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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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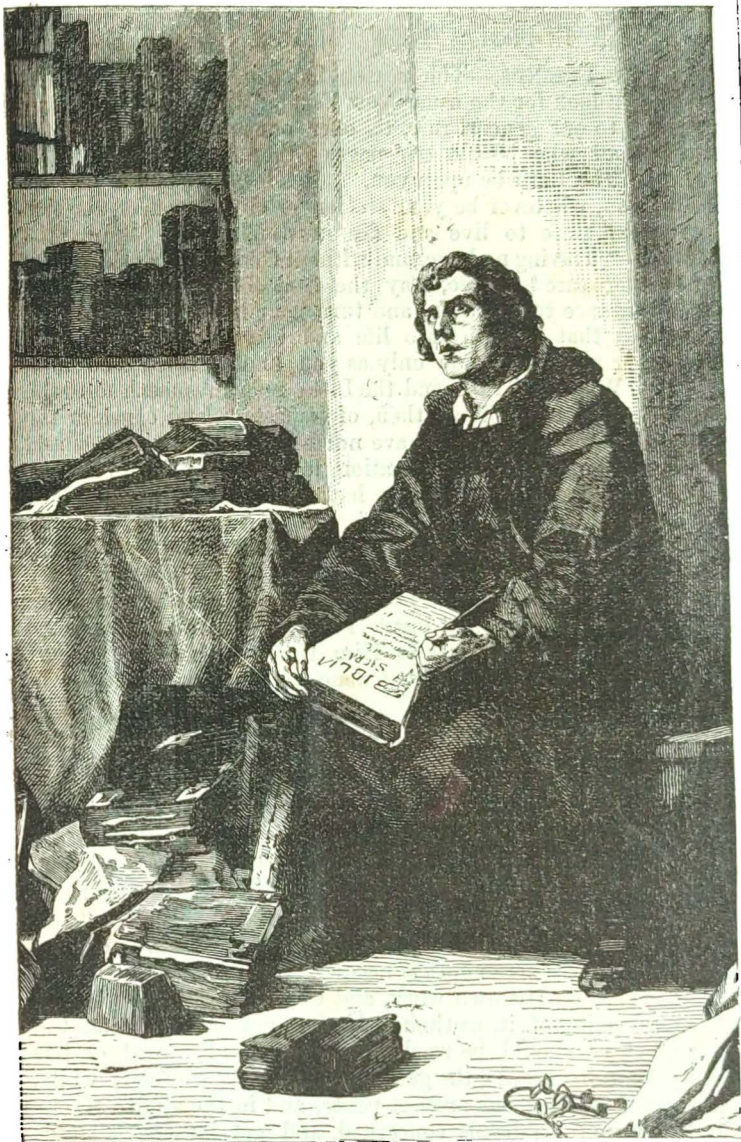
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LUTHER.

THE EDITOR'S NEW YEAR'S ADDRESS.

BELOVED FRIENDS,—The season has come round when our readers will look for the usual New Year's Address, and we wish, according to our general rule, to offer our annual salutation to each and all who peruse our pages; therefore we say, "The blessing of the Lord be upon you." Reader, we earnestly desire this for you, whatever be your station or circumstances, for that is a fearful state to live and die in which God's Word thus describes—"Having no hope, and without God in the world." Are you in that case? If so, may the God of all grace bless you with repentance to salvation, and turn your heart and feet to the narrow way that leadeth unto life and heaven. That way you can neither walk nor know only as you know Christ, who said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh unto the Father but by Me." Think, then, of your state, and consider the awful case you are in if you have not been brought to know and trust in the Lord Jesus for salvation, for "he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God." Oh, that you may hear and give heed to the warnings of God's holy Word, and, by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, be constrained to flee to Jesus for mercy and pardon; then shall you prove His ability and readiness to save sinners great, vile, and lost! Yes, He receiveth sinners still, and calls the burdened ones to Him, that they may obtain rest and peace; and He declares that none who thus come shall ever be cast out.

We pray that the SOWER may be made by the Lord the means of carrying words of warning to unbelievers, words of encouragement and instruction to seekers, and spiritual food and consolation to the exercised children of God; and we desire that our spiritual readers will not cease to pray that rich results may follow our feeble attempts to publish Gospel truth in this day of confusion, declension, division, and strife. Alas! how little true concern we find among us for the honour of our gracious Lord, the spread of His Gospel, and the increase of His kingdom! We are very apt to incline to ease where effort is needed, and to plead the ability of the Lord to do His own work, and to talk of His promises as to the performing of it, as though He had not ordained that the means given us should be used for the accomplishment of His divine purpose respecting the gathering of His chosen seed; while, in matters that affect our present peace, and in the affairs of our daily life, we are so deeply concerned, and get into such states of anxiety, that it would seem at times as though we had not near as much faith respecting His doing for us the little we need, as we have in His doing the great things promised respecting

His kingdom. But is it not to be accounted for in great measure by the fact that often, for the attainment of the end in the latter case, faith and patience are chiefly the things required ; while in the first case, prayer, faith, *labour*, and patience are all necessary adjuncts ? Thus we find that we often talk of faith in the promise, and neglect effort where it is required of us ; and when it is our strength to sit still, we are anxious to be up and doing. How much we stand in need of the Holy Spirit to " prompt us when to stay and when to go," as Mr. Hart says ; for we often labour hard where we can neither make one hair white or black, instead of casting our care on the Lord. And yet, in those cases where God has designed to use us as instruments for the spread of His truth and the calling of His redeemed ones, we talk of the promises as though our instrumentality was not at all connected therewith, and was neither enjoined upon us nor required of us by God. Oh, that we may be quickened to perceive these things aright, and be stirred up to desire to *do* the word and will of God, according to the measure of grace given unto us ! This is not the time to hide the light under a bushel, when professors are going farther and farther from the Word of God, and, by their teachings, are casting discredit upon its divine authenticity and infallible declarations. Thus we see the ancient landmarks of truth removed one after another by professed teachers of Christianity, who set up the oppositions of " science, falsely so-called," in place of the Gospel of Christ, and thus prepare the way for atheists and their teaching ; while, at the same time, Popery is being rapidly advanced by our statesmen and those who receive Protestant pay, and who have sworn to resist her power to the utmost of their ability.

If the saints would unite in one body for prayer and action, instead of mixing with worldlings in their political strife, we might hope to see some good results follow in due time, because our enemies of either name have but an arm of flesh with them, but we have with us the Lord our God, mighty in battle, the King of kings and Lord of lords. Oh, that we might prove ourselves valiant for Him and in His cause !

Some may think these remarks to be out of place here, but we cannot agree to that, inasmuch as it becomes every faithful witness to declare what he sees of the signs of the times, that men, and particularly the Church of Christ, may be warned of the approaching danger (read Ezekiel xxxiii.) ; and may the Lord pour out His Spirit upon us, and cause us to take heed to His faithful Word.

Now, reader, we must each soon appear before God. How do we stand ? Death will wither much that many are now pleased with, for " whatsoever is not of faith is sin." The worldlings are

full of enmity against God. Oh, that we may not be reckoned with them! Are there not many who now profess to be the Lord's, but who will, it is to be feared, from what we now see, share in the worldlings' condemnation? Professors have grown wanton upon their own notions, and despise the old-fashioned truths of the Gospel, preferring evolution or agnosticism to "the truth as it is in Jesus." May we never be left to say "A confederacy" with them!

Then, though we find much among lovers of the truth that pains us, we certainly cannot hope to improve our case by going to either of the many other camps for instruction; nor do we wish, because that would be departing from that which we have received of the Lord. Therefore we appeal to you "who have obtained like precious faith" to stand fast by the Word of truth, and "earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints," since you have proved the reality of that which the Holy Spirit makes known of Christ in the believer's heart, and have found it to be altogether distinct from the doctrines and teachings of men.

How different is the testimony of the Spirit from that gross delusion now so prevalent among a class of professors who talk much of faith, but whose confidence has no better foundation than *self-persuasion*! These may call the seeking, panting, longing souls who wait for Christ unbelievers, if they will; but we know *they* themselves are in bondage and spiritual darkness while they thus speak, and all their vain boast of faith, and reviling of the Lord's little ones, is but an offence in the eyes of Him who will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax.

The Comforter, the Holy Spirit, abides with the Church of Christ to perform His part in the covenant of salvation, and His work takes place in the heart, where He casts down self and sin and sets up Christ; neither can anything resist His power. The stoutest-hearted rebel must yield when He begins to work, for He makes the sinner *feel* his sin, and he never needs to be told after that that he is a sinner, for he carries in his breast the witness to the truth of it, and he is made willing to bow under the sense of his guilt before God, and confess his transgressions. And, when the Comforter testifies of Jesus to such an one, it is not a mere tale or notion he listens to, for the blessed Spirit conveys the virtue of the precious blood of Christ to his heart, and the sinner is made a partaker of Him. Thus the redemption of Christ is not only reported and testified of by the Spirit, but the sinner receives it by faith, and enjoys the blessedness of the liberty of the children of God. Some are early enabled to say, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that

day"; while others have to wait for the testimony of their adoption, for the Comforter does not do these things in a stereotyped manner, but sovereignly according to the counsel of God's will.

The walk of faith is one of varied experience, by reason of the manifold changes which try that precious grace, for it does not make stoics of those who possess the greatest measure of it, since they will surely find there is much for faith to do to contend against the powers within and without that are constantly opposing them, for "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh"; and when the conscience, made tender in the fear of God, feels the prevalency of iniquity, although it cannot finally prevail, the burdensomeness of the evil makes the believer cry out, "O wretched man that I am!" &c. This is not because he doubts the remedy, for he longs for it; and, when the Comforter testifies of Jesus, and sets Him before the eye of faith, then can the believer rejoice and say, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Then, if in the case of those who have a greater measure of faith, these changes are found to greatly exercise them, need we wonder that the bruised reed and smoking flax find the fight of faith to be exceedingly trying? Self-persuaded professors may mock at these changes, but tender-hearted believers cannot pass through them without being in some measure affected by them. Neither does the Lord intend they should; for, by proving them thus, and showing them what is in their hearts besides faith, He humbles them and instructs them, to the abasing of self and the exalting of Christ. This is how He designs they shall "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ"; and it is, though often seemingly the opposite, quite in accordance with the oft-expressed desire of the renewed heart, "Out of self to Jesus lead"; and they are thus learning experimentally more of that divine truth, which perhaps they have long and firmly believed—"By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God"; for it is by putting our faith and knowledge to the test that the Lord draws them forth into practical use, and thus grounds us in the truths of His own Word, by giving us to realize our need of what is promised in Christ, and His sufficiency and suitability to us in our every case of daily warfare and trial. And this experience of Him strengthens our confidence in Him in a way that they who have no such changes can never understand, for we experience the blessedness of the privilege of being favoured to cast all our care upon Him who so constantly and fully cares for us.

Reader, do you ever lose your heavy burdens here? If so, are not such moments sweet and "rich in blessing"? Is not this

"secret place of the Most High" a truly sacred retreat from the storms of the world, of sin, and of hell? Oh, the sacred pleasure of being at times alone with God, even in trouble, as Jacob was, when "there wrestled a Man with him"! May we often enjoy this favour during our pilgrimage below. And especially when, as of late, the potsherds strive with the potsherds, may we have recourse to God, and leave those who use craft, cunning, and carnal means to reap what they sow. Our God reigneth. He has an omnipotent arm, and doeth whatsoever He pleaseth in the earth. We may, therefore, while not knowing what the results of the late political contests may be, leave those who put their confidence in parties to their vain hope, and resort to that Stronghold where prayer has won many a battle, in spite of the strength and devices of men, whose designs God can easily frustrate, even by the very means they employ to gratify their desires. We would not speak nor think lightly of the affairs of our nation, for, with Popery on the one hand, and atheism on the other, and each making rapid strides among us, there is cause for anxiety. But, while we would not despise the proper use of lawful means which, as citizens, we are favoured with, may we never forget that "God is our Refuge and Strength," and the balancing of the powers that be on earth is with Him. He is the great Sovereign of the universe, upon whose shoulders is the government of things on earth and things in heaven. The storms are passing over us, and we are coming nearer to the end of our journey. Oh, that our evidences for eternity may be brightened as we near the end, so that we may be ready when the call is given to "depart and be with Christ, which is far better"! Happy are they whose

"hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness."

They will be made "more than conquerors, through Him that loved us."

Brethren in the Lord, as we again wish you "A Happy New Year," we also say, "Grace, mercy, and peace be with you all that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." Do not forget to pray for us. We feel our shortcomings in the work we are called to, but we desire to do our little as unto the Lord. Help us all you can in our endeavours to spread His truth, and may His divine blessing ever be upon you, is the sincere prayer of

THE EDITOR.

THE strongest man in the family of God is the man who feels he cannot go one step but as the Lord upholds him.—*Krause.*

LUTHER.

It was about the middle of July, 1504-5, that a young man, a student at the University of Erfurt, invited his friends to his apartments to spend an evening in conversation and music. At the close, he told them that it would be the last time they would meet together for such pleasure, for on the morrow he would become a monk. This was the language of Martin Luther. His father had intended him for a lawyer, but the death of one of his companions, and being brought to death's door himself but a little while before, weighed so heavily upon his mind that he determined to enter upon a different course of life. He sent the gown and ring of his degree of M.A., which was conferred upon him by the University at the age of twenty, to his parents, and unfolded to them his reason for doing so. They were much grieved that he should betake himself to a life that differed but little from death. But Luther's heart had been touched by God. Still, he saw no way of obtaining peace and inheriting heaven save by entering the monastery, and he therefore determined to be a monk ; and, applying himself to monkish duties with earnestness and zeal, he pressed forward to join those noble men who, as he then thought, had continual access to God. But here he found he had not left the world behind him, for he had sore battles within himself. He still thought that divine influences entered the soul by attending to ordinances, and, with streaming eyes, he would wait for that influence, and, above all, for the pardon of his sins. He sought this at the altar and in his cell ; yea, he wanted sleep that he might find it.

One morning, his brethren found his cell-door shut, and had to force it open ; and what do they see ? Poor Luther is stretched upon the ground insensible. They gradually restore him, but he only recovered to feel that he had not found peace, for his soul was still full of trouble.

On one occasion, when in the library of the Erfurt Monastery, he found an old Latin Bible. The people knew nothing of it, and the monks had forgotten it. He was now nearly twenty years of age, and had been brought up almost all his life in schools and colleges, yet this was the first time he had seen the holy Scriptures. "Here is God's own Word," he said ; "here God speaks out direct to me" ; and he soon began to study it in real earnest. Other monks, in whom the good work was going on, joined him in his pursuit. He soon saw the rottenness of those things that were read to the people in the churches by the priests, and that there were far more evangelical and apostolical texts in the Bible than they ever read to their hearers. With great attention and delight did he read in the Old Testament the account of

Hannah and Samuel, and, as he drank in the sacred Word with sweetness and delight, he began to wish he was the owner of a like Book.

Those that were opposed to his studying in this kind of way told him to mind his monastic duties, which he did, for he swept the monastery, begged for it, prayed in it, and did penance. But all this would not give peace to his soul, which caused him to cry out, "This black heart of mine—these sins day by day, hour by hour—this perpetual inclination to sin—who shall free me from all this?" This was soul-trouble indeed to him, and such as brought his body to the brink of the grave. Those who saw his conduct said he was a devout man, but he replied, "I am a great sinner. How is it possible for me to satisfy divine justice?"

An old monk entered his cell one day—one who was by Luther highly esteemed, and to whom he used to tell his doubts and fears—and, on his repeating at that time that part of the Creed, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins," the old man answered him, "It is not enough to believe that David's sins and Peter's sins were forgiven. The commandment is, that we believe our own sins are forgiven. Instead of torturing yourself on account of your sins, cast yourself into the Redeemer's arms; look to the wounds and blood of Jesus Christ. By His stripes you are healed; by His blood your sins are washed away." Luther's eyes were opened. The light had dawned upon his soul, and he was face to face with the infinite mercy of God. His soul had at last entered into a peace that passeth understanding. "I have been begging and sweeping and praying," said he, "that I might procure the pardon of my sins, and lo! God has shown me that what I was seeking for by monastic works was mine already by His infinite grace."

But Luther's mind was not as yet wholly freed from Popish errors, for, on being sent to Rome on some monastic business, he ran from church to church, doing those things which were prescribed for the salvation of the soul—shocked at everything, yet believing everything. Once he was to be seen on his knees, climbing "Pilate's Staircase." He who does this has an indulgence—a boon of future mercy from heaven. It was too late for the German monk. The Erfurt Bible was in his heart, and ever, as he mounted another step, by this climbing a material stair striving to possess more of God's life, a voice from the bottom of his heart cried to him in tones of thunder, "Luther, Luther, not by climbing stairs—not by works of this sort! 'The just shall live by faith.'"

The work was done. That side of the Reformation which was a protest against the priestly Church was realized in the heart of this man. His preaching was a denial of official priesthoods, for

he spoke to the individual conscience, and showed that a man might be saved without the priest, and that salvation did not flow to the heart through the Church. What a wonderful revolution of things was here! God's Word shut up for centuries in the Latin Bastile, and now set at liberty—once again brought to the light of day!

Luther was not alone in this German revolt. The German princes were ripe for it, and German towns rejoiced in it. It was this element, speaking humanly, backing him that gave Luther a fitting occasion to stand against the Pope, and all Germany leaped up to support him.

Although his journey to Rome had opened his eyes to the state of the then existing religion, yet, for the first year or two, he questioned himself as to whether or not he was presumptuous.

During his stay in Rome, one named Tetzal came, selling indulgences, which brought forth Luther's voice against such proceedings, for he clearly saw it to be the Pope's lie, that mere writing on a piece of paper could forgive sins, and he was much against German money going to Rome for such purposes. This caused him to denounce Tetzal, and made him draw up his ninety-five Theses, exposing the errors of the Papacy, and then boldly nailed them to the church door, and thus challenged the whole priesthood to refute them if they could.

For a time Luther went on in his work unheeded by the Papists, but after a little while he is found to be a too dangerous character for the welfare of the Pope and his colleagues. Consequently, a Papal Bull is issued against him, his books are to be burnt, and he is to repair to Rome. But what does he do? He invites the members of the University and the officials of Wittenberg to meet him at nine o'clock on the morning of December 10th, 1520, at the gate opposite the Church of the Holy Cross, and there, not without solemnity, did what European man never before had done—committed the Bull, and all the paper pamphlets and books connected with it and the question at issue, to the flames. This probed the Popish nest to the centre, and the "mighty hunter," as Luther called the Pope, demanded the victim. He is summoned to Worms, to answer for his doctrine, and thither went emperor, prince, and peasant, all anxious to see the man that had dared to lift his hand and voice against the Pope. His friends advised him not to go. "I will go," said he, "if there are as many devils in Worms as tiles on the house-tops"; and, on April 2nd, 1521, he sets out. Turning to Melancthon, he said, "If I am put to death, cease not, oh, my brother, to teach, and remain firm in the truth. If thou art spared, what matters it if I perish?"

As he journeyed, every one looked upon him as one marching

to his grave. When he arrived at Erfurt, what a scene presented itself to his mind, for here, in his young days, he had to sing at the doors of the rich for his daily bread, and it was here he first saw the Word of God. The gloom of the sightseers here was turned into joy, for many came out on horseback to meet him, and they line the streets to cheer him as he passes along. "Thou must preach to us," they said. He was led into the church, and ascended the pulpit. Often had he swept its floors and opened and locked its doors, in days long past; and now he is in the pulpit. His text was, "Peace be unto you. And when He had so said, He showed unto them His hands, and His side." He denounced all creature work and merit to be but vanity in the matter of salvation, and preached unto the people the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. From Erfurt to Gotha, and thence to Frankfort, where they took him to a school, and he discoursed to the children.

