners still.

We plead His name before the throne—
"The Lamb of God!" we cry;
He lives who did for sin atone,
And won the victory.

Henceforth a loving, smiling God
Beholds us from above;
And now no more we'd dread His rod,
But rest beneath His love.

* By Mrs. JOSEPH FEARN, author of "Plain Rhymes on the Pentateuch," &c.

THE SOWER.

For lo ! a covenant He makes—
A *new* and blessed one—
And thus for sinners undertakes,
Through Jesus Christ, His Son.

* * * *

“ Behold My law ! ” He says,
“ Shall never curse them more ;
But precious promises
Shall make their hearts adore.

“ No other gods but Me
My people e’er shall know ;
Their hearts My throne shall be,
Whence holiness shall flow.

“ What graven image there
Can ever find a place,
Where I a home prepare
For My peculiar grace ?

“ Shall not My sacred name
Be ever hallowed,
Amidst the glowing flame
Which Love’s own light hath shed ?

“ My Sabbaths shall be sweet
To every child I own ;
I’ll guide their willing feet,
And lead them to My throne.

“ The little ones shall give
Their parents honour due ;
Rejoicing long to live
In pleasures always new.

“ The hands, the eyes, the heart,
Shall all unite to bring
A fair and goodly part
To God, for offering.”

Take comfort, then, all ye
By sin and Satan vexed ;
Remember that for thee
There stands the sacred text.

And, though full oft cast down,
Thou shalt not be destroyed ;
For trials ne’er were known
To make the promise void.

Is God Himself the Word,
The Truth, the Life, the Way ?
And shall we not be stirred,
His precepts to obey ?

Ah ! hasten, Lord, the joyful hour,
When we shall feel Thy Spirit’s power !

CONVERTING GRACE.

THE visit of that godly man, George Whitefield, to Plymouth, in 1743, was instrumental in the calling of many souls. He was going to America, and had taken his passage in a ship that was to sail from Portsmouth, but, the captain refusing to take "the mad parson" on board, lest he should spoil the sailors, he was obliged to go on to Plymouth. Here an attempt was made to murder him; but Satan, as usual, overshot his mark. The Lord had many precious ones in those parts, and the reports about His servant induced thousands to go to hear him during the five weeks he waited for his ship. Some went to gratify their curiosity; others to indulge in active malice.

Amongst the latter was Mr. Henry Tanner, then employed as a dock-labourer, afterwards a useful and highly-honoured servant of Christ at Exeter. His own account of his conversion so richly savours of grace that it must be given as he wrote it:—

"I was working on board a ship, near the New Quay, when intelligence was brought by one of our fellow-workmen that a minister of the name of Whitefield was going to preach in the open fields at Teat's Hill, opposite where we were at work. Soon after, we heard his voice; and, concluding that the man was mad, we resolved to go over and knock him off the place on which he stood. We were six of us, as well as I recollect, which joined in this resolution; and I cannot even now proceed in the relation of the account without stopping to admire and adore, in this instance, as well as what happens in many others, the distinguishing riches of grace, for one of my six companions, not a great while after this, died by the hand of justice, shamefully, at Tyburn.

"Away we ran, as if going to take a rich prize; and so it indeed proved to me, and to me only of the whole company. As soon as we had passed the wall of the French prison, dear Mr. Whitefield opened to our view, extending his arms, and calling with his voice poor sinners to Christ Jesus. I was struck with amazement; and, indeed, so arrested that I could not go a step further until I had given attention to his words. He was preaching, as I afterwards learned, from Acts xvii. 19, 20. I had read somewhat of what he said in the Bible, yet knew no more the meaning than a wild Indian; but was instantly led to conclude that the man was not, as we had supposed, mad.

"The tide being out at that time, I went over the mud, ashamed of my engagement with my companions, and stood behind some of the people to avoid them. They went round in quest of me, as I supposed; but used no violence, because they had lost their leader.

"Every sentence in Mr. Whitefield's sermon was delivered in

such a divine, pathetic, and energetic strain, as cut me to the heart; and was enough (God applying it), as it seemed to me, to raise the dead.

"I went home very different from what I came out—much oppressed in spirit; and as, in the close of the sermon, notice was given that he would preach again on the following evening, I not only resolved to be present, but the time seemed long until the evening arrived. Little did I know that my eternal Lord was thus ploughing up the fallow ground of my heart, in order to sow the seed of eternal grace. Little did I apprehend the gracious designs of His everlasting love towards me, and that He was now making me willing in the day of His power.

"The clock on the succeeding evening no sooner struck six than I threw down my tools, and ran so earnestly that my feet seemed but scarcely to touch the ground, influenced by a very different spirit from what I had felt before. Oh, well may I exclaim, 'What hath God wrought!'

"I arrived at the blessed spot—a very Bethel to my soul—about ten minutes before Mr. Whitefield came. I got near to the table on which he was to stand; and, instead of knocking him off, would have knocked any man down if he had dared to molest him. When he arrived, had given out a hymn, and offered up prayer for a blessing on his labours, in which he prayed as if he would engage heaven on his side, and pull down showers of grace upon the people, I thought I beheld heaven in his very looks. My heart was melted at once.

"His subject was of Jesus' mercy to Jerusalem sinners, from Luke xxiv. 47: 'Beginning at Jerusalem.' From these words God the Spirit led him to show the atrocious sin of crucifying the Lord of glory. He noticed the instruments who perpetrated this dreadful deed, from whence sprung such infinite good—the Jews and Roman soldiers. Then came the never-to-be-forgotten moment, as it concerned me. I stood at his left hand. He was not at this time looking towards me; but had just been observing, 'I suppose that you are reflecting in your minds on the cruelty of those inhuman butchers who embued their hands in innocent blood,' when, on a sudden, turning himself towards me, as if designed—and I do believe from my heart the Lord designed it for me—he looked me full in the face, and cried out, 'SINNER, THOU ART THE MAN THAT CRUCIFIED THE SON OF GOD!'

"Then, and never before, I felt the Word of God quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword. I knew not whether to stand or fall. My sins seemed all to stare me in my face. I was at once convicted, my heart bursting, my eyes gushing forth floods of tears. I dreaded the instant wrath of God, and expected that it would instantly fall upon me.

"None but those who have waded through the deep waters of a convinced conscience can form any idea of the horror I endured. It was happy for me that dear Mr. Whitefield, in the prosecution of his sermon, followed up his observations on the Jerusalem sinners with the merciful designs of the Lord Jesus.

"Having thundered out the terrors of the law, he proceeded to bring before us the allurements of the Gospel; and never, surely, were the rich promises, invitations, and calls of the Word of God more sweetly delivered. His heart seemed to be so enlarged, his soul so melted, his voice and hands extended, inviting the vilest sinners to come and receive a full, free, and complete pardon in the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. 'Come,' said he, 'to Jesus! Come just as you are! Come, thou Jerusalem sinner! Jesus bids me call and invite thee to come. He saith Himself, all that do come He will in no wise cast out. Here is grace to pardon you, a fountain to cleanse you, a righteousness to clothe you; a full, finished, complete salvation for you in His blood. Come, sinner! come, come, come! My Master bids you come. Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation. Hark! how He calls you!'

"It is impossible to describe what my feelings were, and with what different sensations I returned home. Sometimes I was led to think it impossible that any pardon could be for me, neither could I reconcile it with the view I now had of a holy God and His holy law. At other times a glimpse of hope would arise that, as those Jerusalem sinners were pardoned, so might I be. There was efficacy enough in the blood of Jesus to cleanse from ALL sin.

"Thus, for a considerable time, was I variously agitated and exercised. Neither till after many an attendance on the means of grace was my soul brought into the happy liberty wherewith the Lord makes His people free."—*Extracted from "Wonders of Grace."* (W. Wileman, 34, Bouverie Street, London, E.C.)

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FAITH AND HOPE.

WHY, faith respects the promise itself, and hope respects the thing promised; faith respects the truth of the promise, hope respects the good of the promise. Like a king sending his messenger to acquaint his favourite that he is come to his house; the favourite receives the messenger, and then goes out to meet the prince; so faith receives the messenger—the promise; and then hope goes out to meet the King, and waits for the thing promised. The object of faith, then, is the truth of God, for it looks to the Word of promise; the object of hope is the goodness of God—it looks out toward the good thing promised.

RALPH ERSKINE.

GLIMPSES OF THE PAST.

DAVID TAYLOR, Lady Huntingdon's butler, whom she had sent to itinerate through Leicestershire, extended his labours into the adjoining counties. During a considerable period he preached in Sheffield, and while there John Bennet, of Chingley, in Derbyshire, a young man of good education, who had come to enter a horse for the races, went with a friend to hear what the preacher might say. The sermon did not produce any impression on him; but he followed his companion into the vestry for mere courtesy's sake, asked Taylor to come and see his parents, and was not a little annoyed when the invitation was eagerly accepted. He did not wish to be teased with religion; and he knew that Dr. Clegg, the minister of the family, though a Dissenter, disliked all irregular movements. So he did all he could to get rid of the engagement; but the preacher was not to be thwarted, and, after a ludicrous game of hide and seek, succeeded in paying his unwelcome visit.

Within a short time Bennet was brought under the power of divine truth, and became a zealous preacher of the Gospel. "Many doors," he writes in 1750, "are open for preaching in these parts, but cannot be supplied for want of preachers." He usually preached thirty-four times in a fortnight, Derbyshire, Lancashire, and Cheshire being the principal scenes of his arduous labours.

One sermon by John Bennet was specially given of God. Soon after he became a preacher, Thomas Bennet, an inhabitant of Chelmorton, two miles from Monyash, spoke of him to some young men of his acquaintance. "When I was a young man," said he, "the Puritans came and preached at Townend (the principal house of the village), and the people were much affected by them. There is a man called John Bennet, who preaches much in the same way; and if you will get your father's barn, I will invite him over." John Bennet came, and preached accordingly, and the father and his four sons, together with a man named Lomas, received the truth. John Marsden, the eldest of the brothers above mentioned, became a friend of Wesley's, and settled in London. Men on "'Change" marked his sober air, and a caricature of the leading cotton dealers in the metropolis portrays him as bending his knees in prayer.

The late John Thornton, of Clapham, wishing that a man so steady should extend his business, offered to lend him ten thousand pounds on his personal security, but he declined to accept his kindness, because he feared that new cares might ruffle the stillness of his spirit. "There is nothing," he said, on his death-bed, "betwixt me and the kingdom of heaven."

John Bennet held what were known as Calvinistic tenets. He

became minister of an Independent Church in Cheshire ; and here the tale of his useful life might end, but for one memorable event.

Grace Murray, a widow, residing at Newcastle-on-Tyne, and matron of the orphan house in that town, had once waited upon John Bennet when he was sick of a fever, and from that period he thought that she was given to him for a wife, though Wesley would fain have married her, but his brother Charles and George Whitefield were opposed to his marrying at all. She eventually became the wife of John Bennet, and was a true helpmeet to him in his work and labours in the Lord's cause. She outlived her husband thirty years, and died at Chapel-en-le-Frith, Derbyshire, in 1803. Mr. Jabez Bunting preached her funeral sermon from Psalm xxvii. 13, 14 : "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait on the Lord : be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart : wait, I say, on the Lord." "The day before she died" (we quote from a MS. read after the sermon was preached) "she raised herself into a very solemn attitude, and, with most striking emphasis, delivered, in the following language, her dying testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus—'I here declare it before you, that I have looked on the right hand and on the left ; I have cast my eyes before and behind, to see if there was any possible way of salvation but by the Son of God ; and I am fully satisfied there is not. No, none on earth ; nor all the angels in heaven could have wrought out salvation for such a sinner ! None but God Himself, taking our nature upon Him, and doing all that the holy law required, could have procured pardon for me, a sinner. He has wrought out salvation for me, and I know that I shall enjoy it for ever.'"

Oh, to live in the experience of such a faith, and to die in the enjoyment of such peace, is my earnest desire ! R. F. R.

LET me lose the favour of princes and of men, but let me keep the favour of God. The favour of men may be recovered ; and, if not, the favour of God is enough for me.—*Luther*.

"LORD, wilt Thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel ? And He said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power." Oh, my Saviour, while others weary themselves with the disquisition of Thy Personal reign here upon earth for a thousand years, let it be the whole bent and study of my soul to make sure of my personal reign with Thee in heaven to all eternity !—*Bishop Hall*!

OBITUARY OF MARGARET ASHBY, OF GREENWICH.

ALL who write obituaries for the general good of their readers need to remember that they have to encounter the disadvantage of monotony. The minutest circumstance which deeply interests the friends of the departed yields but little edification to strangers. Still, persons of observation know that life, like as the small grains of sand fill the hour-glass, is composed of little things, and that grace in its multiform phases has a beautiful variety, while it has a sublime similarity; and to be enabled to discern God's dealings with others (Phil. ii. 4) may tend to expand our minds and enlarge our hearts with "the loving-kindness of the Lord" (Psa. cvii. 43).

Margaret Ashby, like many of the Lord's people, had convictions in childhood, which, taken by themselves, have no special marks of grace in them, but viewed in connection with what followed, may be regarded as preliminary to the effectual working of the Holy Spirit in the heart.

When she was about eight years of age, she accompanied her mother to the house of a friend. Spiritual conversation passed between a few of the Lord's people who had met together, and when they parted, one of the company engaged in prayer. This little girl, Margaret, of tender years, listened, and came away with the full persuasion of what some professed divines will now deny, that there is a hell of endless torment (Rev. xiv. 10, 11). Her mother very properly tried her by a few questions, hoping she might learn if her daughter was under any concern of soul, but the latter evaded her inquiries. Thoughts of God and eternity she would willingly have banished from her mind, wishing to believe in neither. Once, when suffering from toothache, she resolved to try her belief in the existence of God by asking Him to remove the pain. She quickly lost it; which, while in one way it relieved her, it increased her burden in another. Once, when a child, in disobedience to her mother, she, with some other children, got into a waggon loaded with hop-bins. As the waggon moved on, another conveyance met it, and drew the hop-bins together, and thus Margaret was squeezed between the bins. This circumstance, she believed, laid the foundation for her life-long infirmity—curvature of the spine.

When about sixteen years of age, she was overtaken in a thunderstorm. This struck her with terror. She ran up a hill into a cottage for shelter, but on entering that cottage, she found a poor young woman, apparently in a dying state, propped up with pillows. Thus she felt that signs of death and destruction met her everywhere.

It was about this time the Lord was pleased to remove her

dear mother by death, and being then exposed to some outward snares and follies, the Lord wonderfully preserved her, which later on she was truly thankful for.

For some few years after this she was the subject of much legal repentance. Feeling she was a sinner, and seeing no hope of being saved, she would pity her sad state, and would walk about laden with her sins, expecting to hear the just sentence passed upon her, "Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?" (Luke xiii. 7.) She wished she had been a reptile, or anything without a soul. She could not see how a *just* God could save her. She felt herself a miserable wretch, and wished she had never been born. She felt God would be just in condemning her soul to endless torments. The words "*Eternity! Eternity!*" were terrible to her.

One night, while in this sad state of mind, she went to bed, and laid awake for a very long time, when the dear Lord was pleased to give her a faith's view of Christ suffering for her sins, and brought these sweet lines to her—

"Thy sins, though of a crimson hue,
They are for ever hid from view;
They're sunk as in a shoreless sea
Which opened once on Calvary."

But, fearing lest she should be presumptuously taking what God had not given her, she sought for a confirmation of the above, when these words flowed in—

"Trust in His efficacious blood,
Nor fear thy banishment from God,
Since Jesus died for thee."

She said, "For me, Lord?" He replied, "Yes, for thee; I have put away thy sins." Then, she said, she proved that it was the *goodness* of God that led her to repentance (Rom. ii. 4). Now she felt she knew the truth of these lines—

"A sinner may repent and sing,
Rejoice and be ashamed."

This was very different to her former repentance, and she proved the truth of Mr. Hart's words—

"Law and terrors do but harden
All the while they work alone;
But a sense of blood-bought pardon
Soon dissolves a heart of stone."

And, to use still her own words, she felt she could say with

Bunyan, "My burden rolled off into the sepulchre, and I saw it no more."

It should have been said that our friend was taught early to read the Bible, and was brought up by her parents under the sound of the Gospel; but she felt, after the Lord had opened her eyes and heart to see the glory and feel the power of it, that she had been as blind as the heathen, not having even mentally discovered the plan of salvation, which thousands subscribe to who are destitute of divine life; and she was truly surprised, when sitting at the same chapel, among the same people, hearing the same minister, at the great difference she felt. Truly, as she said, this must be being "born again" (John iii. 5); and the effects of passing from death unto life were further manifested by her heart being united to the Lord's people (1 John iii. 14). There was one poor, afflicted, and tried man at the chapel who used to talk with her, and as they communed together (Mal. iii. 16), she found his conversation very savoury and encouraging. She was then, as she had been for some years previously, a hearer of Mr. Day, at East Farleigh, where she heard the Word with much profit.

On one occasion, in the year 1847, she heard the late Mr. George Abrahams, at Collier Street Chapel. In writing upon that she says, "If ever I was blessed with full assurance it was then. I longed to die in that Collier Street Chapel. I dreaded going out into the world again, lest I should be left to myself, and some day bring a reproach upon the cause and people that I loved. This I greatly dreaded, but hitherto the world has not had to point the finger of scorn, and say, 'Ah, so would we have it!'" (Psa. xxxv. 25.) And all those who knew her can bear testimony that to the end of her days she walked humbly with her God, and, consequently, consistently before the world. But sins of heart, inbred corruptions, and sins of omission were more or less her daily burden. Still, having proved the love and faithfulness of God, she was not one to be continually poring over what she was in herself, to the exclusion of what the Lord was to her. She knew and spoke of both the dark and the bright spots of Christian experience.

When quite young in the things of God, and having the vigour of spiritual youth upon her, she was anxious to honour her Lord by making a public profession of His name, and so was baptized, and joined the little Church at East Farleigh, over which Mr. Day was then the pastor, whom she highly esteemed for the truth's sake, and where the Lord fed her soul and refreshed her in her heaven-bound course. But after she had been much favoured in soul, she says she read that the Lord's people were a tried and exercised people, and often went mourning from the

house of God, fearing lest she was not exercised rightly, because she was so frequently fed and blessed under the Word, and went home rejoicing in the goodness of her God; therefore, she was repeatedly led to ask the Lord to make it plain to her. Her language was, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts. If I am a hypocrite, make it manifest." No doubt in this she was most earnest and sincere, but we fear it was mingled with much unbelief, and seeking for an experience like the children of God about her, rather than a panting for conformity to the image of Christ (Phil. iii. 10). About this time her minister, who had been a spiritual father and shepherd to her, left the chapel; and, whether from a change in her own soul, or from a change in the ministry, but perhaps from both, she found "a famine, not of bread or of water, but of hearing the words of the Lord" (Amos viii. 11). Now she knew what it was to go mourning and fasting from the place where she had often been well fed.

In the providence of God she was removed to Goudhurst, and about the year 1862 she joined the Church at Flimwell, over which the late Mr. Pert was pastor; and for some years, while she resided in that neighbourhood, she was much profited by the ministry, and felt greatly united to the people. She was long acquainted with some choice friends, Mr. and Mrs. Roots, and I think for about twenty years lived beneath their roof. The former was taken with an illness that terminated in death. He made a good end, as related in the *Gospel Standard*, January, 1871, and the "Miss A." several times mentioned therein is the subject of this memoir. While living at Goudhurst, she feared she should fall a victim to small-pox, as it was then in the locality, but the Lord relieved her from her fears by these lines—

"Comfort take, thou child of sorrow,
All is ordered well for thee;
Look not to the anxious morrow,
As thy days, thy strength shall be."

After the death of Mr. Roots, it was thought desirable that his widow and Miss Ashby should take a small business together. One place opened for them, but our friend felt it was not attended with the Lord's leading. Another place had been upon her mind, but there seemed no probability of obtaining it. But the Lord cleared the way to it; and there, at Canterbury, she and her widowed friend stayed some considerable time. But she was compelled at length, through affliction, to leave there, and she felt she could say, to the honour of her God, as He led her there, that He brought her out without loss.

She was once long detained in a railway carriage in a tunnel.

This was a shock to her nerves, from which she never fully recovered.

After she had lived with some dear relatives at Maidstone, she was invited by some friends in Greenwich to spend a few weeks with them; but, through the goodness of her God, and the kindness of her friends, she stopped on and on; and, although she came as a visitor into Devonshire Road Chapel, Greenwich, she soon felt that she was—

“ No more a stranger or a guest,
But like a child at home.”

It is over six years since she first joined our Church, during which time she proved a source of comfort to us, and we still feel our loss. It would ill become the writer to say what he was made to her. He needed no letters of commendation where she was. She was not accustomed to write much, but she wrote as she felt. One extract may suffice—

“ MY VERY DEAR PASTOR,—I, one of the poorest of the poor of thy flock, feeling broken in spirit, and my soul melted at the goodness of God to such an one, and feeling drawn to the Lord that He will bless thee in basket and in store, in thy going out and in thy coming in. I feel He does, and I feel you must love your pulpit, for of a truth the Lord is with you. Last night it was life from the dead to my poor soul. I could say, ‘Thou hast granted me life and favour.’ ”

She was greatly united in spirit to Mr. Jeffery and Mrs. Harris, whose obituaries appeared in the SOWER respectively, February and March, 1880, and July, 1881; and, indeed, she lived in the house of the latter, and participated in her motherly and Christian-like kindness.

She was watchful of the Lord's providential care towards her. One of our dear friends had a small pension put at his disposal, and, believing that her means were small, he was able to appropriate it to her benefit. Prior to this, she said, when she considered what little she had was dwindling away, she was much troubled, but her mind was stayed by this promise, “It shall not fail until the day that I send rain on the earth.” At length she had to change her last half-sovereign. She seemed to have forgotten the promise, but that very same day she received a post-card, saying the pension had been allotted to her. She read it in the light of the promise, and was overcome with God's goodness, for she felt the Lord had sent “rain on the earth.” She called her friend, Miss Harris, and said, “I have read of wonderful deliverances in Huntington's, and Warburton's, and such men's lives, and now I have one for myself.”

Besides the affliction before referred to, she suffered latterly from an affection of the chest ; but an earnest desire to be in the public means of grace overcame the extreme vigilance that some use over their bodies, who, if they have the wisdom of being more prudent, cannot claim the honour of having been more fervent.

The last time she was at chapel was on Monday evening, April 30th. When first her medical attendant saw her, he said he thought he should pull her through. She said to her friends afterwards, "I should like to be pulled up to my Father's house."

On May 8th she was visited by some of our friends. She said to one of them—

" A Father's hand prepares the cup,
And what He wills is best."

She then said, "I don't feel so lively in spiritual things as I should like to be. Underneath are the everlasting arms."

May 11th.—To a friend who visited her, and had expressed a wish that she might be raised up again, she said, "Oh, don't say so, except it be for the dear little cause and our minister ! But," she said, "I can give you all up now."

May 15th.—When some friends called to see her, she related that she had an illness thirteen years ago, when she was not expected to recover ; and when the doctor said he thought she would be restored, she said it was like a dagger to her soul, she felt so disappointed ; and this she more keenly felt when she was able to get about again, because she had been so spoiled for this world.

May 16th.—One of our friends who visited her said, "You are still in the furnace." She replied, "Yes, but I feel it is a very mild one. When the doctor says I am better, I feel it casts me down, and makes me feel dark ; but when he says I am not so well, it seems to refresh me. My religion began in sorrow, but I have some hope it may end in joy. If not, it will be peace. The Lord has made all my crooked things straight, if I had only strength to tell you." The writer saw her later the same evening, and said to her, "If the earthly house were dissolved, you have a building of God, eternal in the heavens." She replied, "Yes, that's it." He said, "You long to depart ?" She replied, "I do, but I am still in an enemy's country. I had a desire to go into heaven in full sail, but I think it will not be so now, as my powers are failing." He told her in any case she would have a peaceful end.

About nine o'clock the next morning, she was heard to say twice, "The people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity," and "Lord, help me !" and "Hope—peace—joy !" Much more she said that was not sufficiently clear to be under-

stood. After lying about three hours in a sweetly composed condition, her happy spirit was freed from its clay tenement, and took its flight to the realms of eternal day.

Thus ended the pilgrimage of Margaret Ashby, on May 17th, 1883, at 11.55 a.m., in her fifty-fifth year.

She was a person of prayerful heart, peaceable spirit, and profitable conversation—not a great talker, but an humble walker.

May the Lord add to us, and to His people everywhere, many more spiritually-minded ones such as she was, who shall be an ornament to His Church here, and be hereafter beautified with salvation.

JAMES BOORNE.

TO "A. E. F."

As we wish to confine our pages to matter which will be, as we hope, for the general profit of our readers, we cannot go into the subject of your letter, which does not seem to us, from your manner of putting it, very clear and intelligible. The passages, Hebrews x. 26, and 1 John v. 16, which you refer to, clearly point out daring professors of religion who have been given up of God and abandoned by man; but we need "bowels and mercies" in dealing even with such cases, lest we further plunge tempted souls into despondency, and make the hearts of those sad whom God would not have made sad. And it would be useless to commence attacking the erroneous teaching of the Church of Rome merely on the points you name, while we believe her entire doctrine and practice to be rotten at the very core. And, with regard to the Church of England, she yet promulgates in some parts much truth, and has, we believe, some good preachers and gracious hearers within her pale. But to attempt in our Magazine to set her right upon the point you mention would be a fruitless use of our pages, we fear, while she has Broad, High, and Low Churchmen teaching many other doctrines equally pernicious. We would not lend our little finger to pull down the time-honoured fabric while she is truly *Protestant*; but, seeing she is becoming less and less the *Church of the Reformation*, we would, while faithfully warning others against her errors, say, "Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her plagues."