On the 16th, he came in sight of Worms. His heart is leaning upon the Lord. When he beheld the tower of the ancient city where the fate of the Reformation was to be decided, he rose up in the waggon that was conveying him, and sung a hymn he had composed a day or two before—"A safe Stronghold our God is still," &c.

Next morning, he is summoned to appear and stand before the young emperor, princes, nobles, and dignitaries of the Church. A manly modesty overpowers him at the first. He asks for a day to prepare his answers, and he is allowed it.

On the 18th of April, in the afternoon, he is escorted by soldiers through the crowded streets into the imperial presence once more; but he comes not with the timidity of the previous day. "I am here," he said, "to answer for my books. In one part of these, I say that man is saved by God's mercy, and not by going on pilgrimages, and doing penances, and such like. This part I dare not retract. A second portion of my writings is directed against Papal abuses and tyranny. This part—the abuses existing—I dare not retract. In a third portion of my works, I have used personalities and hasty words, which I now regret. This portion I most heartily give up. I am but a man, and I may have formed wrong notions; but, if there be anything opposed to Scripture, show it to me, and that which is wrong I will retract, but no more." He was then reprimanded by the official for the liberty he had taken in saying such things, and for not giving a plain and direct answer. Luther then spoke to the Council thus—"Unless I am convicted of error by the testimony of Scripture, or evident reason, I shall not revoke anything that I have written or spoken, for I will not in any wise wound my conscience. I do not conform my belief to the Pope or

the Council's determinations alone, for they have often erred and delivered contradictions one to another. I neither can nor will do or say anything concerning God's Word to the injuring of my conscience. This will I stand to, God helping me. Amen."

After a little further persuasion, the Council retired for that day. The Bishop of Triens, with others, afterwards called on Luther, to try and get him to alter his decision, but he kindly thanked them, remarking that he was not afraid to have his works tried by the Word of God. The Bishop then asked him if he could advise anything for the quieting of the people, but he answered, "None other than that of Gamaliel, for, if it be of men, it will not continue; but, if of God, no power of man can stay it"; and this he asked the Bishop to signify to the Pope.

On the 26th of April, they allowed him to leave Worms for his flock at Wittenberg.

In 1522, he translated the New Testament into the German tongue, but some of the priests prohibited the people reading it. He then showed them that by their tyranny they should not prevail, because he was neither moved by the Pope's curse nor Cæsar's proscription; and the more they tried to slander his doctrine, he, with greater courage, would propagate the Gospel; and, if they should kill him, it would not extinguish it, and God would plague them most grievously if they still proceeded in their furious course. This book so enraged the bishops, priests, monks, and the very dregs of them, that they were determined, if they could not burn him, they would burn all his books.

Such was a few years of Luther's life—the man to whom we are not a little indebted, through God's manifest workings within him and by him, for the freedom which we now have in worshipping God according to His Word and our desire; but oh, how little do we value it!

But the time came for Luther to lay down his body. He was taken with his last illness while going to Isleben, to settle some dispute that arose at the Council of Trent; and, on reaching there, was almost past hope of recovery, but he lingered for some little time.

On February 17th, after eating his supper, he was violently seized with pains in his chest. He took a little medicine, and lay down for an hour or two before the fire. On bidding the friends "good night," he admonished those who were present to pray to God for the propagation of the Gospel, because the Council of Trent and the Pope would attempt wonderful devices against it. He had not rested beyond midnight when he had another severe attack, and he complained of the narrowness of his chest, and, feeling that his life was at an end, began to pray for a continuance of God's mercy for the few remaining moments he had to wait.

Dr. Jonas then asked him if he died in the constant confession of that doctrine of Christ he had so often preached. He answered so as he might be distinctly heard, "Yes," which was the last word he spoke. He then, without any apparent pain, and like as one falling asleep, passed from this life, about three o'clock in the morning of February 18th, 1546, in the sixty-third year of his age. He was buried in the temple in Wittenberg, on February 22nd, many princes and nobles attending to pay the last tribute of respect. Melancthon addressed them with much feeling, and, when done, the coffin was placed by learned divines into a tomb near to the pulpit in which he had so often proclaimed the truth of God. A brass plate was put to indicate the spot where the remains of Luther rest.

A NEW SONG FOR THE NEW YEAR, 1886.

I WILL sing a new song,
And its theme shall be praise
To the God of my mercy,
Who crowneth my days.

I have found His salvation,
And cannot be mute,
But must sing of His name
To a ten-stringèd lute.

From a horrible pit
He hath brought up my soul ;
I was wounded and faint,
But He maketh me whole.

I am catching a glimpse
Of the heavenly day,
While my time, as a shadow,
Is passing away.

On a rock He hath set
My poor slippery feet,
And established my goings,
His favour to meet.

So I'll sing to the Lord
As I journey along,
For indeed in my mouth
He hath put a new song.

MRS. JOSEPH FEARN.

THE Lord loves against love, therefore the believer is encouraged to hope against hope.—*Wakeling*.

"ALL THINGS ARE FOR YOUR SAKES."

LET me tell you, men of the world, and do you tell any man of the world with whom you are acquainted, that God keeps the wheels of His providence moving in their onward course for the sake of His own ransomed people. Tell the men of the world that they are but part of the machinery which has been constructed for carrying out God's own purpose with respect to His people; and remember that the ground of all that the Lord has done for the sake of His people is, the relation in which they stand to Him. They are His own people. It was for them Christ came. Remember His own words, "I am come that they may have life." Who? The sheep that His Father had given Him—the Church of God, which He had purchased with His own blood.

God's people are not of yesterday. It is said of them in Scripture that they were "chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world"; and all that has been done for them, and is now doing for them, is the fruit of the covenant engagement before time of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. There is not one of the dear children of Jesus Christ that is not precious to the Lord—His guests that He keeps as His own special property. He numbers the very hairs of their head, and watches over them with all tenderness and affection as their heavenly Father.

I know what men of the world would say. They ask, "Who shall have the presumption to say that he stands in that position? Who is the arrogant man that shall say he is borne upon the breast of the Lord Jesus? Produce him!" We do produce him. If the poor sinner that speaks to you at this moment could not say that he is saved by the blood of Jesus, he would dishonour God's Word, and make it all an untruth. But God's truth stands unanswerable. He has declared that the man who believes the record is a saved man. I am saved, not because I believe, but because of the *finished work of the Lord Jesus*. There is no presumption in this; and, further, I tell you there is something experimental in it—something that comes home to the heart. Believe me, if men would speak truth, which they do not, and if they were honest, which they are not, upon such a subject as this, they would tell you why they deny these things—just because they do not possess them themselves, and they do not wish others to have them; and I believe this is the very essence of all the objections men make against Gospel preaching.

When we say the Church was everlastingly united to Christ, we are asked, "Why then are men, in their natural state, spoken of as dead men?" We say they were as much in union when dead as ever they were; but if you ask me, "When did these men begin to know and exhibit their union to the Lord Jesus?"

I answer, When the Holy Ghost was pleased to shine into their hearts with the full light of the Gospel; so that faith does not bring the man into union with Christ. I must go higher than that—but it is faith that puts the soul into possession of the spiritual blessings. He may have been in his minority, bound under the law, but all the time he was an heir.

You often hear men that would be very wise and very judicious telling you that all this may be God's truth, but that there is great danger in bringing these doctrines before a congregation. Now, brethren, I cannot believe that. If this be God's truth, it can do injury to no man. We must always remember that, if an angel from heaven were to preach any other Gospel than that which we find in this blessed Book, "let him be accursed." Let us have nothing to do with him. We must stand by the Word of God.—*Krause.*

DANGER FOR IRELAND, AND ENGLAND TOO, IN PROSPECT.

THAT the warning we gave in the November Number of the SOWER was not an untimely one, the following extract from a letter from Ireland, in the *Times*, will prove:—

"What, then, is now to be done? We, a little band of Loyalists, as heaven through the land, have fought bravely of late to keep back the tide at the elections, but, alas! have absolutely and altogether failed. It rushes on in a flood. 'We have no might against this great company.' We appeal, with what almost seems our last cry, to the heart of Great Britain, to its Liberals and Conservatives, to join their hands and protect us. Look to your own future, as well as to ours, and be firm. One false step now may ruin all. To stave off an inevitable conflict by giving in is cowardly. To suffer a knave to bully is more cowardly still. We appeal, sir, to imperial England not to cast us to the wolves. Our Church has been cast out for them. Our property is being devoured by them. Leave us—at any rate leave us—our liberty and our lives."

[Protestants, do not vacillate, but stand firm, and still plead with the God of heaven.]

"ABBA, FATHER!"—It is said, in the "Babylon Gemara," a Jewish work, that it was not permitted slaves to use the title of *Abba* in addressing the master of the family to which they belonged. If so, then the language which Christians are here represented as using is the language of freemen, and denotes that they are not under the servitude of sin.—*Barnes.*

THE ANXIOUS INQUIRER'S PAGE.

A FAMILY PORTRAIT.

"By grace ye are saved."—EPHESIANS ii. 5.

It may serve as a suitable introduction to the subject before us if I note down the substance of a conversation I have just held with one of the Lord's Little-faiths, concerning his hope.

Travelling very much in darkness of soul, being naturally timid and peculiarly fearful lest he should venture to lay hold of a delusive hope, and so build upon a foundation of sand, which would fail him at last, he thus expressed himself:—

"Of late I have been unusually exercised in the night-watches. Waking in the dead of the night, I begin to think about my state before God, until my mind becomes filled with fears that mine is only an educational religion, and not that which springs from the Spirit's work in my soul."

"But what is the object upon which the eyes of your mind are fixed at such times?" I inquired.

"Well, I know," said he, "that I am looking at myself and into myself at such times; but I often hear you say that there can be no spiritual life in a man's soul without producing a *living experience*, and I fear mine is only the effect of natural fear, leading me to seek after peace where my judgment tells me it can alone be found, namely, in Jesus Christ. Thus I was thinking last night, 'What makes me so anxious now about my soul? Is it not because I feel age creeping upon me, and I know that, according to the nature of things, a few more years, and the place that knows me now will know me no more for ever?' This tends to solemnize my mind; but, if this is merely the fruit of natural conviction, it will come to nothing after all."

"Ah! my dear friend," said I, "hypocrites do not think and feel like this. But is it all gloom with you?"

"Oh, no; I cannot say it is! I have some sweet moments of heart-melting hope and comfort under the ministry of the Word. But I fear it is only while you pipe that my soul can dance."

"Stay! Did you not tell me, a short time ago, how sweetly the Lord communed with you, and dissolved your heart in divine gratitude, as you were travelling on a certain railway? This was in answer to your earnest breathings in prayer, and not the effect of the minister's pipe upon your natural feelings. But were not the effects of that sweet visit of love precisely the same as those which follow upon a time of spiritual feeding under the Word preached? Did you not go on, after the sensation of joy had subsided, hanging upon the Word of promise, in child-like simplicity cleaving to the Lord, 'casting all your care upon

Him, really believing He cared for you? I know you did. And is not this just the effect produced by a word which comes, because the Spirit's sweet unction is poured upon it, with divine power into your soul?"

"Yes, it was so; and such are the effects of the Word for a time; but then——"

"Ah! my friend, your '*but then*' springs from the old leaven of unbelief! But what then?"

"Oh, I so soon sink back into my old dark, bewildered, anxious state of soul again; and especially so if my many—and it seems to me my growing—cares about the things of this life come pressing sorely upon me! Yes, I know all my fears are the effect of unbelief. But does not this very thing prove that I am an unbeliever?"

"Listen, my dear friend. There can be no true faith where there is no spiritual life. No unbeliever hath eternal life abiding in him. This is a most important point to be borne in mind. If you have but the beginnings of eternal life, that life, like the spark of fire, tends upward to the Fountain of light, and that upward tending is the beginning of the outflowings of divine faith; but it does not follow that it is accompanied with joy or comfort—yea, it may be totally the reverse. But my judgment of your case—and I speak from daily living experience—is, that you are not only alive from the dead, but that you are in tolerable spiritual health. You have an excellent appetite for the bread of life, and a good spiritual digestion, for you find that time and labour soon bring you back to your old condition of hunger and thirst. Think upon it. If you find yourself craving for food when your natural meal-times come round, do you lament your condition, and conclude that you are unlike mankind in general, and therefore do not properly belong to this world? No; you know it is right to feel empty and hungry, and to desire the return of the accustomed meal. The Lord help you to think simply thus, and to wait in simple confidence, 'looking unto Jesus,' until He comes forth and says to you as of old, 'Children, have ye any meat? Come and dine.' You know His voice, for you have heard it many times; and, moreover, at this moment, I know you feel it is only for the Beloved to 'put in His hand by the hole of the door'—you would instantly rise up to open to Him, while your little hands of faith and hope would 'drop sweet-smelling myrrh'—heart-dissolving love and gratitude—'upon the handles of the lock.'"

"Well," said my friend, "I know what you say is true—at least, I feel it so now—but it won't abide with me."

"Of course not! Did yesterday's dinner satisfy you to-day? You would need the physician if it were so. The precious Word reads—and it is addressed to the new-born babes—'unto whom

coming'—not having come once or twice, but it is continually—every day and every hour the same—ever coming, ever empty, ever needy, ever nothing, that Jesus may fill all, supply all, and be *All in all* ! I will read you a line or two from dear old Father Rutherford, just to the point—'I am every way in your case—as *hard-hearted and dead as any man*—but yet I speak to Christ through my sleep. . . . I know not how to win to a heartsome fill and feast of Christ's love ! . . . Oh, if I could praise Him ! Yea, I would rest content with a heart submissive and dying of love for Him ; and howbeit I won never personally in at heaven's gates. Oh, would to God I could send in my praises to my incomparable Well-Beloved, or cast my love-songs of that matchless Lord Jesus over the walls, that they might light in His lap, before men and angels !' Now, are not these expressions of the man of God the very breathings of your soul, in the midst of your cold moments and dismal frames ? ”

“ Yes, indeed ! But do you think his feelings were like mine ? Did he feel his heart so utterly desolate—so cast out of the Lord's presence, as it were—so totally forsaken as to all sensible nearness to the Lord, and apprehension of His presence, as I feel ? ”

“ His words say as much, and I doubt not it was so with him, yet perhaps more bitter than you have ever experienced. Could the stones of Aberdeen prison tell all that the dear old saint in his bitterness poured forth within his cell, we should possess a companion Lamentation to Jeremiah's ; and yet I know of no man who speaks more sweetly and fully of the intimate communion which the *most needy* of God's family are privileged to enjoy. Hear him again, in the next letter—'I am in need of a word ! A dry plant would have some watering ! My case betwixt Christ, my Lord, and me, standeth between *love* and *jealousy*, *faith* and *suspicion* of His love. It is a marvel He keepeth house with me ! I make many pleas with Christ, but He maketh as many agreements with me. I think His unchangeable love hath said, "*I defy thee to break or change Me !*" If Christ had such changeable and new thoughts of my salvation as I have of it, I think I should be at a sad loss. . . . God be thanked, my Bridegroom tireth not of wooing ! Honour to Him ! He is a wilful Suitor of my soul. But, as love is His, pain is mine, that I have nothing to give Him. . . . The Lord knoweth, if I could, I would sell myself without reversion to Christ ! O sweet Lord Jesus, make a market, and overbid all my buyers ! I dare swear there is a mystery in Christ which I never saw—a mystery of love ! Oh, if He would lay by the lap [the fold] of the covering that is over it, and let my grieving soul see it, I would break the door, and be in upon Him, and get a soul-full of love, for I am a hungered and a famished soul ! Oh, sir, if ye, or any other, would tell Him how

sick my soul is—dying for a hearty draught of Christ's love !' This is a piece of precious, old-fashioned Scotch experience which I fear modern Scotland, wise and prudent though she be, does not understand. The seat of her religion has been shifted from the heart to the head. Nevertheless, a precious remnant still remains, nor shall, I firmly believe, the living power of divine truth ever die out in that honoured land of the noble Knox and the blessed Rutherford. But to return to your complaint, my friend. Can you not tell out the very feelings and needs of your soul in the words I have quoted !"

"Yes," he replied. "What he complains about is exactly what I feel every hour, more or less. But then, I tremble to take my stand by the side of such a man, and fear to conceive that my feelings arise from the same cause as his. I can see in all that he says such holy zeal and indignation against himself, that at once carries conviction with it that he was a man of great grace. But my fears are, that I do not feel intensely enough the wickedness of my heart, so as to drive me in like determined earnest to wrestle with the Lord until He shall confirm His work in my soul."

"Stay, dear friend. Some person had been writing to him, with exactly the same complaint with which you came to me, and his reply is—'I am as hard-hearted and as dead as any man!' Think you, was he deceived in his knowledge of the human heart? No; but he had learnt a few lessons which the Lord is now teaching you. He had learnt to look through his sleep. He had learnt to treat dreams as dreams. As he expresses himself in another place—'Oh, if I could force my heart to believe *dreams to be dreams!* Yet, when Christ gives my fears the lie, and saith to me, "*Thou art a liar!*" *then I am glad!*' Now, what I say to you, I speak from felt experience—from what I pass through every day—almost every waking hour—feeling in myself that I am like one 'twice dead, plucked up by the roots'; and yet, as dear Mr. Hart expresses it—

" 'Tis to credit contradictions;
Talk with Him one never sees;
Cry and groan beneath afflictions,
Yet to dread the thoughts of ease:
'Tis to feel the fight against us,
Yet the victory *hope* to gain;
To believe that Christ has cleansed us,
Though the leprosy remain.

" 'To be steadfast in believing,
Yet to tremble, fear, and quake;
Every moment be receiving
Strength, *and yet be always weak:*

To be fighting, fleeing, turning ;
 Ever sinking, yet to swim ;
 To converse with Jesus, mourning
 For ourselves, or else for Him."

The tears gushed from the eyes of my dear friend as the sweet words told into his heart, and he could not deny that they contained a true portrait of his inner life.

"But," said he, "my dreadful heart is so unutterably deceitful, that I fear I must make shipwreck after all!"

I now turned to Jeremiah xxxii. 40, and read, "And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put My fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from Me."

"You see, dear friend, it is all of *free grace*! 'I will put My fear,' and 'they *shall not* depart from Me.' It is God's *wills* and *shall's*, after all our fightings, and fleeings, and turnings, and sinkings, which must prevail. Nor is there a single discovery made to you of the baseness of your own heart, the power of your unbelief, your emptiness, poverty, coldness, darkness, or rebellion against the God of your mercies, but all, under the divine management of the Holy Comforter, is intended to instruct you, and bring you to live above all that passes and repasses in your own desolate heart, in the simple conviction that your covenant God has taken all that concerns you into His wonderful account, and, having summed up the whole, has made ample, both temporal and eternal, provision for the same in the *grace* given to us in Christ Jesus. But this is the mistake to which we are all prone—having enjoyed now and then a few glimpses of 'the King in His beauty,' and tasted some few droppings of the sweet honey and milk with which the land that is very far off is ever flowing, we think more of the present moment of enjoyment than of the great and glorious inexhaustible treasury which contains our eternal stock, even *the Person of our most glorious Christ*! Even dear Rutherford complains of this as the source of much of his misery thus—'Oh, if I could *dote* (if I may make use of that word in this case) as much upon *Himself* as I do upon His love! It is a pity that Christ *Himself* should not rather be my heart's choice, than Christ's manifested love. It would satisfy me, in some measure, if I had any *bud* [or gem] to give for His love. Shall I offer Him my praises? Alas! He is more than praises!' But it is so. We feel so pleased with ourselves—so satisfied that all is now well—when we can give Him a heart melting with love, in return for His most gracious manifestations. But does He love us for what we feel towards Him? No; but rather 'God commendeth His love toward us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.' Again, dear friend, suffer me to point out to you the cause

of all the anxious care and heart-searchings which arise in your mind as you wake up in the quiet night-watches; and, as the Lord the Spirit shall confirm your soul in these things, instead of complaints and bitter things arising out of your conclusions, He will give you songs in the night. Read with me the thirty-third verse of the thirty-first chapter of Jeremiah—‘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.’ Now, this is the point I desire to bring you to dwell upon, and from the contemplation of which you will ultimately get much sweet establishment. You are full of anxious inquiries. ‘If it be so, why am I thus?’ But there could arise no such anxious feeling in your mind if the law of God were not written in your heart!”

“True,” said my friend, “I know something of the terrible thunderings of Mount Sinai, and have long been brought to feel that no hope or prospect of salvation can be found under the shadow of that fiery mountain; but this does not seem to be the cause of my present exercises. I see most clearly that salvation must be, from the first to the last, all of free and sovereign grace. I know of no hope or expectation of good things to come, but in the Person, blood, and righteousness of Jesus only; but my anxieties arise from a trembling fear lest I do not rightly believe, and rightly go to the Lord, and rightly feel the burden of my sinfulness, and rightly put off the old man with his deeds, and rightly put on the new man. Indeed, my desire is not so much after a knowledge of the way of salvation, for that I think I begin to see somewhat clearly; but all now seems to turn in my mind upon the question, Are these things which I feel, and is the cry which is produced, I may say, incessantly in my soul, the living cry and the living feeling of a heaven-born child of God?”

“Truly you have made a good confession,” said I. “This is just to the point. The law of which the Holy Ghost speaks is something more than Sinai’s ten commandments. These may be stored up in the memory, and many a Pharisee prides himself in his mistaken belief that he remembers them so well, and keeps them so strictly, that he pleases God thereby. But Paul tells us (1 Cor. ii. 16), ‘But we have the mind of Christ.’ And again (Rom. viii. 9), ‘Now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.’ No man *can* have the mind of Christ unless he is a living member of the body of Christ; nor can the Spirit of Christ be found in any man, unless he is one of God’s own adopted children; as it is written, ‘Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your heart, crying,

Abba, Father!’ It is by this Spirit of Christ dwelling in the new man, the law of the Spirit of life put into the inward parts, and the holy law of love and liberty written upon the heart—which is more than mere precepts hoarded up in the memory—that the heaven-born child of God, having the mind of Christ, knows what he is in his sinful self, with a feeling spiritual knowledge which affects his heart with sorrow while he dwells in this tabernacle, because he cannot do, nor think, nor feel, nor say the thing that he would. Rutherford has told us what he would do. He would, if he could, so requite Christ for His love, and the Father of mercies for His grace, that he would have been living in Aberdeen prison as he is now living among the ‘spirits of just men made perfect,’ adoring in communion, and magnifying the riches of God’s grace, and loving his all-glorious Christ with a suitable devotion. Come, dear friend, what say you to these things? Is not this the uppermost desire in your anxious heart?”

“Yes, I can truly say it is so—at least, I know, if I could always live with my heart softened by a sense of His love, I should live above my doubts and fears.”

“But, my friend, this would be living by sense—that is, by the sensible feeling of enjoyment, whereas ‘the just shall live by faith’; and faith has not so much to do with the present penny as with the treasure in the bank. The present penny is spent the moment it is received, but the treasure remains always the same. However, the Holy Comforter shall yet show you that it is the empty vessel that is your every-day proof that of His fulness you have already received, and grace upon grace, to empty you of all self, and grace to go empty and nothing to receive more grace. The Lord increase your faith!”—*From “Gospel Cottage Lectures.”*

GOD preserves His own work by His Spirit—first, He moves us to do, and then He preserves us in doing, and arms us against the impediments.—*Sibbes.*

A CHRISTIAN should let us see his graces walking abroad in daily conversation; and, if such guests are in the house, they will often look out of the windows, and be publicly seen abroad in all duties and holy actions.—*Gurnall.*

WHAT is our death but a night’s sleep? for as through sleep all weariness and faintness pass away and cease, and the power of the spirit comes back again, so that in the morning we arise fresh and joyous, so, at the last day, we shall rise again, as if we had only slept a night, and shall be fresh and strong.—*Martin Luther.*

OUR SEED-BASKET FOR YOUNG READERS.

APPLES OF GOLD IN BASKETS OF SILVER.

HONOURABLE WOMEN.

CATHERINE OVERTON was born at Bedworth, in the county of Warwick. Her father was Mr. Valentine Overton, Rector of Bedworth. It pleased God betimes to plant the seeds of grace in her heart, which first discovered themselves when she was about fifteen years old, at which time God discovered to her the corruption of her nature, by which a deep impression was made upon her tender years. The following narration was found in her cabinet after her decease :—

“I was but young. My father, being at prayers in his family, I many times found such sweetness, and was so affected therewith that I could not but wish that my heart might oftener be in such a frame. I was convinced in my conscience that, without faith, I could not be saved, and that every faith would not serve turn to bring me to heaven. Hereupon, I fell to examination of myself, and, though I could not find the marks of a strong, yet, through God’s mercy, I found the marks of a true, though but weak, faith, which was some comfort and support to me.

“When I was about seventeen years old, my parents sent me to wait upon a young gentlewoman in Northamptonshire, at which time, being far from my near and dear relations, and meeting with some other discouragements in the family, through want of the means of grace which I formerly enjoyed, I grew very melancholy. I began also to have great workings of conscience in me, and Satan, that deadly enemy, took his advantage, through my ignorance of his devices, to raise up fears and terrors of conscience by reason of my manifold sins ; and by reason thereof I had no peace nor rest in my soul day or night, but was persuaded that all the threatenings contained in the Book of God against wicked and ungodly men did belong to me, and were my portion, insomuch that, when I took up the Bible to read therein, I was filled with fear and trembling, yet, withal, I durst not neglect it. Thus I continued a great while under these grievous temptations and inward affliction of conscience, yet durst not open my mind to any, judging my case to be like nobody’s else. But God, who is rich and infinite in mercy, and Jesus Christ, who bought His elect at so dear a rate, would not suffer any of His to be lost, and, therefore, He was graciously pleased to preserve, strengthen, and uphold me by His own power from sinking into despair. But I was so weakened by the anguish of heart that, when I came home, in six months, my dear parents scarcely knew me.”

After remaining at home for some years, she was united in marriage to Mr. S. Clarke, minister at Shotwick, which union the Lord greatly blessed. But I shall proceed with the narration of her exercises of soul in her own words:—

“It pleased God for many years to keep me in a disconsolate state, not clearly evidencing the certain assurance of His love to my soul, so that many times I questioned whether I had any part in Jesus Christ or not—whether I should ever attain to life and salvation or no—and this made me walk with a drooping spirit, so that I could take no true comfort in anything. But, though heaviness endured for a night, yet joy came in the morning, when the Lord caused the light of His countenance to shine upon me. Upon the death of my youngest child, it lay very heavy upon me, so that I was brought oft upon my knees to beg support from God, and to crave His grace, that I might not speak nor act anything whereby God’s name might be dishonoured, and that He would make up this outward loss with some more durable and spiritual comforts; and I found a seasonable and gracious answer to these my requests, for the Lord did sweetly manifest His special love to my soul, assuring me that He was my gracious and covenant Father in Christ, whereby my love to Him was much increased, and, by His grace, was wrought in me a holy submission unto His will, as well in suffering as in doing, as also by avoiding whatsoever might provoke Him to withdraw the evidences of His love from me. And, furthermore, I bless God, and speak it to the praise of His rich and free grace, my prayers and earnest desires have been answered by His giving me comfortable assurance, both from the testimony of His holy Word and the witness of His blessed Spirit, of my eternal and everlasting salvation in and by Christ Jesus.

“By all these I have gained this experience—first, that God is true and faithful in making good all His promises seasonably unto us, as that ‘He will never leave nor forsake us,’ &c. Secondly, that it is not in vain to wait upon God, and to seek unto Him in our straits who is more ready to hear than we are to ask. Thirdly, that I desire to see—yea, and the Lord hath showed me—the vanity and uncertainty of the most satisfying comforts that this world can afford, and what an emptiness there is in them, and I desire to sit loosely from them, that I may be ready to part with them when God calls them from me or me from them.

“I found also by experience that, in the least affliction, if God hides His face from us, and withdraws the evidences of His love, we can neither do nor suffer anything; and, on the contrary, I found that I could, with much cheerfulness, bear great distempers when I enjoyed the favour of God in them, so that then I could readily say, ‘Good is the work of the Lord, as well as

His Word'; and 'Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.' I found also that, by my pains and sickness, I was the better able to sympathize with, and to pity and pray for, others in the like case. Also, I hereby learned to prize health, and that because in health we have liberty and opportunity to enjoy the public ordinances with others of God's people, whereby the graces of God's people are quickened and strengthened, which otherwise, by reason of our corrupt nature, are apt to grow cold and languish—because in health we find sweet, satisfying comfort in the use of God's creatures, whereas, in sickness, the daintiest food is loathsome. The consideration of these things made me the more to prize health, to be very thankful for it, and the more careful to improve health, and employ the strength given to God's glory.

"I found also that I was very unable to fit and prepare myself for a comfortable approach to that solemn ordinance, the Lord's Supper. Though I prayed in private, and desired the prayers of others on my behalf, yet I came far short of what I desired, or what was required, so that I found little spiritual relish and comfort in the use of it, so that my spirit was oft much troubled, fearing lest some secret sin, undiscovered, had caused the Lord to hide His face from me. But even then my gracious God brought this into my mind, that the Lord does sometimes afflict us for the exercise of our graces, as well as to humble us for our sins. I also considered that, as the Lord in this sacred ordinance doth renew His covenant of grace, sealing unto us the pardon of our sins, through the blood of Christ, so He calls us to renew our covenant with Him, to believe in Him, and trust upon Christ for life and salvation; and that comfortable promise was precious to my soul, 'Though He hide His face from us for a little moment, yet with mercy and loving-kindness He will return to us again.' Blessed be the Lord for ever! I desire to treasure up these experiences, that, in times of temptation, I may resist Satan, 'steadfast in the faith,' for I am not altogether ignorant of his devices; and God's promise is, that in all these things we shall be 'more than conquerors.'

"On September 18th, there came to me the sad news of the death of my son, John Clarke, a faithful and godly minister at Cotgrove, in Nottinghamshire. Thus, as the waves of the sea follow one another, so God is pleased to exercise me with one affliction after another. Indeed, it hath been the Lord's course and dealing with me ever since He stopped me in the way, as I was posting to hell, to raise up one affliction or other, either inward or outward, or from my own corrupt heart or nature; and, not having grace and wisdom to carry myself under these various afflicting dispensations, as in the case of the loss of this

dear son, from whom I had much soul-comfort by his spiritual letters and writings to me, this caused my griefs and sorrows to take the greater hold upon me, upon the loss of one who was so useful to me. My grief grew so great that I took no pleasure in anything in the world, but was so overwhelmed with melancholy that I judged I could not live long in such a condition. Hereupon I began to examine my heart why it should be so with me. I often and earnestly sought unto the Lord with many prayers and tears, beseeching Him to quiet my heart, and it pleased God seasonably to hear my prayers and to regard my tears, by calming my spirit, and giving me to submit to His holy will and pleasure who is a God of judgment, and who waits to be gracious unto those that trust in Him, so that I could say, 'I called upon the Lord in my distress, and He answered me, and delivered me.' 'Bless the Lord, O my soul.'

"The Lord knows that I write these things for no other end but that God may have the glory, and that others may be encouraged to seek unto God in their straits, and to 'trust in Him at all times.' Amen."

She had some friends from London come to dine with her in the month of May. Whilst at dinner, it pleased God to strike her with a shivering, which brought on a distemper, from which she never recovered. As to the state of her soul, during her sickness, she enjoyed, through God's mercy, much joy and peace in believing. She would often cry out, "Hold out, faith and patience!" She earnestly desired to be dissolved, saying, "It is hard work to die."

A few minutes before she departed, her daughter speaking to her of Jesus Christ, she said, "My Lord and my God!" and thus she passed away, exchanging this life for a better, aged seventy-three years.

R. F. R.

[Our friends at Bedworth would be glad to find this religion at the Rectory still.]

ROYALTY AND POPERY.

THE following notice speaks for itself as to which way the heads of our nation are inclining respecting Popery. Time was when England's monarch would not have acted thus:—

"A requiem Mass was celebrated on Saturday, December 5th, at St. James's Roman Catholic Church, near Manchester Square, for the repose of the soul of the late King of Spain. Representatives of the Queen and Royal Family, and nearly the whole of the *Corps Diplomatique*, were present."

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.

MY DEAR AUNT,—I was very glad to have a letter from you near the end of last year. Christmas coming on, and having very long hours, I have put off from time to time answering your kind and loving letter.

God, in His mercy, has indeed been kind to me, a hell-deserving sinner. I was anxious about my state before God from the age of ten years. No real peace or rest did I get or find till I had been in this country four years. I went to hear my honoured uncle, your dear husband, when about fourteen years old, and it did appear to me how impossible it was for man to be just before God; and often have I felt condemned, and could not take or apply any blessing to myself, and I used to go mourning about, for I felt there was no good thing in me—that I was quite dead to all spiritual life, and had no power to approach a holy God, that could not look upon sin. All the time I used to hear my dear uncle describe the all-sufficiency of the obedience and death of Christ to sin-sick, sin-burdened sinners, and the efficacy of His blood to cleanse from all sin, so that God could look upon them as His children, “without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.” Then I have heard him speak of the lamb without blemish, as typical of Christ, the Lamb in the great sacrifice, when He died on Calvary for His own, whom the Father had given Him from before the foundation of the world; also, the cities of refuge, the man-slayer, and the avenger of blood; and how beautifully he explained all the Jewish rites and ceremonies, and that they had their end in Christ, the Antitype! Still I could not say or feel I had any interest in the matter. The fact was, I was like the sinner who is described as the publican who cried, “God be merciful to me a sinner!” I had not then come to the place to say and feel, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” Still, I loved the people who went where uncle preached, and listened with the greatest attention; and I was kept from many outward sins and temptations.

About three years after I arrived here, I was in such a dark state that I cried day and night for weeks together, longing that my heavy burden might be removed, that Jesus might be my Surety, and that I might find peace in His love. It nearly brought me to a sick-bed; but God applied such sweet texts to my mind that the burden was taken away, and I rejoiced in Christ as my Sin-Bearer, Surety, Friend, Elder Brother, and Peacemaker. I saw Him by faith on Calvary, and the Word came to me with power. I was melted into tears, and, instead of condemnation, all was joy and peace, and I was as a weaned child.

I could say, "Abba, Father!" indeed, and the dear Spirit did open up the Scriptures to my mind. I seemed led by the hand, and felt to lean on Jesus' bosom, and my soul did have sweet converse with my Lord. I felt to plunge by faith into that precious fountain, and did sit at His feet and learn of Him, when all that my dear uncle had said respecting Christ and His Church—their union, oneness, and safety—and that all that the Father had given Him should be brought in, and testify of His sovereign grace, was sweet to me indeed. Christ was All in all to me, and I could say from my heart, "Not by works of righteousness which I have done, but according to His mercy He hath saved me," &c. "By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." Yes—

" 'Twas all of Thy grace we were brought to obey,
While others were suffered to go," &c.

I am sure that He will not speak peace and pardon to our souls to-day, and leave us to-morrow. He that hath begun the work in us will carry it on—hope that maketh not ashamed, but maketh glad.

"Members of His body, of His flesh, and His bones," was very sweetly applied to me, going along the street one Sunday, which melted my heart in thankfulness, to think how dear His redeemed children are—that not a hoof shall be left behind, but they "all shall be taught of Him," and "great shall be the peace of His children."

" My soul through many changes goes;
His love no variation knows."

My dear aunt, you have two natures—the one opposed to the other. You have been spared to a good old age. God says, "Even to hoar hairs will I carry you." He will strengthen thee in every trial; yea, He will strengthen thy heart, and lay thee down in peace.

We can, through grace and mercy, say, "'To whom shall we go?' Thou art the Christ, the desire of our hearts, the joy of our tongues, the sweetest of ten thousand to our souls." "We love Him because He first loved us." Stupendous love to worms of the earth, to take them up out of the horrible pit, to place our feet on Christ, the Rock of Ages, and call us sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty! "Grace first contrived the way," &c.; "grace taught my soul to pray," &c.; and grace has kept me and you to this day, and will not let us go. "To them that look for Him will He appear without sin unto salvation."

I thank you for the SOWER, and was pleased to read the

sermon* of dear uncle's. It was so much like him, and is the only way that a man can be just before his Maker.

May the dear Lord keep, sustain, and give you grace according to your day! So prays,

Your affectionate nephew,

ALFRED E. PLAYER.

St. Kilda, Australia, August 24th, 1885.

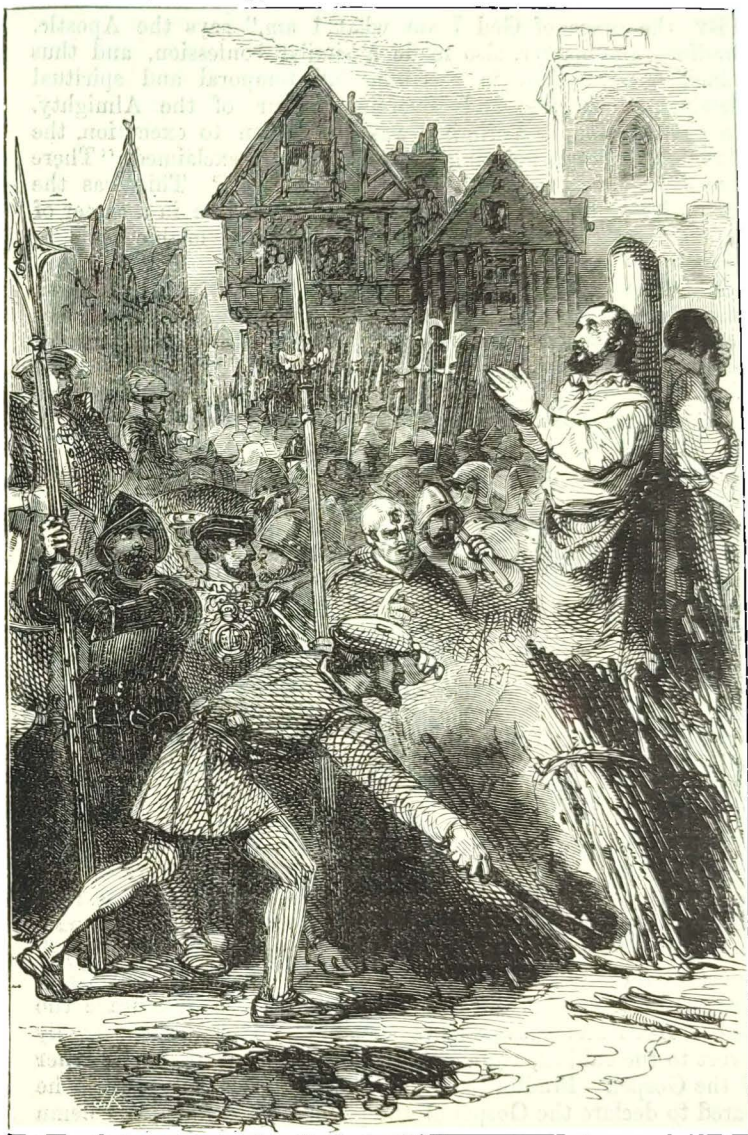
[The writer of the above letter—an orphan lad—left his native town, Saffron Walden, about the year 1853 or 1854. The truths he had heard made a lasting impression upon his memory; and the imperishable seeds of grace being, by God, sown in his heart, began to germinate here, and have sprung up, and bear fruit in that far-off land, as his letter testifies. What an encouragement to the Lord's servants, however engaged, to labour on! "Casting their bread upon the waters," they *shall* "find it after many days," for God has said, "So shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth; it *shall not* return unto Me void," &c. (Isa. lv. 11). Even so, Lord, let it be!—R. F. R.]