WHEN you see the refiner cast his gold into the furnace, do you think he is angry with the gold, and means to cast it away? No. He sits as a refiner. He stands warily over the fire and over the gold, and looks to it that not one grain be lost. And, when the dross is severed, he will out with it presently; it shall be no longer there.—*Crisp*.

CONSOLATION FOR THOSE WHO ARE IN
TRIBULATION.

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."—JOHN xvi. 33.

OUR tender, loving, and gracious Lord well knew what feeble ones He had to deal with. He knew from painful experience what tribulation was, for He was a "Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief," reproached and despised by the very rabble, set at nought by the rulers, and put to the most shameful and painful death that malice then knew. He, therefore, tells His disciples, in the most gentle manner, what they must expect. But He prefaces it with consolation—"In Me ye shall have peace." Were we not of the earth earthy, we should not want anything besides the first declaration to keep the mind stayed and calm under the most severe trials; and, when trials are at a distance, we are ready to think this is alone sufficient. But our dear Captain well knew how much we should want to keep our head above water when the enemy comes in like a flood, therefore He kindly provides all necessary consolation. Our kind and tender Redeemer held a long discourse with His poor, disconsolate disciples just before He was betrayed into the hands of sinners, the scope of which seems to be to establish their minds in the belief of His Godhead (or equality and oneness with the Father), as is plain by the context. He well knew the accursed death He was about to die would shake their confidence, and that, when His body was entombed, they would be ready to think all was over, as is plain some of them did, notwithstanding all His instructions. "But we trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel;" and, when they heard of His resurrection, instead of receiving the tidings with glad expectation, they could scarcely credit what they heard, but were astonished at the report the women gave of not finding His body, &c., as you may read in Luke xxiv. 21, and following verses. But, though they did not understand His doctrine until He opened their understanding that they might understand the Scripture, *then* the belief of this glorious mystery greatly strengthened them for future trials. In Him, as the incarnate God, they then had peace.

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." Jesus is emphatically styled "our peace" in Ephesians ii. 14, 15: "For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition; having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in

Himself of twain one new man, so making peace." Faith, appropriating faith, brings that peace into the conscience that all the tumults of the world cannot disturb when it is in lively exercise ; but, if it is at a low ebb, and billow after billow rise, fear sometimes makes headway against the soul, and the child of God finds it hard work to hold up his head with any degree of cheerfulness. But we must remember that we are in an enemy's country, and, therefore, must expect molestation.

"In the world ye shall have tribulation." Our Captain met with as much tribulation from the world as any private soldier—yea, as much as all put together ever met with, for "in all their afflictions He was afflicted ;" and the cruel treatment any of His members now meet with touches Him. This appears plain from Revelation i. 7, "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen." I do not think this refers merely to those who nailed Him to the cross literally, and thrust the spear into His side, but to those who have pierced or wounded the members of His mystical body. There is not a scoff, a jeer, or a reproach, that is thrown at a member of His, but Jesus feels it as the Head. He looks with pity and tenderness upon His suffering family, and will cause every trial to work for good. If tribulation were not better, infinitely better, than ease, our gracious God would not suffer us to be exercised therewith. When our first parents sinned, and exposed themselves and all their posterity to the everlasting wrath and fiery indignation of a holy God, though our most merciful and gracious God found a Ransom, that a certain number should be delivered from going down into the pit, yet He thus declares, "I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed ; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." This has ever been the case since the fall of Adam. To multiply Scripture proofs would be endless and altogether needless, as no attentive reader of the Scriptures can be ignorant that this has ever been the case. This is a cross every renewed soul must carry. "If any man will be My disciple, let him take up his cross and follow Me." Shall mortal man complain at this ? "We are by nature children of wrath, even as others." We can give no *reason why* the Lord set His love upon us more than others; and if we suffer from the fall only in this life, shall we complain ? Do not our daily offences call for the rod of affliction ? And if our Father only deals with us as a wise and tender Parent, shall we complain ? Did we not once feel enmity in our hearts against God and the ways of God ? And is this slain, and love put in its place ? Oh, what reason have we to be thankful that we were not left in the ruins of the fall to

be persecutors, instead of being the persecuted! Seeing it is declared with a *yea* that "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution," and in the text under consideration, that "in the world ye shall have tribulation," it is but striving against the immutable decrees of God to strive to avoid it. We should indeed be careful that we give our adversaries no just occasion to speak reproachfully, for if we take this patiently, it is but reasonable, as we are then only buffeted for our faults, and can by no means repair the injury we do to the cause of truth. But if we be wrongfully reproached, we may rejoice, inasmuch as we are partakers of Christ's sufferings, and the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon us (1 Pet. iv. 14). We have not only the promise of peace in Christ to bear up our minds under the tribulations of the way, but we have also an assurance that our enemies are already conquered: "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." Though a troop may for a little season overcome us, yet we shall at last overcome through the Captain of our salvation—yea, and be more than conquerors through Him that loved us. Victory! victory!

Old Salford, April 13th, 1819.

S. R.

FAITHFUL WORDS.

ONE reason why sinners do not feel the sting of sin is on account of an insensible hardness grown over, and a desperate searedness impressed upon, their consciences by extraordinary villainy and variety in sin, such as those in Isaiah v. 18—"that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope;" by waving the glorious light of the Word under which they sit, and which shines in their faces, as a "foolish thing;" by villainously trampling under foot the power of it, with despite and scorn many times against that light, which stands in their consciences like an armed man; nay, and by treading out through custom in sin the very notions that nature hath engraven in their hearts, as men do the engravings of tombstones, which they walk upon with foul shoes. I say thus, at length, their consciences become so utterly remorseless and past all feeling—so hardened, so seared, so scaled up with a reprobate sense—that, with an audacious and giant-like insolency, they challenge even God Almighty Himself to draw His sword of vengeance against them. "Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope: that say, Let Him make speed, and hasten His work, that we may see it: and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it." These roarers and

swaggering Belials in this respect have consciences worse than the devil himself, for he "believes and trembles." Even those already desperate and damned spirits tremble at the forethought of that fuller wrath which is to come, and yet further deserved damnation. And thou sometimes eatest thine heart against the terror of the Lord for thy sins, by looking upon God's mercy with false spectacles, and so enlarging it beyond the limits of truth; for, though God's mercy be of the largest extent, yet it is bounded with His truth; and, therefore, usually in the Scriptures we find these two coupled together, God's mercy and His truth.

Now, this truth tells us that the good tidings of the Gospel belong only to the poor, to the broken-hearted, to the captives, to the blind, to the bruised; that he only who "confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall have mercy" (Prov. xxviii. 13); that "except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke xiii. 3); that "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John iii. 3); that "God shall wound the head of His enemies, and the hairy scalp of such an one as goeth on still in his trespasses" (Psa. lxviii. 21); that, "if we regard iniquity in our hearts, the Lord will not hear us" (Psa. lxvi. 18); that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. xii. 14).

Compare, now, these and the like places with thine heart, life, and present impenitent state, and tell me, in cool blood and impartially, whether any mercy at all as yet belongs unto thee upon good ground, while thou art yet lying in thy sins.

BOLTON.

It is by understanding the Scriptures that we know our own hearts, and it is by knowing our own hearts that we come to understand the Scriptures.—*Foster*.

WHEN I go down into the country, and shake hands with hedgers and ditchers, their hands are callous; and what makes them so? Working much. And there's nothing makes the heart so callous as working for the devil.—*Hill*.

CHRIST loves to undertake desperate cases. Martha and Mary sent for Him—"Behold, he whom Thou lovest is sick." Jesus stayed where He was. Lazarus dies; but He will not go till He had been buried four days, then He goes. So comes the nobleman—"My little daughter lieth at the point of death." Jesus stays where He was till one of Job's messengers came, saying, "Thy daughter is dead; why troublest thou the Master any further?" Then He says, "Fear not, only believe." "O thou of little faith, wherefore dost thou doubt," seeing God hath sent His Son to save the lost, and to call sinners to repentance?—*Huntington*.

WHAT IS IN THE NAME?

WHAT is "the religion of humanity" which the infidel applauds? It is the religion which has its origin on earth, and confines its hopes to earth. The phases of infidel opinion are as countless as the waves on the sea. They range from Universalism—all saved, no hell, no devil—to blank atheism; no God, no future, but as the leaves of the forest are reproduced in the verdure of spring—man but a superior animal.

We have in our midst just now a wave of Freethought, so-called. Fine names, such as "Rational Religion," "Freethought Platform," &c., are used to allure the unwary. Who would not be free, liberal in thought, and rational in religious opinion? Is there not a savour of presumption in the assumption of such names? Why not call themselves rejectors of the Bible as a rule of faith—unbelievers in Jesus Christ as the Saviour—supporters of the rights of man as not fallen from integrity? Then their names would correspond with their opinions. Their doctrines give them no peace of conscience, for the nature that God has given to man admits of rest nowhere except in God. Restlessness is as true of the lost on earth as it is true of the lost in hell. One of Gambetta's last words was, "I am lost!" and it is what every outcast from the divine presence will feel when the truth of his condition is realized in the light of eternity. The language of Scripture cannot be gainsaid except by fools: "He that believeth not shall be damned."

Reader, beware of those false teachers who are nothing better than pioneers of the false religion adopted by infidels.

THE ENGLISH REFORMATION.

THE English Reformation was a great and God-honoured, as well as a God-directed movement by which the British people were freed from the bondage of Rome—a bondage at once very cruel and very degrading. What gives special importance to such a history is the reaction going on in the Church of England—a movement from spiritual liberty to intense spiritual darkness, from freedom to slavery, from faith to superstition. The Ritualistic movement in the Anglican body is one of the strangest in modern history. How enlightened men can go back to bondage, to superstition, to the innumerable follies of the corrupt Roman organization, passes comprehension.

A bishop some time back wrote, "I am perfectly convinced that the Reformation is menaced, and that a corrupt form of worship and teaching is now being insidiously introduced. We have to deal not with individuals, but with a conspiracy. The

present state of things cannot go on long, and the comfort is, it could not well be worse."

Many clergymen of the Church of England are efficient agents in leading their people into the fold of Rome. They deem their conduct consistent with their obligations; and they are at little pains to conceal their aims or methods.

Dr. Geikie says what is too obviously true: * "Our clergy has become virtually Romish to a most sad extent. The English Church Union boasts of some three thousand members—about one-eighth of the clergy—banded together to resist the law. Ritualism is spreading among the younger clergy; and Ritualism is Romanism to all intents and purposes." The Bishop of Chichester has said: "From one church alone five clergymen have lately passed over to Rome, and they have to the utmost of their power leavened all they could influence with Romish doctrine. Craft, subtlety, and secrecy, are the characteristics of the Roman propaganda." †

The Sisterhoods established in the Church of England have largely gone over to Rome. One, of which Dr. Pusey was warden, went over bodily. Mr. Mackonochie was almost equally successful with one of which he was warden. Dr. Pusey introduced with a favourable preface a book in which a Ritualistic essayist boasts of the success with which Ritualists are teaching men "that God is to be worshipped under the form of bread, and that the priest's absolution is God's forgiveness." In the same volume it is declared that their object is "ultimate union with Rome."

The Ritualists scorn to be called Protestants, and abuse of the great Reformers is especially delightful to them. It is well that the true character of the Ritualistic leaders should be known. It seems to us vital to the Church of England that she should throw off this wretched survival of barbarism which has usurped and degraded the name of Christianity—this religion of pantomime and machinery, which is as irrational as it is opposed to the example and precept of Christ and His holy apostles and martyrs. Ritualistic mummeries are an insult to the good sense of this nineteenth century, and are far more congruous to the religions of Central Africa than to the holy religion of Christ.

These people, these Ritualistic propagandists, desire to assimilate the Church of England with the Church of Rome. It is curious that such an ambition should exist even for one

* "The English Reformation, How it Came About," &c. (London: Strahan and Co.)

† And yet loud complaints have frequently been made that this same Bishop not only winks at the Romish practices in such churches, but actually speaks in flattering terms of the work the clergy are doing there.

hour in the soul of any one who has read Church history. We can understand men brought up Roman Catholics cleaving to their Church. But for a Protestant to go back into a society degraded by the unspeakable crimes and cruelties of a series of Popes who all the while claimed to be Vicars of Christ—to go back into a muddle of heathenism and debased Christianity—to disown the glorious liberty of the Gospel—is simply to commit intellectual suicide. In one phase of it, the Papacy is unquestionably a conspiracy against the future of humanity; and it is a fearful blot upon the fair character of the Church of England that she tolerates in her ministry not a few such conspirators.

The Reformed Church of England, when founded, repudiated the ridiculous doctrine of “apostolic succession.” That absurd error was introduced by the same Bancroft who, falling on his knees before James VI., declared that he was the special gift of Almighty God, and the noblest prince since Christ’s time. It was enforced by Whitgift, who blasphemously declared James to be specially inspired by the Holy Ghost. Presbyterian ordination was accepted as valid in the Church of England till the relapse into moral darkness in 1662. A profligate court, a degraded and venal clergy, found it convenient to do all in their power to bring back a diluted Popery, from which the English Church is suffering to this hour.

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.—No. XL.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,—I feel sorry to have kept you so long without a reply to your very kind letter; but I know you will pardon me this time when I tell you I have been very unwell since I last saw you, and my school is still very full, which is a great fatigue to me. I feel, as I advance in age, my energies fail me *much* among the children, but I do not wish to grow weary of well-doing, although often am weary in it, but desire to trust in the Lord, who hath said in His most holy Word, “As thy day is, so shall thy strength be.” The weather is most excessively hot to-day. Through mercy, I have not to go out in the broiling sun to labour, but can sit in my school-room and quietly enjoy the pleasure of penning these few lines to you, which I sincerely hope will find you in good health and strength. I have work wants doing in the garden, but must forbear until it be the will of Almighty God to send us cooler weather, which I do earnestly pray for. It is most trying for poor creatures in the hay-fields at this time; and we begin to hear accounts of some being taken ill, and obliged to leave their work.

Oh, my dear young friend, I find this to be a world of toil and

woe, and *do long* to know more of what it is to have my affections weaned from *all* the perishing things of this dying life, and to have them set on things above, "where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God," upon whose most glorious countenance your dear mother, I hope, is now gazing with holy raptures and with ever-growing joy and happiness in the regions of eternal holiness and everlasting peace and comfort, where sin and sorrow can *no more* reach her redeemed soul. The great Object of her faith and desire while she lived is now become the glorious Object of her admiring sight. Now she is enjoying in full the substance of the things she once hoped for, but often feared she would never attain unto. She many times helped us to sing the precious words of the poet—

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

My dear young friend, there is *no way* of escape from eternal ruin but by a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ and the power of His resurrection. Oh, that you may be divinely taught to know you have an interest in Jesus, and the great salvation He hath accomplished ! The things of this life are passing away, and we shall soon have to bid a final adieu to all things under the sun. It does my heart good to see you looking so well, and to find that you are truly steady and careful to preserve a good character. May God, in mercy, ever hold you fast to it, and, in His own good time, make you wise unto salvation. I see your father sometimes, and he appears as well as usual, and pretty cheerful. All wish to be kindly remembered to you. Your sister has gone to Cheltenham. May the Lord prosper her way, and in mercy bless her. My kind respects to Joseph. May the Lord have mercy upon him, and save his soul with an everlasting salvation.

Oh, my dear friend, the things of eternity are increasingly solemn to me day by day. I shall soon have done with all things here below. Can't tell you much village news—will leave that to others. Accept kind regards and best wishes for your welfare. I should like to meet you in heaven, and pray that the blessings of salvation may rest upon you.

I remain, yours sincerely,

Milton, July 15th, 1876.

JAMES GARDNER.

SHALL it to me be given
To see the gates expand ;
And shall I enter heaven,
That better, promised land ?

THE SOWER.

AN EXTRACT FROM A SERMON TO THE YOUNG,

PREACHED MAY 23RD, 1847, BY THE LATE JOSEPH IRONS.

"The generation of the upright shall be blessed."—PSALM cxii. 2.

IF this blessed statement be read and understood only literally, and Jehovah's people, who are made "upright" in Christ Jesus, and by His grace only, are understood, it is impossible to ascertain how this promise has ever been followed out; for lamentably do we discover, with regard to "the upright"—I mean the people of God—that in many, many painful instances their posterity live, and I fear die, strangers to God. Grace is not hereditary. If you look at the expressions connected with it, you will find it stated that this peculiar Man, declared to be "righteous" and "upright," greatly delights in God's commands. There is a subordinate sense in which this is true of all Christians, but its highest and best sense refers only to the Man Christ Jesus. It is also said that "His seed shall be mighty upon the earth." There is many a poor, distressed parent, that knows and loves the Lord Jesus Christ, who is ready to look at the passage in that limited sense and say, "I surely cannot be one of the upright, for my seed are not 'mighty upon the earth.' My seed are despised, and rejected, and almost destitute. I cannot follow out the promise with regard to this literal view of it." Go a step further: "His righteousness endureth for ever." I confess that I cannot understand this text, I cannot look into its import and preciousness at all, without beholding the Person of Christ, the glorious Redeemer, as "the upright," and the Righteous One, emphatically called "Jesus Christ the Righteous;" and then I can understand how all His "generation shall be blessed."

There is a passage of Scripture that has puzzled many divines, which I think the Lord has thrown some light upon in my mind to-day, while looking at it. When speaking of our blessed Lord, the prophet says, "He was taken from prison and from death;" and he adds, at the close of the description of His history and character, "Who shall declare His generation?" Some divines have puzzled themselves exceedingly to ask about the eternal generation of Christ, and some have been wicked enough to deny it and reject it; but just compare it with the language of my text, and view "the generation of the upright" as the "seed" of Christ, and then ask the question of the prophet, "Who shall declare His seed?" Who shall count their numbers? Who shall

tell their vast amount? for the Word of God says that they are "a multitude which no man can number, from every kindred, and nation, and people, and tongue under heaven;" and who shall declare them all? I look at this as the real sense, and blessed sense, of the text I have just cited.

Now, having given this key to the language I have read as the basis of our discourse, intended especially for our dear young friends to-night, allow me, first of all, to invite their attention to the description of the holy family.

As a parent, and as a parent loving the Lord Jesus Christ, I should feel very thankful if I could read this literally—if I could be satisfied and certain that "all my generation shall be blessed" of the Lord—and, most undoubtedly, you that are godly parents will feel with me upon this point—anxious (as we hinted this morning) about all the household getting into the Ark. But, as I cannot understand my text in this way, I must view this holy family as the offspring of Christ, as His "seed." "He shall see His seed, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand."

Now, I can easily bring forward Scripture proof that Christ's seed "shall be blessed" of God; but my point, first of all, is, to urge upon my dear young friends the inquiry, "Am I of the seed of Christ?" There lies a point of vast importance. All I shall say about blessedness you can have no just ground to claim, unless you can come in with this first criterion, "I am of the seed of Christ, the offspring of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, the Righteous One." Oh, the vast importance of this! I think this promise refers to the same point and subject as that in which the prophet Joel is commissioned by the Holy Ghost to say, "I will pour out My Spirit upon Thy seed"—Christ's seed—"and My blessing upon Thine offspring;" for, in a literal sense, we cannot even comprehend that, because there are such a multitude of instances in which there is an entire failure with regard to the hopes and expectations of parents relative to their seed.

Now, I beseech you, my dear young friends, to examine this point closely. Are you the seed of Christ? With regard to your literal birth, most of you have no difficulty or hesitation, nor have others concerning you, relative to saying whose seed you are. You carry the family likeness, you bear the family name, you are recognized in family interests among them. There is no dispute upon the point. Now, I want the matter to be as clear with you in regard to your being the seed of Christ. I want you to carry His likeness. I want you to possess His Spirit. I want you to bear His name; and I want you to have one common interest with Him in all that pertains to the glorifying of His dear name. Come to this point, beloved. Whatever

you may be able to say about pedigree, about the wealth and dignity of your parents, that will not save you—that will not avail you in a dying hour. You must be able to prove that you are the offspring of Christ, partakers of His life, created anew in Him, really regenerated by His Holy Spirit, and possess a heavenly birth, according to His own declaration, "Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Now, mark, I beseech you, that this offspring, seed, posterity, or "generation" (as the phrase is in my text), are all the workmanship of His Holy Spirit, as it is written in the Epistle to the Ephesians, "We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus."

Now, my dear young friends, let me here crave your close examination, because the present day is a day in which religion is fashionable, such as it is; and the fashionable religion of the day says not one word to you about a new birth. It may tell you the abominable [Popish] lie that a little water did it for you, which even those who tell you know to be a falsehood; and yet the daring impostors proceed with their imposition. But believe them not. Real Christianity is not the workmanship of a priest. Real Christianity is not the workmanship of water, little or much. Real Christianity is not the workmanship of the creature. Real Christianity is not the workmanship of Sunday-school labourers, however valuable or important they may be, though they may be instruments. Real Christianity is the workmanship of the Holy Ghost, and it consists in a new creation.

Now, I want my dear young friends, even the very youngest among them—those who are only just capable of thinking—to ask themselves these questions—"That I have a birth is beyond a doubt, because I am alive; that I am born of kind and Christian parents, and am under circumstances in which I am well clothed and fed, and receive a good education, I will thank God, and I ought to thank Him for it; but have I a birth from above—another, a new, a heavenly birth? Am I under the training and influence of the Holy Ghost, in things pertaining to God?" And let me tell my hearers, young and old, that you are, every one of you, at this moment, either under the curse of God, and exposed every moment to His eternal sentence of vengeance and destruction; or freed from that curse, with no condemnation hanging over you, and the blessing of God, which maketh rich, and the fulness of the blessing of the covenant of Christ secured and participated by you. One or other is your state before God. Do examine the matter, I beseech you! "Am I blessed or cursed?" Better far to ask this, than to ask whether you are rich or poor, young or old; but ask, "Am I blessed of God, or am I under His curse? Am I learning what I am, and what Jesus is, so as to loathe myself, and love Him?" These questions will bring

you to some conclusions respecting whether you belong to the generation of Christ.

[Lord, look upon our children dear,
And bless them with Thy holy fear ;
Oh, teach them in their early youth
To love and prize Thy Word of truth !
Thus may they prove a godly seed,
From sin and Satan's bondage freed ;
And live, with loosened tongues, to tell
How Jesus rescued them from hell.
May they be found within Thy fold,
As sheep by the Good Shepherd told ;
And, as Thy sons and daughters, show
What grace has done for them below.
Then, when Thy jewels Thou shalt bring,
May they appear before their King,
And join with us to sing Thy love
Within Thy blissful courts above.—ED.]

TRUTH VERIFIED.

" Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground, and die, it abideth alone : but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."—JOHN xii. 24.

How true it is that Satan has blinded the eyes of those that believe not ! Thus, many infidels try in their blindness to prove the Word of God untrue, but while *they* stumble and fall, that Word for ever remains the same—unalterable, unchangeable truth.

About the year 1854, an infidel called upon me, and disputed the Bible upon this very text, and scornfully ridiculed the idea of a corn of wheat dying in the ground, to become fruitful. I could only withstand him upon the ground of faith, fully believing that God's words are true. This infidel afterwards cut his throat, and thus destroyed the life which God had given.

A short time since, I was staying at a large farmer's in Cambridgeshire, and our conversation turned upon the growth of corn. He kindly explained to me the truth of this text, and said that, when the grain was sown, a thickish root about two fingers long came forth, which presently withered, perished, and entirely rotted off ; then, when it was dead, there came forth another root, which shot straight down into the earth, and according to the length of that root, was the height of the stem. Now, if that first root does not perish, which sometimes (but not often) is the case—yet, if it does so happen, the stem is always barren, and entirely fruitless. Thus the Lord's Word stands for ever firm. *His* knowledge is perfect.

Chelsea.

A. B.

ENCOURAGING COUNSEL.

DEAR FRIEND,—As you mentioned the seventh, eighth, and ninth verses of the seventy-seventh Psalm, I thought perhaps you might be travelling along that way, although you were so lately on the mount; and fearing Satan might get the advantage of you, by working with your unbelief, to make you think that the God which you have rejoiced in is not “the God of the valleys,” I felt it on my mind to give you freely of such as I have, that you might, with the Lord’s blessing, once more “resist the devil, and see him flee from you.” If you should glean one ear of corn therein, you will do well to thank the great Boaz, who alone commands the handfuls to be dropped for poor gleaning Ruths. Do not let Him find thee gleaning in another field, but ever keep fast by His maidens; and, though thou mayest not always glean so as to satisfy thee, yet He is too kind to let thee starve, for “He keepeth the soul alive in famine.” Great is His power, love, and mercy; great is His faithfulness. Do not be afraid of wearying Him with thy complaints. He loves the beggar’s knock.

“Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will He be favourable no more? Is His mercy clean gone for ever?” &c. (Psa. lxxviii. 7—10.)

Doubtless most, if not all the Lord’s people who travel in the wilderness for a time, after being called by grace, are brought into the spot where they can adopt the language here as the language of their heart. Were it not so, where would be “the trial of faith”? How could they be one in heart with those who have gone before? How could they prize the Word of God as they now do? How would they prove the Apostle’s words true, “We walk by faith, and not by sight”?