DEATH OF MR. VANDERBILT.

MR. W. H. VANDERBILT, the well-known owner of railways and speculator in stocks, died suddenly on Tuesday, December 8th. At breakfast his health and spirits were better than usual. He spent the forenoon in the studio of Mr. Ward, the sculptor, who is executing a bust by commission of the New York Medical University, to commemorate a liberal gift it recently received from Mr. Vanderbilt. On returning home he had luncheon, and laughed and chatted pleasantly during the meal. He said he intended to go for a drive, but, instead of doing so, he went to the office of Mr. Garrett, the railway president. He had been upwards of an hour with that gentleman when he suddenly fell from his chair, and died in three minutes from apoplexy. He has left an enormous fortune, estimated by some at from thirty to fifty millions. This cannot profit him now. How such a circumstance emphasises that solemn inquiry, "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" We know not how it was with Mr. Vanderbilt; but, reader, may we be most concerned to "win Christ and be found in Him."

THOSE who are blameless before God should be harmless among men (Phil. ii. 15).—*Wakeling.*

* See the SOWER for September, 1884.



"FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH."

"FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH."

"By the grace of God I am what I am," says the Apostle. Bradford, the martyr, also made a similar confession, and thus coincided with Paul in ascribing all temporal and spiritual blessings to the free and sovereign favour of the Almighty. On one occasion, as a criminal was passing on to execution, the illustrious martyr, pointing to the prisoner, exclaimed, "There goes John Bradford, but for the grace of God!" This was the preventive and restraining power that stopped him in a career of sin and folly, curbed his lusts and passions, and enabled him to "choose the better part."

Manchester was the birthplace of John Bradford. The citizens of this large and populous city are reminded of this fact by a statuette of the martyr, which adorns a portion of the exterior of that imposing edifice, the new Town Hall. After receiving a good education, we find him, in the days of Henry VIII., secretary to Sir John Harrington, who was treasurer of the king's camps and buildings at Boulogne. On account of his ability as a scribe, and his expertness at figures, Bradford gained the favour of his master, and became his confidential adviser in all weighty matters. A very good prospect appeared to lay before him. But a sudden change passed over the mind of the secretary, which caused him to resign his post, return to his native land, and preach the Gospel. Bradford at once proceeded to the University of Cambridge, and earnestly set to work at the prosecution of his studies; and his diligence was attended with such success that, after a few years' residence, the degree of Master of Arts was bestowed upon him. Another honour awaited him. But a short time elapsed before the Master and Fellows of Pembroke Hall offered him a Fellowship in their college, and Bradford was now considered one of the luminaries of the University.

During his residence in Cambridge, one of his dearest and most intimate friends was Martin Bucer. This worthy man had perceived that Bradford was not only a diligent and learned scholar, but a humble and sincere Christian, and one well qualified to proclaim the grand and majestic truths of the Gospel. Bucer would often suggest this matter to his friend, but Bradford's natural shyness and reserve would at once discourage the idea. But Bucer became more pressing, and would continually revert to the subject, urging Bradford to go forward as a preacher of the Gospel. Bradford shrunk from the task—not because he feared to declare the Gospel of the grace of God, but the solemn responsibility of the post awed him. On one occasion he pleaded his meagre learning—a rather ungrounded plea—as an excuse for

not daring to preach the Word. But Bucer's answer was to the point. "If," said this good man, "thou hast not fine wheat bread, yet give the poor people barley bread, or whatsoever else the Lord hath committed unto thee." At length Bradford yielded; and Dr. Ridley, who was then Bishop of London, gave him a prebend in St. Paul's Cathedral, where he diligently laboured for three years.

But the liberty of preaching the Gospel enjoyed in King Edward's days was short-lived, for, very soon after the accession of Queen Mary, those who had been most diligent and prominent in this gracious work were thrown into prison. Bradford was among the number. On August 16th, 1553, he was incarcerated in the Tower, and he was imprisoned from that time in various places of confinement until the month of January, 1555. During that long period he was variously employed. One day he would be arguing with some friar who had been sent to harass him; and the next day he might devote to the compilation of some sweet and edifying epistle to those who needed "building up in their most holy faith." At other times he would be engaged in prayer or study. Although a prisoner, Bradford was not idle. Many and constant were the discussions he had with his adversaries, and at these trying times he would preserve a surprising equanimity, and answer their questions in a concise and scholarly manner. Bradford must have possessed a remarkably calm mind and good temper, for it is difficult to discover the least ruffle or sign of discomposure in the many long discussions he had with his crafty and malicious foes. But the brave martyr was enabled to resist their machinations. Scarcely a day passed during his long confinement without a visit from some bishop, friar, or other person. All these various parties had one object in view. They wished Bradford to desert the ranks of Christ and join their side; but, thanks be unto God, their wishes were never realized.

During his imprisonment, however, there were times of repose. John Bradford was permitted to spend some of his hours in solitude, and these periods he profitably employed in prayer, study, and writing. His letters, remarkable for their elegance of style, simplicity of language, and enunciation of Christian experience, were penned during the period when he was left alone in his cell, unmolested by his enemies. These letters attracted considerable attention, and were subjected to keen criticism in the Houses of Parliament. The Earl of Derby stated, on one occasion, that they had greatly contributed to the spread of "heresy" in the kingdom.

At length Bradford's imprisonment came to a close. On the day before his execution, he was conveyed during the night from

the Compter to Newgate. On the following morning, Bradford was conducted to Smithfield, where the stake was erected at which he was to be burned. A companion joined him in the flames. John Leaf, who had been an apprentice in London, suffered at the same stake. On their arrival at the stake, around which a large concourse of spectators had assembled, the two heroes engaged in silent prayer, until they were rudely disturbed by the sheriff, who said to Bradford, "Arise, and make an end, for the press of the people is great." They then undressed for the fire. When all was ready, the undaunted martyr, with uplifted eyes and hands towards heaven, impressively exclaimed, "Oh, England, England, repent thee of thy sins! repent thee of thy sins! Beware of idolatry! Beware of false Antichrists! Take heed they do not deceive you." The sheriff commanded Bradford to be quiet, threatening to tie his hands unless he was obedient. "Oh, Master Sheriff," said Bradford, "I am quiet. God forgive you this, Master Sheriff." One of the officers then said to him, "If you have no better learning than that, you are but a fool, and had best hold your peace." With the wood crackling and the flames fiercely glaring around him, the happy and peaceful martyr, now on the threshold of everlasting joy and glory, exclaimed, "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth to eternal salvation, and few there be that find it." A few moments more, and he was gone! Thus bravely died John Bradford, one of the most noble of England's "noble army of martyrs."

With Popery coming in upon us like a mighty flood—with convents, monasteries, and mass-houses constantly cropping up around us—with friars, monks, nuns, priests, and Jesuits busily and craftily at work on every hand—how solemn and how timely does the dying appeal of Bradford sound in our ears—"Oh, England, repent thee of thy sins! Beware of idolatry! Beware of false Antichrists!" These words might have been uttered to-day instead of three hundred years ago. Idolatry of various types is assuming large proportions in our land, and Antichrists are deceiving vast numbers of our countrymen. Rome is again aiming at supremacy, and her efforts have been crowned with no little success. But, thanks be unto God, although that system may imagine that she is on the road to success, yet the day will assuredly come when all systems of error, Rome included, will be dashed into pieces, and truth will "reign o'er the world, supreme and alone."

J. C.

REASON is God's candle in man, but as a candle must first be lighted, so reason must be illuminated by divine grace before it can savingly discern spiritual things.—*Krause*.

BARRENNESS LAMENTED AND QUICKENING LIFE DESIRED.

BY HENRY FOWLER.

"My soul cleaveth unto the dust: quicken Thou me according to Thy Word."—PSALM cxix. 25.

THIS Psalm is an open declaration of spiritual, internal religion, and to the end of time will be read with pleasure and profit by the chosen generation. The words selected are evidently the language and breathing of one "begotten again to a lively hope," "translated from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son," "born again, not of the will of the flesh, but of God."

The carnal, whether professor or profane, are utter strangers to the import of the text, being strangers to the things of the Spirit, of which the text is a lively expression. "The entrance of God's Word giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple" (ver. 130); and when the power of God is effectually displayed unto a sinner, he abides no longer in darkness, but hath "the light of life, even the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ"; and such are properly denominated "children of light," because "the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth."

Nor is it possible for any change to take place, as respects the soul's condition. He is justified from all things by the imputed righteousness of Jesus, and the communication of the Spirit by the Lord of life and glory is the most substantial evidence of his complete justification—"If ye be led by the Spirit of God, then are ye not under the law." I beg you to keep this in view, as you peruse the following, and not for a moment suppose I mean to convey an idea that the believer's changes in his daily warfare make any change in the new covenant, in his justification, or in the omnipotent work of regeneration.

1. The special energy, guidance, and direction of the Lord the Spirit is much prayed for, and more needed, by a real believer in Christ, for great deadness to spiritual exercises makes part of his daily cross, and which he will be more or less subject to until he is called to lay down his armour and quit the field—until "mortality is swallowed up of life." It is no uncommon thing for a believer to be wounded—yea, to fall in the field of battle (see Prov. xxiv. 16; Micah vii. 8; Luke xxii. 16); nevertheless, he shall not be utterly cast down, but shall experience, like Peter, a most gracious look of love from Jesus, fully expressive of the superaboundings of His richest grace, even to the chief of sinners.

The pilgrim's progress is not only different to what the world imagines, but very different to what the believer in his early days considered it to be, insomuch that he thinks it very strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try him. And such is the real case, at times, that he is assailed with the most horrid temptations of Satan, coming into his soul like a flood, threatening destruction to both body and soul. Unbelief also joins with the old hissing serpent, and that at a time when his covenant God hides His face behind the cloud, so that he finds little or no freedom at the throne of grace. It is true the well of living water is the same, but the well is deep, his faith is weak (as to the exercise of it), and his unbelief very strong, insomuch, if he read the free promise, unbelief introduceth so many "ifs" and "may-bes" that he is afraid of reading the Book of God, lest he should discover something to distress him. When it is thus with any believer, the most favourable opinion that another child of God may be pleased to entertain of his case fails of giving him peace or tranquillity of soul—"My soul refuseth to be comforted." Thus he "walketh in darkness, and hath no light"—is without the Sun of Righteousness for a season—yet his prayer is to the God of his life, "Quicken Thou me."

Now, when a child of light prays to be quickened, it manifesteth a sensibility of creature-insufficiency. Something of this insufficiency the Apostle Paul felt when he wrote his seventh chapter to the Romans—"When I would do good, evil is present with me. I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members"; and it pressed him so heavily that he cried out, as one gasping for life, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Thus we see an Apostle kept in motion by two opposite principles—the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, so that he could not do the thing that he would.

And let it be observed that nothing so effectually teaches creature-insufficiency as experience. Nay, a person would not suppose himself so very insufficient to perform the least spiritual act, did he not daily feel the diabolical workings of a deceitful, unbelieving heart. The guilt, power, and dominion of sin is indeed removed from every believer by the one offering of Jesus on the tree accursed. The Spirit of life given unto us is the evidence of it, but the in-being of sin the believer is called to bear and contend with as his daily cross. Even as the Canaanites were left in the land to try and prove our fathers, and to demonstrate the faithfulness of God to His promise, so Jehovah hath left us this cross—the corrupt principles of depraved nature—lest we should settle on our lees, like Moab,

and lightly esteem the Rock of our salvation, like Jeshurun, and take pleasure in our supposed attainments.

Now, the work and design of the Holy Spirit is, to spoil the pride of human nature, or, in other words, to keep the vessels of eternal mercy daily sensible of their dependence on their living Head. They were chosen by the Father to be conformed to the image of His Son, but surely there would be no conformity whatever between a lowly Jesus and a lordly disciple. Oh, the pride of the human heart! How difficult the conflict to walk in Jesus even as we have received Him! How mortifying to my pride to be daily coming, daily receiving, daily casting all my care upon Him! Nothing less than the power of Jehovah can enable the believer so to do.

But generally, before the Lord communicates, He puts a cry in the soul—such a cry as no hypocrite in Zion ever experienced—and this cry is, in my opinion, a most substantial evidence of our sonship. It is the product of the Spirit helping our infirmities, and it is put forth at a throne of grace to God our Father, though not at all times expressed in words, for the child of light cannot sometimes order his speech by reason of darkness; yet his cry is real prayer, and is sure to meet with acceptance before God, being “the groaning of the Spirit,” who “maketh intercession for the saints, according to the will of God.” Thus the believer unburdens his soul, and, in the exercise of precious faith, casts his cares and distresses on the shoulders of the appointed Burden-Bearer, even on Him who is “mighty to save,” and thus proves the truth of the observation, “He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer,” but speaking peace unto His people and to His saints, that they turn not again to folly.

When a child of God prays to be quickened, it is that he may be raised above the carnality of his mind, for “to be carnally-minded is death”—that he may be raised above the reasonings of the flesh, that produce nothing but bondage, wrath, and death, being allied to the old covenant—that he may be enlarged in the sweetest fellowship with his most dear Father in the Beloved—that he may find boldness to enter into His presence by the blood of Jesus—yea, that he may be enamoured, as in the day when Jesus “brought him into His banqueting-house, and His banner over him was love,” when he could say with the poet—

“Thou art my ocean, Thou my God;
In Thee the passions of the mind,
With joys and freedom unconfined,
Exult, and spread their powers abroad.”

2. To whom does a believer pray in a time of trial? Not to

the gods, as did the sailors with Jonah, in a time of temporal distress, for unto us there is but one God, essentially so; nor to the creatures, for who among the sons of the mighty can be compared unto our God? nor to the angels, for they are but ministering spirits; no, nor to the saints, for they have nothing but what they receive; but to the Lord Jehovah, as signified by the personal pronoun "Thou" in my text, by whom David meant to say, "My own covenant God," for where shall a child of God go, in a time of distress and want, but unto its Father? Our Lord taught us this when in the flesh—"If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give His Holy Spirit unto them that ask Him?" Besides, who can quicken the dead? None but He that made the living; and it requires the same power to carry on the work of faith in a believer as it did to quicken at the first. "Ye are kept," says Peter, "by the power of God."

Now, when David saith, "Quicken Thou me," it implies the total insufficiency of all creatures, either angelic or human, to perform it. It is true, the Lord may use means, such as the preaching of the Gospel, &c.; but still He is the Main-spring who sets all the wheels in spiritual motion. Hence we find the Scriptures uniformly give all the praise to the First Cause—see Ephesians ii. 1—5; 1 Peter i. 3; which I adduce as a sample of the amazing displays of God's power.

But let it be remembered that the separate and distinct glory of the Father, in the operation of His power on the elect, by no means obscures the glory of the other Persons in Jehovah, for as the Father quickeneth, even so the Son quickeneth; and as the Father and Son quickeneth, so the Holy Ghost quickeneth. "The Word of God is quick and powerful." Such was the voice of Jesus from the heavenly glory to the conversion of Saul of Tarsus; and the might of the Spirit is the same in all His amazing operations on the heirs of promise.

These points ought to be insisted on much more than they are, for they are rejected not only by the avowed infidel, but treated as matters of no great importance by the generality of our preachers—yes, and such, too, of whom we would hope favourably, but who ought to be rebuked sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, and that they may sound forth this important article of our most holy faith.

What a miserable plight must a Church be in when guided by a preacher who, from Sabbath to Sabbath, scarcely mentions the foundation truths of the Gospel, but who substitutes in the place of the Gospel truths, oratorical art, to move the passions of the spiritually dead, to gain their foolish approbation! "My soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united."

Some assert that a believer, by virtue of the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit already received, can remove every obstacle that stands in his way, can take the promise, and apply it to his own use as circumstances require. But this is, I think, as opposite to the truth of God as it is to the daily experience of the children of God, for I would ask such, if any received principle of life be sufficient to guide and direct the partaker of grace into a spiritual knowledge of Christ, in His power, love, and grace, then where does the sovereign power of the Spirit appear? Where is the necessity for Him (the Spirit) to bring all things to our remembrance—to glorify Jesus, by taking of His and showing it unto us? Paul, jealous of his Master's honour, ascribes the shedding abroad of God's love in our hearts unto the Holy Ghost (Rom. v. 5); and, in chapter xv., expresses his most earnest desire that they might "abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost," all which evidently proves that no (believing) man can quicken his own soul—that the way of a (believing) man is not in himself—that it is not in him that walketh to direct his own steps—that man's goings, *i.e.*, spiritual movements, are of the Lord the Holy Ghost. Glory to God, "it is not of him that willeth." Boasting is for ever excluded, and the saved sinner a debtor to sovereign grace all the way to the kingdom.

But is it possible that a believer can be the subject of so much depravity, and yet have a right to the promise of life? It is more than possible. Nay, to suppose that a person must feel less of sin in his nature, in order to exercise faith in the promise, is to obscure the glory of the Gospel, which is a revelation of sovereign, free grace, consequently, in no way dependent, as to its efficacy, on the worthiness of the creature. Upon this point, as on many others, our spiritual guides, so-called, fall into many mistakes, to the great perplexity of many of the Lord's dear people. They tell us that sin must be rooted out of our nature, or subdued in such a manner as to feel it die daily—that we must keep the law somehow or other, in order to strengthen our confidence in God. Now, it is by such words of vanity that legal preachers are but too successful in binding the hands and feet of such as are "asking the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward." I myself listened awhile to their tale, even until I had nearly sunk in despair; but He who watches over His wandering sheep in the cloudy and dark day appeared for my help, and sensibly relieved my desponding mind. I saw the fulness and freeness of the Gospel. I felt the power of the blood of sprinkling, which was a full answer to every accusation. The Word of truth was the means, but Omnipotence was the grand cause, even the Holy Ghost. Thus the Spirit of adoption comes not

by the works or preaching of the law, but by the hearing of faith. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!"

3. What is the ground of a believer's argument at a throne of grace? Nothing less than the absolute, unchangeable Word of promise—"Quicken Thou me, according to Thy Word!" As if he had said, "Thou, O God, hast said, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.' Now, 'remember Thy precious promise, upon which Thou hast caused me to hope.' Let me experience the truth of Thy unalterable promise, by a display of Thy matchless mercy and stupendous grace as all-sufficient for the supply of my every want. I am all changes, but Thou changest not; and as Thou art, so is Thy precious Word. 'Heaven and earth may pass away, but Thy Word cannot pass away.'"

This, I presume, was the experience of the writer of my text, and, blessed be God, it is, and has been, the preacher's experience for some years. Hence I observe, the faith of God's elect is different from every other faith, in that it rests alone on divine authority. The testimony of the great I AM is everything with true faith—"That your faith might not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." But all professing men have not this faith, hence the wild conjectures of many, and the cold, insipid-definition of others, on a subject so plain to a soul blessed with an unction from the Holy One.

The stability of the Word of promise is that, in which faith triumphs. Here she boasts—here she sings—even while in the valley below, knowing that the Lord hath spoken the Word, and confirmed it by an oath; and when she looks up for a blessing, it is that she may receive a covenant blessing by virtue of the word of the oath; and, while the mouth of prayer is opened to receive the unmerited favour, the heavens drop down righteousness, and then the partaker thereof cries out with delight, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy Word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by Thy name, O God of Hosts!" Thus the life of faith is maintained in the soul by a special communication from the vital Head, Christ, according to His word, for He saith, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." And our Lord saith again, "As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me. I am the Bread of Life: he that eateth Me shall never hunger."

This is a brief definition of faith, in some of its exercises, and perhaps the most profitable that can be given; but my design was not so much to treat of the superstructure as the basis or foundation upon which it rests.