Here are six solemn questions pressed out of a burdened heart. None but the living can rightly use the same. None but those who have tasted adopting grace can really enter into the feelings of the Psalmist here. This is the soul who can feelingly say—

“Pause, my soul, and ask the question,
 ‘Art thou ready to meet God?
 Am I made a real Christian,
 Washed in the Redeemer’s blood?
 Have I union
 To the Church’s living Head?’ ”

This soul has tasted adopting grace in some measure, hence the question, “Will the Lord cast off for ever?” You cannot “cast off” a garment if you have never had it on. You cannot “cast off” a friend if you never had one. Thou canst not rightly feel

thyself "cast off" until thou hast "leaned upon the Beloved," or, at least, desired so to do; and the desire of the righteous shall be granted. Methinks the language before us comes from the heart of one who has had his feet placed upon the Rock, and has been "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets." This soul has said—

"Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee."

"Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her Beloved?" There has been a little feeling sense of His arm of power and mercy being beneath the soul, delivering it from the sins and snares of this wilderness world, and delivering it from the curse of the law. His drawing power has also been felt, so that the soul has been "made willing in the day of His power," like the Church of old. "Draw me; we will run after Thee."

Now, this soul has perhaps been favoured to approach unto God, like a child goes to its father or mother with its troubles—"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." But the Lord has decreed that His children shall be "weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts," in order to be taught knowledge and to understand doctrine (Isa. xxviii. 9). The weaning time is a crying time. How hard the child takes it! May it not well question the mother's love and compassion, and cry out, "Will she cast off for ever?" (in its feelings.) These are hard times with a suckling in grace, but very needful, in order to understand doctrine. "We walk by faith, and not by sight." Now His smiling face is lost sight of, and Zion's breasts seem dried up, and Satan and unbelief are doing their dirty work—

"To sink us with the gloom
Of all that's dismal in this world,
Or in the world to come."

"Will the Lord cast off for ever?" No, "for the Lord God of Israel saith that He hateth putting away" (Mal. ii. 16) —

"Graved on His hands, divinely fair,
Who did their ransom pay,
The golden letters still appear,
He hates to put away."

"Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord?" Do you not see Joseph turning aside to weep?

"Will the Lord cast off for ever?" No; bless His dear

name, He says, "Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out." "Courage, soul, there yet is room!"

"And will He be favourable no more?" What! has He "remembered thee with the favour which He beareth unto His people?" Have you been favoured with the golden sceptre held out to you, when you deserved nought but death? Have you been brought into the "King's chamber," when others have been left out?

"Why was I made to hear His voice,
And enter while there's room,
When thousands make a wretched choice,
And rather starve than come?"

Did this favour come to thee entirely of His own free grace, through Christ, the Beloved, without thy worth or worthiness? And dost thou say, "Will He be favourable no more?" I say—

"His love no end or measure knows;
No change can turn its course;
Immutably the same it flows
From one eternal Source."

Does He now treat thee in a distant manner? Canst thou see no favour in the way He takes with thee? Don't despair, but remember there is a "set time to favour Zion." Look at the fountain of favour—it is in God, and "God is love."

"Is His mercy clean gone for ever?" What do you know about His mercy? Have you at times been favoured, like David, to fall into the hands of God, feeling that His mercies are great? Have you been able to sing with the heart, "Thy mercy in Jesus exempts me from hell," &c.; or have you hoped in the mercy of God, having no other hope but in mercy, through blood? What! think you that His mercies are "clean gone for ever"? No; but thou shalt say, "Though Thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is turned away, and Thou comfortedst me" (Isa. xii. 1). "His mercies are new every morning." They come fresh from the Fountain every morning. Don't despair, for—

"The fountain o'erflows our woes to redress;
Still more He bestows, and grace upon grace."

"His mercy endureth for ever." "But," say you, "why does He frown then? Why not show His smiling face as before? Why not let me come near Him as before?"

"Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face."

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

Do you not see that the rod is in the hand of mercy ? “He doth not afflict willingly.”

“Doth His promise fail for evermore ?” Have you at times sucked honey from the promise, and found it sweet to your taste ? Do you find it but ink and paper now ? Has He made a promise to you, so as for you to feed thereon and grow, long before it come to pass ? And do the days of adversity come so thick and fast that you say, “All these things are against me. How can the promise be fulfilled ?” Remember what He says—“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away”—

“His promise is yea and amen,
And never was forfeited yet.”

“Though it tarry, wait for it.” “Shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him ?”

“Hath God forgotten to be gracious ?” What now ? Are the showers of grace withheld ? Is there no dew to lay all night upon thy branch ? Do not give it up, even if quickening grace is withheld. If thou art as cold as clay, if thou hast scarcely any breath of prayer, if humbling and subduing grace is at a low ebb, if thou hast scarcely enough grace to carry thy daily cross, yet He hath not “forgotten to be gracious,” but will surely help thee yet. Can He forget His own work ? If He has given His own life a ransom on Calvary’s cross, mercy and grace will be forthcoming too.

“Hath He in anger shut up His tender mercies ?” No ; for Jesus has opened the store-house of mercy, never to be shut against a contrite one—

“The door of Thy mercy is open all day
To the poor and the needy who knock by the way ;
No sinner shall ever be empty sent back
Who comes seeking mercy for Jesus’s sake.”

“Fear not ; His merits must prevail.”

“And I said, This is my infirmity.” Unbelief is an infirmity indeed. Short-sightedness is our infirmity. Looking at God’s works with sense and reason, and viewing Him as changing like ourselves, is our infirmity. “But the Spirit helpeth our infirmities,” and helpeth us to triumph over them. He giveth faith to view things aright.

“But I will remember the years of the right hand of the

Most High." I will remember what Christ, the Man of His right hand, hath done in His "goings forth from of old, from everlasting," when He tabernacled here below. Ah! what did He do with the right arm of His power? Confounded His foes; bruised Satan's head; took the sting of death away; "swallowed up death in victory;" for ever shut the gates of hell against His people, and opened the gates of heaven for their reception; removed the iniquity of that land in one day as far as the east is from the west; "brought in everlasting righteousness;" opened all the channels of mercy; opened "a fountain for sin and uncleanness;" raised the dead to life; opened the eyes of the blind; healed the lepers; dispossessed men of devils; gave men power over unclean spirits. Oh, the power of His "right hand"! "Is anything too hard for the Lord?"

"I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High," in bringing His people out of Egypt; dividing the mighty waters; leading them through and destroying their foes; in leading them through the great and terrible wilderness; giving them water from the rock and bread from heaven; and bringing them safe into the land of Canaan—

"Join thou, my soul, for thou canst tell
How grace divine broke up thy cell,
And loosed thy native chains;
And still, from that auspicious day,
How oft art thou constrained to say
That grace triumphant reigns!"

Has not His "right hand" been exalted in binding the strong man who kept the palace? Has He not delivered from worse than Egyptian bondage? Has He not divided the waters of trouble, and made a way when there has appeared to be no way? Has He not so smitten the great rock that you have tasted its streams? Have you not eaten the heavenly manna, by precious faith? "O love, thou bottomless abyss!"

What say you, poor-soul? Can you give it up without remembering these things? Can you give it up when you remember these great things, and your meditation is sweet?

"I will remember the works of the Lord." He is not man. His arm is not shortened. His ear is not heavy. He is the same God now as in days of old—has the same power and the same mercy.

"Surely I will remember Thy wonders of old." So that, if I am saved, it will not be the only wonder. He is a wonder. He is a wonder-working God. Wonders will never cease all the while sinners are saved by such amazing grace.

Biddenden, August 18th, 1882.

J. KEMP.

FRESH KINDLINGS.

DURING a dark and anxious period in the Church of Scotland, a long time ago, two godly ministers in the far north occupied adjoining parishes. They were both very deeply concerned about the condition of things in their beloved land, and often did each of them in his closet plead with the Almighty to visit them with better days. When they met occasionally, the burden that lay on their spirits was frequently the theme of their converse, and they took counsel together as to what means could be used to alleviate the evil and procure a blessing. It seemed as if little could be done except to watch and pray. To these duties they agreed to give themselves; and that there might be perpetual supplication at the throne of grace, they adopted the following plan.

It so happened that their habits of life differed a good deal in one respect. One of them was accustomed to sit very late at his studies, while the other was an early riser. Their manse also, although some miles apart, were within sight of one another. It was therefore agreed between them that the late student should continue each night in his labours and supplications, with a lamp in his window, throwing its light across the wide, dark reach of country, to show he was in his watch-tower with his God. Meanwhile, his brother had retired to rest, to rise a little after midnight and light his lamp, placing it in his window as an answering beacon to the gleam that came across the fields and moors. At this signal the late watcher laid himself down, with the sweet assurance that, while he slept, his fellow had taken up the task of waiting with their petitions on the Lord. Thus did they seek to carry out the language of the prophet, "I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord keep not silence, and give Him no rest till He establish, and till He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth" (Isa. lxii. 6, 7). "I stand continually upon the watch-tower in the daytime, and I am set in my ward whole nights" (Isa. xxi. 8).

It may not be needful to take so literally the exhortation of Scripture to "pray without ceasing," yet it is in souls of this fervent stamp that mighty spiritual movements have often their origin. The hidden fire burns in their hearts till the favouring moment for it to burst out into a widespread conflagration. On the temple altar of burnt-offering the fire was never permitted to go out. At the hour of sacrifice, the flames ascended to heaven, consuming the wood and the offering; but when the service was accomplished, and the burning heap sank down to a few embers, these were carefully preserved alive till the time of

the next oblation. Thus, between alternations of fierce blaze and hidden smouldering, the fire which had come down from heaven was kept from becoming extinct.

In the history of the Christian Church, in like manner, there have been marvellous baptisms of fire; and, again, there have been seasons when the things which remained were ready to die. In some few hearts alone the secret flame has been continued, like a handful of coals from off the altar laid up in a censer. Yet again these have been made use of to awaken a fresh kindling. The Holy Spirit, the true Source and Author of spiritual life, has used these as His instruments to effect a great and glorious work, and then a long season of decay has been succeeded by a new and blessed Pentecost.

And thus it is in the personal experience of the children of God. The day of adversity comes, and all their former prosperity seems to be withered and gone; and, in this state of dearth in their soul, they sigh and say, "Oh, that I were as in months past!" &c. (Job xxix. 2). But the living spark is still preserved in their breasts, and in desires, though feeble, it ascends to God, until, in due time, the Holy Spirit fans the little fire with His reviving breath, takes of the things of Christ, and brings them home to the heart, according to the promise, and with His own broad seal again impresses on that heart such a sure testimony of covenant love that it can exult and say, "I was brought low, and He helped me." "Wait on the Lord."

HOW TO PRAY.

A MANUSCRIPT found among the untouched papers of the late Dr. J. A. Alexander, on "Circumlocution in Prayer," closes with the following "practical suggestions" in respect to prayer. They are specially applicable to all who pray in public:—

1. Let your prayer be composed of thanksgiving, praise, confession, and petition, without any argument or exhortation addressed to those who are supposed to be praying with you.

2. Adopt no fixed forms of expression, except such as you obtain from Scripture.

3. Express your desires in the briefest, simplest form, without circumlocution.

4. Hallow God's name by avoiding its unnecessary repetition.

5. Adopt the simple devotional phrases of Scripture, but avoid the free use of its figures, and all quaint and doubtful application of its terms to foreign subjects.

6. Pray to God, and not to man.

NIGHT THOUGHTS BY A WATCHMAN.

A WONDERFUL SIGHT—A GREAT VICTORY.

"Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in His apparel, travelling in the greatness of His strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save."
—ISAIAH lxiii. 1.

To see the Lord of heaven and earth in human form is a most pleasing sight. That God should take our nature, and dwell on the earth with us for a short time, is cause for astonishment; but that He should be born of a woman, and come among men in such a lowly form that He was generally unknown until He manifested His glory, is amazing. To see Emmanuel in the manger at Bethlehem is surely a wondrous thing; but to trace His life, His death, His resurrection and glorious ascension—and all this undertaken and accomplished for sinful, dying men—to trace this with the eye of faith, is a sweet and heavenly employment.

Christ rightly viewed in any respect, or in any condition, is a heart-cheering sight. Even upon the cross, put to shame and grief, rejected of men, and forsaken for a short time by the Father, He is lovely in the eyes of every Spirit-taught, law-condemned sinner; so that—

"I need not blush to own that He
On whom my hope of heaven is built
Was crucified on yonder tree,
Since 'tis His blood that cancels guilt."

But rather cry—

"Behold, behold the Lamb of God
On the cross!
For us He shed His precious blood
On the cross:
The rocks do rend, the mountains quake,
While Jesus doth atonement make,
While Jesus suffers for our sake;
On the cross.

"Let every mourning sinner cling
To the cross;
Let every joyful Christian sing
Of the cross:
There let the preacher take his stand,
And, with the Bible in his hand,
Go preach to every tribe and land
Christ and His cross."

The prophet had seen Christ "led as a lamb to the slaughter;" but now he sees Him coming as a Conqueror to His throne. He

comes from Edom and Bozrah in His own strength. Edom was the land of Israel's foes, and is often mentioned as such from the time of their coming out of Egypt. Into the land of His enemies the Messiah came, and they received Him not, but cried, "Away with Him! We will not have this Man to reign over us!" However, Christ did not come to ask permission to be King, but to conquer and to gather a people for Himself. Each subdued and reconciled foe knows well enough that it was by the power of Him who is "mighty to save" that he was brought over to his best and only lasting Friend. How strange that it should be so; but it is true in all. As good John Newton has said, "Long we either slight or doubt Him." As He is, however, both mighty and determined to save, He is not prevented by the unwillingness of those whom He came to deliver.

The place or condition from whence the travelling Conqueror is seen to be advancing is called Bozrah, as well as Edom, because Bozrah was the capital of Edom. Not that He came from the city of that name, but because He was leaving the state or condition and circumstances signified by the word. Bozrah, according to Cruden and others, means "tribulation" or "distress." And did not the Lord Jesus Christ pass through great tribulations and undergo deep distress while in the land of His enemies? However, He soon finished the will of His Father, and completed the work He came to do. He came down into the abode of His foes alone, and was alone in the fierce but glorious combat with Satan, sin, and wicked men. He therefore must have all the praise for redeeming His people from these their enemies. Is it not a most cheering and soul-inspiring sight to see Jesus thus ascending victoriously to His Father and our Father, to His God and our God? The Lamb is now in the midst of the throne, there to rule and protect His followers.

How sure and steadfast in His throne of glory the Conqueror sits! And His throne is not more secure than His people's eternal salvation. These are always linked together. How could Christ reign in peace and rest in glory if He were constantly having some of His subjects drawn or forced from Him by His conquered foe, the devil? If Satan were not subdued, this might be; but as Christ has triumphed over all the powers of death and hell, not one of His chosen ones can ever be lost. Believer, here is your safety, and from hence your confidence and comfort must spring. Dwell much upon this important truth. Jesus is alive for evermore, with the keys of hell and death in His hand. He lives to save His people with the same power and love to-day as He possessed, and so fully demonstrated, when He dwelt below. His exaltation has not in the least altered His affection. He is the same Jesus still. Ever think of Him as such, and approach

Him as such. It was the same Jesus which was meek and lowly in heart, which took up the little children and blessed them, and which washed the disciples' feet, that thus came from this abode of sorrow, "travelling in the greatness of His strength, mighty to save." If He is still such, what have you to fear?

"Behold, from Edom's land of woe,
Where Bozrah's bitter waters flow,
A conquering Warrior comes I see,
All clad in peerless majesty!

"Who can this wondrous Person be
That travels with such royalty,
And, in the greatness of His might,
Puts all His mighty foes to flight?

" 'Tis I, 'tis I,' the Victor cries,
With love and anger in His eyes;
'I tread My foes beneath My feet,
And truth and righteousness repeat.

" 'I'll stain My garments in this war,
And bring My captives from afar;
In earth and hell it shall be known
The year of My redeemed is come.' "

Tempted, afflicted, mourning, weak, and guilty sinner, if this Jesus does not live for you, who is it for? If not *you*, who does He live to save and bless?

W. B.

A WORD FOR THE GRACELESS.

IF a lesser sin many times press so heavy when the conscience is enlightened, how will thy poor soul tremble under the terrible and intolerable weight of all thy sins together! When all thy lies, all thy oaths, all thy filthy speeches and railings, all thy mad passions and impure thoughts, all thy good-fellow meetings, ale-house hauntings, and scoffings of God's people; all the wrongs thou hast done, all the goods thou hast got ill, all the time thou hast misspent; thy profanation of the Sabbath, thy mocking Christ at every Sacrament, thy non-proficiency at every sermon, thy ignorance, thy unbelief, thy worldliness, thy covetousness, thy pride, thy malice, thy lust, thy lukewarmness, impatience, discontentment, vain-glory, self-love, the innumerable swarms of vain, idle, wandering, and wicked imaginations; in a word, all the pollutions, distempers, and estrangedness from God in thine heart; all the villainies, vanities, and rebellions of thy whole life—I say, when all these shall be charged upon thy graceless soul by the implacable indignation of that highest Majesty whose mercy,

ministry, and long-suffering thou hast shamefully abused ; whose anger, patience, and pure eye thou hast villainously provoked all thy life long, alas ! what wilt thou do then ? What "wings of the morning" will then carry thee out of the reach of God's revenging hand ? What cave shall receive thee ? What mountain canst thou get by entreaty to fall upon thee ? What darkest midnight or hellish dungeon shall hide thee from that wrath which thou shall be neither able to abide nor to avoid ? In this case, I would not have thy heart in my breast one hour, for all the riches, glory, and pleasures of ten thousand worlds.

BOLTON.

"THE CITY OF MY GOD."

(PSALM xlviii. 2.)

BEAUTIFUL Zion ! city renowned !
Through the universe wide thy praise shall resound,
When straight from thy God thou descendest, the bride
For thy Husband in garments of glory arrayed :
Oh, glorious thy beauty, by prophets foretold !
Thy gates of fair pearls, thy streets of pure gold !
To dwell in the city, mine may it be—
The beautiful city, Zion the free !

Beautiful Zion ! the hope of thy rest
Is a balm for the weary and sorrow-bound breast ;
From the bars of affliction, and struggling with sighs,
Sweet prayers for thy coming in breathings arise :
Eternal the joys in thy palaces found ;
For ever the song of the saved shall resound ;
To dwell in the city, mine may it be—
The beautiful city, Zion the free !

Beautiful Zion ! desire of the earth !
Nor sorrow nor sighing in thee shall have birth ;
The prisoners of hope, here with burdens oppressed,
How long they to enter thy portals of rest !
Thy rivers of pleasures eternally roll.
Anointing with gladness each blood-ransomed soul ;
To dwell in the city, mine may it be—
The beautiful city, Zion the free !

—From "*The Way Home*."—A. S.

ACCORDING to the judgment of sense, would any one choose the enjoyment of the most exquisite pleasures for a year, and afterwards be content to burn in a furnace for a day ? much less to enjoy them for a day, and to burn for a year ? How stupid are they who, for momentary delights, incur the fiery indignation of God for ever ! Try but the finger with the flame of a candle, and you will soon discover your weakness.—*Bates*.

ASA.

THE lives of Bible saints are given to us in their varied aspects that we may desire their graces but avoid their sin. The incidents in their lives teach us many lessons, and yield profitable meditation to those who desire to follow in their footsteps, so far as they followed God. In the life of Asa we can discover the flesh and the Spirit, the saint and the sinner, the company as of two armies, the humble suppliant and the proud oppressor. The one we can rejoice over, but the other gives cause for mourning and sorrow. Yet in both does the child of God discover something of his own image, "for as in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man;" and, although the living soul would be holy as God is holy, yet he finds, by bitter experience, that the "Canaanites will dwell in the land." And surely there is a needs-be that it should be so, for if there were no thorns in our sides and pricks in our eyes to humble us, and prove us, and show us what is in our hearts, how proud we should grow; and, like a ship at sea without ballast, the first fair breeze might prove too much for us, for, instead of speeding us to our desired haven, it would probably capsize our barque, and but for the kind help of that God who holds the winds in His fist, and the waters in the hollow of His hands, we should never more steer our course heavenward.

Asa began to reign well. The strange gods were broken to pieces, the groves were cut down, and Asa did that which was right and good in the eyes of the Lord his God. The Lord took notice of this, and honoured it by giving him the blessings of peace for fifteen years. Asa began well. So did Joash, who reigned well all the days of Jehoida, the high priest, but who ended by killing the son of his best friend (2 Chron. xxiv. 21). So did Uzziah, of whom it is said, "As long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper; but when he became strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction, for he went into the temple of the Lord to burn incense." For his presumption the Lord smote him, and he was a leper to the day of his death (2 Chron. xxvi. 21).

How many have seemed to begin in the Spirit, but have ended in the flesh, of whom it might be said, "Ye did run well; who did hinder you?" How many Pliables, who would outstrip in pace the poor burdened Pilgrim, have turned back at the first Slough of Despond; but it is "those that endure to the end that shall be saved." The wayside, the thorny ground, the stony ground, and the good ground hearers all started for heaven, but only one of them ever saw the pearly gates. Is it not a solemn thought that many thousands of lost souls once bid fair for glory, but sin,

Satan, and the world proved too strong for them, and they soon gave up the battle, wandered out of the way, and ended as all do who are not born from above, and "kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation" ? Well might the wise man say, "Better is the end of a thing than the beginning."

These considerations make the child of God tremble, lead him to seek for a good beginning, and for living testimonies in his soul that it is the Lord's work, and keep him very sensible of the Saviour's words, "Without Me ye can do nothing."

"When any turn from Zion's way
(Alas ! what numbers do !),
Methinks I hear my Saviour say,
'Wilt thou forsake Me too ?'

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

Asa was prevalent in prayer. The Ethiopians came against him to battle with an army of one million soldiers and three hundred chariots. Asa's army did not number many more than half as many, and he did not appear to have any chariots ; therefore, while his enemies were trusting in their horses and chariots and their numerous army, Asa was crying "unto the Lord his God, and said, Lord, it is nothing for Thee to help, whether by many, or with them that have no power : help us, O Lord our God, for we rest on Thee, and in Thy name we go against this multitude. O Lord, Thou art our God ; let not man prevail against Thee." In answer to this remarkable prayer, the Lord smote the huge host of Ethiopians, so that they were destroyed before Him. In this remarkable petition we notice Asa's faith and confidence in the Lord's power to help, and truly this is a certain mark that attends all real prayer, "for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a Rewarder of all those who diligently seek Him." We then find how implicitly Asa left his case in the Lord's hands, feeling that the battle now was not his, but the Lord's. "Let not man prevail against Thee." This should be another accompaniment to prayer, but the Lord's people, for the most part, come very short in this matter. They go to Him with their burdens and difficulties, but, instead of leaving them in His hands, and watching to see how the matter will fall, they immediately go to work to deliver themselves. This the Lord permits them to do, till they find all their strength is gone. Then He shows them their folly, and graciously enables the poor heavy-laden souls to cast all their burdens upon Him, while they "stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord"—

“ When first before His mercy-seat
 Thou didst thy all to Him commit ;
 He gave thee warrant from that hour
 To trust His wisdom, love, and power.”

Asa had great zeal in the Lord's service. A prophet was sent to meet Asa, probably as he returned from fighting the Ethiopians, and spoke powerfully to him, showing how the Lord would continue to be his Helper all the while he continued to serve and trust in Him. The prophet's words, together with the recent deliverance wrought by the Lord on his behalf, seemed to have such a gracious effect upon the king, that he came out more boldly on the Lord's side than he had previously done ; and such was his zeal for the Lord's honour that he removed his mother (1 Kings xv. 13) from being queen because she had made an idol. “ And Asa cut down her idol, and stamped it, and burnt it at the brook Kidron ” (2 Chron. xv. 16). Thus we see that the Lord's honour was more precious to him than his own flesh and blood. Not only did he destroy the false worship, but he did his utmost to establish the true worship, by renewing the altar of the Lord ; and, for this purpose, he assembled all his people, with many out of the other tribes of Israel, “ who fell to him, when they saw the Lord his God was with him.” The congregation thus assembled entered into a solemn covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers with all their heart, and with all their soul ; and whosoever failed to do so should be put to death (Deut. xiii. 5—11). This was another very pleasing episode in Asa's life. The good work was so mightily revived in his soul that he ran diligently in the Lord's commands, and found wisdom's ways to be pleasantness, and all her paths peace.

When the Lord is pleased thus to visit His dear children, by putting His hand a second time to the work, what life, vigour, and freshness seem to be infused into the soul ! And this coming, as it frequently does, after a season of soul desertion, when the poor soul has felt like the bones in Ezekiel's vision—dry, very dry—and often, too, as in Asa's case, in a time of great strait and trouble—oh, how delightful it is ! It is like day after night, plenty after famine, joy after sorrow, the fresh bloom of spring after the barrenness of winter, and their joyful language is—

“ If I loved my Lord before,
 I would love Him ten times more ;
 Drop into His sea outright ;
 Lose myself in Jesus quite.”

What diligent search is then made for all Diabolians that still may be lurking in Mansoul ! Every Queen Sin is dethroned, and every idol stamped in the dust, and the Lord alone is exalted in

that day. The company of the godly is greatly prized, and all the precepts and promises of the Gospel become more precious than the choicest earthly treasure. How the happy soul can then make a fresh surrender of itself to its best Beloved—

“ Take my soul and body's powers,
Take my memory, mind, and will ;
All my goods and all my hours,
All I know and all I feel ;
All I think, or speak, or do ;
Take my heart, but make it new.”