Now, as there is stability in the Word of promise, so there is suitability. - "There are given unto us," saith Peter, "exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might be partakers of a divine nature." The suitability and greatness of the Word of promise appears in that it not only brings forth into spiritual existence, but affords a believer all spiritual supplies by the way ; and the concluding scene of life will prove to each and every ransomed sinner that there hath not failed one word of all the good promises the Lord hath given unto us.

May He add His blessing. Amen.

THE RIGHT WAY.

"And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee," &c.—DEUTERONOMY viii. 2.

Now let me call the way to mind
Which God hath led me through;
The way that Wisdom had designed
Before myself I knew.

And has it been a pleasing way—
A way of ease and health?
Have I in grandeur passed my days,
And fed on praise and wealth?

No; no such earthly toys for me;
The way that I am led
Doth better with my soul agree
Than if with pleasure fed.

I've passed through seas of grief and pain,
Through poverty and shame;
And learnt in that, and sickness, too,
To bless the Eternal Name.

I have by this been led to see
The evil of my ways;
To mourn in deep humility
The sins of all my days.

The evils of my heart appeared
While I these trials bore;

I've learned to hope, I've learned to fear,
And hate those evils more.

To Jesus have my troubles led,
And taught my soul to feed
On blessings purchased by His blood—
Oh, happy griefs indeed!

While thus I'm spared from year to year,
I learn to live above,
And long to leave this body here,
And join the heaven of love.

A DREAM AND ITS RESULTS.

Do you believe in dreams? Perhaps not. Neither do I—that is, in dreams of the average kind. Yet, although some dreams are due to indigestion, I am inclined to think that some are almost like inspiration. Perhaps you will think thus, if you will read what follows.

An aged and respected minister, whom I knew well in my boyhood, preached to a congregation in London, near Oxford Street. This minister, younger then by many years than when I knew him, was one day shocked by news respecting one of his congregation. A young woman, who had been in the habit of attending his chapel, became depressed in mind; the depression increased until she sank into confirmed melancholy; the melancholy deepened until, feeling herself able to bear life no longer, she rushed, unbidden, into the other world. *She committed suicide!*

The pastor heard of this. The news stunned him. He sat down, wondering how it was that the sad attack of melancholia was suffered to continue and deepen until it terminated so tragically. He thought—he wept—until the image of the unhappy girl was deeply impressed upon his imagination.

He retired to rest, tried to sleep, and did sleep; but it was not at all surprising that the likeness of the girl should be present in his dreams, or that his solemn thoughts, when awake, should in part reproduce themselves in sleep. Had he preached and warned as earnestly as he might? If he had shown the way of life, through Jesus Christ, with greater clearness, might not this catastrophe have been averted? Such questions could not but suggest themselves to a sensitive heart. They did suggest themselves to the pastor, and robbed him of much rest that night, for the image of the girl stood before him in his dream. Then came a hush, and then the silence seemed to be broken, for she spoke to the pastor. Did she reveal any secrets of the

“Something after death—
The undiscovered country, from whose bourne
No traveller returns”?

No; we must find out these secrets, each for himself, when we go hence. But the girl spoke to the pastor in his dream, nevertheless, for the dream-silence was broken by the words—“If you had preached otherwise.”

“Preached *otherwise!*” cried the pastor (as he thought)—“what do you mean? Should I have preached from other portions of Scripture, or have preached with more fervour?”

“If you had preached from these words, ‘*Give me a true token*’”; and the girl gave (as the pastor thought) an outline of the discourse,

beseeking him to preach it, adding, "It can do me no good, but it may save others."

This message being delivered, as from the other world, the pastor passed out of dream-land and awoke, with feelings that may be better imagined than described. He immediately arose, and, seizing pen and paper, committed the outline to writing, for it was *Sunday* morning, and, by a singular coincidence, he had been seeking earnestly during the week, and especially on the previous day, to concentrate mind and heart on some portion of Scripture as a text for his morning's sermon, but had utterly failed to do so. He had gone to his bed not knowing what he should say to his congregation. No wonder, then, that he could not sleep easily, even if the solemn news referred to had not reached him; and we can hardly doubt that the intelligence brought of the tragedy had still further incapacitated him for collected thought on the previous day.

It was now drawing near to the time when the pastor was expected in the pulpit. What could he take as a subject? The remembrance of his dream lay heavily on him, and just then the question flashed through his mind, "Does God intend me to preach from the text suggested in my sleep?" But then occurred another question—"Is it not too late now? She who suggested it, or seemed to suggest it, is in the other world. It can do her no good."

But no other text would come to his aid; beside which, the words he heard in his sleep were ringing in his ears—"It may save others"—and so, ascending the pulpit-stairs with almost no preparation for the morning's exercises, he announced as his text, "*Give me a true token,*" and his own testimony was, that he preached feeling as one inspired. He spoke of God's tokens which are given to all men—tokens of His power, wisdom, and love. He referred especially to tokens given in the Scripture which only the Christian realizes, and more especially to those evidences of being a true believer in Jesus which must be felt to be understood, such as the penitent, broken heart; the heart's earnest question, "What must I do to be saved?" the clinging trust in Jesus, because He has said, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." "These," said the preacher, "are God's tokens that those who possess them 'shall never perish' in their sins, and have 'passed from death unto life.'" And, as he thought of his dream, though nothing was then said about it, the pastor's heart yearned over his congregation, and he silently prayed that the simple Gospel message he was delivering might go straight to the heart of some one in the congregation, and become "the power of God unto salvation."

The scene changed. The Sabbath had passed, and the pastor was sitting in his vestry. A gentle tap at the door announced the

presence of a visitor. "Come in!" had scarcely escaped his lips, when a young woman entered. He recognised her, for she had been for some time a member of his congregation. She was soon seated, but her emotion for a while kept her from being very communicative. At last she said—"That text!"

"What text, my friend?" said the pastor.

"Oh, that text about *the true token!*"

"Yes; do you think it was meant for you?"

"Oh, yes! You knew my friend?" The pastor thought directly of the suicide, and it was she to whom reference was made.

"Yes, I did," said the pastor; "and, with you, deplore her sad end."

"Ah!" said the girl, "*that end would have been mine, but for that text.*" The death of my friend had preyed on my mind, and I, too, had resolved to commit suicide, but thought I would just come to chapel once more. I came, and then *that text*——"

* Emotion choked further utterance. The pastor wept with her, and the interview closed with prayer.

Yes, "that text" had carried its message. One had gone beyond its reach, it is true; but it reached another in time to save her, by the power of God's Spirit, from an untimely death by suicide. Thus—

"God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform."

And this case is only a sample of others that occurred, for many, within a few months, testified to the saving power of God felt on that Sabbath morning; so that *there may be something even in a dream.* God has many ways of speaking to man, and a dream represents sometimes one of His methods. "In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then He openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction." We do not know all the secrets of our inner life yet, and nothing needs to be ventured here concerning the natural history of dreams; but we know that, by every good and deep impression made upon mind and heart, God speaks to us.

Reader, perhaps a dream has come to you, with its message from God. *Hear it. You must go hence, though you may never, like the unhappy girl referred to, rush hence by your own act. You need to be prepared for your change. You are a sinner, and need a Saviour from your sins and their consequences in another world. Only Jesus Christ can reconcile you to God. He was sent to save sinners. "God was, in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself."*

"O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in Me is thine help," says God.—*From a Tract.*

NIGHT THOUGHTS BY A WATCHMAN.

THE PAIN AND GAIN OF DEATH.

PAIN and gain are closely united in all things with which we have to do. There is very little gain in any matter without a considerable amount of pain previously. We are in sorrow and to sorrow born. Advancement and permanent prosperity, when honourably obtained and maintained, in this life are the result of painstaking labour; and the pains, cares, and sorrows are varied according to the age and place, the company and circumstances, in which each find themselves, from time to time. Whether in youth or age, poverty or wealth, honour or dishonour, the way to gain is through pain. As this is so in life, both spiritual and natural, so is it in death. There are the pains and gains of death.

1. Consider the *pains* of death. These are many and various, for death is a penalty as well as a necessity, and it is a penalty each must pay for himself. There are the natural and the physical pains. These are often very great, and of considerable duration. The prostrate nerves, the aching limbs, and the throbbing head, often accompanied with other intense local pains, cause the days to be feared and the nights to be dreaded. Many have cried out in the night, "Oh, when will it be day?" and in the day-time, "Oh, that it were night, and I could sleep!" Thus are they tossed to and fro, and find no ease. Then there is the severing of earthly ties and natural attachments. These, close and dear as they may be, must be broken, and this sometimes causes heart-pangs and sore mental struggles.

It is a solemn thing to die. I have seen several death-beds, and have been at each and all most solemnly impressed with its sad reality. When heart and flesh faileth, it is awful work if God is not the Strength and Portion of the soul, and heaven the hoped-for rest. But, blessed be the Lord, there is something more than pain in connection with death for all the redeemed of the Lord, to whom Jesus is precious, for, although their death may be painful, the pain is not perpetual. There is the happy and peaceful deliverance. There is the sweet and welcomed rest. Death is as the operation of the surgeon, in order that the patient may go home in perfect health. Notwithstanding, then, its solemn aspect and its painful reality, it is desirable, for—

2. There are many and great *gains* to every saint by death. They gain by being freed from sin and sorrow, from darkness and doubt, from weakness and fear, from the world and the flesh, from Satan and an evil heart. They gain by being restored to the holy image and heavenly paradise of God. They gain by being brought into the joyful company of the family in glory, and

the sunlight of the Redeemer's face. They gain by being made perfect in knowledge and power, so that they worship God and the Lamb without ignorance and weakness, both of which often cause sorrow and shame while serving here in this body of sin and death. They gain by possessing the kingdom and inheritance designed and prepared for them by their everlasting Father's love and grace; so that, instead of being the poor, despised, and afflicted outcasts of this world, they are made princes in glory, receiving a full reward for all their works of faith and labours of love, their patience of hope and continuance in well-doing, which in this world mark out, to the eye of faith, heaven's heirs, while they are clad in the garments of earth. It is only time and place, which are, by the appointment of God, soon to end—not the want of interest and relationship—which keep the beloved of the Lord away from their high honours. Their right to the inheritance is most sure, and their relationship to God is eternal.

Let your service be according to your relationship and interest, high and honourable. As His love gave you a high standing, so let Him have a high standing in your heart. The reward is exceeding great and eternally safe. Compared with the future joy, the present sorrow is very small, the service easy, and the burden light.

Reader, will the pain of death be the gain of glory to *you*?

“ Beyond this life of hopes and fears,
Beyond this world of griefs and tears,
There is a region fair.
Who will be there? The lowly here—
All those who serve the Lord in fear—
The world's proud mockery dare.

“ Those who have learnt at Jesus' cross
All earthly gain to count but loss,
So that His love they share:
Who, by the Holy Spirit led,
Rejoice the narrow path to tread—
These, these shall all be there.”

W. B.

AFFLICTIONS are as nails driven by the hand of grace, which crucify us to the world. The husbandman ploughs his lands, and the gardener prunes his trees, to make them fruitful; the jeweller cuts and polishes his diamonds to make them shine the brighter; the refiner flings his gold into the furnace that it may come out the purer; and God afflicts His people to make them better.—*Toplady*.

OBITUARY OF ELLEN WALTER.

DEAR SIR,—I forward to you a little account of the affliction and death of Mrs. Ellen Walter, who had been an attendant at Nazarene Chapel, Ninfield, for several years. I visited her during the last twelve months of her affliction, and nearly always found her in soul-trouble. But the last few weeks of her life she was in deep waters, and sank deeper and deeper, till her friends were afraid to leave her alone. I believed it was the work of God upon her soul, since she felt such a love to the truth and to the Lord's people. She had kind friends around her to help her in temporal things, and there were some that wanted to ferry her over the river, but she refused these even to sit up with her in the night, and said that, when they were about her, she always had these words on her mind, "Come out from among them," &c. Once, when visiting her, I asked her whether she would change her gloomy fears for their assurance and joy. She at once said she would not, and that none could help her in her deep distress but the Lord Himself.

A little before the Lord delivered her soul, I found her in a most distracted state, begging for mercy. I prayed that the Lord might soon deliver her, as she was tempted to commit self-destruction, so fierce was the enemy at the time, but not so dreadful as he had been a few hours before. I told her that I had been reading the SOWER, and one piece was upon the death of Sarah Skinner, whose relations I well knew, and felt a great union to them. I said I had forgotten to bring it with me, but they could borrow it of a neighbour just by. When I went down-stairs, I told her daughter of the distress her poor mother was in, and she said it was not nearly so bad as it had been a few hours before. She had been prostrate for a time, and could not move without help. But she awoke up from a little sleep, and tore off the bed-clothes, and told her daughter to get out of the way, then forced herself out of bed, and ran across the room, crying out, "I must go! I must go!" Her daughter said, "Where are you going, mother?" She replied, "To hell I must go! To hell I must go!"

After I had left, they borrowed the SOWER, and her husband read the first part of the account of the death of Sarah Skinner (the latter part did not come out till after her death). This so exactly accorded with the things she had passed through that, when I saw her again, she told me it so broke her down that they were obliged to stop several times and weep together. She also told me that her troubles were greatly removed. She said the dark clouds were so broken that she had a view of the glory of heaven.

The next day I went to see her again, but I did not go upstairs, for she had had such a glorious deliverance, and had

so triumphed in God's great salvation, that she was exhausted, her bodily sufferings having been so very great previously.

I visited her again the next week, and when I entered the room, she lifted up her feeble arms and cried out, "Oh, help me to praise Him! I had never thought it to be like this. The Lord has answered all your prayers." I believe that, even when she was asleep, her heart was in heaven. She would wake up and say, "Am I still alive? Am I not yet dead?"

Thus fell asleep in Jesus a true Nazarene. It is said by many around us, as it was in days of old, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" and we may reply, "Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" W. BILLENNESS.

The following is a letter from her husband:—

DEAR FRIEND,—My dear wife was born at Catsfield, in the year 1830, and died at Ninfield, July 24th, 1885. I knew but very little of her life before we were married, which was in 1864; but it may be truly said of her, she "came up from the wilderness, leaning on her Beloved." She was for many years subject to bondage through the fear of death, and in the year 1884, when under medical treatment, the doctor pronounced her incurable; her complaint being heart disease. From this time she was brought into great trouble about her state as a sinner, the devil tormenting her day and night, telling her she was not one of the Lord's children. She said, "I shall soon have to die, and where shall I go?" I told her I believed she would go to heaven, for if she did not belong to the Lord, Satan would not torment her so; but she could not take any comfort from that. She said she wanted something from the Lord with power. This she had to wait for nearly twelve months. It was, however, granted her in July, 1885. She was much cast down all that time, but was not destroyed.

About July 14th, the Lord was pleased to turn her sorrow into joy. She had a comfortable sleep, which she seldom had before, her pains being so very great, and she awoke with these words resting with power on her heart—"Daughter, be of good cheer; thy sins are all forgiven thee." She said she had had a little view into heaven. "I have seen throngs and throngs," she said, "as though they were at supper with their Lord." I said to her, "That's good news, my dear." She replied, "I can give you all up now," meaning myself and her children. From that time she could say, with the Psalmist, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name! He has brought me up out of a horrible pit and miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock," &c. She said, "Do help me to praise Him!" which I hope I did, for I felt like a hind let loose.

About July 18th, she was cast down again, and requested me to pray for her, saying she wanted praying for as much as ever she did, which I did to the best of my ability. After this she said, "We have had many sweet seasons together lately." I said, I did not know that we had. "No," she replied; "I was afraid to tell you, for fear I should deceive you." After this she was very calm. She said she felt to be in a very sweet frame of mind. She felt sure she was going to heaven. She said, "Oh, the love I feel to Mr. Billenness!" I said to her, "By this we know that you have passed from death unto life, because you love the brethren." This was nearly the last conversation we had. She was able to say but little after this, her bodily weakness being so great. During the last fortnight she took scarcely anything but water. She addressed her children, giving them good counsel, which I believe they will never forget, and left them in the hands of the Lord.

To Mr. Billenness.

THOS. WALTER.

Mrs. Walter was interred in Ninfield Churchyard by Mr. Billenness, it being the first Dissenting burial there under the new law. Between one and two hundred people attended, and some testified that it was the most solemn occasion they ever witnessed.

ONE word spoken in faith is better than a thousand prayers in a formal, lukewarm way. I myself have often found that, when I can say but this word, *Father*, it doth me more good than when I call Him by any other Christian name.—*Bunyan*.

MAN'S will is steeled against the Lord and His truth; therefore, away with that falsehood and that error which would teach that God is standing as a suppliant before proud man, and that He is waiting until man condescends to lend an ear to Him. These things savour of blasphemy.—*Krause*.

How shall we know whether we be espoused to Christ or not? Answer: Our hearts can tell us whether we yield consent to Him or not. In particular, whether we have received Him as He will be received—as a right Husband—that is, whether we receive Him to be ruled by Him, to make Him our Head. Again, a willingness to follow Christ in all conditions as He is discovered in the Word—to suffer Christ to have the sovereignty in our affections above all other things and persons in the world. This is the right disposition of a true spouse. Christ must be loved for Himself. Let us not so much trouble ourselves about signs as be careful to do our duty to Christ, and then will Christ discover His love clearly unto us.—*Sibbes*.

PRAYER COMMENDED.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I received your welcome letter, and would have given you a few lines yesterday had I been able, but the day was very trying, and brought on my ague again, so that I have kept in bed for warmth. This afternoon I feel so weak that it is just as much as I can do to sit up, but I am anxious to give you my opinion on the matter you wrote about with as little delay as possible.

I highly approve of your suggestion. It is private prayer for any matter that brings the open reward (Matt. vi. 6); and it is especially the duty and privilege of the children of God to pray for each other, but more so for *the minister we hear*. "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; and for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the Gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak" (Eph. vi. 18—20). So, again, when Paul wrote to the Colossians, he begs not to be forgotten—"Remember my bonds" (Col. iv. 18). "Brethren, pray for us" (1 Thess. v. 25). Now, if Paul required the prayers of the saints to help him, how much more must any other minister now require them! In this matter, I think the children of God in general are very neglectful, and to their own souls' discomfort, for the more a person prays for the minister they hear, the more does the Holy Spirit bless that ministry to their souls. I had full proof of that in the late Mr. Lock. God certainly made that man His mouth to my soul in matters where I could get no answer in private, and I have often sat and heard him with life and peace, and come away sweetly refreshed, while I have heard others grumbling and finding fault with all he said. I always prayed for him daily in private, and when I went to hear him, that the Lord would prepare his heart and tongue with a suitable portion for me, and make it spirit and life to my soul. You do this for Mr. Birch, as you propose, and I am sure you will soon reap the benefit of it. Engage all you can in the work, members or not, if they have the spirit of prayer; but I would not let Mr. Birch know anything about it until afterwards. "Watch unto prayer," observe the effects, and before long something will take place to bring it out. You know Satan is a wily adversary, and turns everything into bane, so that we require the Saviour's caution, "Be wise as serpents and harmless as doves." I shall be present with you in spirit on Tuesdays and Fridays, and wrestle with you in this matter. Nothing can withstand *important* prayer.

I clearly see that you are placed in a very peculiar position from the composition of your Church, and that your hands require to be strengthened by the infusion of more male members. Satan always did, and always will, try his schemes first on the weaker vessels. If they are gained over, then he employs them to work upon the stronger, and by which he often gains his ends.

May the Lord bless and direct you, and fulfil all your counsel, is the prayer of,

Yours affectionately in Christ Jesus,
Woolwich, April 24th, 1850. W. MATTHEWS.

AN IMPORTANT CONTRAST.