Asa sinned in his old age. For thirty-six years Asa seemed to walk humbly with his God, and when he had reached that point when it might be thought that he was safe from falling, then he fell—first in sending money to the king of Syria, that he might break his league with Baasha, king of Israel, and come to his assistance. How different his conduct now to when he was assailed by the Ethiopians ! After this fall he sinned grievously by putting the seer in prison who was sent by God to show him his folly ; and, last of all, he displeased the Lord greatly because, when diseased in his feet, he sought not to the Lord, but to physicians. Thus he died, apparently under a cloud of God's displeasure, yet saved, we trust, although as by fire ; for the Word declares that “ the heart of Asa was perfect all his days.” Does not the fall of this good man in his old age show us plainly that none are safe from temptation till quite out of the reach of sin and Satan ? In fact, the Word of God abounds with like incidents. Noah's drunkenness, Abraham's slips, Lot's incest, David's adultery, Solomon's strange women, Hezekiah's pride, and Asa's fleshly confidence and oppression of the godly, were not when they were young in the way. No ; then their hearts were tender, their weakness was sensibly felt, and their dependence on God was entire. Then it was that the Lord kept them as the apple of His eye, and hid them under the shadow of His wings. But when they had been brought through many battles, supported under heavy trials, preserved from foul temptations, then they became strong in themselves, and lost sight of their best and only Friend. Then was Satan's hour ; then it was that he tripped up their feet, caught them in his net, and stripped them of all their strength as completely as Delilah stripped Samson. He soon blinded their eyes, made them to grind in the prison-house, and caused them even to make sport for the enemies of their God. But Satan cannot finally prevail over the Lord's chosen ones, any more than the Philistines could finally prevail against Samson ; for we are told that, when Samson called on his God and said, “ O Lord God, remember me, I pray Thee, and strengthen me only

this once, that I may be avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes," the Lord did as he requested, and Samson slew more of the Lord's enemies and his own at his death than ever he had done previously. So does every tempted, sin-besmeared, and devil-hunted child of God obtain an everlasting victory over all his foes, through the help of Him who came to bruise the serpent's head. Thus is every heaven-born and heaven-bound soul compelled even to the end to acknowledge, with Paul the aged, that they are the greatest of all sinners and the least of all saints—

"Greatest sinners, greatly spared,
Love much and themselves debase;
Mine's a paradox too hard—
Rich of mercy, poor of grace !

"Me Thou hast forgiven much ;
This my sins too plainly prove ;
Give me what Thou givest such,
Much humility and love."

HOPEFUL.

A FEW THOUGHTS ON SANCTIFICATION.

THIS important Scriptural truth is one which is probably not much thought of, or dwelt upon, by most, yet perhaps would be very seasonable in the Church of God at the present time.

God is a holy God, and heaven a holy place, prepared for a people who are made meet for it (Col. i. 12), called a "holy nation" (1 Peter ii. 9), and our greatest mercy is to possess this meetness.

To sanctify is to set apart for a holy end and use. Thus the tabernacle, the altar, and all the vessels of the ministry were sanctified. These were "patterns of things in the heavens" (Heb. ix. 23). The tabernacle was sanctified by the glory of the Lord (Exod. xxix. 43), which was there revealed, and also by the sprinkling of oil and blood (Exod. xl. 9; Heb. ix. 21). So now, as the grace and glory of God, revealed in the Gospel, shine into our hearts, we are thereby sanctified, for the faith which perceives this grace purifies the heart (Acts xv. 9). Divine truth, relating as it does to the cross of Christ, is made powerful and effectual in washing and cleansing the sinner; and the mind, being under the illuminating influence of the Holy Spirit, the truth is obeyed (1 Peter i. 22; Rom. vi. 17). This is the anointing of the Spirit (1 John ii. 27), whereby many precious fruits are produced in the soul, and the flesh crucified (Gal. v. 22—24).

In the light of this teaching, sin is seen and felt, and the desire implanted in the heart to forsake it. Now we begin to

learn what opposites sin and grace are, and how naturally unholy we are. Forgiveness of sins, or justification, is what a sinner first desires to realize, and sanctification must be inseparably connected with it; for to know pardon, and the way in which it comes to us, even through the shedding of the blood of Jesus, this must have a sanctifying influence upon the mind. By this blood we are redeemed, not only from the curse of the law, but also from the dominion of sin and Satan, and become the Lord's own inheritance, over which the Lord has a gracious claim to soul, body, and spirit; whilst the desire is, that we should be the Lord's, not in name only, but by doing those things which are agreeable to His mind and will. Here is the renewing of the mind, and conformity to the image of Christ. Nothing but the love and favour of God revealed to the heart could bring forth these things.

The office of the Holy Ghost is to take of the things of Christ, and to show them unto us (John xvi. 14), and communications of this kind have a sanctifying effect.

To this work the carnal mind especially discovers its enmity, because by it its sinful workings are opposed; and where a little experience of sanctification is attained, what sad dealings and painful backslidings we are exposed to, so that we can hardly discover anything of it in ourselves! Besides, it is doubtless the aim of Satan to work by various temptations, to bring us down into a more carnal state, hence the need of watchfulness.

We often hear that there is much of the spirit of the world in the Church, and we feel, as forming a part of it, that this is only too true, so that the evils of the age sadly leaven the Church.

For some years past, it is to be feared that several things have combined together calculated to encourage the spirit of infidelity. The large amount of false profession of religion has unquestionably increased the growth of this evil, which we firmly believe has also greatly injured many who hold the truth. In some cases, it is the consequence of other sins having gained an ascendancy over the mind and defiled the conscience. It is an evil dreadfully injurious to our spiritual vitality. In other cases, it may be the result of having held the faith for a time, but not in a pure conscience; and here it proves an awfully destructive evil, whether a person continues or discontinues their profession. But, where any are the subjects of the sanctification of the Holy Spirit, repentance and deliverance will be granted.

Sanctification is ascribed to each Person in the holy Trinity. "Sanctified by God the Father" (Jude 1) may specially refer to the saints being set apart to obtain salvation (1 Thess. v. 9)—the enjoyment of the heavenly inheritance (Acts xx. 32; xxvi. 18; 1 Pet. i. 4) which is reserved for them. They are set apart to

have an interest in redeeming blood, which cleanseth from all sin. And here we may trace the love of God the Father in our sanctification, for whatever Jesus Christ or the Holy Spirit have done to make us holy, both are the gift of the Father to this end (1 Cor. i. 30; 2 Thess. ii. 13).

Jesus Christ is said to be sanctified by the Father (John x. 36), and also by His own blood (Heb. x. 29). Aaron, the high priest, was sanctified for his office by the sprinkling of oil and blood (Exod. xxix. 21); so Christ, the great High Priest of our profession, was anointed without measure with the Spirit of the Lord (John iii. 34; Isa. lxi. 1). The body He took was prepared by the Father (Heb. x. 5); and in this body He was to do the will of Him who sent Him, which He said was His "meat" (John iv. 34), and was "obedient unto death" (Phil. ii. 8), being "an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour" (Eph. v. 2). Blood must be shed for the remission of sins (Heb. ix. 22). This was the "blood of the New Testament" (Matt. xxvi. 28), and of the "everlasting covenant" (Heb. xiii. 20), which our dear Redeemer must give, to be a perfect and suitable Mediator between God and sinners; and, having made an atonement for sin, He enters into heaven with all the eternally-abiding freshness, efficacy, and savour of His blood and merits, there to appear in the presence of God for us (Heb. ix. 24). This is the only ground of boldness or liberty we have to enter into the "holiest" (Heb. x. 19), *i.e.*, "the blood of Jesus."

The sanctification of those who come to God in this way appears described in the twenty-second verse: "Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water," which may signify the effect of the application of these sweet and pure truths of the precious Gospel to the heart (John xv. 3; Eph. v. 26). This is specially confirmed by Christ's own words, "Sanctify them through Thy truth" (John xvii. 17). Hence it is evident that the Gospel, which is the power of God to salvation, is the same to sanctification.

Enoch doubtlessly proved much of the excellency of the grace of sanctification, for he walked with God (Gen. v. 24), and had this testimony—that he pleased God (Heb. xi. 5); and we see that his faith, like Noah's and Abraham's, led to obedience to the will of God. And herein lies a great part of the holiness of the saints. There is a practical acknowledgment of God, according to the apprehension we have of His grace and glory manifested in Christ, inwardly feeling that He is to be feared, loved, and served, according to His Word.

Knowing our own insufficiency to do anything, we wait upon the Lord with desire for the fulfilment of His gracious promise—that He will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask (Luke

xi. 13), under whose influence tenderness is produced, shame and sorrow for our past sinfulness and wanderings, a desire to love the brethren, to forgive all, and to walk humbly, carefully, and prayerfully before the Lord ; for only in obedience to the leadings of the Holy Spirit can sanctification be produced in us.

Now, however small our attainments may be in this grace (and small indeed they are), yet it may be for the health of our souls, for the good of the Church, and especially for the glory of God, that these things should be set before our minds (John xv. 8).

Hitchin, October, 1882.

THE DAY OF JUDGMENT.

THE day of judgment will be an awful day. A man may write of it and talk of it ; sceptics may sneer at it, and infidels may deny it ; the day *will* come. The man who blindfolds himself, as he stands upon the brink of the precipice, does not escape the deadly fall because he has blindfolded his eyes. The judgment of man follows from his responsibility. In every action, and every word, and every thought, for which he stands before God as responsible, there is a sort of day of judgment while he does it and when he does it ; and that day, that awful day, will be but the winding up of the awful drama—the fearful day of execution. In the solemn day of judgment, what will become of the atheist and of the deist ? What will become of the half-infidel and of the formal worshipper ? And what will become of that man that has a clear creed in his head, and the love of sin and the world in his heart ? Lost, lost for ever ! Ah ! what a day that will be, when the tears of mothers over their children, the prayers of fathers for their children, the admonitions of friends, and the rebukes of conscience in consequence of them, shall all stand up as a league against a man, so that he shall be his own condemner !

In that great day the wisdom of God shall be revealed. Why was the book of providence so dark ? Why was that cumberer of the ground kept alive, while he who was fraught with vitality and influence was swept away ? All shall be revealed. The depths shall be fathomed, and God's wisdom shall then be declared. We shall then see why there were evil men full of riches, and good men sinking in poverty. We shall then understand why God permitted these things.

Then, too, shall the justice of God be clearly discerned, and there shall never be found a hair's weight of judgment upon one sinner that he does not deserve—there shall not be the slightest breach of equity in the condemning of one soul.

And then shall be seen what God's grace was. We see it now

as "through a glass darkly;" then shall we see how it was all of grace from first to last.

And oh, what will that day be when God's vengeance, too, shall be revealed—when the pomp and the pride and the glory of this earth shall vanish like a scroll rolled up and burned, and the palaces and the cities and the glories of architecture shall be "dissolved with fervent heat"?

What a moment will that be, when all shall stand and be righteously adjudged to that which their sins deserved! Those who are in Christ—found in Christ—glorified in Christ; those who have despised Him, justly and eternally condemned. "Search us, O God, and try our hearts; and grant that we may stand before Thee on that great day."—*The Olive Branch.*

ROME AND THE MASS.

THE Mass is the greatest thing in the Church of Rome. Indeed, it is the pillar of the Church. They teach that a piece of dough, made into a wafer by pressing between two irons, that has had five words pronounced upon it by the priest, is turned into the body, blood, and divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ; that the almighty Maker of heaven and earth has been compressed into a wafer; and then, when held up by the priest, who says, "Come and adore your God," men and women fall down and worship. This is great blasphemy; it is against the Scriptures. Take, for instance, the second commandment—"Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, or any likeness of anything in heaven above. . . . Thou shalt not bow down to them," &c. Now, this wafer has an image of Christ impressed upon it. It is a created thing made to represent God: and, therefore, it is a direct breaking of the second commandment, which Rome knows, so that in many catechisms published in Canada, this commandment has been omitted.

The Saviour, when on earth, foresaw the abomination of the Mass, hence He says, "If any man shall say, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; inasmuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, He is in the desert; go not forth: behold, He is in the secret chambers; believe it not" (Matt. xxiv. 23—26).

Now, this is just what the Church of Rome does. After the Mass has been performed, the wafers that are left are either placed in a chamber in the church, or put in a box, to be carried to the sick. In visiting a Romish church, this secret chamber

can always be seen ; in some cases the door leading to it being made of gold or silver, and the priests will tell you that the Lord Jesus is within that chamber. When the priest goes to visit Bridget O'Brien, who is sick, he takes with him a wafer god to give to her. No sooner do all the neighbours hear that such is the case, than they come running to the house, in order that they may fall down and worship their god. How clearly does this fulfil the foregoing prophecy of our Lord !

These things are solemn and terrible. It is nothing more than the old Paganism of Rome under a new form.

In Persia, when the sun rises in the morning, many are watching for it ; and no sooner does it appear, than they fall down and worship it. "How sad ! how degrading !" this may be thought ; but it is not nearly so bad as the Papists adoring their god of paste, for the sun is known by all to be the source of light and of warmth, and one of man's greatest benefactors, but no such excuse can be pleaded on behalf of the blind devotees of Rome.—*From a Lecture by Pastor Chiniquy.*

ATHEISTICAL TEACHING INSUFFICIENT TO SATISFY A TROUBLED CONSCIENCE.

THE utter hollowness of the teaching of the enemies of Christ may be seen if we take the case of a man accused by conscience, which has been awakened to feel the many and notorious sins of his past life, and refuses to allow him to rest, day or night. This man goes to a Materialist lecturer for advice, and anxiously inquires how he may satisfy and pacify this troublesome conscience. The lecturer says, "Dismiss your foolish fears, your vain superstition ; there is no personal God ! When you die, there is no more of you." He looks perplexed, and turns away dissatisfied. He cannot stifle the voice of conscience.

He proceeds for relief to the Freethinker lecturer, and says to him, "I cannot shake it off me. I feel that I am a sinner. What shall I do ? Is there any one to punish me ? Shall I have to answer in the next world for my sins ?" The advocate of Free-thought replies, "Banish your fears ; you shall not surely die. There is no hell, and no devil. You suffer enough in this life. All are progressing happily in the next world. There is not even a purgatory." Still dissatisfied, as no solid ground for rest has been offered, for no atonement for sins actually committed has even been suggested, he turns away, his conscience as ill at ease as ever.

He proceeds to the Rationalist, and states his distress, as his sins of falsehood, dishonesty, and licentiousness are tor-

turing his soul. The Rationalist lecturer, with a half-suppressed smile at his distress, replies : "Be quiet ; your conscience is very foolish. You have lived on the whole a very fair life, haven't you ? That is all that is required. Or if you have fallen into some deep sins which you keep to yourself, you are sorry for them, are you not ? Then you are all right. Your sins are only weakness and folly ; you need no satisfaction or expiation. God is merciful. If there is any paradise, an honest man like you stands a good chance to enter it." But he answers, "I am tormented with the thought day and night, that there must be a place of misery in the next world for all the profligates, murderers, adulterers, blasphemers, and unbelievers of every race and country, who have died as they lived. I must either believe that man is like the brute when he dies—that he has no future existence—or that such men as these, dying with their souls stained with sin, without repentance, or atonement for sin, or the faintest appearance of holiness, must find themselves in a place of misery ; and, as I know that I am a sinner, I feel in my very conscience that I must find mercy for my faults before I die. What say you to this ?" "Oh," he replies, "you have too much feeling to be a Rationalist. We don't want men whose eyes run down with tears for their sins, and you have too much conscience for a Freethinker. We don't want either men or women who will suffer themselves to be annoyed by that disturber of their peace. Go to the Christians, if you will not believe us. They will tell you what you must do to be saved. We have no part or lot in their salvation."

He comes to us, and says, "Is it not true that I must find some atonement for my sins ? I feel in my conscience that I will perish for ever if I do not get some satisfaction, which the holy Creator and God will accept." We reply, "It is true that satisfaction must be found, or you are lost for ever, for God has declared, 'The soul that sinneth, it shall die ;' and there is but one way of escape from eternal death, which is thus set forth—'God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' He died the Just for the unjust, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. None other could take your guilt, and put it for ever away ; but 'the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all ;' and He having laid down His life for His sheep, as their Ransom, and, by His own blood, having atoned for their transgressions, all that believe in Him are brought through faith to enjoy the forgiveness of sins, peace with God, and a hope of heaven, according to the promise of the Gospel."

Reader, which teaching is the safest to die upon ?

HOW ROMISH PUPILS ARE TAUGHT OPEN AND UNABASHED IDOLATRY.

WE take the following from one of the addresses recently presented to "Archbishop" Vaughan before leaving our shores. It may teach Protestants to be thankful that they and their children are saved from such sin and degradation as the worship of creatures, and from dependence on them for salvation:—

"How consoling it is to lift our eyes to Mary Immaculate, to whose saving care you have committed us, and under whose guidance we hope to work our way with honour to the heaven of eternal rest. Your Grace, we are sure, will not be unmindful of us when kneeling at the shrines of the great Apostles, St. Peter and Paul, and will convey to our Holy Father the Pope the heartfelt reverence and love of his children in distant Australia. May the faithful sea-star Mary guide your Grace safely through the perils of your long voyage, and conduct you soon again renewed in strength for your labours of zeal in your southern home.* Begging your Grace's blessing, we subscribe ourselves, your dutiful and affectionate children, the Pupils of the Marist Brothers. St. Mary's, Eastertide, 1883."

Let the reader mark these sad lines. Dr. Vaughan has taught these pupils to lift their eyes, not to the Saviour, but to "Mary Immaculate," and her care is said to be "saving." Then this woman is the avowed saviour in the Church of Rome. It is, of a truth, not Christianity, but Marianity. Then these students are made to say that "they hope to work their way with honour to heaven." Let us pity this ignorance of Christian truth. It is the Good Spirit, not Mary, that conducts to the land of uprightness; and no one reaches that land by his own works, but by the merits of the Son of God.

Again, they ask an interest in his prayers "while he is kneeling at the shrines of the great Apostles, St. Peter and St. Paul." Shrines are images of gods. To kneel at the shrines of Apostles is to worship these Apostles as, at the very least, a sort of demi-gods. We know what was said to John, when he attempted to pay homage to an angel, or glorified saint—"See thou do it not; worship God."

The address closes with a prayer to Mary, as "the faithful sea-star," to guide his "Grace" over the ocean and back again. This title is a novel one; but it is suited to the Church. No mention is made of God, or of Jesus Christ, or of the Holy Spirit.

* "Archbishop" Vaughan did not return to Australia, having died a few weeks since, while out on a visit with his brother, the Roman Catholic "Bishop" of Salford.

They beg his blessing, as if there were some superhuman potency in it.

These children are to be pitied, for they are under the training of men who are strangers to the doctrines of Christianity. We have no doubt that their teachers had a hand in this address. It expresses at once their religion and the result of their teaching. Such is the work of "the Marist Brothers"—true to their name.

The spread of this idolatry would be the ruin of our land. People will not rise above their god. The god of the Romanists is a woman. The God-Man, Jesus Christ, is superseded by the mother of His humanity.

Protestants, awake, and try to enlighten and rescue your Roman Catholic neighbours from their fatal superstition of the dark ages; and do so in great kindness and in fervent prayer to God for success!—*The Witness* (Sydney).

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.—No. XLI.

DEAR BROTHER,—I once promised you I would tell you some of the Lord's dealings with my soul, and I will now try to do so in my poor feeble way, the Lord helping me; and if it be His will to make it a blessing to your soul, we will give all the praise to His great name.

I was made to feel myself a lost and ruined sinner in the sight of a holy and just God when I was seventeen years of age, about which time I had a remarkable dream, that was much impressed on my mind. I dreamed that the judgment day was come, which very much frightened me, for I knew I was not prepared to meet a holy God, or to stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. My feelings I cannot describe, as I looked upon God as my Judge, fearing every moment lest I should hear the awful sentence, "Depart from Me," &c. But in my fright I awoke, and glad I was to find it was not a reality. This was the means of bringing me more earnestly to cry that I might be washed in that fountain that is opened for sin and for uncleanness. Before this I had been trying to be very good, and indeed I thought myself to be very good sometimes; but the Lord, in His great mercy, showed me that all my righteousness was but as filthy rags in His sight. He made me to cry—

" Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to Thee for dress;
Helpless, come to Thee for grace;
Black, I to the foun'tain fly;
Wash me, Saviour, or I die!"

Oh, I was black indeed, and I knew that nothing less than the blood of Christ would wash my guilt away ! The more I prayed, the worse I felt myself to be. The old enemy would often be telling me that it was of no use for me to pray, for I was not one of God's elect ; but I could not help praying. My feelings at this time are plainly set forth by the poet, where he says—

“ I can but perish if I go,
I am resolved to try,
For, if I stay away, I know
I must for ever die.”

Many times, when I have crept away to some secret place to try to pray, the enemy has tried hard to frighten me from mercy's door, but it only made me cry the more, “ Lord, save, or I perish ! ”

I was in this state of mind for a long time, but it pleased the Lord, in His great mercy, to apply these words with power to my mind, “ Come unto Me, all ye that labour,” &c. This greatly comforted me, for I felt, as it were, His everlasting arms of mercy underneath and round about me, bearing me up under my load of guilt. Oh, I felt such a love to Him as I had never felt before ! But this did not satisfy me, for I had not got that blessed evidence in my soul that Jesus died for me. I could not say, “ Jesus is mine, and I am His.” No ; I could not “ read my title clear to mansions in the skies,” and nothing short of this could satisfy my longing soul. But it pleased the Lord to keep me crying and waiting for this great blessing for nearly two years, during which time I underwent many changes, which, were I to tell all, would fill many more pages than I can now write. Sometimes I was tempted to give up all hope, and try to enjoy the pleasures of this world ; but He who had begun a good work in me did not leave me to myself. No ; bless His dear name—

“ He kept me then, He keeps me now,
And will not let me go.”

In this way I was led on till He saw fit to give me the great blessing I had so longed for. My soul was set at a happy liberty after hearing Mr. Griffin preach from the words, “ Truly this was the Son of God ” (Matt. xxvii. 54). I believe the Lord was with him, he preached so well ; and he described my feelings as exactly as if some one had told him all about me. He spoke so encouragingly to those who had never experienced the blessed evidence that Jesus died for them. Oh, how my poor soul longed to say, “ Jesus is mine, and I am His ; ” and I felt I could not rest till I knew this.

I went home and prayed earnestly to the Lord to show me whether I was one of His blood-bought family or not, but I felt so unworthy of His love, I scarcely thought He would listen to the cry of such a poor worm as me. But, bless His dear name, He is ever ready to listen to the poor and needy, when they cry unto Him. As I was pleading with Him, I saw, *by the eye of faith*, my precious Redeemer hanging on the cross; and it was as though He looked down upon me with such a look of love, and spake these words, "For thee, for thee, I died." I fell down at His feet, and was so melted with His love that it was almost more than I could bear. My sins were all gone in a moment, and oh, how happy I was in knowing that He died for me, who was so unworthy of His favour! Oh, what love I felt to Him! He was then to me "the Chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely One." But I could not praise Him half as much as I desired. I did not sleep much that night for joy, and, as I lay awake, my little room seemed filled with His glory, and it seemed as though I could hear the angels in heaven rejoicing over me, a sinner saved by sovereign grace. It was heaven indeed to my soul, and I sang with Dr. Watts—

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

Oh, how I wanted to die, and be with my precious Jesus, never to sin against Him any more, but sing His praise above, and never, never cease! I shall never, while on this earth, exalt Him half enough, but—

" When this poor, lisping, stammering tongue
Lies silent in the grave,
Then in a nobler, sweeter song
I'll sing His power to save."

RHODA GODWIN.

LUTHER used to say, "I am more afraid of my own heart than of the Pope and all his cardinals. I have within me the great Pope—*self*."

"THE sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." It is the crushed olive that yields the oil—the pressed grape that gives us wine. It was the smitten rock that gave the people water. Thyme and the palm are said to grow the strongest when pressed down; so is it the broken, contrite heart that is most rich in holiness and fragrant in grace.

THE SOWER.

THE SUBSTANCE OF A SERMON,

PREACHED BY A. E. REALFF, AT HARLOW, ON SUNDAY MORNING,
SEPTEMBER 9TH, 1883.

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: by which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison."—1 PETER iii. 18, 19.

THE Apostle has been treating of *undeserved suffering* (ver. 14). This is, more or less, the common lot of the sheep of Christ in every age of the world, but in the apostolic age it was peculiarly so. Of this their Saviour had forewarned them, and pronounced those "blessed" who were thus called to suffer for the truth's sake (Matt. v. ; John xv.). This Apostle here reiterates the same testimony; and, for the encouragement of those thus called to suffer, he reminds them that in nothing do they so much resemble their Lord, "for Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust."

Suffering, in one form or another, is the lot of all the "sons" of God. It is only the "bastards" who escape (Heb. xii.). Hence, said Augustine, "God had one Son without sin, but He has no son without suffering." The holiest and best of all God's sons—the Son in whom He expressed Himself as being "well pleased"—this was the Son who suffered most of all. Then all hail suffering, seeing it is a mark of God's favour and love. Let this, therefore, be the motto of every child of God, "I am willing to suffer, if need be; but, by God's grace, I will strive against sin." Well sings the poet Cowper—

"The path of sorrow, and that path alone,
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown;
No traveller e'er reached that blest abode
Who found not thorns and briars on the road."