THERE are many who profess to know the truth, and yet see no difference between predestination and fatalism. The former is in the Bible ; the latter in the Turk's Koran. Fatalism is cold and hardening in its effects upon the heart, but predestination melts and humbles the heart before the God of truth. Fatalism is an *iron fetter* ; predestination is *love*, with its ten thousand cords. Fatalism excludes man's condemnation for sin in his fallen state, and cuts away the ground for the conviction of the Spirit of truth (John xvi. 8) ; predestination discovers man's guilt and God's sovereignty, and shows how many are justly left and many justly saved. Christ never preached fatalism, either plainly or in parables, to those around Him. He preached man's accountability to a holy and just God, in consequence of original sin, actual transgression, and rejection of Himself as the sent Son of God ; and the safety, blessedness, and eternal salvation of all who were given to Him by the Father in predestinating love. Fatalism is like the cuckoo's egg—neither warmed nor cared for ; neither claimed by, nor able to claim, parental love or union ; neither taught, nourished, nor protected, but dropped in another's nest, while the Turkish bird seems to say, "I leave you to your fate." But predestination is like the egg of the dove—loved, nourished, and cared for by its loving parent ; warmed and sheltered under its wings ; predestinated and brought forth to mourn sorely over sin, to love and cleave to its own kindred, to tremble and fear, to know and love its Parent, and at last to fly away with the wings David longed for (not of the fatalistic cuckoo, but the predestinated dove) to everlasting, heavenly rest.

"I fearless say, fate is Satanic spawn ;
 'Tis Antichrist in its most hardened form ;
 But sovereign counsel, purpose, will, and plan,
 Is angels' glory, and good-will to man."

THE ANXIOUS INQUIRER'S PAGE.

SMALL BEGINNINGS.

ALL who have been drawn to the Son have not [the same degree of] experience. . . . Upon many the Lord comes suddenly, as an armed man. Without preparation, in the very midst of their forgetfulness of God, of their life of worldliness and sin, He lays hold upon them, breaks in pieces with one blow the heart of stone, and makes them feel that "the axe is laid to the root of the tree." The first desire of such is immediately directed to the blood of the Lamb. It is the condemned criminal's agonizing cry for mercy. But with others the Saviour pursues a more gentle and hidden mode of conversion—a course of gradual development, after varied, and often long, preparation. And as, after the cold, dark winter, the opening spring, with its early green, its budding leaves, its tender blossoms, has more charm for us than all the pride and glory of summer, so, to the practised eye of an experienced Christian, it is a peculiar joy to behold in any soul the first workings—the first tokens—of grace, as blossoms full of the promise of future and fairer things. This commencement is indeed frequently, to all appearance, a small, inconsiderable thing. There is not [manifested] in the soul what we call repentance and contrition; but there is a secret disquiet—a feeling that something great, something essential, is wanting. There is no cry for grace and mercy, but there is an inward yearning after a good which, as yet, it knows not how to define; no distinct and believing acknowledgment, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," but there is an anxious inquiry into the things of Christ. There is, as yet, no swearing of fealty to the banner of Zion, no decided passing over to the ranks of the people of God, but there is a listening ear whenever the things of God are spoken of. There is an earnest desire to have the matter settled—to come to some decision; a panting for some certainty—some positive conclusion—a seeking for truth and for peace.

You must not be disappointed if such a man as I have attempted to describe does not yet express full agreement with you when you are praising and magnifying the Saviour, and speaking one to another, amongst those that fear Him, of the wonders of His grace. It may even be possible for him to be ill at ease in your company, and to quit you abruptly and in silence; yet it is not from enmity to your holy things, but from a secret depression—a secret regret that he cannot go along with you—that wings are so wholly wanting to him, that he must grovel upon earth while you are soaring in eagle-flight far above out of his sight. Nay, you must not count it a strange thing if he sometimes even warmly oppose you in your views of spiritual things, or impa-

tiently exclaim with Nathanael, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Still, under all may be a sincere desire for truth; and to-morrow, perhaps, he may cry with not less ardour, but with a holier fire, "Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God, Thou art the King of Israel." And were he amongst scorers, I answer for it that he would take the side of the Gospel, and openly and boldly confess Him whom he had not yet found for himself—yea, confess to more than he has yet quite apprehended—but his heart already whispers that it is truth for which he combats.

When we meet such minds, we may well give free scope to that love which "hopeth all things," certain that here it will not be disappointed. With glad and cordial welcome should we meet these first dawnings of a divine light, and, though they may be still weak in faith, still full of error, we must not condemn or harshly judge, but, like true lovers of God, tenderly and delicately deal with them, that we may not grieve that Spirit who has lovingly received them, and to whom it seems good to bring forth in them "first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear."—*From "The Journey to Emmaus," by Dr. Krummacher.*

A COMPARISON BETWEEN FAITH AND UNBELIEF.

FAITH is the root of all good; unbelief is the root of all evil. Faith maketh God and man good friends; unbelief maketh them foes. Faith bringeth God and man together; unbelief separates them. All that faith doeth pleaseth God; all that unbelief doeth displeaseth God. Faith only maketh a man good and righteous; unbelief maketh him unjust and evil. Faith maketh a man a member of Christ; unbelief maketh him a member of the devil. Faith maketh him an inheritor of heaven; unbelief maketh a man the inheritor of hell. Faith maketh a man the servant of God; unbelief maketh him the servant of the devil. Faith showeth us God to be a tender Father; unbelief showeth Him to be a terrible Judge. Faith holdeth fast by the Word of God; unbelief wavereth here and there. Faith esteemeth God to be true; unbelief looketh upon Him to be false, and a liar. Faith knoweth God; unbelief knoweth Him not. Faith loveth both God and his neighbour; unbelief loveth neither of them. Faith only saveth us; unbelief only condemneth us.

PATRICK HAMILTON.

[The form of expression used by the old divines appears to us, at times, very singular, but life, power, and savour are manifested in their writings. The late William Gadsby, when some one remarked to him that we seemed to have more light in the truth than those good men, replied, "Yes; but we have made a woeful change—life for light."]

OUR SEED-BASKET FOR YOUNG READERS.

APPLES OF GOLD IN BASKETS OF SILVER.

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC WIDOW.

A YOUNG widow writes as follows:—Very young in life I was married to a young English captain of a vessel. He was an upright man in all his ways, and I was much attached to him. One great trouble, however, oppressed me. He was a Protestant, and I a Roman Catholic. I longed for his conversion to the "true faith," as I then ignorantly considered my religion. But, after a few years, he was lost at sea, and I was left to mourn his loss. A loss it was indeed, for I not only mourned for my own lonely lot, but was in deep distress because I thought, being a Protestant, he was certainly in hell. No "heretic" (as we called all who did not go to Mass, and worship the Virgin Mary) could possibly be saved. I wept, and prayed (or *thought* I did), and fasted, till one day the question was raised in my mind, "*Are all poor heretics lost beyond all hope?*"

I arose early next morning, and went to confession. In my distress I said to the priest, "I cannot find it in my heart to believe that all poor heretics are lost. Are they?" To my astonishment and delight he whispered, "No; their faith in Christ saves them."* I left the church and hastened home with the words ringing in my ears, "Their faith in Christ saves them. Their faith in Christ saves them." That night I retired to rest with a faint ray of hope that, after all, my lost one *might* have had faith in Christ, and would be saved. As I laid on my bed, however, my thoughts travelled from the state of my dead husband's soul to *my own*. Had I this faith in Christ which saved people? Distressed with a conviction that I *had it not*, I at length fell asleep, and dreamed I saw Jesus Christ, but so far was He from me that I could not reach Him. He appeared to be on the top of a high mountain, and, though my heart (in my dream) longed to get to Him, my feet seemed fastened to the ground where I stood, and could not move. My distress was dreadful. I felt I must perish, for I could not possibly approach Him where He was. Then I thought He saw my sore distress, and, drawing near, He looked on me with infinite compassion. I saw His head, His hands, His side, His feet, and His face, once so marred with sorrow. As He drew near, I asked Him to save me. I thought that He next pointed me to a place which I knew

* Whether this Romish priest understood *himself* anything of the saving faith in Christ of which he spoke is not stated, or whether a natural compassion for his fellow-men dictated his words. They were, however, made useful by God.

well, and had seen people go in on several occasions, and distinctly said, "Go there, and thou shalt hear words whereby thou shalt be saved." "Not so, Lord," I said; "they are heretics. I could not go there." Thereupon He left me, and all was dark, and I was again wretched, and lonely, and miserable.

But the words that He had uttered, "Thou shalt hear words whereby thou shalt be saved," took possession of my mind's waking thoughts. The idea of going to a small room, up a dingy passage, as He directed, was too hard for my poor, proud, and rebellious heart. Yet had *He* not said it?

As night came on, I watched for two quiet people whom I had often seen going to that despised place of meeting. A few minutes after they had gone in, with trembling heart and faltering steps, I followed, and listened at the door. Some one was praying, but presently all was silence. Quietly pushing open the partially-shut door, I crept in. At the further end of the room was a tall, solemn-looking man at a desk, with a Book before him. As I entered he raised his eyes, and, apparently fixing them upon me, read, "*Who shall tell thee words whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved*" (Acts xi. 14).

I could not then doubt that the Lord Jesus had indeed spoken to my soul. Presently the speaker went on to tell of the utter ruin of man. Whether worldly or religious, he was lost. Of necessity, if not saved, he must perish. This was all new to me, but in full accord with the sense of sin and helplessness I was then feeling. Then he went on to show how God had provided, by the death of His dear Son, for the perfect salvation of every vile sinner who feels his need of Him; also, how truly and absolutely, because of what He has done, apart from our prayers, or tears, or good deeds, a poor sinner obtains the forgiveness of sins, and is brought home to God by an infallible Guide; and, finally, the means by which it is done—their faith in Christ.

Never can I forget the sudden joy these words brought to my poor troubled heart. Quietly I left that little room, rejoicing in God my Saviour, and I understood a little of the feelings of the woman in Simon's house, to whom He said, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace" (Luke vii. 50).

AFFLICTIONS can do the children of God no hurt. They may affright, but they cannot harm them. They may meet them with fear, but shall part from them with joy.—*Flavel*.

DESIRES are the spiritual pulse of the soul, always beating to and fro, and showing the temper of it; they are, therefore, the characters of a Christian, and show more truly what he is than his actions do.—*Sibbes*.

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.

MY DEAR CHILD,—I cannot allow any time to pass without a word of comfort, if so be I may be instrumental thereto.

Your little note causes us gratitude, though you are "wretched," because we know that only such as are so are made really happy. David said, "My soul, hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise Him," and so will *you*. God was the health of David's countenance, and He will be the health of yours also.

"Father, dear," say you, "no one can help me, I think, for no one really knows me!" Yes, they can. God knows you, my dear, and He can help you. Pray to Him, and that will help you; and we will pray for you, and thus *we* shall be able to help you. God says, "I have laid help upon One that is mighty"—that is, *almighty*—Jesus, "mighty to save"; and Jesus says, "I came to seek and to save them that are lost"—lost to all hope of helping or saving themselves—and He says, "Look unto Me, and be ye saved." God knows your heart, and all that is bad in it; but He knows also the strugglings to be delivered from evil, and to have a "new heart and a right spirit" put within you; and this He is doing for you by slow degrees, as His Word declares, "Line upon line, precept upon precept; here a little, and there a little." Struggle on, my dear child. Jesus will help you by His Spirit, imparting secret strength to hold up and hold on, and you will prove His word true in the end—"Sin shall not have dominion over you."

Now, your other remark. You do not hate any one, I am sure, and you may test yourself thus—Would you not rejoice if God would change the heart and bless even the very worst person you know, or the greatest enemy you have? Could you not do as Jesus bids—"pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you"? I am sure you could. Thus you do not hate them. You may hate or dislike their bad practices or their foolish ways. That is quite another thing. David says, "Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate Thee? I hate them with a perfect hatred. I count them my enemies"; again, "The wicked shall perish; they shall consume away like smoke"; and yet, had it been God's will, David would gladly have seen them all saved, and go to heaven, such love had he to poor sinners; so it was not their persons, but their evils, he so much hated. God help you, my dear, to judge between these distinctions! Satan

"Worries whom he can't destroy
With a malicious joy."

"Your adversary, the devil, goeth about" still to do all the harm he can.

I remember, when first convinced of sin, he used to tempt me with one Scripture to keep me from praying to God, and I ventured to speak of it to a dear old Christian man, and he was made the means of loosing that bond. "Don't you know, my boy," said he, "Satan can make use of Scripture? But he never makes a *good* use of it. His purpose is always to make us unhappy, and keep us from God. Take it for granted, my boy, as long as you live, what comes *from* God, Scripture or otherwise, leads always to God; and, on the contrary, what comes from Satan is to draw or drive us away *from* God," and this has been a help to me ever since. Perhaps it may help you.

Cleave to your Bible, and the Holy Spirit will open the eyes of your understanding.

The Lord bless you, my child, and make you happier. So prays,

Your affectionate father,

H. N.

A DEAD TREE.

IF, in the month of May or June, we should find a tree in our orchard with no buds, or blossoms, or leaves upon it, we should conclude it was dead; and why? Because it gave no signs of life. - We might wonder why it should die, and what had caused its death, but of the fact we should have no doubt. There it stands, with all its branches well developed, and still a tree in name, but a dead tree, and utterly useless for all the purposes for which it was placed there.

Now, that budless, blossomless, leafless tree standing there in that orchard, represents great numbers of men and women in the Church of Christ on earth. They stand among their fellow-members. They are called Christians the same as the others. They look somewhat like them. They are full-grown. They are in the fruit orchard, and yet they give no signs of life. Not even a bud or a leaf is to be seen; and when the time of fruit comes, there is nothing but a dead tree. It may bear the name of an apple, or peach, or cherry tree, but that is all. It is dead. It has a name, but is dead.

Reader, what is your case? Are you lively in business, in politics, or other worldly matters, and a mere form in the garden of Christ? If you give yourself to the former, you will only be a drone in the latter. Oh, that the love of Christ to us may constrain us to love Him more and serve Him better!

FAITH is the looking off from ourselves, and believing what God has told us of Himself.—*Krause*.

NOTICES OF BOOKS, ETC.

The Annual Report of the Gospel Book Mission to the Army and Navy. Mr. C. BRIDER, Manager, Old Gaol Chapel, Salisbury.

IT is cheering to read of the progress of this good work year by year, and we feel sure that the heart of Mr. Brider must be gladdened as he observes the growing success of the Mission so modestly started by him, some years ago, for the benefit of our soldiers and sailors at home and abroad. Only truthful magazines, books, &c., are sent out by him to be distributed; therefore this Mission has special claims upon those who desire the diffusion of pure Gospel truth. We shall be glad of any help to enable us to continue to send a good parcel of GLEANERS and SOWERS monthly, according to Mr. Brider's request in the following extract from a letter sent to us, and which ought to have received earlier notice, but, through over-pressure, and failing strength caused by many weeks of heavy work and lack of sleep, it, with other things, has been overlooked. We hope, however, that Mr. Brider's appeal will not be in vain:—

DEAR MR. HULL,—I am writing to thank you and all kind friends for your generous help to me in this good work during the past year.

Many and marvellous are the doors of usefulness now open to us for the circulation of truth in all parts of the world, and I am very thankful to add that the SOWERS and GLEANERS, which are put into all our parcels, in common with other kindred matter, are greatly valued by many in the army and navy.

Men on every hand are willing to receive and circulate among the soldiers and sailors pure truth, and they are most thankful for it. Surely this must be the work of God, who alone can impart such dispositions and love for His Word; and it ought to impart fresh zeal to those who "know the joyful sound," and who are engaged and interested in the work of doing good.

I hope that you will be enabled to send me the same quantity of Magazines during the coming year.

Sincerely yours,

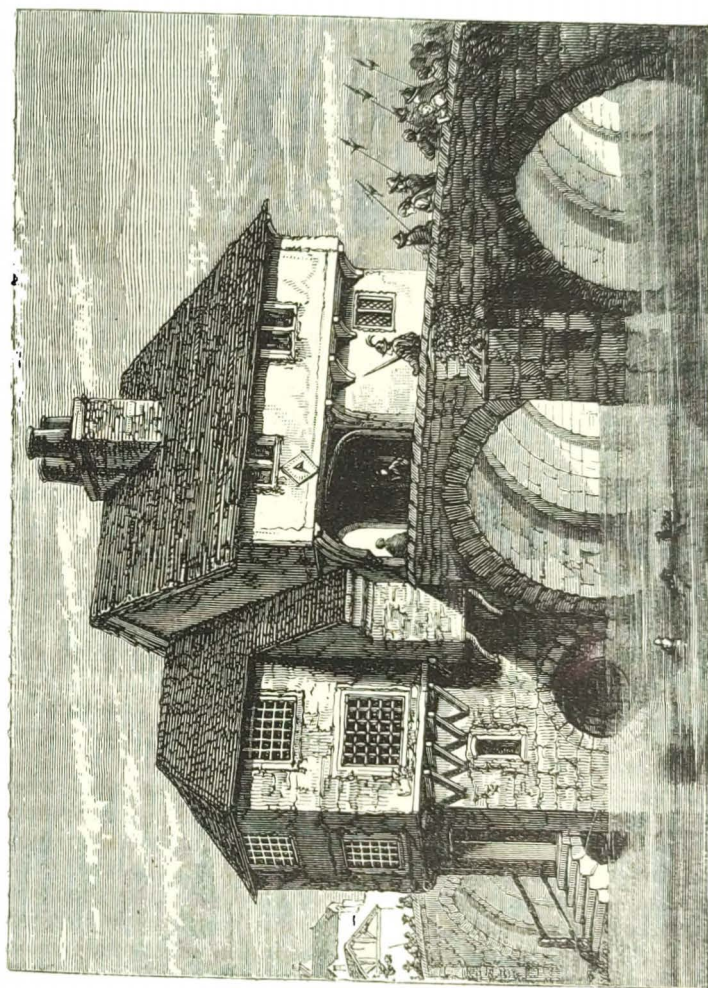
CHARLES BRIDER.

December 9th, 1885.

[Dear friends, we ask those of you who can do so to help us to send a good monthly bundle of our Magazines to Mr. Brider. —Ed.]

THE believer learns those lessons in the lack of Christ's sensible presence which he could not possibly acquire in the enjoyment of it.—*Wakeling*.

The Sower, March, 1866.



THE OLD JAIL AT BEDFORD.

JOHN BUNYAN.

JOHN BUNYAN was born at Elstow, near Bedford, in 1628. His father was a tinker, and, concerning his humble birth, Bunyan says, "My descent was of a low and inconsiderable generation, my father's house being of that rank that is meanest and most despised of all the families of the land." But, poor as his parents were, they did not neglect sending their children to school, for which John felt very grateful in after years.

At a very early age he acquired the sad habit of swearing, for which he became notorious, but he proved "the way of transgressors to be hard," for, after spending a day thus in sin, he was scared and terrified at night with fearful dreams, and apprehensions of devils and wicked spirits, who, as he thought, were labouring to carry him away. At times, thoughts of the day of judgment would so fill his mind that, when in the midst of his play, he was often cast down and miserable.

Having thus early in life (for he was not then ten years old) contracted such evil habits, they grew up with him, becoming part of his nature; and, as he got older, his terrors left him, and he became more hardened in sin, until he married, when, by reading two books which his wife possessed, which were all the dowry she had, and partly by her influence, he was led to attend the parish church twice every Sunday, but he was totally ignorant of the nature of sin and his need of a Saviour.

The times in which Bunyan lived were very corrupt. The king, in 1618, issued a permit to everybody who should go to evening prayer on the Lord's Day, to divert themselves in the afternoon with such exercises as leaping, dancing, playing at bowls, shooting with bows and arrows, as likewise to rearing May-poles, &c., but those who refused to come to prayers were forbidden these sports. Bunyan was only too glad to avail himself of such a law by sporting and profaning the day which the Lord has set apart for His worship.