Dear fellow Christian, are your friends unkind? Remember, it is written of Him, "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." Are you poor? He said, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head. Do your enemies inflict upon you bodily or mental suffering? He was mocked, and scourged, and crucified; He was even "numbered with transgressors," classed with thieves, gluttons, wine-bibbers, and harlots; yet He

cheerfully "endured the cross, despising the shame," and this for *thy* sake.

Our text will help us to consider these sufferings of Christ, and their purpose.

I. THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST.—"Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust." Here we shall perceive three particulars specified concerning the sufferings of Christ. They were "for sins"—for sins not His own—and the suffering was "once" for all.

1. *The sufferings of Christ were "for sins."* Sin always merits suffering, and the punishment which, according to God's holy law, must follow sin, extends beyond this life, even into an eternal future. So God said to Adam, "The day that thou sinnest against Me, by eating that which I have commanded thee not to eat, thou shalt surely die." Says the Apostle to the Romans, "The wages of sin is death;" "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die." Therefore, as all men are "born in sin," "we are all by nature the children of wrath," and "cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the Book of the law to do them."

It was sin, therefore, that caused the awful agonies, the groans, and the pains, of the ever-blessed Son of God on behalf of His chosen people—

"Heard you that awful groan
From yonder altar-tree?
'Twas sorrow's deepest moan;
'Twas life's last ecstasy!
"A spotless, heavenly Victim dies,
A Substitute for thee;
And 'Eloi! Eloi!' mournful cries,
'Lama sabachthani?'"

The sublime majesty of God's law must be vindicated. God's people must be shown what sin is, and what it deserves. Look, then, dear child of God, at the pale and ghastly face of the Most Lovely, bespattered with crimson gore, crowned with thorns, buffeted, torn, spit upon! Oh, matchless Son of God, it was sin that so maltreated Thee!

2. *But these sins, for which the Lamb of God suffered, were not His own.* He "suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust," i.e., the Righteous for the unrighteous—

"He dies to atone for sins not His own;
The Father hath punished for us His dear Son."

All His saved ones, gathered "out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation," were unrighteous, and He, the Righteous, suffered in their stead. Elsewhere they are called "ungodly" and "sinners." "He brought me up," exclaims the Psalmist, "out of

a horrible pit, out of the miry clay." Speaking of Joshua, the high priest, says the Angel of God, "Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" "I am the Good Shepherd," says Jesus; "the Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep"—not for the goats, but for the sheep. "I am the Good Shepherd, and I know My sheep, and am known of Mine." "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many"—yes, even for "a multitude which no man can number." "All we like sheep have gone astray," exclaims the Church, "and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all," i.e., all His people, not all the world. It never was God's intention to save all the world, and all the world will not, therefore, be saved. If such had been God's intention, He would certainly have done it, and not suffered the devil to defeat His purpose, for He is the Almighty God. Nor was it Christ's intention to redeem the whole world, or He would have accomplished what He intended. But said He, "I lay down My life for the sheep." "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me;" and "No man can come to Me except the Father which hath sent Me draw him."

Dear friend, are you saying, "I fear I am not one of these sheep"? Listen to the language of the Shepherd Himself—"My sheep hear My voice, . . . and they follow Me." "Hence," says one of the old divines, "Christ's sheep are marked in the ear and in the foot." Now, do you know what it is to "hear" the Shepherd's voice—in His Word, through His ministers, by His ordinances—speaking pardon, reconciliation, and peace; inspiring hope, and drawing out your heart's love? And is it your desire and delight to follow Him? These are some of the evidences of being a sheep of Jesus Christ.

But can it be that any hearer of this has never been anxious about such a subject? Think, now, what a terrible thing to be gathered at last with the "goats"! "Ye shall die in your sins," says the Redeemer. "Whither I go, ye cannot come."

3. *These sufferings of Christ were "once" for all:* "Christ also hath *once* suffered for sins." Now, this "*once*" extends over thirty-three years, embracing the whole earthly life of our Lord—the entire period of His incarnation. From the manger and the knife of circumcision, all through His days and nights of poverty, slander, ill-usage, and shame, right on to the garden of agony, Pilate's bar, the pillar of scourging, the cross of crucifixion, it was one continued scene of woe. And oh, poor awakened sinner, it was all for thee! It was thy sins that did it!

Mr. Whitefield, preaching at Plymouth, turned and looked hard in the face of a young dock-labourer, named Henry Tanner, who stood close to the table, and said to him, "Sinner, thou art the

man that hast crucified the Son of God!" Those words were carried home by the divine Spirit, and Henry Tanner became first a humble penitent, then a rejoicing believer, and ultimately an honoured and useful minister. Blessed be the Lamb of God, He "suffered the Just for the unjust," or where would my poor soul have been? "Who His own Self bare our sins in His own body on the tree."

"Once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb. ix.). The sacrifices of the ancient typical people were many, and continually offered. Concerning them the Apostle wrote, "Every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: but this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God" (Heb. x.). Away, then, goes the "sacrifice of the Mass," as it is impiously called, and all the Ritualistic and other imitations of it! Away goes every human priesthood! We have no priest to mediate, sacrifice, and atone but Jesus. We want no other sacrifice than His, offered "once" for all on Calvary's cross; for to add to that all-sufficient and all-atoning sacrifice another of human invention is derogatory to that one sacrifice, and is a proof of the unbelief and rebellion of the human heart, which will not be satisfied with that one sacrifice concerning which the great High Priest said, "It is finished!" but wants to see a sacrifice repeated every day, like those of the Jews. Well, as to "the sacrifice of the Mass," the "sacrifice of the altar," or whatever else it may be called, we must say, as the inspired Apostle said concerning the ancient sacrifices offered before the time of Christ, they "can never take away sin," or "make the comers thereunto perfect." But, blessed be God, this one sacrifice of Christ both can and does. "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from *all* sin."

We come now to the second part of our subject—

II. THE PURPOSE OF CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS.—It was "that He might bring us to God." Now, Christ brings His redeemed ones to God, according to our text, in two ways—by His death in the flesh, and by His quickening Spirit.

1. *By His death in the flesh*—"being put to death in the flesh." The putting of the Saviour to death in the flesh brings us to God, by revealing to our minds the terrible *nature* of sin, which causes it to merit such dreadful sufferings. When the convinced sinner sees the Son of God's love so grievously tormented, on account of his personal sins, he sees what he himself deserves.

Oh, my hearer, have you ever been made conscious that *you* are a sinner? I do not mean in a general, but in a very particular way. If you have, you will never forget it. I well remember when God convinced me of sin; and I felt it so keenly that I thought there was not a sinner more vile under the canopy of heaven. It made me wretched; it drove me almost to despair, and nearly to suicide! And this has been the experience of many of God's children—the late John Warburton notably so. Oh, “the Word of the Lord is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword,” when it cuts the heart of the awakened sinner! But, when God graciously gives the alarmed one to see that Jesus, his Surety, Saviour, and Substitute, has borne all his sins, and that he is thereby delivered, and “there is therefore now no condemnation,” then he is indeed brought to God by the sufferings of Christ.

2. *By His quickening Spirit.* Jesus was “quickened by the Spirit; by which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing.” Our Saviour, Jesus, did not, though crucified and “put to death in the flesh,” continue in the grave, but was “quickened by the Spirit.” “And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness;” and only those are made nigh unto God by the blood of Jesus who are quickened by His Spirit.

This influence of His Spirit, Christ exercises now in the hearts of His people, bringing them, as sensible sinners, to seek and find favour with God; and He always did so exercise it, even in the earliest ages of the world, for the gathering of His sheep to the Gospel fold. By it “also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison.” The spirits of those disobedient antediluvians are still in the “prison” of hell, suffering the just punishment of their wickedness and rebellion. But Christ, by His Spirit, while the ark was building, preached to them, in the person of Noah, who (2 Pet. ii. 5) is styled “a preacher of righteousness.” Yes, it was Christ's Spirit that inspired patriarchs, prophets, and psalmists to speak and write the Word of God, though many of those to whom they preached and wrote are now, and ever must be, in the “prison” of hell. Of this “salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the *Spirit of Christ* which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow” (1 Pet. i. 10, 11); and “holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (2 Pet. i. 21). Therefore, remember that it is awfully dangerous to trifle with God's most holy Word.

These "spirits in prison" can no longer hear the warning voice; and the time will soon be over with ourselves. My hearers, your bodies will very shortly be laid in the tomb; and, unless you are, by the quickening operations of the Spirit of Christ, brought savingly to God, it is to be feared of many of you that your "spirits" will be "in prison." Oh, solemn thought! May God carry it home to your hearts, and bring you near to Himself, and to Him shall be all the glory!

"THY WAY, O GOD, IS IN THE SEA."

"THY way, O God, is in the sea,"

Thy footsteps are unknown;

Thy paths, to us, a mystery,

But light surrounds Thy throne.

For Thine Thou workest all things well;

In wisdom dost Thou move;

Thou savest men from death and hell;

Thy acts are truth and love.

Unknown to us, just now, Thy ways,

But not to Thee unknown;

And we shall know, through endless days,

How light for us was sown.

All will be plain to understand—

Crooked, or rough, or even;

To find all led to that bright land,

All will be clear in heaven.

The stormy seas of life will bring

Us quickly to our rest;

Past heartfelt grief will make us sing

Loudly among the blest.

From every sharp and fiery fight

As victors we shall come,

Through Thee, who turns the shades of night

To day, and leads us home.

Margate.

G. H. M. READ.

MANY a small man is never done talking about the sacrifices he makes; but he is a great man indeed who can sacrifice everything and say nothing.

THE notion of free grace may make persons dissolute, but the sense of it restrains from sin. There is grace in the desire of grace, as there is sin in the desire of sin. Grace is an immortal seed, cast into an immortal soil, that brings forth immortal fruit.

—*Mason.*

NIGHT THOUGHTS BY A WATCHMAN.

A PLEASING SIGHT—AN IMPORTANT QUESTION.

"Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her Beloved?"—SOLOMON'S SONG viii. 5.

THE Lord Jesus Christ came not only into the place, this earth, where His chosen bride was, but into her condition also. He was made of a woman, made under the law, subject to its claims and penalties, in order to redeem His beloved people from under the law, that they may receive the adoption of sons. He humbled Himself, even to the death of the cross, that He might raise us to the relationship of children, and make us heirs of God. Oh, how great the honour and privilege of being a child of God! What can be equal to this? And every child of God is an heir of God even while in this wilderness world, this state of sorrow, suffering, and sin. But they are not at home in this wilderness. This is not their rest. Not one of the heaven-born ones can find satisfaction in this world for their bruised and burdened spirit. They each and all thirst for a higher and holier condition. To be freed from the bondage of corruption, and a body of sin and death, is their desire and their portion; and to this happy state and condition they are all being constantly led and lifted by the Beloved of their soul.

In the description given us in the text, we have a correct likeness and a permanent picture of the bride and Bridegroom travelling to their mansion-house. She *could not* leave her native place without His almighty power, and He *would not* return to His abode without her. Although He was alone in the conflict, and by His own arm obtained the victory over His and her foes, yet He would not and could not be at rest in glory without her. He prepared the place for His beloved ones, and is determined to take them to it, that where He is, there they may be also.

1. Notice where they are seen. They are neither wholly in, nor entirely out of, the wilderness, but are "coming up" from it. The Lord finds all His chosen ones in the thorny wilderness. Not one of them had a desire to leave their birth-place, although their condition was most wretched and dangerous, until He called them and drew them out. And now, notwithstanding all these called and drawn ones are most anxious to go with Him to His palace, not one of them has either the wisdom or the power to go one step without His aid. Look at the position each is constrained to take. Being so weak, they lean upon their Deliverer all the way; and only as they lean on Him can they move upward and onward. There is no

other way of leaving the wilderness of death and darkness. This is the old, the tried, the everlasting way. No one ever got to the father's home in any other way. Any other picture of the Prince and the pilgrim than this—the pilgrim with his back to the desert, his face towards the palace, and his hands clinging to his Guide—is not genuine. Being yet in the wilderness, and pressed with foes and filled with fears, the bride clings to her Beloved; and, having a strong desire to leave it, she is always “coming up” with Him from it. Yes, she cometh up with Him. He is with His people in the wilderness, and in this is their safety; and they are constantly leaning on Him, and so go on, and obtain the victory. He knows their weakness, and they prove His strength, as He leads them forth by the right way. Having confidence in Him, they commit their all to His keeping. Thus they venture on Him, though oft with a trembling heart.

2. Consider the inquiry, “Who is this?” Is not the question an indication of admiration and surprise? The friends of the Bridegroom admire His conduct and rejoice at His success. Some of His victories cause much happy astonishment, for He has frequently won for Himself some of the oldest and most hardened servants of the black prince who is the ruler of darkness. Mark you, when Jesus leads forth from the society of the world one of His redeemed, it is open and manifest to all his friends; and they delight to see His goodness thus displayed. The work cannot be hidden. He does not light a candle and put it under a bushel. His friends observe His gracious and glorious triumphs, and rejoice with an holy joy. Both angels and saints are gladdened when sincere souls repent and believe—

“ Another sinner born of God,
Makes heaven's vast concave ring;
Again they Jesus' love record,
And ‘Hallelujah!’ sing.”

Every led and leaning one is a surprise to himself. He is not so much astonished at others being called, as he is amazed to find himself being weaned from the world, and his feet walking in the way of righteousness and the paths of peace. And, after years of fellowship with the heavenly Guide, and numberless proofs of His boundless grace, he is but the more amazed that ever he was drawn forth from the multitude who are still left to walk in the broad way to death. The power that draws upward from the wilderness is the power of love. Having loved with an everlasting love, He draws with an almighty power—the power

of loving-kindness. And so the dependence of the leaning soul is the dependence and confidence of love. It is because He is her Beloved that she leans upon Him so confidently and continuously. The confidence of the soul is confirmed by the fact being observed that all who have truly and fully cast themselves upon Him, and hold fast to His arm, have been safely brought to their blest abode. What greater honour can be given to the Beloved than that of confiding dependence all the way, and in all things?

“ Leaning on Thee, my Guide and Friend,
My gracious Saviour, I am blest ;
Though weary, Thou dost condescend
To be my solid ground of rest.

“ Leaning on Thee with child-like faith,
To Thee the future I'd confide ;
Each step of life's untrodden path,
Oh, let Thy love and mercy guide ! ”

But here is the voice of alarm also. This is a direct and personal question—“ Who is this that is thus coming from the wilderness ? ” Ask yourself, “ Is it I ? ” Is this world a wilderness to you ? Do you feel its thorns and briers ? And are you seeking a better country ? Is Jesus your Beloved ? Are you seeking deliverance by Him alone ? Then surely He has made you hear His voice, and is causing you to follow Him. He has drawn you, and will lead you to the end. Never would your heart have had one desire for Him—never would you have seen beauty in Him, nor have sought His aid—had He not sent His powerful Word to you, to cause you to be alarmed at your dangerous position, and to flee to Him for safety.

Yet, again, are you leaning on Him and moving forward ? Can it be seen that you are leaving the wilderness ? Are some of the strings which bound you to the place and state of nature's delight broken, and being broken, by His hand ? Do you find Jesus the best company, and desire Him above all others as your Friend ? Do you fear to offend Him, and grieve when you have grieved Him, and His Spirit in His people ? Oh, then, rejoice ! This is the Lord's doing. It is He who brings your soul into a wilderness state, in order to bring you out of the wilderness. He breaks your idols, but will give you Himself. He will never allow you to go back to serve them again. He will hold you fast, and cause you to lean on Him—

Behold, the Bridegroom comes again !
His toil and strife are not in vain ;
For, leaning on His loving breast,
A fair one leaves the wilderness

Who can it be, so weak, yet bold,
 That firmly to her Leader holds !
 Who, as her native place she leaves,
 So close to her Beloved cleaves ?
 Is this His bride Emmanuel leads—
 So weak that all His strength she needs ?
 Is this the prize for which He fought ?
 Is this the wandering one He sought ?
 'Tis even so. In great distress
 He found me in the wilderness ;
 And now, to further show His love,
 He takes me to His home above."

W. B.

SOWING AND REAPING.

AN old writer remarks, "There is a necessity for the judgment to be passed on individuals being delayed till the end of time, because their works do not end with their death." It is a solemn thought. We may, for instance, consider parents, in training their children, the fruits may not appear for many years after they are dead, and so on. There are wonderful heights and depths in the judgment of God in this view. To think that a word, spoken or written, may be like a grain of seed cast into the earth, to be multiplied a thousand-fold, and re-sown perhaps again and again from one to another, and yet that each will have exactly its own measure of reward in the great day of reckoning. Is it not an amazing thought ? God will be glorified very exceedingly then.

We could not determine what share we have had in the good or evil which has been wrought. If one person wrote a book, another gave it away, another lent it ; or, to go further back, how much the writer of it may have learned from books he had read, and from thoughts he had gathered from others ! We seem lost in a labyrinth of which we know next to nothing, and yet each link in the chain must be so clear to the eye of God, that He will be able to give to each precisely what their thoughts and words and actions will have produced in all their varied and multiplied results.

These thoughts have opened up a field of wonder to my mind. While, on the one hand, it seems to fill every moment of time with increased importance, giving us an interest in it, not only during our own short span of life, but until time shall be no more, it also gives us an idea of the boundlessness of God's knowledge, and of the rectitude with which He will come to judgment. We may well be filled with adoring wonder and delight—not, of course, meaning anything of merit in this.

A. NEWTON.

THE CHURCH'S SPOTLESS FAIRNESS.

(SOLOMON'S SONG iv. 7.)

IN attempting to penetrate into the hidden meaning of this superlative hymn-book, how necessary it is that faith should throw off the shackles of mere natural reason! It is the unconquerable habit of reason to judge of all things around and within by what is seen and felt, while the nature of faith is to soar above sense, and listen to the voice of Jehovah. The mainspring of depraved reason is the deity or self-sufficiency of the human being (Gen. iii. 5), whilst that of faith is in the only true God. Let us for a while lend our enlightened faculties to the report from heaven which faith gives us in this Song.

It is the self-same Voice, if in a different tone, which once spoke very differently of the same party, to the following import: "Thou art hateful and loathsome. Thine heart is deceitful; its every imagination only and always evil. Yea, thou art a brand, only fit for the fire." Such was the Divine Voice as to the state of nature. But hear it further: "I saw thee in thy blood, and said unto thee, Live. It was a time of love when I passed by and gave thee this new existence. In the pity of My love I redeemed thee, bore all thy sin and curse, washed thee in My life-blood, and thus made thee what I wished thee, and what I now call thee. And, now that I am telling thee what I have made thee, wilt thou not believe Me? Something I have begun to do for and in thee, as thou wilt not deny, for thou hast confessed before Me that this little is marvellous in thine eyes. Why, then, shouldest thou doubt either of My love or power to do all that I have spoken to thee of?"

God calleth things that as yet are not as if they already existed, and, therefore, can behold His saints as now seated with Christ in glory, where, without a shadow of doubt, they soon shall be. Truth, like the light of day, dawns gradually upon the new-born soul. The teachings of Scripture are put into us bit by bit; and indeed we are slow of heart to believe what is revealed. The righteousness of God is revealed from *faith* to faith. The tottering infant is taught to attempt the upright posture in motion by faith alone. He is further taught to live by faith, to stand and fight by faith, and, last of all, to think and feel by faith. Faith digs after the treasures of the Word, soars in holy meditation, and, by the Spirit's aid guiding the eyes of the mind, explores heavenly mysteries.

Faith's sole warrant is *what is written*. Thus, it being written that God has blessed His saints "with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus," Faith would like to know what these are. She bends her powers to discover, that she may enjoy.

This Book of Songs is perhaps the best exposition of Ephesians i. 4. In this fourth chapter we have a bust portrait of the Church, given by her Lord and Husband. Her hair, her eyes, her lips, her speech, are spoken of with all the delight of the fondest lover; but He perceives her incredulous blushes, and knows well how very different from His description she feels herself. Therefore He says (ver. 6), "Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get Me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense." As if He said, "I know you cannot see in the dark; you cannot understand Me yet. Nevertheless, all I have said is true, as you may find written in the volume of the Book;" for the "mountain of myrrh" points to the Bible ("His lips drop myrrh"), and the "hill of frankincense" to prayer, this perfume being used as incense at the time of prayer. And are not both these like high ground from which an extensive view may be taken of surrounding objects? So that He says, in effect, "If you cannot as yet receive all I say, as to what My grace has made and will make you, betake yourself to the prayerful study of the written Word, and you shall find it all true to the very letter."

Having thus directed her, He amplifies, in the seventh verse, what has been said. Whether or not she can receive it, she is still, in His eyes, all fair, without a spot. Why should not this be all true, since the Lord has the entire moulding of the object of His affection to His own liking? Had not all right notion of creatureship been lost in our proud hearts, we might begin to think it true; but, being as we are, we cannot possibly imagine it, except as actuated by the new faculty of faith, which just believes what God says only because He says it. Here is the simplicity and strength of faith. Out of the mouth of babes strength is ordained. Just as a little child believes all that others tell it, drinks in all its father says without a scruple, so is it with faith. Happy child! Blessed divine principle! Who is he that knows its value?

Faith, habitually feeding upon the Word, and digesting its truths one by one, comes at length to require stronger meat, and, therefore, begins to dive into the deep things of God. It hears God say that "by one offering Christ has perfected for ever them that are sanctified;" that His righteousness being imputed and put on, the soul stands before God as righteous as Christ Himself; and when it hears the holy Jehovah declare of a vile sinner, in himself felt and known to be black, that He can see no iniquity in Jacob, Faith in all simplicity receives it, however astonishing.

When, in poring over the Book, Faith reads that forgiven sinners are not only cleansed from all their filth, but are made partakers of the *divine* nature—that Christ is truly formed in

them—that the Holy Spirit dwells in their bodies as His temple—marvellous though it be, it is God who affirms, and, receiving it as true, the proper effect—joy unspeakable—is produced. When Faith clearly makes out that the saint, while in this body, is partaker of two natures, retaining all the perverse members of the old, side by side with the new creature formed within—that these two will ever be at strife until life's end—that do what the most godly believer may, with all the help of grace, he cannot do as he would, but the flesh will sometimes cast him into prison or captivity—that this is so *decreed*, however distressing it may be, and however lengthy the struggle—then Faith, in duty bound, meekly submits to the inevitable, and longs for emancipation. When Faith apprehends that there has been a complete change of condition between the Lord Jesus and the believer—that Christ was made sin for him, and he righteousness in Christ—that the old Adam in him, with all his possible powers of sinning, was really nailed to the cross—that, by Christ's death to the sentence of the law, he is for ever freed from its curse, as the widow from her dead husband—then Faith begins to feel in a very large place indeed, and delights in the liberty wherewith Christ has made free.

Lastly, when Faith, well versed in the great mystery of redemption, sees the Lord Jesus, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, determining to make manifest His invisible existence to created intelligences, and making choice, not of the highest of these, but the lowest, and first humbling the nature of His chosen before exalting it to such a pitch of glory—when Faith further considers that the infinite Jehovah, intending thus to ally Himself with the creature, must, as Creator of all things, make the object of His love and alliance exactly according to His pleasure, the preparation, in every part, being the handiwork of the only wise God—considering also that Himself has made her what He here declares—all fair and without a spot—why should Faith not believe it, however contrary to natural reason? Faith will make the saint say most feelingly, “I am black;” but, pondering over the sublime mysteries of this Song, he is not able to discover one allusion of the Bridegroom to the plain fact that His spouse is black as hell in herself. The Lord only alludes to what He has made and will make her. Perceiving this, and that He will most assuredly “present to Himself a glorious Church, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing,” why, who can blame Faith for being beside herself with holy joy?

THOUGH God may seem to frown in His providences, yet He always smiles in His promises.

JAIRUS.

"Jesus went with him."—MARK v. 24.

THE gracious method of the Lord's dealings with His people is very beautifully exemplified in the history and experience of Jairus. There is no point in his experience in which it would be more desirable to participate than in that recorded in the simple statement, "Jesus went with him." Oh, anywhere with Jesus! His presence is the greatest blessing. His company in the path not only secures ultimate success, but also ensures divine support amidst all intervening trials.

It is well to remember that the presence of the Lord Jesus does not always imply a cessation, or even a diminution, of grief and sorrow. On the contrary, in this case, *after* Jairus had obtained his request, and Jesus had (in accordance therewith) turned to accompany him, his trouble became intensified. The lesson, dear reader, is that, if you are in very great trouble, you need not therefore conclude that Jesus is *not* there.

It may be convenient to arrange our remarks in the following order, noticing, in the *first* place, Jairus and his troubles; *secondly*, the journey of Jesus and Jairus.

1. *Jairus and his troubles.* The twenty-second and twenty-third verses read thus—"And, behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw Him, he fell at His feet, and besought Him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death: I pray Thee, come and lay Thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live." We might call attention to the name of Jairus. It is very significant, meaning, "one whom God enlightens." If, then, my reader is an enlightened one, he is a spiritual Jairus. As this is an important matter, let us pause to consider it.

If we inquire, *What* is enlightened? the answer will be, "*The eyes of the understanding*," agreeably to Ephesians i. 18. Old authors frequently speak of the understanding as the eye of the soul, which, being first turned inwards, sees the heart is utter corruption; and then the Object which the understanding, illuminated by a ray of spiritual light, beholds, is Christ Jesus the Lord as the sinner's only hope. The enlightened one begins to possess a knowledge of Christ by beholding, first, His power, and, secondly, His willingness to save. Jairus saw Christ's power to save, and confessed it. In due time he also saw His willingness. Divine enlightenment has a two-fold effect. It reveals something of self, and something of Christ. It enables one to *discern* the helplessness that is in self, and the grace that is in Christ; our insufficiency, and His all-sufficiency; our own unworthiness, and His worthiness; our

misery, and His mercy; our imperfections, and His spotless perfectness.

Now, Jairus was, by reason of his position, one of the most unlikely to be found at the feet of Jesus. He was a "ruler of the synagogue," and, therefore, probably one of the Pharisees to whom Jesus had said that "the publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you." Grace often reaches the most unlikely persons; and even Jairus "came" to seek the mercy of Jesus. He turned from all other helpers to Jesus, having experienced the uselessness of resorting to other aid. He "came," he "saw," he was conquered. When he beheld Jesus in all His grace and power, and came into the presence of the mild, majestic King of kings, he "fell at His feet" in deepest humility and self-abasement.

Oh, it is a favour to be a humbled, hopeless, helpless soul at Christ's feet! No true humility is to be found anywhere but at His feet and in His presence; and it is a feeling sense of need that alone brings us there. Jairus needed Christ, hence he sought and found Him. Having a case for Jesus, he ventures to approach, and make known his trouble. His little daughter was "at the point of death." Jairus' need of the help of Jesus was extreme, hence "he besought Him greatly," with vehement importunity describing her state, and then making known *what* he wanted Jesus to do for her, and also pointing out *how* Jesus might do it. In this latter particular Jairus went too far. As we shall hereafter see, the Lord did not choose to answer his prayer just in the way he prescribed, although at first it seemed as if He would. Jairus besought Jesus to "come," and immediately "Jesus went with him." The answer was prompt, and, as Jesus turned to accompany him, Jairus might well have felt that his prayer had prevailed, and that all would be well. Now they commence what was to the latter a most momentous journey, which brings us to notice—

2. *The journey of Jesus and Jairus.* Scarcely had they started when a hindrance presented itself in the shape of a multitude of persons, who "thronged Him," impeding His progress and retarding His steps. Jairus' case was urgent. His daughter was dying, and doubtless he would have eagerly pressed through. But the Master did not seem to hurry, and almost immediately *He stopped!* Notwithstanding the impatience of His fellow-traveller—and assuredly, if impatience can ever be excusable, that of Jairus then was—and the urgency of the case, Jesus suffered His attention to be directed to a woman in the press who had touched the hem of His garment and been healed of her plague. She had had her disease twelve years, and was not, like the daughter of the ruler, at death's door. However, it pleased

Jesus to stop to attend to the seemingly less urgent case first; although, by so doing, He was delayed until it was too late to prevent Jairus' child from dying. While the events were happening recorded in verses 25 to 34, how intense must the anxiety of the father have become! Then, just at the moment the gracious words proceeded from the lips of Jesus imparting healing and peace to the woman, all his hopes were apparently blasted, for there came certain from the ruler's house which said, "Thy daughter is dead; why troublest thou the Master any further?"

On a consideration of this message, it will be found that it not only brought the tidings of the loss of a daughter, but also appeared distinctly to convey to him the fact that his prayer was not to be answered. He had expressly petitioned that Jesus would, by the laying on of His hands, preserve life and prevent death. It had not been so, and those around deemed it useless to trouble the Lord further.

Now, notwithstanding the attention of Jesus had been for a time apparently diverted from Jairus and his troubles, amidst the surging of the crowd Jesus heard and noted the sad tidings, and, "as soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, He saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe." This was a word in season indeed, and, after the display of Christ's power just witnessed, it must have been fraught with encouragement to poor, trembling, dismayed Jairus. It was as though the Lord had said, "Be not afraid, although My action in the matter of this woman has overthrown all the fond hopes raised when, at your request, I turned to go with you. Be not afraid, although it appears that your prayers will not and cannot be answered. Be not afraid, even though despair is seizing your spirit. Only believe that all things are possible; nothing is too hard for Me to perform or too difficult for Me to accomplish. Only believe that I often answer prayer in an apparently contradictory way, but always do for My pleaders far more exceeding abundantly above all that they can ask or think." With this injunction Jesus starts again, with the sorrowful, perplexed, and wondering Jairus; and now He does what, to the apprehension of sense and reason, He might have done previously, that is, He permits not the crowd to hinder, for "He suffered no man to follow Him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James." At length "He cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly. And when He was come in, He saith unto them, Why make ye this ado and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth." When this astounding statement fell on the incredulous ears of the wailers, they forgot their office, and broke out into

rude and unbecoming laughter. No sooner were the words out of the mouth of Jesus than "they laughed Him to scorn." By the expression, "she is not dead," Jesus doubtless meant *finally* dead, in the sense in which they understood it—that she would not live again till the resurrection. After they had ridiculed Christ's statement, He "put them all out," and entered the chamber of death with the father and mother of the damsel. Taking her by the hand, He uttered the ever-memorable words, "Talitha cumi."

A few years ago, a very sweet and excellent poem was published in one of our free-grace magazines,* having these words for its title, founded on the fact that the expression "Talitha cumi" is a term of endearment used by Hebrew mothers to awaken their sleeping children. This accustomed phrase was adopted by Jesus in the tenderness and gentleness of His great mercy, so that the resurrection of the maid was no sudden alarming phenomenon, but a simple awaking from sleep. Thus life was imparted by Him who is "the Resurrection and the Life." When Jesus had spoken, "straightway the damsel arose and walked, for she was of the age of twelve years."

The prayer of Jairus was answered, but not in the manner he had prescribed. If we compare his supplication and the Lord's fulfilment of it, we shall find the latter greatly exceeds the former. Jairus had prayed Jesus to *heal* his daughter. He raises her from the dead—a far greater and more conspicuous miracle and mercy. That which Jairus wanted the Lord to *prevent*, He permitted to occur, for the following reasons—*first*, to try Jairus' faith; *secondly*, that he might be able to prove that He is not merely the Physician, the Healer of disease, but also the Giver and Restorer of life; *thirdly*, to teach *us* how He is pleased to answer prayer, that we may not be discouraged when it is by "terrible things in righteousness," even by permitting that which we fear and pray against to come to pass.

"They were astonished with a great astonishment." In this way the ruler of the synagogue was delivered from his trouble, and found his petitions abundantly answered; and thus ended the *journey of Jesus and Jairus*.

Chapel House, Leicester.

E. C.

"SIR," said a gentlewoman to me the other day, "it was a mercy I did not break my leg as I came out of church the other day." "Madam," I replied, "it would have been a mercy if you had."—*Hill*.

* The Gospel Magazine, January, 1879.

DIVINE HOLDING.

"Who holdeth our soul in life."—PSALM lxxvi. 9.

BLESSED truth! If that almighty Hand loosed its grasp for one moment, the case were hopeless. But such can never be the case. Eternal truth declares none can pluck the sheep from the Great Shepherd's hand (John x. 28).

Being held *in* life implies life has been *given*. Ever since Adam sinned death has reigned over mankind. According to God's Word, "In the day thou eatest thou shalt die" (Gen. ii. 17). (Spiritual death and the death of the body are both included in this threatening.) "Dead in trespasses and sins," is the Apostle's description of man by nature (Eph. ii. 1). "The gift of God is eternal life," the same Apostle was taught to proclaim (Rom. vi. 23). Therefore, whenever we see signs of spiritual life, such as a sense of sin, desires after a knowledge of God, pardon, and reconciliation, we know that the Holy Spirit has operated on that soul, and from that time He will never cease to watch over, teach, and "hold in life." The value and blessedness of such an unconditional promise can only be *graciously* realized as tenderness of conscience and lively fear of God are kept up in the soul. Our great enemy is ever ready to lull into carnal security on the one hand, when hope appears to be good and well-founded, or to drive into doubt and despondency on the other, when sin has beclouded our evidences. But this Spirit-given life again and again works a lively hope, with filial fear, contrition, self-loathing, and circumspection, which also causes adoration and wonder at the unspeakable love which has made such promises and declarations that, irrespective of all the sin and worthlessness of the sinner, He will maintain the life He has given through all the changes, trials, and temptations of life, and will finally crown all time-enjoyed blessings with an entrance into that "rest which remaineth for the people of God" (Heb. iv. 9).

One of the methods the Lord takes to "hold the soul in life" is, by showing His displeasure against the sin of His people. Though He forgives, as the Psalmist says (Psa. xcix. 8), He "takes vengeance on their inventions;" and He makes them bitterly feel, too, that it is no light matter to sin against God, "though He will not cast away His people." Sins which no human eye sees, or ear hears, but allowed in the heart and affections, God has rebukes for; and He gives them, too, making all fancied "beauty to consume away like a moth" (Psa. xxxix. 11), at the same time assuring the heart of His care and love, thus "holding the soul in life." "Whom the Lord loveth He correcteth," &c.

Many emptyings of this kind, "from vessel to vessel," the Lord uses, which to sense and reason appear like being given

over unto death rather than being *held* in life. Yet the spark is still there, and again and again its possessor will be enabled to say with the poet—

“The flesh dislikes the way,
But faith approves it well;
This *only* leads to endless day,
All others lead to hell.”

And so the warfare goes on, and will until the “vile body” is put off. Thus the strongest believer as well as the weakest has nothing but the absolute and unchanging promise of God to trust in, or glory of, and unto Him *all* the praise and glory are due.

A.

UNION TO CHRIST.

(EPHESIANS v. 30.)

How precious that truth to my soul,
That Christ and His people are one !
He, life-giving Head to the whole ;
They, members—e'en bone of His bone.

A union so firm and so sure
Nor Satan nor sin can undo ;
In Jesus the whole is secure ;
And since He lives, they shall live too.

This union brings with it all bliss,
Secured as it is by Christ's powers ;
We take part in all that is His,
And Jesus in all that is ours.

Hence I, a poor creature so mean,
And in myself nothing but sin,
In Christ become perfectly clean,
And holy and righteous in Him.

Moreover, this love is so meet ;
'Tis human, 'tis also divine ;
I call it “ my Jesus' love sweet,”
Which flows from His heart into mine.

Not love of the Godhead alone,
Nor that only human in heart,
But the union of both, forming one
In the Person of Christ, to impart.

R. HAWKER, D.D.

BEFORE you go to the university of election, you must go to the grammar school of faith and repentance.—*Cecil*.

A HEAVENLY VISITANT.

"Thou knowest not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth."—
JOHN iii. 8.

I WAS sensible that He was present with me—I remembered it after His visits were over. Sometimes I had a presentiment of His entrance, but I never could feel His entrance or His exit. Whence He came and whither He departed, by what way He entered or left me, I confess that I am even now ignorant; and no wonder, for His footsteps are not known. You ask, then, since all His ways are unsearchable, whence could I know He was present? His presence was living and powerful. It awakened my slumbering soul; it moved, softened, and wounded my heart, which had been hard, stony, and distempered; it watered the dry places, illuminated the dark, opened those which were shut, inflamed the cold, made the crooked straight, and the rough ways plain, so that my soul blessed the Lord, and all that was within praised His holy name. I had no evidence of the Lord's presence with me by any of the senses—only from the motion of my heart I understood that He was with me; and from the expulsion of vices and the suppression of carnal affections I perceived the strength of His power; from the discernment and conviction of the very intents of my heart I admired the depth of His wisdom; from some little improvement of my temper and conduct I experienced the goodness of His grace; from the renovation of my inward man I perceived the comeliness of His beauty; and from the joint contemplation of all these things I trembled at His majestic greatness. But because all these things, on His departure, became torpid and cold, just as if you withdrew fire from a boiling pot, I had a signal of His departure. My soul must be sad till He return, and my heart is again inflamed with His love; and let that be the evidence of His return. With such experience of the divine Word, if I use the language of the spouse in recalling Him when He shall absent Himself, while I live, her word, "Return," shall be familiar to me. As often as He leaves me, so often shall He be recalled, that He may restore to me the joy of His salvation—that is, that He may restore to me Himself. Nothing else is pleasing while He is absent who alone is pleasure, and I pray that He may not come empty, but full of grace and truth, as He was wont to do.—*Bernard.*—*Milner's "History of the Church of Christ,"* Cent. XII., Chap. IV.

HOWEVER full the soul may be of trouble, God can find room to deposit a drop of comfort therein.—*Wakeling.*

THE BELIEVER'S HIDING-PLACE.

"Thou art my Hiding-place ; Thou shalt preserve me from trouble ; Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance."—PSALM xxxii. 7.

WHO wants a hiding-place ? Angels do not, as they have kept their first estate, and never offended their Creator. None but the guilty need a hiding-place. It is those who feel the wrath and indignation of a just and holy God that know the worth of a hiding-place. Let a sinner just quickened to feel his deserts hear of a hiding-place, and the sound is welcome to his ears. How does he long to know he may take shelter in it, but ah ! how many lets and hindrances does he meet with ! Satan tries all that in him lies to prevent his getting a sight of this sure Refuge, as he well knows that, if he only gets a sight of it, he is no longer his certain prey. Though unbelief for a while forbids his entrance, yet this sight so strengthens hope that he keeps close to the walls, as it were, of the city of refuge ; and, when closely pursued by the dog of hell, he will almost demand entrance. "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." This violence is no way displeasing to the King, but, on the contrary, it is His will that such should be importunate. It is the Holy Spirit that makes intercession in the hearts of such, and enables them to plead the Lord's own promises : "Thou hast said, 'Call upon Me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee.' Thou hast said they 'shall not be ashamed that wait for Thee.' Thou hast said Thou wilt 'avenge them that cry day and night unto Thee ;' and Thou art 'not man, that Thou shouldst lie ; nor the son of man, that Thou shouldst repent.'" And when a soul is thus brought to compass the Almighty with His own promises, how boldly does he (though in himself a poor, weak sinner) intercede at the throne of grace ! He wrestles, and will not go until he obtains the blessing, even the blessing of assurance of eternal life—the blessing of a knowledge of his salvation by the forgiveness of his sins. Nothing short of an entrance into the Hiding-place will satisfy the truly quickened soul. Faith in Jesus, who is alone the Hiding-place from the storm, and a Covert from the tempest, as a Saviour for sinners, as I before hinted, first has a view of it ; but though this is welcome, and keeps the soul from black despair, yet it is not sufficient to satisfy that soul who feels himself a helpless sinner, exposed to all the curses of a righteous and holy law. A bare peradventure only serves to urge the soul to more earnestness at a throne of grace ; and, if it does not, it ought to be suspected as a cheat—a cheat that may end in presumption

for an unapplied Christ is no Saviour. Jesus has wrought out a perfect righteousness—a righteousness as broad as the holy law of God—to cover the naked soul with, and He has likewise paid every mite that was due to justice on the behalf of His elect. All this may be believed, and yet no comfort be brought into the soul. The soul truly alive will not rest satisfied until it obtains the appropriating power, faith; until it can say with the Apostle, “He hath loved me, and given Himself for me;” and, with the Church of old, “My Beloved is mine, and I am His.” This faith is the gift of God, and whoever feels his need of it is welcome to ask for it, and has the promise of obtaining it. By this faith of appropriation we enter into the Hiding-place, and find ourselves secure from all our foes. We triumph over them as conquered enemies, and “rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.” We enjoy that peace that passeth understanding, and feel our mountain to stand so strong that we hope we shall never be moved. But experience teaches us that our standing in the enjoyment of this depends upon fresh and continual supplies from the God of all grace, or we soon descend this mount. We not only stand in need of a Hiding-place when first quickened from a “death in trespasses and sins,” but we are never safe but as we continue in it, as is plain from John xv. 3—10. If faith loses its hold, we are soon surrounded with numerous foes; but blessed be our gracious God, He will not leave us to their will. He may suffer them to frighten us, but it is only to drive us back again to our safe retreat. If Satan beset us as a roaring lion, we are again made to fly to our Hiding-place, and are safe. If guilt stares us in the face, we know no other refuge. If fears of death arise, we can look nowhere to allay them but to our Hiding-place. If persecutors arise, we fly to the same place, for we have not an enemy to encounter that we dare face in our own strength.

“Thou art my Hiding-place; Thou shalt preserve me from trouble.” When we enter by faith into this Hiding-place, we leave our troubles at the door, and they would fain find entrance to disturb our repose, but our Hiding-place preserves us. We are safe, sheltered in the Rock of Ages, against which the gates of hell (or all the united powers of darkness) shall not prevail.

“Thou shalt preserve me from trouble.” By *trouble* here we must understand all *real evil*, as the Lord has not engaged to keep us from what *we call* trouble in this vale of tears. If so, we should not prize our Hiding-place; but He has promised to be with us in trouble. And, again, it is said many *troubles* happen to, or befall, the righteous, which seems to intend the result of trouble rather than trouble itself, but the wicked fall into mischief. Or perhaps we may understand that calm and serene frame of mind

which is enjoyed by those who feel their safety, for what trouble can a soul fear when he sensibly enjoys the smiles of the omnipotent Jehovah? "The Lord is on my side," said David, "therefore will I not fear what man can do unto me." When a loving and gracious God would call His people's faith into exercise, and strengthen them against fear, He thus addresses them: "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?" (Isa. xl. 28; see also xliii. 14—17) Who can suffer trouble in his mind when he thus sees his safety? But I more think the first is principally intended, though I think the latter is included.

"Thou art my Hiding-place; Thou shalt preserve me from trouble; Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah." What a clause is this—"Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance!" This verse may be considered as the language of the Church collectively; and here what a sweet view have we of our safety, being members one of another! Had the Church said she would rejoice with songs for the great deliverance she had experienced, it would not raise any admiration, as this is only her reasonable service. But Jehovah, our Hiding-place, and Preserver from evil, will "compass us about with songs of deliverance."

If this had been the only place in the Word where such a thing was hinted, we might be tempted to think it a mistake in the translation, but we read similar declarations in other parts of the Word. In Jeremiah xxxii. 41 we thus read, "Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good with My whole heart and with My whole soul;" and in Zephaniah, the prophet thus speaks, "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; He will save, He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love, He will joy over thee with singing." Well may it be said, "Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God." The very contemplation of it is enough to swallow up the thoughts. I can not express my wonder at it for want of suitable words. I therefore drop the subject with silent admiration.

Well may the verse end with "Selah"—a note of attention—for surely this calls for the attention of every individual member of this city or Church, for what is said of one is said of all. The weakest believer is included as well as the strongest. Here, then, let us admire and adore, and may we by such rich security be encouraged to fight manfully under the banner of Christ, and may it be our one concern to show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvellous light. Even so. Amen.

Old Sampford, May, 1819.

S. R.

BOLD ATHEISM.

It is well for Christians to know that the so-called Rationalism taught so zealously in the present day is downright atheism. The man that makes nature his god has no God. The earth, and sea, and air around, which constitute the nature with which man is familiar, is surely no god; and, as a result, there is no thought of prayer, for to whom are they to pray? They have no god who has eyes to see or ears to hear. Christians should bestir themselves. They should be ready by careful study to give every man a reason of the hope that is in them, and they should seek the Spirit of God to arouse them to the task of putting the plain truth of God before their fellow-men. The country is teeming with men and women who have no God. They have cast aside all idea of a Creator, Saviour, or Judge. This is the result of infidel books and reviews, and of lectures in our halls. And, what is worse, the preaching, in many pulpits, of an universal charity on the part of God altogether apart from the atonement of Christ, which would thereby be rendered quite unnecessary, is one of the most potent agencies used by Satan for propagating this evil and soul-destroying system.

Friends of God, of truth, and of your fellow-men, do not sleep, but meet the evil with "the truth as it is in Jesus," and may God own our feeble efforts to honour His Word and name.

THE ETHICS OF THE BIBLE.

WHEN the Bible is belied by atheists and infidels as an obscene Book, not fit for women and children to read, even under the guidance of intelligent Christian men and women, surely it is an unwarrantable insult to every honest-minded man possessed of sound common sense. To my mind the Bible, taken as a whole, unmistakably proves itself to be the best ethical production that ever was introduced to the world. The few isolated natural weaknesses and shortcomings of Lot, Moses, Noah, David, and other otherwise godly-minded men, were never approved of; but, on the contrary, all such immorality is denounced and condemned in almost every page of the Bible by God Himself, and by all genuine Christian believers. All the vice and immorality—in short, all the scum and filth of unsanctified human nature—that is in the world, or ever was in the world, is now, and ever was, the inevitable fruit of an infidel disposition either to forget God, or to deny Him altogether, as did the infidel antediluvians; and the shortcomings of some of the prophets and patriarchs are recorded in the Bible as so many beacons of warning to future

generations not to do the same things. So much for the filth and immorality said by infidels to come from the teachings of the Bible, so carefully culled out by infidels or so-called Free-thinkers. I say "so-called Free-thinkers," for the Bible teaches me that, when men wilfully and determinately reject and repudiate its teachings, they are bound by the cords of a reprobate mind. This applies to confirmed infidels and self-righteous men, as well as to the scum of the earth—not to confirmed Christians, inasmuch as they are never given up entirely by God to the temptations of the flesh, nor to that evil one, the devil, who tampers with the thoughts of all, more or less, and who inextricably fetters the thoughts of confirmed infidels and sceptics. I, therefore, conclude that the proper name for so-called Free-thinkers, of which sceptical men and boys are so proud, is *fettered thinkers*; and that free-thought, as applied to rampant infidelity, is a misnomer that will not bear the light of truth. H. C.

THE PRETENTIOUS DEVICE OF LEO XIII.

THE late Luther celebration seems to have stirred the spirit of the Pope to invent some new means of opposing the work which Luther was the honoured instrument of furthering, to the breaking down of the supremacy of the Papacy. Leo XIII. seems to be alarmed at the results likely to accrue from Luther and the Reformation being thus prominently brought before the public mind, that kind of history being a potent weapon against Popery. The power of the press has been more than equal to what was foretold of it by good men who saw it in its infancy. It has continued to exert an influence which neither book-fires nor Pope's bulls could withstand, but which, to this very day, the Church of Rome hates and dreads.

Many different measures have been devised by different Popes to meet the particular current of events connected with the Reformation, and which they, in their several times, had to face. Leo XIII. has hit upon a scheme which is certainly a somewhat novel one—at least, so far as the Church of Rome is concerned. He has written a letter to certain cardinals at Rome, in which he says, "Since the enemy seeks weapons, above all, in history, the Church must fight with equal arms; and wherever the attack is most violent, there it must use the greatest efforts to repel the assault." To this end he proposes to open the Vatican library to certain writers who will, according to his instructions, be expected to tell the truth in such a way as to show the Reformation to be an error, and the Church of Rome to be in the right. Well, if we are to have the truth, we shall not object to the

proposed work, for we believe it will have a very different effect from that which Leo XIII. desires, and that by it the Church of Rome will wield a weapon to her own conviction and condemnation as an apostate and persecuting Church.

One paper* says, "While Leo XIII. seems disposed to enlist truth on his side, we would say, by all means carry out the benevolent design. Let nothing be held back to mar the effect. So far as decency will permit, let us know all about the public and private life of the Popes themselves; and let the doings of the Inquisition itself be dragged into the light of day, to be stamped with eternal infamy. Let the bestial Alexander VI., and the savagely intolerant Paul IV., be painted as they really lived, acted, and died. If this were done, who could possibly be the gainers save ourselves? It cannot be, however; for truth, simple and unadulterated, is the one thing of which the Papacy stands in dread. The truth, according to Popery, is truth suppressed; and the fabric, grand as it may appear to human eyes, is founded in a lie.

"Does the Pope really believe that the world, at this time of day, would really accept history written under the conditions he prescribes, and which, before publication, must be submitted to a censorship of cardinals, with Leo himself in the chair?

"The hostility of the Papacy to historical investigation, and even to liberal studies in general, has frequently been exemplified before the whole world; and, judging of the future by the past, one cannot possibly believe that the Vatican censorship will ever encourage impartial inquiry or fair criticism. We just mentioned Paul IV., and it may be feared that that Pope's fierce intolerance was very representative of the system he professed to govern. Such was this man's hatred of the printing-press, which had then been working for the enlightenment of mankind for more than a century, that, in 1559, he issued his 'Index Expurgatorius,' which, according to M'Crie, was 'an engine devised to extinguish letters in Europe, and to reduce it to the barbarism from which it had lately emerged.' His agents traversed the country in all directions, and rigorously carried out the Papal decrees without mercy. A contemporary writer in Italy says, 'The number of books committed to the flames was immense, so that, had they all been collected into one place, it would have equalled the burning of Troy. There was not a library, private or public, which escaped the disaster, or which was not nearly annihilated.' It is very easy to object to this that Leo XIII. is a much more respectable and enlightened man than Paul IV., but that does not infer that the Papacy itself is changed. In a sense, the system is

* *The Baptist.*

unchangeable in spirit ; and, were proof of this wanted, things which have happened within the last decade in Spain, Portugal, or Ireland, might be cited. It sounds very fine to hear of an invitation going forth for writers who 'dare not lie' to hasten to the Vatican for the purpose of prosecuting historical studies ; but the fact remains that their patrons are really more afraid of the truth they profess to love than of any other spectre which the historian's wand could raise."

SATAN'S DEVICES.