But one Sunday morning he went to church as usual, when the minister spoke of the evil of Sabbath-breaking, whereupon he felt in his conscience the sermon was intended for him; and, for the first time, he experienced what guilt was, going home sad at heart. But, as soon as he had dined, he shook the sermon out of his mind, and went to his sports with increased delight. But the same day, as he was in the midst of a game at "cat," and having struck it one blow, just as he was going to strike another, suddenly a voice from heaven sounded into his soul, which said, "Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to heaven, or have thy sins and go to hell?" At this he was in an exceeding maze; wherefore, leaving his cat upon the ground, he looked up to

heaven and saw, with the eyes of his understanding, Jesus Christ looking down upon him very greatly displeased, and threatening him with grievous punishment for these and other ungodly practices. He stood musing before his companions, when it was suggested to his mind that it was too late to expect mercy, and, despair getting fast hold of him, he made a desperate resolve to go on with his games, determining to have his fill of pleasure before he went to hell, as he thought. Wherefore he went on in sin with great greediness, cursing and swearing and playing the madman, for which he was once reproved by a woman, who was herself a loose, ungodly creature, saying it made her tremble to hear him, and that he was the most ungodly fellow for swearing that ever she heard in her life, at which he was silenced and put to shame, and wished in his heart that he might be a little child again, that his father might teach him to speak without swearing. How it came to pass he knew not, but he did from that time so discontinue it that he became a wonder to himself, and shortly after, putting on an outward form of religion, he thought he "pleased God as well as any man in England."

In the providence of God, John Bunyan removed to Bedford, to follow his calling as a tinker; and in one of the streets of that town he came where there were three or four poor women talking about the things of God, "and methought," says he, "they spake as if joy did make them speak—as if they found a new world, and were people that dwelt alone, and were not to be reckoned among their neighbours," at which his own heart began to shake, for such things as they talked of had never entered his mind. He, however, felt he must listen to them, and continued going again and again, and found his heart softened thereby; and when they brought Scripture to prove their assertions, he felt convinced of the truth of what they said, and pondered the things in his heart. Thus God, in the riches of His free grace and boundless compassion, brought him to that wisdom which Moses exhorts to—"O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!"

The limits of our article will not allow us to follow him in this good work. Suffice it to say, the Lord led him to a greater knowledge of himself as a lost, ruined, guilty, needy soul, and in due time showed him he was just the character Jesus came to save, making him to rejoice in Him as his Saviour, as described in his "Pilgrim's Progress," where Christian arrived at the cross, from whence he went on singing—

"Blest cross, blest sepulchre, blest rather be
The Man that there was put to shame for me."

Bunyan was not only a tinker, but a soldier. He served in the

Parliamentary army at Leicester, at the time of the Battle of Naseby, where, upon one occasion, he was called out as a sentinel, but another soldier volunteered to do duty for him, and that very man was shot through the head while at his post. Thus the Lord, whose tender care was over Bunyan, spared his life that he might be a renowned soldier of the cross.

Now, as the Lord chose Paul to be the great Apostle, who to the disciples seemed the most unlikely person, so He chose John Bunyan to preach the Gospel, to the astonishment of those that knew his former life. He had not, however, laboured more than five years before he was apprehended by the civil powers, on November 12th, 1660, at Samsell, near Harlington, where he was engaged to preach. His hearers were met together, and after he had given out his text, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" the constable came with a warrant to take him prisoner, at which Bunyan was not much moved, for he remarked, "We might have been apprehended as thieves, or murderers, or for other wickedness; but, blessed be God, it is not so. We suffer as Christians, for well doing." He might have escaped, it being rumoured that a warrant was issued against him, but he was determined to stand his ground.

He was taken before the justices of the peace, and by them committed to Bedford Gaol, to await the sessions.

Bunyan was afterwards tried before five or six justices, but they could find nothing against him, except it was in the law of his God. His chief offences were—he did not use the Common Prayer Book, and that he went about teaching in certain places of meeting, to the disparagement of the Church of England. For these acts of Nonconformity he laid in the miserable cell for about twelve years; but his God was with him, and made the prison like a palace to him. He was often far happier in the prison than the king was upon his throne, or the rich, "who fared sumptuously every day." He never before had such an inlet into the Word of God, and doubtless he has preached to millions of the human race by his confinement, who, but for that, would never have heard of him, for by it he became very popular; so the means used to stop the spread of truth were, by God's blessing, the cause of more widely circulating it.

It was there he wrote several books, the materials for which were not borrowed, for his library in prison consisted only of the Bible and "Foxe's Book of Martyrs."

During the early part of his imprisonment, the Lord gave him favour (as He did Joseph) in the eyes of the jailer, who allowed him occasionally to visit his friends, and to preach in the villages and woods. It is said that many of the Baptist congregations in Bedfordshire owe their origin to his *midnight* preaching; but

this coming to the ears of the justices, the humane jailer well-nigh lost his place through it, and he was seldom afterwards permitted to go out of doors.

It was an anxiety to Bunyan, when he was first imprisoned, to know what would become of his wife and four children, one of whom was blind; but the Lord took care of them, and, in His providence, enabled him to work for them in prison, as it is recorded of him. "Nor did he eat the bread of idleness, for there," says the writer, "I have witnessed that his own hands have ministered to his family's necessities, making many hundred gross of long-tagged laces, which he had learned to make in prison."

John Bunyan, with many other prisoners, was liberated indirectly through the intercession of a Quaker; and, about the time of his liberation, an Act was passed granting certain indulgences to Nonconformists. It was enacted partly to conciliate the Roman Catholics, who, with others, were suffering persecution because they dissented from the form of worship used by the Church of England.

Bunyan's imprisonment extended over a period of twelve years, during which time he was confined in the county gaol. After being at liberty for a period of two years, he was again imprisoned for six months, but this time in the town gaol on the bridge, of which we are able to give our readers an excellent engraving.

It was during this short imprisonment that he is supposed to have conceived the plan of his famous allegory, and, indeed, wrote the chief portion of the first part; but it is thought that he was liberated before he had quite completed it. After the Pilgrims' visit to the Delectable Mountain, it says, "So I awoke from my dream." This is supposed to mark the point Bunyan had reached in his book when the order came for his liberation, and the rest of his dream was written at home.

He lived and preached the Gospel for about sixteen years after he was let out of prison, and both he and his writings became very popular. Upon one occasion, the King remonstrated with Dr. John Owen because he went to hear a tinker preach, to which Owen replied, "May it please your Majesty, had I the tinker's abilities, I would most gladly relinquish my learning."

Bunyan died in London, August 12th, 1688, and his remains were interred in Bunhill Fields burying-ground, where, of late years, an elaborate tomb has been erected to his memory; and, within the last few years, Bedford, the town of his imprisonment, has made room for a handsome monument to perpetuate his memory. "The memory of the just is blessed."

“BE STILL, AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD.”

BE still, and know that He is God, my soul ;
 His hand, which smites thee now, will make thee whole ;
 Adore His sovereign will and passive lay ;
 Remember He's the Potter—thou the clay.
 He is all-wise, nor can mistaken be,
 And He's too good to be unkind to thee ;
 In His severest strokes He, smiling, says,
 “I'll surely do thee good in all thy ways ;
 'Tis but if need be.” Think of that and sing,
 For every stroke doth but thee nearer bring
 To God thy Father, whose Paternal care
 Thou still dost kindly, daily, sweetly share.
 The hottest furnace, or the heaviest cross,
 Shall but refine thy soul and purge thy dross ;
 Shall brighten all thy graces, and thou'lt see
 'Twas all in very faithfulness to thee.
 However dark the storm appears in view,
 Still on Him cast thy care ; He'll bring thee through ;
 Strong is His arm, and faithful is His word,
 And He is still thy kind, thy gracious Lord.
 Then in Him trust, nor faint beneath His rod,
 Thy Smiter is thy Friend—thy Father—God !
 In His all-holy, wise, and gracious choice,
 In faith and love unfeignedly rejoice.
 Yes, I'll rejoice, in spite of all my pain—
 Rejoice in Jesus, nor of Him complain ;
 I'll bow submissive to His holy will,
 And praise and love and thank and bless Him still.
 It can't be long ere I, through grace, shall be
 From pain and sin and sorrow ever free ;
 Shall see His face and triumph in His love
 Among His saints in that bright world above.
 In joyful raptures there my soul shall tell
 How heavenly wisdom ordered all things well ;
 How sovereign love and faithfulness divine
 Did through the whole of all my trials shine ;
 How tender pity, with extended wing,
 Did sweet support and daily succour bring ;
 How the long-suffering patience of my God
 Spared me and blessed me while I felt His rod ;
 How the almighty Hand which held me up
 Divinely sweetened sorrow's bitter cup.
 There, above all, my happy soul shall prove
 The boundless glories of redeeming love ;
 There my exalted Saviour I shall see,
 And kiss those hands and feet that bled for me.
 Prostrate before His high and holy throne,
 His loving-kindness I'll for ever own ;
 And, with the harps and songs and choirs above,
 Sing in immortal strains, eternal love.

SAMUEL MEDLEY.

"SOVEREIGN GRACE O'ER SIN ABOUNDING."

YOU have repeatedly requested that I would transmit to you, in writing, the very remarkable account of the poor penitent whose last moments I attended. Indeed, as I am led to believe that the memoirs of such characters have a very happy effect, through God's blessing, to lift up the hands that hang down, and to support the feeble knees, and the extraordinary conversions of notorious sinners should seem to be intended by the divine goodness to this end, I am pleased to gratify your wishes in this particular, hoping that the Great Disposer of all events may so graciously direct the relation of it to good, in causing the influence of the Spirit to accompany it, that it may terminate to His glory in awaking others to repentance, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

I am verily persuaded few instances have occurred within these later times which more strikingly have illustrated the goodness of God, and the sovereignty of His grace, than that of the person whose conversion it was my peculiar happiness to be an eye-witness of, the circumstances of which I am about to relate. From motives of tenderness and delicacy to her surviving relation, I am not permitted to mention her name. It will be sufficient to all the purposes intended from the relation of her history to observe in the outline of it, that she was one of those unhappy and ever to be deplored characters who live by prostitution. At a very early period, having been seduced from the path of chastity, and the sense of female modesty being once removed, she gave herself up to this wretched life, and from the age of seventeen to within a few months preceding her death, which happened in her thirty-second year, she had lived in a state of the most abandoned profligacy.

When I was first called to visit her, I found her in the last stage of consumption. The poor creature had, it seems, long struggled amidst the conflict of various passions of shame and fear and distrust, mingled with the most earnest desires to find some means of grace, before she could summon sufficient fortitude to send for a minister to that purpose. But, in proportion as her illness increased, the burden of sin becoming more and more intolerable, the distress and agonies of her mind pressing harder upon her, the approach of death, judgment, and eternity, opening in full prospect before her, and swelling in magnitude and awfulness at every renewed view, and above all, no doubt, the blessed Spirit of God operating by His gracious influence to lead her heart to repentance—these awakening causes triumphed over every other consideration, and, with an earnestness hardly to be described, she desired that I might be sent for.

It seems that I was particularly chosen to fulfil this office from

a circumstance which had taken place a few months before. I had at that time been engaged, in my daily visiting the sick, in attending the last moments of a man who kept a house of ill-fame, with whom, at that season, this woman lived, and (as she afterwards informed me) God had then been pleased to render my visits to him profitable to herself, for though, at this period, she was actually engaged in the very career of all her sinful courses, yet she always watched the moment of my approach, and, hastening from her loose companions, she would hide herself in a room adjoining to that of the sick man, where the thinness of the partition favoured the opportunity of hearing all that passed unperceived, and, with floods of tears, and in the most poignant grief, she would pour forth her soul in prayer to God.

The scene which presented itself before me at my first interview with this poor woman was, I think, the most powerful arrest upon my feelings I ever experienced. It baffles all the powers of my pen to describe. Portray to your imagination a dying woman, with just life enough to speak, under the impression of the quickest sensibility her sinking frame could sustain, confessing, with every aggravating circumstance she could recollect, the iniquities of her life, awed by no consideration of fear or shame to conceal or keep back the whole truth, seeking no palliation, studying not to extenuate or throw a covering over transgressions which she had committed, but very evidently feeling in the heart what she openly proclaimed with the mouth—that she was “the chiefest of sinners.” Never shall I forget the manner with which she addressed herself to me after she had gone through the melancholy tale of her life, and methinks her form is now before me. With a look of the most exquisite distress, at once expressive of hope, and fear, and a thousand anxieties, she directed her dying eyes towards me, and said, “Can there, sir, do you think, be any mercy for such a wretch as I am?” You may readily suppose what answer I gave to this most interesting question, and how eagerly I sought, by a faithful representation of “the truth as it is in Jesus,” to direct her eyes to Calvary. With a number of quotations from the Gospel which represent Jesus as the Saviour and the Friend of sinners, and of the express purpose for which He came—“not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance”—I endeavoured to soothe and comfort her spirit, and I could perceive a gleam of hope brightening up her saddened countenance. But how was my astonishment awakened when, proceeding from general promises of revealed truth to make application to her particular case, by leading her into a brief view of the doctrine of the fall, and man’s utterly lost state before God, with the design of the Redeemer in the scheme of salvation, she frequently anticipated my account, and gave me every now and then proofs that

she was no stranger to the great subjects of which I spoke! I could not help expressing my surprise how a person in her unhappy way of life should have been brought to a knowledge of these truths, and this opened a new source of grief to her mind, and brought many tears from her eyes. Her parents, she told me, had early taught her principles of religion, and no doubt had seasoned their instructions with fervent prayers to God for His blessing upon them; but her sinful course of life had tempted them to fear all was fruitless, and they had left the world (for, as well as I can recollect, they had both been dead some years) lamenting the inefficacy of their supplications to God for their graceless child.

How many prayers offered up by serious and regenerated persons for their ungodly children have been answered years after the humble petitioners have been gathered to their fathers! How ought the sequel of this history to encourage parents to pray without fainting, and never to restrain prayer before God! And what examples are there now in heaven, among the redeemed of the Lord, of the children of the faithful, recovered through almighty grace as brands from the fire, whose seemingly unpromising conduct suppressed every hope, and caused the parents to descend with sorrow to the grave!

The delight with which the poor woman listened to my relation of the Redeemer's love in the salvation of sinners, and of His own most precious promise—that all who came to Him He would in no wise cast out—the fervency with which she united with me in prayer, and the very great earnestness of her importunity, when she begged of God that the blood of Christ might cleanse her from all sin—these were all very pleasing considerations to encourage me to hope that a spirit of grace was poured out upon her from the Lord.

But what I would beg most particularly to mention, as more calculated to give this assurance that her contrition was sincere, and the sorrow she expressed arose from His power in the heart who was "exalted as a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance and remission of sins," was, the effect which manifested itself in her faith in the Redeemer's merits and atoning blood. That great Being who had poured a spirit of grace and supplication into her heart, and led her to "look on Him whom she had pierced, and mourn," had given her also to believe on Him to everlasting life, for no sooner had I brought before her the evidences of the Redeemer's love to poor, self-condemned sinners, than she was enabled to rejoice in the consolation, and to have a good hope, through grace. And this, you know, could come from no other source than from the immediate teaching of the blessed Spirit. It is His peculiar, gracious work.

The friends of dying persons often form inaccurate decisions of the operations of the Holy Ghost. Convictions of sin, which are induced from the teaching of the blessed Spirit, have, it must be confessed, several distinguished particularities to denote them from the distress of mind which is the mere effect of a foreboding and alarmed conscience, and in nothing, perhaps, more striking than in this one instance. He who is under the stings of a guilty conscience only, and awakened by the prospect of death, will be saying and seeking for everything he can by way of extenuating his past misconduct; whereas the soul under divine convictions aims at no palliative, seeks no excuse, but feels, as the Apostle did, the full truth of that declaration, "the chiefest of sinners." These essential distinctions between the operations of the Spirit of grace in the heart, and the alarms of guilt only arising in the sinner's mind, will sometimes afford the opportunity of discerning that godly sorrow induced by the wisdom that is from above, and working "repentance not to be repented of," from that sorrow of the world which cometh from the wisdom that is beneath, and which worketh death. But, in the other operation of the blessed Spirit, which leads the convinced sinner on, when mourning over a corrupt and lost nature, to behold the Lamb of God as an all-sufficient Sacrifice, taking away the sin of the world, here we are furnished with more clear and decisive marks, and can more plainly trace the footsteps of His divine labour, for, as "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost," wherever, therefore, we discover certain and unequivocal testimonies of this kind, and depending faith upon the merits and atonement of the Redeemer, a penitence accompanied with this principle becomes a more certain evidence of grace in the heart, and furnishes more pleasing assurances concerning the state of the soul, and all good men that see it may say, "This hath God done," for they may perceive that it is His work.

At this distance of time, nearly ten months, I cannot recollect with exactness, so as to give in her own words the very strong testimonies with which this penitent made profession of her faith, and her abiding dependence upon Christ for salvation. From my first interview with her to the time of her death, through an interval of about thirteen days, her testimony was steady and unshaken.

The day of her death, finding her strength almost exhausted, and her speech so slow as scarcely to be understood, I questioned, with some degree of anxiety, whether her confidence in the Redeemer's merits was the same, and she seemed to reprove me for the apprehension, and gave me to understand that she waited for the glorious moment to begin the song of Moses and the

Lamb ; and, as I found afterwards, from those who were with her when the hour came, she departed under a full persuasion of happiness, through the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I confess to you very freely that, in the course of my ministry, for nearly twenty years, I have never yet seen an instance at all approaching to it for displaying the freedom and sovereignty of God's grace in the recovery of sinners ; and when I meet with self-sufficient and self-righteous Pharisees, I feel the force of our Saviour's sentence most awfully fulfilled—"Publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you."

I have stated the circumstances of the case simply as they have appeared, and have only to lament that I did not make any written memoranda of her expressions, for some of them were wonderfully striking. I remember, indeed, among other things, she told me that she had felt early convictions of her conduct, and which, more or less, accompanied her through the whole of her sinful life. "Many, many times, sir," said she, "have I drowned myself in drunkenness, to drive away reflection, and to deaden something which seemed to call me to repent."

Is not this indeed "a brand plucked from the fire"? How are the words of the Prophet verified in all such instances of God's grace—"Who is a God like unto Thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage?" "He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou?"

Oh, that the careless who read this may be led from it to attend to the things that make for their everlasting peace, and not be left among those who find at death that they are for ever hid from their eyes! "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" (Isa. xxx. 18).

Aldwinkle.

DR. HAWEIS.

THE believer finds it most difficult to rejoice when he has most cause to rejoice (James i. 2).—*Wakeling.*

WHEN He bids us ask, it is not for that He needs to be entreated, but that He may make us more capable of blessings by desiring them.—*Joseph Hall.*

I REMEMBER, in going to undertake the care of a congregation I was reading, as I walked in a green lane, "Fear not, Paul ; I have much people in this city" ; but I soon afterwards was disappointed in finding that Paul was not John, and that Corinth was not Warwick.—*John Newton.*

THE REPROOF OF LIFE; OR, FAITHFUL WOUNDS BETTER THAN DECEITFUL KISSES.

A FEW THOUGHTS UPON REVELATION iii. 20, BY G. H.

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me."—REVELATION iii. 20.

WE have in these words a blessed unfolding of experience. The Scriptures not only give us many precious doctrinal statements, in which the great truths of God are set forth to be received by a divinely-produced faith, but they also describe the workings and actings of the life of God in the soul. The Bible is written in an experimental manner; consequently, a man may, in judgment, be sound upon certain points, and yet most seriously err when it comes to the workings of the divine life in the hearts and lives of the godly. There are more forms of error and ways of being erroneous than one. We may adhere to a sound form of words and some correct doctrinal system in the letter, and yet be antagonistic in our words and conceptions to the manifestations of the divine life. Whilst apparently insisting upon the helplessness of the creature, and the needs-be of the Spirit's operations, our words may very possibly tend to fetter and impede the blessed Spirit's free actings in the hearts and lives of God's children. "Our vines," says the spouse, "have tender grapes." Truly, they are a great deal too tender for the hand of mere nature to touch them properly. Unless great tenderness of conscience and the blessed fear of God are in exercise, we may easily crush, or, at any rate, take the bloom off from, those grapes. We may easily do what God warns us against—quench or grieve the Holy Spirit of God as working in the hearts of God's people.