THE Lord's dear people cannot be too much upon their guard against the devices of Satan. He is an arch, cunning fiend, always upon the look-out to deceive, and drag the unwary into bondage. As to outward, flagrant sin, he cares not one straw about dragging them—that is, the living children of God—into that, for he knows well that such temptations will meet with a most determined resistance from the new-creature life in God's children. His arts are, therefore, more generally brought to bear upon those points in the natural character of the Lord's people which Satan finds to be the most susceptible of his deep-laid plots. Pride, covetousness, worldly fame, devotion to the arts or the sciences, devotion to those who bind themselves about the heart, and entwine themselves in the affections—all these Satan uses most successfully to bring those who are feeling after the Lord, if haply they may find Him, into terrible bondage.—*G. D. Doudney.*

A common device of Satan is to present the poverty and affliction of those who walk in the ways of God. Though they are outwardly poor, they are inwardly rich. Though saints have little in hand, they have much in hope. In all ages God has had some who have been great, rich, wise, and honourable ; though *not many* wise men, yet *some* wise men. The spiritual riches of the poorest saints infinitely transcend the temporal riches of all the wicked men in the world. It will be but as a day before these poor despised saints, who are God's jewels, will shine brighter than the sun in his glory ; and in that day, oh, how will the great and the rich, the learned and the noble, wish that they had lived and spent their days, with these few poor contemptible creatures, in the service of the Lord !—*Anon.*

WE are too apt, on the one hand, to look for an exemption from trouble, and, on the other hand, to *overlook* the promised presence and support of Jesus in trouble.—*Wakeling.*

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.—No. XLII.

TO A YOUNG BOY ANXIOUS ABOUT HIS SOUL.

MY DEAR BOY,—I was very glad to receive your kind note, and am glad to send you a short line in return, although my time is much taken up. You are very dear to me, because your soul is precious; and if you are ever brought to Jesus, washed and justified by Him, you will praise Him more sweetly than an angel of light.

I was riding among the snow to-day, where no foot had trodden, and it was pure, pure white; and I thought again and again of that verse, "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." This is a sweet prayer—may you make it your own. Often go alone, and look up to Jesus, and say, "Wash me!"

Amelia Geddie was one day dressed in a new white frock, and some one said to her, "No doubt you will think yourself very trim and clean?" "Oh, no," she said; "I will never think that until I have the fine white robe of my Redeemer's righteousness put upon me."

I am glad, my dear boy, you think that God is afflicting you to bring you to Himself. It is for this, I trust, that He smites you. His heart, His hand, and His rod, are all inscribed with love. But we want to see that your affliction does bring you to Himself. The lake of fire and brimstone stretches beneath every soul that lives in sin. "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." If the Lord Jesus would but draw the curtain, and let you see His fair face and His wounded side, and how there is room for the guiltiest sinner in Him, you would be drawn to Jesus with the cords of love.

I was preaching in Perth last Sabbath. When I came out, a little girl came up to me, and her mother said she had been crying the whole night before about her soul, and would take no comfort till she should find Jesus. Oh, pray that the same Spirit may thus work in you! Remember, Johnnie, you once wept for your soul, too, and prayed, and professedly sought Jesus. Have you found Him? Or have you looked back, like Lot's wife, and become a hard, cold pillar of salt? May the Holy Spirit awaken you to call upon the name of the Lord. Your time may be short; God only knows. They are the happiest who are brought soonest to the bosom of Jesus.

Give my kindest remembrances to your mother, and to A——, when you write. May you all meet at the table of Jesus above, and may I be there too, a sinner saved by grace.

Ever yours, &c.,

R. M. M'CLINEY.

Collace, January 27th, 1842.

THE SOWER.

THE SUBSTANCE OF A SERMON,

PREACHED BY MR. T. HULL, MARCH 13TH, 1881.

"Although my house be not so with God, yet He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure."—2 SAMUEL xxiii. 5.

THE things of the "everlasting covenant" are stable things, for they are eternal; and these everlasting things are, to the people of God, precious things, because they are things connected with their salvation. They are loved with the everlasting love of God. They inherit the everlasting blessing; and, as they are interested in the everlasting covenant, they also have an everlasting inheritance, for their inheritance is the everlasting God. When these things are felt in the heart, they are found to be comfortable things in the case of all, the foundation of whose hope is the Lord Jesus, who is, as the promise runs, "A Stone, a tried Stone, a precious Corner-Stone, a sure Foundation," against which the gates of hell cannot prevail. And the kingdom which belongs to them is a kingdom which cannot be moved. Thus the hope of God's people is a good hope, through grace, which can never be removed from them; nor can they be removed from it, because the "Lord Jesus Christ is our hope;" and they that are one with Christ are bound up with Him in the bundle of life. He says, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of My hand." He calls them by His grace; He claims them as His own. He dwells in their heart, and He is their God, their Guide, their Strength and Salvation, and their eternal Portion; therefore, it can well be said of them, "Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord?" Oh, what an arm of salvation is there! what a Corner-Stone for our hope! what stability for the faith of God's weak and tried people! The stability of their hope is beyond all the power of hell to affect it. Their evidences may be affected, their frames and feelings may change, but their hope can never be destroyed, for their "life is hid with Christ in God." Happy are they who trust in Him; blessed are they who enter into Him by faith; for to be found in Him is to be found saved of the Lord!

What a comforting portion these words have been to many of the Lord's people! It was a very comfortable feeling David had in his soul when he uttered them, although it was some consider-

able time after the Lord first made known to him the covenant of which he speaks. Many changes had passed over him since that time, but he still viewed the covenant to be perfect, and he felt satisfied in his soul with that which God had prepared for him.

Let us, first, notice David's reflection concerning his house. Things had not transpired in connection with the development of the covenant as he had expected in respect of it; yet that was not the fault of the covenant, nor of the God of the covenant. It was attributable to his want of a right understanding of some things he wrongly interpreted, through the weakness of his flesh and the strength of his natural affection. And who is there among the people of God that does not, at times, when He gives them a word of promise, see a great deal in it which raises their hope respecting things which deeply concern them? And sometimes they think they see things in it which afterwards do not come to pass. Hopes are, to a great extent, raised, and feelings elated at the time, concerning things which God really has neither promised nor spoken of unto us. But we try to hold our hope of these things, and want to bring them in as being connected with the promise which we would fain have reach to the pleasant desires of our hearts. But it is not always that God says to His people concerning these things as He did to one of old, "I have accepted thee concerning this thing also." When this covenant was made known to David—as recorded in the seventh chapter of the second Book of Samuel—his heart was filled to overflowing with the goodness and the love of God. It so overpowered him that he wished to be alone with the Lord; therefore he went in and sat down before Him, while he contemplated this covenant and conversed with the Lord about it. And the very fact that God had spoken so graciously to him, and had promised to make him a house, filled him with surprise, and he said, "But Thou hast spoken also of Thy servant's house for a great while to come." It was not only a present blessing, but a prospective promise—an everlasting covenant which, I doubt not, he then thought concerned his children too. This thought cheered the heart of David. And where is the man of God who would not like to know that his children were interested in the same everlasting covenant as himself, in the same free grace blessings, the same eternal salvation? Where is the godly man who could wish for his children a better portion than that they should have a part in the mercy of God and the kingdom of Christ? But David here had to say, "Although my house be not so with God." It had not proved to be so in the case of Absalom, and other members of his family. How little he saw of the manifested grace of God in his children—that is, so far as we know, at least. We read of

one who was highly favoured of the Lord, and that was Solomon. God blessed him, and blessed him abundantly; but of the rest, some were cut off in their wickedness, and some lie in obscurity. Therefore, with respect to his children, David was compelled to confess that matters had not prospered as he had anticipated. With his house, it was not in spiritual things as he had desired, and hoped it would be. These are weighty things to godly parents; but how little do children in general think of them! It is sad to see what little value they set upon their own souls, upon the things of God, and an interest therein. Well might the Lord Jesus Christ ask that solemn question, "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" What phantoms they choose to follow rather than consider their eternal future! How true it is that "the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ should shine unto them!"

Oh, children, we know we cannot give you grace, but we can pray for you! We can pray that the grace of Christ may be bestowed upon you, that your eyes may be opened, your hearts circumcised, and you thereby be made truly sensible as to what you are and where you are before God. That is a most solemn hymn which was sung at the commencement of the service—

"Pause, my soul, and ask the question,
 'Art thou ready to meet God?
 Am I made a real Christian,
 Washed in the Redeemer's blood?
 Have I union
 With the Church's living Head?'"

Oh, that God may impress that on your hearts in such a way that you may never be rid of the anxiety caused thereby until Jesus is revealed to your faith as having made the only, but complete, atonement for your sin!

Let us, in the second place, notice a few things connected with the covenant. In the midst of all David's sorrowful reflections respecting his house, there had, however, been no unfaithfulness on the part of God in performing the covenant. Some of David's anticipations had failed, but the covenant remained the same, and this he found and confessed to be a good and stable covenant, "an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure." It was underneath his hope, and it was still the stronghold for his faith. He not only felt wrapped in it as in a mantle, and bound up in it by bonds of eternal love, but his heart rejoiced in it as his goodly portion and everlasting inheritance. Perhaps some one will say, "And what is this everlasting covenant?" It is a testament of everlasting blessing. As I said before, this cove-

nant is full of blessing ; it is a covenant of grace, and therefore it is a covenant of mercy and of salvation. How, well, therefore, it is suited to our case, as hopelessly ruined sinners ! The former covenant—the covenant of works—affords no help whatever to the fallen sinner in the matter of salvation. There is not one of you can derive any good hope from the law. If you think you do, you are miserably deceived ; and if that law ever becomes, by the convincing power of God in your conscience, what some of us have felt it to be, you will find that it holds out no hope to you. Sinner, there is no sound of mercy there, no word of grace, no foothold for thy hope there. “ Since to convince and to condemn is all the law can do.” And yet it is a covenant, a covenant which God gave to man—and more, that covenant was given at a time when man was prepared for it. It was first given in the garden of Eden. There, God, who formed man and made him upright, put him as he came from His hand, formed with a disposition and ability to keep the covenant He then gave him. But man, by his own act, made himself a sinner, and rendered himself thereby both unable and indisposed to keep the covenant of God. Sin, then, made a breach betwixt man and God which none but God’s own Son could fill up, and, if He had not stood in the gap, man must have gone to eternal ruin universally. But the Lord Jesus Christ, was manifested in due time, according to the promise of God, and according to that covenant of grace which was made before the sinner fell, and in which the Lord Jesus Christ was the covenanting party on behalf of His people. He became their Surety. He offered Himself to God in their behalf. This covenant, then, might well be spoken of as an everlasting covenant, for when the first covenant failed, then a second was found prepared, and it stood firm. The second covenant was not shaken by the fall of man, if the first was. The fall was conducive to the development of the covenant of grace, for if man had never fallen, the second covenant would not have been needed. But when man fell, sin prevailed, and death entered into the world by sin ; and then the covenant of God’s grace was from time to time developed, until it was clearly manifested as it now is made known to us in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Thus, underneath all this ruin caused by sin, there was God’s purpose of salvation found, and the foundation of Zion’s hope was laid deep in the eternal mind and counsel of Jehovah. He Himself framed the covenant for His chosen, and, “ because He could swear by no greater, He swore by Himself, that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us.” This covenant was a gracious provision made by

God for the time of man's necessity ; and it was brought forth and proclaimed at that time, in the promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. And as it was revealed in general, so it is in the case of every individual member of Christ made known in *their* time of necessity and extremity. But David, in speaking of the covenant, was favoured with a sweet and comprehensive view of it. He not only speaks of it as the "everlasting covenant," but he also speaks of it as a well-ordered covenant, "ordered in all things and sure." This has reference to all that belongs to Christ, and to all that belongs to His people, for they are so united that they cannot be severed ; and the covenant so embraces both, that we cannot speak of one without speaking of the other. All that the covenant contains is found in Christ ; all the covenant promises are given in Christ ; and all that God's people hope for in that covenant they receive of Christ. Thus it is "ordered," for God's people are a predestined people. They were predestinated unto these things before the world began (2 Tim. i. 9), and every covenant good, every covenant blessing, was ordered for them, and the time, the means, and the manner of the development thereof, were all arranged and fixed. Thus, there is no peradventure here in respect of these things ; and, when a child of God can come here, and get a view of the eternal mind, as revealed in the Word of God and in the covenant of His grace, oh, what happiness arises in the soul ! Oh, what consolation it imparts to the heart, and what stability it gives to faith and hope ! But we should never know anything savingly of the blessings of God, of His grace or His salvation, if it was not revealed in us by the Holy Ghost, for all knowledge would be of no use unless we had experience united with it ; therefore David said, "He hath made with me an everlasting covenant." But perhaps some one will say, "Is it not made with Jesus Christ for the Lord's chosen race, and are not all the children of God interested in it ?" Certainly, if we have received anything of this covenant, all have received it in the way of grace. "For who maketh thee to differ from another ? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive ? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it ?" When we come into this secret experimentally, it makes us feel very little. It humbles the proud sinner as it did David when he exclaimed, under a like feeling, "Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that Thou hast brought me hitherto ?" "What ! has God in His gracious purpose gone before me to save me ? Has He fixed His love upon me ? Did He think upon me in my ruin and in my dread condemnation ? Did He look upon me with love when I was in my sins ? Was His eye upon me when I was an enemy to God, an alien and a stranger, and did

thoughts of mercy rise in His heart as the fruit of His eternal love to me? Oh, wondrous grace, that God should think of me when I had no care for myself! Oh, wondrous love, that God should love me when I had no love for Him! Oh, matchless mercy, that He should call me His own when I had no desire for Him, nor for a knowledge of His ways!" Thus God commends His love to His people when He declares how He has looked upon them, how He has thought of them, and what He has purposed concerning them. The Apostle sums it up thus, "But God commendeth His love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Here we see that He not only lays the foundation, but He brings His people to build upon it.

And now, sinner, how stands the case with thee? Art thou "without hope, and without God in the world"? Or canst thou say that sin is thy burden? If thou art distressed with sin and waiting for mercy, let me ask, where is thy hope? On what is it founded? Perhaps you will say, "I have no hope." Well, the hope of God's people is often out of sight. "What a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" There are many of us who have hoped in God when we could neither see nor trace our hope. But, poor sinner, He puts His everlasting arms underneath thy sinking heart, and thy fainting soul, and, though thy heart may be sore distressed, and apparently without hope, yet He is still underneath, and the time of love comes round when the Lord brings His fainting people to feel that the foundation of their hope is laid deep, deep in the infinite mind and covenant, the precious blood and name, of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us look at the matter rather more closely for a few minutes. In doing this, we must come to the old subject, personal religion. This is not a thing of fancy, nor a mere notion of the mind. It is a reality, a gracious work—a work wrought in our hearts by the Holy Ghost—and that which God Himself does can never be undone. That which He has built up can never be pulled down, and that which He plants can never be rooted up. If God's promise of grace is yours—if He has given you a part in this covenant—what He has purposed towards you in eternity will be fulfilled in your experience. You will, by faith, apprehend what God has designed, and enjoy that which God has appointed you. It is of no use our talking about the covenant abstractedly. We must talk about it as we experience it; and when we come to an experience thereof, we find and feel the blessedness of it; we find how the covenant is adapted to our case—to all our needs. We find how every need is met in it, and how everything concerning us is appointed and ordered there; how all the promises of God in the way of grace are sure there, for they are made in Christ and are treasured in Him. "It pleased the Father that in Him

should all fulness dwell." Thus, as we are brought to know the Lord Jesus Christ, we enter into the mystery of the covenant by faith; and this is the way the longing soul desires to come into the inner court, into the secret place of the Most High. Do you want to find the open door of mercy and of grace, whereby a poor trembling sinner may enter in and sit down among the children of the Lord Jesus, as one of those who have obtained everlasting life, as one redeemed with the precious blood of Christ? Be of good courage, for your desire shall be granted; and, as sure as the Lord brings you to His footstool, so sure you will realize His covenant love; and you will realize it by the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, for that blood is part of the everlasting covenant; therefore it is called "the blood of the everlasting covenant," and it was ordered in that covenant that that blood should be shed. Do you feel to need it? Do you need it in the way of atonement? If you would draw near to God, you can only do so by this blood. It is only by virtue of the doing and dying of the Lord Jesus Christ that you can stand accepted before God. There must be an experience of your interest in Christ; for if there is no partaking by faith of His righteousness, there is no other way whereby you can be just with God. There is no other righteousness in which you can appear before Him. We, as transgressors, must, if we are saved, be clothed with a righteousness not our own. And, since His blood alone can cancel our guilt, and His perfect obedience alone justify us before God, He is the only door of hope revealed to sinners in the Gospel. This is the way we need to find; this is the Rock, the Foundation, we need for our hope; and every poor sinner that comes to Him by faith shall be thus brought nigh to God. Your hope may sometimes seem to be withered and gone from you, but it will be revived again, for covenant love is unchanging love. Some of you who have been favoured with a knowledge of Christ for a number of years, and who have experienced the blessedness of an interest in the "covenant ordered in all things and sure," have found it comforting in your sorrows, consolatory in your troubles, and a good foundation for your hope in time of trial. Your heart has been strengthened again and again, as the Holy Ghost has brought it to your mind, and has spoken to you of the treasures of grace, of love, and of blessing therein for the poor and needy. And, as He has taken the Word of grace, the Gospel Word, and unfolded it, and you have received of the fulness of the grace which is in Christ Jesus in your hearts, oh, how satisfied you have been with God's covenant! How glad your heart has been that His mercy, His grace, and His goodness have thus been prepared for a needy soul like you! And now the more you know of it, the more you want to know. Your views are sometimes enlarged,

and your heart is enlarged too, as one part after another of this covenant is unfolded, and that often in the midst of trying circumstances. Thus one trouble, as it were, calls forth a promise, and another calls forth a covenant blessing, so that you receive one covenant good upon another from time to time, to the strengthening of your heart. And what does this prove? It proves that you are children of God, that you are His *covenant children*, that you are loved with an everlasting love, and that the God of the covenant still cares for you; that you are bound up in the bundle of life, and that all the rich provisions made for His Church belong to you. Oh, what a good thing it is to enjoy this—to have a bright earnest that the whole covenant of everlasting love is ours! What a mercy, friends, if we find, as we draw nearer to death, that these experiences of the covenant grow brighter! Some of us know what it is to need it in our lives, and surely we shall need it in death. Death is no trifle; to go from time into eternity, I say is no trifle; to stand before the judgment-seat of Christ is not a light matter. We shall want our evidences clear when we come to die, so as to be well assured that our hope is built upon the sure foundation God has laid in Zion, that, in the prospect of eternity, we may be able to say, “I know whom I have believed.”

When you are in the world, and have to do with the people and things of it—when one thing comes upon another in quick succession, and you are hurried hither and thither with the affairs of this life and the concerns of time—there are many changes will pass over even a heaven-born soul. How often we find that the work of God within us is obscured by those dimming shadows, and how much we are made to feel our need of the constant renewings of the Holy Ghost! Therefore, how comforting it is to realize the reviving and the sweet development of God’s work of grace in the soul under such circumstances! Oh, what a mercy to find that it is sufficient for the day and the hour when we must exchange time for eternity!

May the Lord grant us His covenant grace, that we may each know what it is to live in the Lord, and, when we come to die, may we, through faith in Christ Jesus, prove what it is to die in the Lord. Amen.

If you truly hate sin, you hate it wherever you see it. You hate it in the minister, you hate it in the people, you hate it in an enemy, you hate it in a friend, you hate it in a king, you hate it in a beggar, you hate it in a nation, you hate it in a Church, you hate it in a family, you hate it in an individual, you hate it in others, but you hate it most in yourself.

AN ACCEPTABLE SERVICE.

WE found it a nice opportunity, one Wednesday evening, after threading our way through the noisy streets of London, to turn into the Surrey Tabernacle.

The preacher on the occasion of our visit was Mr. Grey Hazlerigg, of Leicester, a minister who has long been known amongst the Churches as an able "contender for the faith which was once delivered to the saints."

We learn from Mr. Hazlerigg's own writings that it is now thirty-five years since the Lord, after a long season of soul-trouble, brought him into the sweet liberty of the Gospel. At first it was his impression that the Lord designed him to go forth as a missionary to the heathen; but one day, when walking in the fields near Carlton Hall (where he then resided), the word dropped into his heart, "Return unto thine own house, and tell them what great things God has done for thee." He was not unmindful of this intimation. The family altar was at once re-erected, and such a divine blessing followed that one and another of the household soon became the subjects of gracious convictions. He was made especially useful in the conversion of his aged mother, which naturally formed a double tie of affection between them.

A few years ago, a little volume of Lady Hazlerigg's letters was published, entitled "Sweet Memories," and certainly its precious contents proved the title to have been well chosen.

When Mr. Hazlerigg's eyes were opened to see the formality and death which characterized the services of the Church of England in that as in other localities, he could no longer worship there, and therefore commenced holding meetings in the hall at Carlton House, which proceeding excited a great stir in the neighbourhood, so that even one of the newspapers published an attack upon him. But the Lord stood by him, and enabled him to stand his ground.

His ministerial labours, commenced under these circumstances, have since been exceedingly abundant, and we cannot but feel thankful that the Lord permitted His servant to remain and labour in England.

It was a sweet, soul-profitting discourse that Mr. Hazlerigg preached at the Surrey Tabernacle, on the occasion of our visit. The text was Jeremiah ii. 2, 3—"I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after Me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown. Israel was holiness unto the Lord, and the firstfruits of his increase: all that devour him shall offend; evil shall come upon them, saith the Lord."

Mr. Hazlerigg commenced by expressing a hope that the people had come up depending upon the Spirit, and not upon man, for he felt his need of that blessed teaching. He knew it was humiliating to be shut up before the people, yet he had often told the Lord, in secret, that he would rather be shut up, than have his mouth merely opened by the flesh.

In referring to his text, he said that the Lord had two ways of remembering people. Of the wicked, it might be said that He remembered their sins, but not their persons; but with His children it was the reverse, for He forgets their sins, but remembers their persons. David prayed that the Lord would not remember the sins of his youth. Sins of youth are often a grief in old age. It is doubtless profitable for us to remember our sins daily; yet, when our iniquities rise like a great mountain before us, it is truly sweet to see the blood of Christ rise also, till our sins are drowned in blood. Why does God forget the sins of His people? Because He remembers His covenant. The world He puts off with the kisses of His providence, but He remembers His children with the kisses of His love. Well might the Church say, "Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth."

Some people object to experimental preaching, but it is to be feared, when such is the case, that they are greatly lacking as to any vital experience of their own. The text shows that the Lord remembers, in the past experience of His people, "the kindness of their youth." Every child of God has a spiritual youth. Some professed Christians, however, appear to be born (as people say) with teeth, and know everything all at once, so that no one can teach them anything. The Word of God, however, compares the beginning of life in the soul to a grain of mustard-seed, but with that grain is implanted all the graces of the Spirit, which shall in due time be developed by the Spirit's operation. When life is first implanted, the soul cannot understand what is the matter; but the feelings are beautifully expressed by the word of the man who came to the priest, concerning the leprosy in his house, "It seemeth to me that there is a plague in the house."

There was a time in Mr. Hazlerigg's own experience when he could sin, and then repent with tears, and afterwards sin again; but when the Lord took possession of his heart, he found he still had the power to sin, but none to repent. In due time the Lord gives the seeking soul some discoveries of His grace and mercy, which sets him longing to possess them for his own, just as the man who found treasure hid in the field willingly parted with all that he had in order to buy that field.

Bunyan, in his "Holy War," speaks of the consultations which were held by the inhabitants in Mansoul, when seeking recon-

ciliation with Immanuel. A proposal was made that Mr. Good Deeds should go to Him on their behalf, but this was quickly vetoed, for some felt that Immanuel would say, "What! is Mr. Good Deeds still alive?" At length they decided to send by one Mr. Desires Awake, and it is certain no better man for the business could possibly have been found.

Mr. Hazlerigg said that he believed in a growth in grace, and in a ministry that builds up; and, to speak candidly, he would not sit under any ministry that did not do this. That is a poor baby that is always a baby.

Before the love of espousals to Christ can be experienced, the soul must be divorced from the law, to which he is closely wedded; hence the necessity of a law-work, so that sin may become exceeding sinful, and every mouth may be stopped before God. When this has been accomplished, the soul experiences the blessedness of those words in Ezekiel xvi. 8, "I passed by thee, and thy time was the time of love." The child of God can then turn his back upon the world, and embrace a precious Christ. The special characteristic of a believer's youth is that of *desire*, while the characteristic of the espousals is that of love.

Mr. Hazlerigg mentioned that, when in deep exercise about his own soul, the people about him said that he was going mad, but when Jesus was revealed to him, they said that he had gone mad. He was not surprised at this, for wherever he went, whether riding or walking, he was reading or singing of Jesus Christ, and they, poor things, being out of the secret, could not understand it.

The Church going after Christ in the wilderness, in a land not sown, evidently refers to the kindness of youth. It is a kind of intermediate state, when the soul is spoilt for the world, and yet not happy in Christ.

Israel being "holiness to the Lord" sets forth the time of espousals; and those who have enjoyed such a season know full well what a separation they then felt, both from sin and the world.

"If any one had told me," said Mr. Hazlerigg, "at this period in my experience, that I should have sinned against God, as I have done since, it would have broken my heart." The true language of the soul at such a time is—

"Compared with Christ, in all besides
No comeliness I see;
The one thing needful, dearest Lord,
Is to be one with Thee."

In the close of the text, the Lord speaks of His people being devoured. Sad that it should be so, yet, alas! it is only too true. In the love of espousals, the soul would gladly die rather than

live to sin against so good and gracious a God ; but, after that time, what a resurrection there is of those sins which seemed gone when Christ rose upon the soul with healing in His wings ! The devourers have been at work. Sloth, the world, error, and strife amongst brethren, all act as devourers of the children of God, till their state forcibly reminds one of the description given by the prophet Joel, "The land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness." But the promise given does not say that the child of God shall be destroyed, but rather, that evil shall come upon their devourers. God will save His people ; "Israel shall dwell in safety ;" and, when time with them shall be no more, "then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

OBSERVER.

IF the death of saints is precious in the Lord's sight, how precious must their *persons* be !—*Waking.*

IF thou hast a Christ in thy heart, a cross on thy back, a world under thy feet, and heaven in thy view, thou art a happy man.

THE *literal* creation was *cursed* for the sake of the first Adam ; the *spiritual* creation is *blessed* for the sake of the Second Adam.—*Waking.*

WHAT makes a Christian praise God more to-day than yesterday ? Not merely because he has received more blessings, but because he sees he is more unworthy of them.

AFFLICTIONS are blessings to us when we can bless God for afflictions. Suffering has kept many from sinning. God had one Son without sin, but He never had one without sorrow. Fiery trials make golden Christians ; sanctified afflictions are spiritual promotions.—*Dyer.*

"HE that toucheth you toucheth the apple of His eye." That is the tenderest part—not to say the most vital, but the most susceptible of feeling, even of the slightest touch—and, as the eye, from its exposed situation, is more easy to wound than a vital part, so the Church, being on earth, is obnoxious to persecution for the same reason. Every individual has sentimentally a weak or tender part, which, if at all assailed, he is sure to feel, and more deeply than anything else. Thus we may say that the Church is Christ's tender part, and that Christ is the Church's vital part (as He and they are one). Hence He considers the injuries done to her as inflicted on Himself, and will requite them upon the perpetrators thereof with tremendous vengeance at a future day.—*Waking.*

BUNHILL FIELDS.

DEAR SIR,—I enclose notes of "A Visit to Bunhill Fields," and, if you think it suitable, shall be glad if you can find room for it in the *SOWER*.

It is quite unsectarian, and may be interesting to many of our young friends throughout the country who do not know there is a spot containing the ashes of so many eminent men as do Bunhill Fields.

Yours very truly,

G. NEWMAN.

IMPRESSIONS OF A VISIT TO THE OLD BURIAL GROUND AT
FINSBURY, AUGUST, 1882.

THE old Bunhill Fields burial ground, Finsbury, London, has been named "The Campo Santo of Dissenters," and not without reason, for here, awaiting the resurrection morn, are gathered the remains of more illustrious Nonconformist divines than are to be found in any one spot on earth besides.

The ground is situated on the left hand side of the street leading from Finsbury Square towards the City Road. It is bounded on the Finsbury side by iron railings, and is intersected by walks, planted on each side with trees. It is about three acres in extent, and is literally crowded with tombs and grave-stones. The keeper says they number six thousand; and some of them are of the greatest possible interest.

The one which attracts the greatest attention, and has been visited by pilgrims from all parts of the world, is an altar-tomb over the remains of John Bunyan, the immortal dreamer. He was buried in the grave of his friend Strudwick, the grocer of Snow Hill, Smithfield, at whose house he died. A simple monument was placed over him, with this inscription, "Mr. John Bunyan, author of 'Pilgrim's Progress,' ob. 31st August, 1688, æt. 60.

"The 'Pilgrim's Progress' now is finishèd,
And death has laid him in this earthly bed."

In May, 1832, a public subscription was opened, headed by the Earl of Shaftesbury, the result of which was, that the old memorial was replaced by an altar-tomb, upon which rests the recumbent figure of Bunyan, and on each end of the tomb are sculptured scenes from the "Pilgrim's Progress." One of them represents Christian climbing a hill with a load on his back, and the other where he comes to the cross, and his load falls from his back into the sepulchre.

The monument perhaps next in point of interest to the general public is, the handsome obelisk erected over the last resting-place

of Daniel Defoe, the author of "Robinson Crusoe," a work which is supposed to have gone through more editions than any book in the English language, with the exception of the "Pilgrim's Progress." The monument was erected, a few years ago, by the subscriptions of 1,700 readers of the "Christian World."

A little to the right of the central walk is an altar-tomb over the remains of Isaac Watts, D.D., author of "Watts' Psalms and Hymns," and many other works. He has been buried over one hundred years, and yet to this day his hymns are more widely valued, perhaps, by Christians generally than are those of any other individual writer; and to-day, while standing beside his tomb, the lines occur to the mind fresh, and with the same import, in measure, as they did to him those many years ago—

"When shall the day, dear Lord, appear,
When I shall mount to dwell above,
And stand and bow amongst them there,
And see Thy face, and sing, and love?"

His is the fruition, ours the prospect; but how long? Even now the prospect grows brighter as we remember the lines—

"Give me the wings of faith to rise
Within the veil, and see
The saints above, how great their joys,
How bright their glories be.
"Once they were mourning here below,
And wet their couch with tears;
They wrestled hard, as we do now,
With sins and doubts and fears.
"I ask them whence their victory came;
They, with united breath,
Ascribe their conquest to the Lamb,
Their triumph to His death."

Towards the lower end of the right hand side of the ground is a handsome obelisk of polished red granite, erected over the grave of Joseph Hart, a few years ago, by many loving admirers of his excellent hymns. He was buried in the year 1768, and a plain headstone erected to his memory. This stone still stands at the back of the monument. Two of his hymns, of which the following are the first verses, are sung by nearly every Christian denomination of the present day—

"Come, ye sinners, poor and wretched,
Weak and wounded, sick and sore;
Jesus ready stands to save you,
Full of pity joined with power:
He is able;
He is willing; doubt no more."

And—

“ Come, Holy Spirit, come ;
 Let Thy bright beams arise ;
 Dispel the sorrow from our minds,
 The darkness from our eyes.”

Not far from Mr. Hart's monument is a plain altar-tomb in memory of Lady Ann Erskine, sister of Lord Chancellor Erskine. She was remarkable for her sincere personal religion, and was one of Lady Huntingdon's trustees for forty years.

On the other side of the ground are many remarkable memorials. Two altar-tombs mark the resting-place of Henry and Richard Cromwell, grandsons of the great Oliver. These tombs are said to have been found seven feet beneath the surface of the ground, and restored by the Corporation of London in 1869. It does not appear to be now known whether they were thus covered by the enemies of their great ancestor, or whether it was done by friends to protect their remains from insult. However, such fanaticism has now passed away, and Cromwell's name is revered by a large majority of his fellow-countrymen. Near by, also under an altar-tomb, are the remains of Lieut.-Gen. Charles Fleetwood (1692), Cromwell's stern Lord Deputy. He married General Ireton's widow (Cromwell's daughter), and was one of the famous leaders of Cromwell's Ironsides during the civil war.

Not far from General Fleetwood's are two other altar-tombs which will be sure to attract attention. One is the last resting-place of Dr. John Owen, Dean of Christ Church during the Commonwealth. He preached the first sermon before Parliament after the execution of Charles I. ; and the other, that of Dr. Thomas Goodwin, who attended Cromwell on his death-bed.

Here is also the grave, marked by a headstone, of Mrs. Susannah Wesley, widow of S. Wesley, M.A., Rector of Epworth, Lincolnshire. But her name is, and ever will be, best known to the world as the mother of John and Charles Wesley. John was the founder of the Wesleyan Methodists, and Charles the author of some very beautiful hymns. Those commencing with the following verses are especial favourites—

“ Oh, love divine, how sweet thou art !
 When shall I find my longing heart
 All taken up by thee ?
 Oh, may I pant and thirst to prove
 The greatness of redeeming love,
 The love of Christ to me !”

And—

“ Hark ! the herald angels sing,
 Glory to the new-born King ;
 Peace on earth and mercy mild ;
 God and sinners reconciled !”

Close by his mother's grave is an altar-tomb, from the top of which, it is said, John Wesley preached one of his most impressive sermons.

In this burial ground, too, rest the remains of Dr. Gill, the commentator; Matthew Wilks, the eccentric Welsh minister; Joseph Hughes, one of the founders of the British and Foreign Bible Society and the Religious Tract Society; J. Townsend, founder of the Deaf and Dumb Asylum; J. Hardcastle; Dr. Waugh, founder of the London Missionary Society; Dr. John Rippon, hymn writer and compiler, and the successor of Dr. Gill at Carter Lane Chapel; T. Priestly, brother of the celebrated Dr. Priestly, who died in America; David Nasmyth, founder of the London City Missions; Dr. Winter; Thomas Bradbury; Dr. Daniel Williams, founder of the library in Redcross Street; John Dunton, author of his own "Life and Errors;" Dr. W. Harris; Dr. Henry Hunter; Thomas Belsham; Joseph Ritson, the antiquary; Dr. John Guise; Daniel Neale, author of the "History of the Puritans;" Dr. Stennet; Dr. Richard Price, author of a work on reversionary payments; Dr. Fisher; Dr. A. Rees, editor of the *Cyclopædia*; Dr. Nathaniel Lardner, author of "The Credibility of the Gospel History;" William Blake, painter and poet; Thomas Stothard, R.A., and a host of others, too numerous to mention.

But sufficient names are here given to show that this spot has a special interest, as it contains the ashes of many men who have not only done much for the literature of their country, and of the world, but who were eminent for their fearless intrepidity in troublous times. But it makes one sad to see many—aye, the majority—of these tombs sink into neglect and decay. True, the names of such men need not be carved upon their tombs to perpetuate their memory; still, in a wealthy country like England, it seems humiliating to hear, as we did from the keeper, that there is no fund wherewith to keep their last resting-place from decay.

How solemnly, from such a place, do the words of Scripture seem to sound forth, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after death the judgment."

Reader, how stands the case with thee? Art thou in Christ by faith? or art thou a sinner, living without hope and without God in the world? In Bunhill Fields lies the dust of many saints of whom it may be said, "These died in faith;" and the Word of God pronounces all such "blessed," because those who die in the faith of Christ "die in the Lord." Are you in union with Christ Jesus? If so, death will bring you into His presence above; but, if you live and die a stranger to Him and His salvation, you will hear the awful word, "Depart!"

THE LAST SAYINGS OF SOME ITALIAN MARTYRS.

ON the 23rd of May, 1498, three Frati were executed on the Piazza San Marco, at Florence. The most noted of the three, Savonarola, when going to the gallows, was asked by a priest, "With what mind do you suffer this martyrdom?" He replied, "Should I not die willingly for Him who suffered as much for me?" He was so absorbed in devotion that he scarcely seemed aware of what was passing around. "He died," says one, "penetrated by the most lively feelings of charity and sustained by hope."

Fra Domenico was so serene and cheerful that he seemed like "one going to a place of delight, and not to death." His face shone with joyful hope, as though he were already in the ante-chamber of heaven. Fra Salvestro walked to the place of execution with a firm step, saying, "Into Thy hands I commend my spirit." Their bodies were afterwards burned, and their ashes thrown into the river.

"The dungeons of the Leonine City had witnessed the ecstasies and raptures of Pomponio Aligieri, preparing for death as for a festival. Led to the stake in a court adjoining the Castle of St. Angelo, he ascended it as if going up to an altar. His firmness amid the flames was a cause of astonishment, and almost terror, to the cardinals who were present at the spectacle. To a friend he writes just before his death: "I have found honey in the mouth of the lion, an agreeable retreat in a frightful precipice, glorious prospects of life in the abode of death, joy and peace in an abyss of hell."

The annals of the Apostolic Church—noble poems of faith and martyrdom—contain no story more touching than that of Luigi Pascali, the pastor of the Waldenses, in Calabria. Pascali was dragged from prison to prison, and saw his friend Stephano Negrini die of hunger by his side. His brother, who had obtained leave to see him, fell powerless on beholding such a terrible spectacle. His head was bare, his arms and hands were bleeding from the cords by which he was bound, like a man about to be led to death. Pascali exclaimed, "My brother! if you are a Christian, why do you allow yourself to be thus cast down? Do you not know that not a single hair can fall from our heads without the will of God? Trust in Jesus Christ, and take courage! The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." "These are the feelings of my heart," wrote the martyr before his last conflict. "My faith becomes stronger as the hour approaches when I am to be offered as a sacrifice of a sweet-smelling savour unto Christ. Yes; my joy is so lively that I can fancy I see my fetters broken,

and I would be ready to brave a thousand deaths, were that necessary, for truth !”

Pope Pius IV. and the cardinals were present at the execution, but their watchful eyes could not detect the slightest trace of dejection or weakness in the features of the Christian hero, who seemed, as it were, transfigured in death.

Another champion of the reformed faith, Bartolomeo Bartocci, when in the midst of the flames, and when his body was partly consumed, exclaimed, “Victory ! victory !”

Aonio Paleario, a classical professor at Lucca, author of “The Benefit of Christ’s Death,” and for which he was condemned by the inquisitors as “a heretic deserving the most rigorous punishment,” says, “Now the hour is come ! What should I fear, indeed, and why should I dread to encounter the ignominy, the axe, and the stake, which threaten every faithful confessor of Jesus Christ ? It is time to show, after the example of so many holy men, not how we may live by making a compact with infidelity, but how we ought to die for the holy cause of the Gospel. It remains for me to seal the truth with my blood. I, then, Aonio Paleario, the servant of Jesus Christ, here bear a steadfast testimony ; and I am ready to lay down my life for Christ, the Author of my peace and my salvation.” After having taken leave of all whom he loved on earth, Paleario was ready to die. With the eye of faith he saw, with increasing clearness, his merciful Saviour waiting to receive him on his entrance into another life, and the humble prayer of the Christian was turned into the ecstasy of the martyr.

The way was short from the prison to the Bridge of St. Angelo, where the scaffold was erected. Paleario trod it with a firm step. He calmly contemplated the preparations for his death. When the first rays of the morning sun coloured the city and the Tiber, he expired on the scaffold. His body, still palpitating, was cast into the flames.

A name would be wanting in the Roman martyrology if we did not add that of a follower of Valdez, a learned professor in the University of Bologna—Mollio, of Montaleino. Having been seized at Ravenna, under the pontificate of Julius III., he appeared on the 5th of September, 1553, before a solemn assembly, holding a torch in his hand, and followed by several of his pupils, who had accompanied him into prison, but whose constancy did not equal his. Having been asked to speak, Mollio defonded himself with the boldness of a man regardless of all worldly interests. He openly confessed the doctrine of justification by faith alone, pronounced the Mass to be idolatry, and called the power which the Pope and the cardinals arrogated to themselves by the right name of “usurpation.” “You pretend,” he said to them, “to be the successors of the Apostles and the heirs of Christ, and you

thirst for the blood of the saints, you despise the Word of God, and you persecute His ministers, as if there were no Avenger in heaven ! Ah ! I appeal from your sentence, whatever it may be, to the tribunal of the Sovereign Judge of all, and I summon you to answer for it, at the last day, when your pompous titles and your proud ornaments will dazzle us no more than your tortures now terrify us. In witness of this I return you what you have given me !” At these words he flung his burning torch on the ground and extinguished it with his foot. The trembling cardinals condemned him to perish immediately, with those of his companions who would not disown his sentiments. Tisserano, of Padua, refused to separate his fate from that of Mollio. They were led together to the Campo di Fiore, and died with equal intrepidity at the stake.

What a reckoning that will be for the apostate and blood-thirsty Church of Rome on the day when she must answer, at the judgment-seat of Christ, for the blood of the saints which she has shed ! Happy those who, departing from her, shall not partake of her plagues !

SCOFFERS SILENCED.

“The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.”—PSALM liii. 1.

LET me tell you a story. I have told it before ; but it is a striking one, and sets out in a true light how easily men will be brought, in times of danger, to believe in a God, and a God of justice too, though they have denied Him before.

In the backwoods of Canada there resided a good minister, who, one evening, went out to meditate, as Isaac did, in the fields. He soon found himself on the borders of a forest, which he entered, and walked along a track which had been trodden before him, musing, musing still, until at last the shadows of twilight gathered around him, and he began to think how he should spend a night in the forest. He trembled at the idea of remaining there, with the poor shelter of a tree into which he would be compelled to climb. On a sudden, he saw a light in the distance among the trees, and imagining that it might be from the window of some cottage where he would find a hospitable retreat, he hastened to it, and, to his surprise, saw a space cleared, and trees laid down to make a platform, and upon it a speaker addressing a multitude.

He thought to himself, “I have stumbled on a company of people who, in this dark forest, have assembled to worship God, and some minister is preaching to them, at this late hour of the evening, concerning the kingdom of God and His righteousness ;” but, to his surprise and horror, when he came nearer, he found a

young man declaiming against God, daring the Almighty to do His worst upon him, speaking terrible things in wrath against the justice of the Most High, and venturing most bold and awful assertions concerning his own disbelief in a future state !

It was altogether a singular scene. It was lighted up by pine-knots, which cast a glare here and there, while the thick darkness in other places still reigned. The people were intent on listening to the orator ; and, when he sat down, thunders of applause were given to him, each one seeming to emulate the other in his praise. Thought the minister, "I must not let this pass. I must rise and speak. The honour of my God and His cause demands it." But he feared to speak, for he knew not what to say, having come there suddenly ; but he would have ventured, had not something else occurred.

A man of middle height, hale and strong, rose, and, leaning on a staff, he said, "My friends, I have a word to speak to you to-night. I am not about to refute any of the arguments of the orator ; I shall not criticise his style ; I shall say nothing concerning what I believe to be the blasphemies he has uttered ; but I shall simply relate to you a fact, and, after I have done that, you shall draw your own conclusions. Yesterday I walked by the side of yonder river. I saw on its floods a young man in a boat. The boat was unmanageable. It was going fast towards the rapids. He could not use the oars, and I saw that he was not capable of bringing the boat to the shore. I saw that young man wring his hands in agony. By-and-bye he gave up the attempt to save his life, kneeled down, and cried with desperate earnestness, 'Oh, God, save my soul ! If my body cannot be saved, save my soul !' I heard him confess that he had been a blasphemer. I heard him vow that, if his life were spared, he would never be such again. I heard him implore the mercy of heaven for Jesus Christ's sake, and earnestly plead that he might be washed in His blood. These arms saved that young man from the flood. I plunged in, brought the boat to shore, and saved his life. That same young man has just now addressed you, and cursed his Maker. What say you to this, sirs ?"

The speaker sat down. You may guess what a shudder ran through the young man himself, and how the audience in one moment changed their notes, and saw that, after all, whilst it was a fine thing to brag and bravado against Almighty God on dry land, and when danger was distant, it was not quite so grand to think ill of Him when near the verge of the grave.

We believe there is enough conscience in every man to convince him that God must punish him for his sin, and that in every proud scorner's heart the words of Scripture, sooner or later, will find an awful echo—"If he turn not, He will whet His sword."

"How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn you at My reproof: behold, I will pour out My Spirit unto you, I will make known My words unto you. Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out My hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all My counsel, and would none of My reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh."—*Spurgeon*.

Volney, a noted infidel, was once overtaken by a violent storm at sea, when he began to be in the greatest distress, and ran about crying, "Oh, my God! Oh, my God! What shall I do?" Afterwards the storm abated, and the infidel, who before had been ridiculing and scoffing at Christianity, was so humbled and ashamed that he durst not show himself for days.

ENCOURAGING WORDS.*

FOR ONE WHO SAID, "I HAVE NOT FOUND JESUS."

(See Luke xv. 4—5; "He found him," &c.—Deut. xxxii. 10; "Found of Him,"—2 Peter iii. 14.)

SEEKING soul, be not dismayed,
Though thy finding be delayed;
If the Saviour hide His face,
He will show His heart of grace.

Art thou seeking every day
How to find the narrow way?
Turning from the paths of sin,
Hating evil most within?

Is the Word of Jesus near?
Are His holy precepts dear?
He Himself, be sure, is nigh;
He will guide thee with His eye.

Though the Lord thou hast not found,
He is seeking thee around;
Drawing thee with cords of love
To the light and life above.

Had He not the work begun,
Thou wouldst still the Saviour shun;
All His beauties fail to win
Him who loves the ways of sin.

But the sheep who hear His voice
In their Shepherd shall rejoice;
He is on the lost one's track,
Seeking—finding—bringing back.

* By Mrs. JOSEPH FEARN, author of "Plain Rhymes on the Pentateuch," &c.

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.—No. XLIII.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,—I came here on Monday, and, if spared, return home to-morrow.

It was a pleasure to me to read your note, and to find that you are still in pursuit of the greatest blessing God can give, or a poor, lost sinner can receive—the pearl of great price, the inestimable gift of His only and dearly-beloved Son. Oh, what a mercy to have desires in one's soul after Him. It is a certain sign that His desire is toward us, for He is the first and He is the last. May you be blessed to follow hard after Him until, like the spouse in the Canticles, you can say, "I have found Him whom my soul loveth." Painful doubts, distressing fears, sad jealousies, gloomy surmisings, false apprehensions, Satan's suggestions, past sins and present corruptions, may for some time be permitted to keep you in suspense respecting your interest in electing love, redeeming blood, and justifying righteousness; but none of these things can shake or frustrate those exceeding great and precious promises which are graciously recorded in the Scriptures; therefore "be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, ye that hope in the Lord." "Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; He will come and save you."

I am not a stranger to these things, having had years of painful anxiety about my never-dying soul, and concerning my interest in the love and blood of the dear Redeemer. Therefore, think it not strange that it sometimes seems impossible that the Lord will hear and answer your cries, and give you the knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of your sins. But wait upon Him, call upon Him, look unto Him; and, "though the vision tarry long, wait for it; it will speak and not lie;" for there is a set time to favour Zion, and nothing shall or can prevent the truly seeking soul, and the Object sought, which is Jesus, from coming together. "And therefore will the Lord wait, that He may be gracious unto you; and therefore will He be exalted, that He may have mercy upon you: for the Lord is a God of judgment: blessed are all they that wait for Him."

" Let not conscience make you linger,
Nor of fitness fondly dream;
All the fitness He requireth
Is to feel your need of Him:
This He gives you—
'Tis the Spirit's rising beam."

Read, search, and pray over the Word of God; ask for

wisdom ; seek for it as for silver, and search for it as for hid treasure, for "every one that asketh receiveth ; and he that seeketh findeth ; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

Please give my Christian love to your mother, and to all in your house who desire to fear the Lord's name, and accept the same yourself.

From your soul's well-wisher,

December 13th, 1876.

ALFRED HAMMOND.

A CLOSING ADDRESS TO OUR READERS.

DEAR FRIENDS,—Another year is fast closing upon us, and, as it dies away, may we not, who know the Lord's mercy, sing, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us" ? Notwithstanding all our sins of omission and commission, our heart-backslidings and unfruitfulness, He has verified His word of promise, "As thy days so shall thy strength be." May His faithfulness and love in times past be so remembered by us that our hearts may be softened and humbled before Him, while, as penitents, we confess our sins, and pray for pardoning grace and for closer communion with Jesus, our living Head. Is not the feeling of many a heart among those who read our pages well expressed in the words of the poet, "Oh, could I know and love Him more" ? The Lord grant that this desire may burn still stronger in each breast, and that we may be favoured with more constant fellowship with the Son of God, as we travel through this sinful world, till we shall leave all that hinders and troubles us below, and rise to dwell with Him whom now we, unseen, love and adore, in the home He has gone to prepare.

We would feel very thankful for the Lord's great goodness to us in granting us needful help in our work, and for the goodly measure of success which has attended our labours. The growing favour with which the SOWER is received, the many testimonies that are borne as to its usefulness, and the constant increase in its circulation, all encourage us to go forward, and to hope still in God, who has declared that His Word shall not return unto Him void.

We trust our friends will once more try to advance our sale of both SOWER and GLEANER, as we are anxious to get them among the general public as much as possible, in order that we may throw our mite into the scale against the rapidly-spreading errors of Rationalism, Infidelity, and Popery. Satan's agents are busy, and their money is freely spent in circulating such literature as is calculated to poison the mind of our youth. Oh, that we may all be active in our endeavours to spread abroad the good seed of God's Word, depending upon Him to bless it who has said, "in due season we shall reap if we faint not." We shall try to make

the SOWER as acceptable as our means and ability will allow of; and, by giving additional features of interest, we hope to make it increasingly adapted to the public need. Therefore, we trust our friends will, by their warm-hearted and universal help, enable us to obtain for it a position worthy of its character among the multitude of publications constantly issuing from the press. A friendly recommendation, or a number put into the hand of those whom you meet with, will do much to increase our circulation, and spread the truth of God. Let us, then, hope that all our readers will now try and get additional subscribers for next year, as this is a good season for the purpose.

May the Lord incline many hearts to the work, and may we be favoured to see large prosperity as the result of our labours being owned and blessed of Him whom we desire to love and serve in all sincerity and with singleness of heart.

Reader, may you be found in Jesus when He shall come to judge the world is the prayer of
THE EDITOR.

THE CHILD JESUS.

"For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder."—ISAIAH ix. 6.

"UNTO us a Child is born,"

A Child of wondrous sway;
Who found us desolate, forlorn,
And brought a heavenly day.

Benighted, as away from heaven
And God we wandered far,
Till He, the Son, to us was given,
The bright and Morning Star!

Glad tidings of Him angels sang,
Glad heralds of His birth;
The Gospel trumpet's glorious clang
Resounded through the earth.

Oh, wondrous grace—"a Child is born!"

"Mystery of godliness;"
God manifest in human form,
Omnipotent to bless.

Margate.

G. H. M. READ.

END OF VOLUME V., NEW SERIES.