"So gentle sometimes is the flame
That, if we take not heed,
We may unkindly quench the same—
We may, my friends, indeed."

Against, then, a rash handling of that which pertains to, and is descriptive of, the Holy Spirit's work, of an experimental and practical nature, in His people, we desire to be ourselves cautioned, and firmly, yet kindly, to guard our readers.

Our aim in this paper is, to warn our friends and readers against error in those forms which are subversive of the truth, as to its experimental and practical bearing. These errors are not the less dangerous, but the reverse, when they wear, as they may do, the garb of an excessive attention to orthodoxy, the persons influenced by them being sincerely zealous. A "form of godli-

ness," Paul tells us, may—yea, in the latter days and perilous times, will—exist where the power of godliness is wanting. A dead hand even may hold the truth in the letter of it—hold the scabbard of truth—whilst the "sword of the Spirit" itself may be wanting. Thus consciences may not be honestly dealt with, but men remain unwounded in their sins, and even be equipped from the Word of God, and with the letter of truth, against the truth itself. This error may take in various forms, or a dead letter, bondage and killing resistance to the truth, in the power, experience, and practice of it, may be discovered under various disguises, in all of which it will, of course, appear to be on God's side, and even zealous for doctrinal purity.

1. It—we speak not of men, but of a particular form of error—will lay hold of expressions, declaring a man's capability of choosing evil, and willingly doing what is wrong, and mightily cry out that such expressions affirm his power of willing and doing what is right. Thus, under the pretext that such expressions imply creature power, it will try to do away with them, and thus enervate the ministry of the Word of God. It will tend to ward off from men's consciences the strokes of the Spirit, in His warning words and solemn admonitions. Now, all Scripture shows us the fallacy of this. Everywhere man is represented as capable of voluntarily sinning, and everywhere that sinning meets with the divine condemnation. In fact, man, as left to himself, can do nothing else, and yet is never for a moment acquitted on that account. But the same Scriptures everywhere declare man's natural inability to do anything really good—to truly turn to God or please Him—every imagination of man's heart by nature being only evil, and that continually. Man, then, can sin, can resist the Holy Ghost, can reject the Lord Jesus, can trample underfoot the Son of God, can "treasure up unto himself wrath against the day of wrath"; but to assert all this is by no means equivalent to saying that, left to himself, he can do the opposite of all these things, or that he can, by himself, truly repent and turn to God, and "bring forth fruit meet for repentance."

Again, Scripture shows plainly that the children of God can grieve the Holy Spirit—can quench the Spirit—and neglect the Lord Jesus. To affirm these things in the ministry is Scriptural and correct. But do the Scriptures and the ministry, therefore, affirm that the children of God, as left to themselves, and without present help from the Holy Spirit, can do what is right? Certainly not. Here, then, we see that it would be a strange wresting of a man's words—a blamable violence done to his expressions—to say, because he speaks of the possibility of such neglect of Christ and its consequences, that he exalts creature power, and contradicts the sovereignty of the grace of God.

2. It will cavil at and oppose words of counsel and advice, when uttered or written by the ministers of God, under the plea again that such words of counsel and advice imply creature power. But what real child of God has not felt the benefit of such words? How thankful we have been to read words of wholesome counsel in the pages of such wise and able men as Owen, Flavel, Huntington, Romaine, Newton, and others! Did we thus value them because we believed them to imply creature power, or a capability in us as of ourselves to comply with them? Certainly not. Had we so conceived of them, they would have become bonding words to us. But we felt them applied to us of the Holy Spirit as salutary counsels, showing us what was right and wise, and leading us to cry to the Lord to work in us according to them. They stirred up desires and prayers in our hearts to be led aright.

3. It will declaim against words descriptive of the actings of the life of God in the souls of God's people, and here again cry out that such words imply creature power, as though, when Paul writes to the Thessalonians about the work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope, manifested in them, he meant mere creature power, and did not ascribe all to the Lord; and as though, when ministers in the present day describe in perfectly correct terms the effects of the Holy Spirit's operations in His people, they deny the Author of those effects.

4. It—we still, to avoid all mere personality, write against the principle—will be for inserting, without any just reason, explanatory words, and perpetually and even impertinently introducing, with a mere lifeless formality, the name of God and other things, as if God's people cannot take in the spirit of a writing, but are always bound by some hard conception of the letter; and as if they cannot arrive at a man's meaning unless he is continually treating them as so many infants, and, therefore, insisting upon the first principles of godliness. Surely, when the entire drift of a man's writings and ministry are of a creature-abasing and God-exalting nature, he need not be perpetually saying, "My dear hearers, you must not suppose I mean this in a free-will sense. I would not have you understand me to be speaking the language of Arminius. Do not be alarmed. I am not a legal lion, but a sound; sober, harmless Calvinist." Surely so much apologising and explaining would rather lead a wise man to think there must be something amiss, than to believe in the man's perfect soundness. Truth and integrity are, for the most part, content in their honest simplicity to go straight forward. Guileless and sincere, they wear no veil, and can hardly dream of their truthful utterances being misinterpreted.

5. The spirit we are writing about, and affectionately, we hope,

warning our friends against, will, if persons are not watchful, and fall under the deadening influence of it, lead them into the condemnation of Isaiah xxix. 20, 21—into watching for iniquities, accomplishing a diligent search (Psa. lxiv. 6), and making a man an offender for a word. It will cause men to wrest and pervert the writings and utterances of the ministers of God. It will take words and sentences out of their proper connections, and make them signify a something entirely opposed to their proper meaning. It will thus deal with the words of ministers as those who advocate free-will and universal offers do with those of Christ Himself. For instance, if a man, in order to set forth the absurdity and impiety of a man's supposing that God ought to give all men a chance of being saved, and invite all alike, says, "Why, the natural man will not come to Christ," this sentence, picked out of its connection, may be made to imply that very creature power which it is the design of the minister to testify against. "The natural man," he would say, "has not so much as a will, a desire, for any of the things of Christ. How absurd, then, is all this cavilling against the sovereignty of God's grace towards His people—this advocacy of a chance for all men!"

Or, again, if a minister, duly and properly discriminating, as he ought, between a moral and a physical inability, says that men will not do certain things, then such an expression may be cried out against as if the minister had said that the natural man would not do the works of that new creation life God gives to His people, and would be damned for not doing them. Our Lord said, when upon earth, "Ye will not come to Me that ye might have life." A minister may say, "Ye will not attend upon the means of grace—read your Bibles—go to the place of worship where the truth is preached. Nay, instead of this, you prefer profaning the Sabbath by vain pursuits. You will go rather to the public-house and the place of amusement than to the house where God is worshipped and Christ spoken of. You despise wisdom's feast, and prefer the feast of folly. The piece of ground, the five yoke of oxen, the newly-married wife—these all have your hearts; these engage your minds. How can you think that you are Christians, or right for heaven? How can such persons escape the damnation of hell?" Now, just as some, from a merely shallow conception of our Lord's words—an isolation of them from the context—will say they show that it lies within the compass of every man's will whether he will have eternal life or not; so others may, from a like want of depth and due consideration, declare that such words as we have put into the lips of a minister imply creature ability, and set forth the dependence of salvation upon the natural man's will.

But who, that fairly considers the matter, will not see that the

minister is walking within the sphere of truth? He is rightly discriminating between the things that differ. He is "giving a portion to seven and also to eight." He is really as God's mouth; and those who carp and cavil—who wrest and pervert his meaning, isolating his words and misrepresenting him—are really falling into the jaws of a sad condemnation. It is perfectly right to say that man naturally, and until he is born and taught of God, has no will for the things of Christ; therefore he cannot thirst for them, or come to the Lord Jesus. It is also perfectly right to distinguish between law and Gospel; natural duty and Gospel grace; between what was within the capacity of man to perform, as made upright in the image of God, and that which, being a new creation work, must be performed by the Holy Spirit working in the midst of the new creation. It is equally correct to say that men will not do certain things when the secret of their disobedience is not a physical but moral inability, arising out of the rebellion of their natures, the bondage of their wills to sin and Satan, and therefore justly exposing them to divine displeasure.

We hope our friends will not take these warning words amiss. We fear for the ministry, if it is influenced by such a dead letter, enervating spirit as we have written about. We feel it is really a kindness to warn those whose words and actions are governed in any degree by such a carping, cavilling, word-picking spirit, of the dangerous path they are treading in. The ministry of the Spirit is a sacred thing, and not to be improperly trifled with. God says, "Touch not Mine anointed, and do My prophets no harm." These words are applicable, but we must leave the matter now with God Himself.

What we say is this—that, in various ways, some of which we have pointed out, the doctrines of the Holy Spirit's work, and of the inability of the fallen creature, may positively be used against the work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts and lives of His people. Thus the ministry of the Gospel may be bonded and hampered by a mere human pedantry, and the faithfulness and usefulness of the ministers of God endangered. Thus both ministers and people may be forced to lie down upon a bed shorter than that the new man of grace and liberty can stretch himself upon it. Against, then, all this fleshly opposition to the ministry of the Spirit, in its freedom and fulness—this antagonism to the children of God, in respect of the actings and workings of the grace of God in their hearts and lives, and therefore to the Holy Spirit Himself—we now raise up our voice in not an unkind, but still a most earnest protest.

Let such a spirit as that which is manifested in the foregoing and similar ways be prevalent in the Churches, and the ministry

of the Word will be paralyzed. Then all that will be left will be a ministry of apparent doctrinal clearness—of a sort of soundness in the letter—but powerless as to the conscience. The words of God's servants will be a sword without an edge, arrows without points to them, a light without warmth; and the results will be, an unwarned people, sunk into the very dregs of sloth, worldliness, luxury, self-seeking, and pride, and, to crown all, a Laodicean carnal security.

(*To be continued.*)

"WHEN WILT THOU COME UNTO ME?"

I MOURN Thine absence, Saviour;
Thou seemest *far* away;
Or art Thou veiled, and *hiding*
Thy smile from me to-day?

Oh, when wilt Thou, returning,
"Come in, and sup" once more?
I'm waiting Thee to welcome
To my heart's open door.

Thy presence is my sunshine;
No cloud comes where Thou art;
No wonder, then, I'm longing
For beams upon my heart.

Why should we e'er be parted?
The truth, Lord, I *must* tell—
I shall not be contented
Till we *together* dwell.

JESSIE.

FAITH is not only the gift of God, but it is of the operation of His Spirit.—*Krause.*

THOUGH the state of the Church and every Christian is subject to alterations, exact evenness is to be striven after here, but to be enjoyed in another world.—*Sibbes.*

THERE is the analogy of faith. It is a master-key, which not only opens particular doors, but carries you through the whole house. But an attachment to a rigid system is dangerous. Luther once turned out the Epistle of St. James, because it disturbed his system. Dr. Owen will be ashamed of his wisdom five minutes after he has been in heaven. I shall preach, perhaps, very usefully upon two opposite texts; but if I attempt to reconcile them, it is ten to one if I don't begin to bungle.—*J. Newton.*

THE ANXIOUS INQUIRER'S PAGE.

DEAR FRIEND,—Our late conversation led me to read and consider the eighth chapter of Proverbs. There seems to be a great fulness of Gospel truth in it. The Lord Jesus Christ, under the name of Wisdom, is here speaking. We sometimes speak of men as wise men. Some are wise in natural things, and some are made of God wise unto salvation. But what is a drop to an ocean? And what is that drop of wisdom that God has put into the heart of any of His creatures to the more than ocean—the infinite wisdom that is in Himself? And the Lord Jesus Christ is One with the Father and the Holy Spirit, One God blessed for ever.

In this chapter the Lord gives a description of Himself; also of those He speaks to—"the sons of men." Indeed, it is a proclamation of the Lord Jesus Christ to the sons of men, to let them know the thoughts of peace and love towards them which had been in His heart "from everlasting." Before the world was it was in His heart; but, to bring about His gracious purposes, it was necessary to make it known to them. Therefore "Wisdom cries—puts forth her voice" (Psa. xix.)—declares *how* God's voice is proclaimed—in His works of creation and providence. His speech and language through them has sounded through all the earth, and His words to the end of the world.

Men have come to a dreadful state of blindness and hardness when they turn a deaf ear to God's voice in His rebukes, and His judgments on the nations, for their provocations and forgetfulness of Him.

The second and third verses describe the position taken by Wisdom, when she proclaims the joyful news of the love and delight that is in the heart of the Lord Jesus Christ towards the "sons of men." The places are "high places," "places of the paths," "gates," "entry of the doors." All these places being mentioned seems to show that no condition or circumstance can prevent God's voice being heard. Is a friend or neighbour cut down by the hand of death? Is any visitation of God remarkable in a neighbourhood? (Joel ii. 11.) God is proclaiming His power, His justice, &c. But this proclamation may more set forth the Gospel call to the "sons of men" in the preaching of the Word; and the "high places," "gates," &c., wherever a door is opened or an opportunity given to God's servants to declare the truth, in warning the wicked, and publishing the remedy God has provided for sin-bitten souls, "even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, that whosoever believeth," &c. Though all are (in one sense) bitten by sin, and held captive by its

power, yet all are not afflicted by the smart of the deadly poison which is working in them, and which will surely bring them to eternal destruction, unless their course is arrested by Almighty power, and they are brought to seek for, and also find, the healing which the Gospel proclaims. These, from necessity, gladly resort to "the places of the paths," "entry of the doors," &c., where Wisdom, by His servants, declares the way of salvation, and their response is, "God be merciful to me a sinner!"

Then He speaks of "excellent things," which are worthy of their earnest attention and reception—that they are true—there need be no fear of trusting in them. There is "nothing froward or perverse" in the words of His mouth. Those who trust in Him will never be deceived or disappointed. His words "are plain to him that understandeth." Knowledge and understanding are God's gifts, and He has promised to "give to every one that asketh"; but, as none will ask until they are made "wise unto salvation," the mark of Wisdom is then upon them. It was on the publican when he stood afar off, and smote upon his breast, &c.

Further on He says, "I love them that love Me," &c. Their love is not the cause of His love. No; His love was first. He loved them before the foundation of the world—when they were "dead in trespasses and sins," when nothing but enmity was in their hearts towards Him. But when, by His grace, they are brought to know His way of salvation, and what He has done and suffered to accomplish salvation, then their love flows out to Him in desires, longings, and pantings—"As the hart panteth," &c.—after the manifestations of His love. "God is love," and where a spark of His life is in the soul, there will be love flowing back to God. The sun shines upon the moon, and the moon reflects the light back towards the sun. The glory of Christ shines upon the blood-washed garments of His saints. Their garments absorb none, but reflect all the glory back to Him. "Not unto us" (Psa. cxv. 1).

E. MORGAN.

THERE is no man so far off that the arm of Christ cannot reach him—there is no man so sinful that the blood of Christ cannot cleanse him—there is no man so hardened that the Spirit of God cannot soften his hard heart.—*Krause*.

A CHRISTIAN is able to do great matters, but it is in Christ that strengthens him. The understanding is ours, the affections are ours, the will is ours, but the sanctifying of these, and the carrying on of these supernaturally, to do them spiritually, that is not ours, but it is Christ's.—*Sibbes*.

A SKETCH OF POPERY, BY A CONVERT.

MANY Protestants may have made for themselves sketches more perfect than the one now presented to them, yet it possesses a peculiar interest from having been made by Thomas Campbell, for many years secretary to Cardinal Manning's "League of the Cross," and who was sent to Woolwich to "oppose" Mr. Murphy, and had forty tickets and a band of men given him to "oppose" Edith O'Gorman, at Tottenham.

Mr. Campbell calls his sketch, "The Down Line of Popery":—

"The Chairman of the Down Line of Popery is His Satanic Majesty. It is worked by an Antichristian company, of which the superintendent-in-chief is the Pope. He is assisted by cardinals, archbishops, bishops, priests, monks, nuns, and familiars.

"No. 1 Station is called *God-making Station*. Here gods are manufactured by the company's servants, contrary to the commandment which says, 'Thou shalt have no other God but *Me*.'

"No. 2 Station is *Confession*. Here is the chief booking-office for lust, obscenity, immorality, impurity, murder, sedition, and crime in general. This is the most destructive station on the whole line, and most expensive to travellers, as the charges are enormous; but the directors guarantee a safe journey to the termination. The amount of fare is not marked for the public, but is learnt at the 'private inquiry offices,' which are very numerous. *Secrecy* strictly guaranteed.

"No. 3 Station is called *Penance*. This station is also on safe lines, if you have the means at your disposal, and are willing to pay the company. Commit what trespasses one may, such as murder, adultery, forgery, whether by male or female, accommodation is provided, at prices named by the directors.

"No. 4 Station is called *Indulgences*. This station is only a short distance from penance, and the price for tickets nearly the same; only the directors will inform you that you can pass the great lakes of fire unsinged, by taking *special tickets* at this station.

"No. 5 Station is *Dispensation*. At this station you are allowed many concessions. Here you may have what is pleasing to 'the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life.' Special tickets are issued for any period, and are renewable. All tickets are paid for in advance.

"No. 6 Station is the *Rosary*. Here you can book on a safe journey by counting beads, which are supplied at the box office at all prices. On this line the chief object of admiration and homage is 'the Virgin.' Passengers are cautioned strictly against indifference in their worship of her.

"No. 7 Station is *Image Worship*. From this station there are many branch lines, and parties travelling on these must be careful to pay homage to every picture, statue, and figure, whether made from canvas, wood, clay, stone, or metal. The company insist upon their rules being carried out by all passengers, under severe pains and penalties.

"No. 8 Station is *Immaculate Conception*. From this station you can book to 'Children of Mary,' 'Scapular,' 'Medal,' 'Miracle,' 'Novena,' 'Conceived Without Sin,' and 'Mother of God' stations.

"At all these stations you need not fear the name of Jesus. All will be safe at the 'Immaculate' Station, as also at all the branch stations. 'Jesus' Station is not on this line.

"No. 9 Station is *Infallibility*. At this station, the chief superintendent resides, surrounded by Jesuits. This, for the present, is the end of the line. In the locality blasphemers of the Lord and His Christ abound. Also, the destroyers of souls and disturbers of the peace live here, through whom nations and peoples are ensnared, enslaved, and destroyed.

"Such is a brief account of my journey on the Down Line of Popery. Take my advice, and avoid it as you would skating on dangerous ice. Thank God, I have got out from among them! Jesus, keep me where I am!

"THOMAS CAMPBELL."

"POWER BELONGETH UNTO GOD."

Not all the powers of Nature can
One darling lust subdue;
Not all the art and skill of man
Can sinful souls renew.

Though parents with affection teach,
They still must teach in vain,
Since God alone the heart can reach,
And form its powers again.

The ministers, with heavenly skill,
Dispense the sacred Word;
'Tis God must bow the stubborn will,
And life divine afford.

The Holy Spirit, like the wind,
Blows when and where He please;
And what's impossible to us,
Performs with greatest ease.

Bourton.

B. BEDDOME.

ANY good short of the *chief* good will satisfy those in whom is *no* good (Psa. iv. 6).—*Wakeling*.

OUR SEED-BASKET FOR YOUNG READERS.

APPLES OF GOLD IN BASKETS OF SILVER.

CURIONE—AN EVANGELIST OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

ABOUT three leagues and a half from Turin, and at the foot of the Alps, was situated the town of Cirié, where stood an old castle, named "Cuori," and the family to which it belonged was called from it, "Curione." One of its members, Giacomino Curione, who lived at Cirié, had a son born to him on the 1st of May, 1503. He was named Celio Secundo. He lost his mother as he came into the world, and his father died when Celio was only nine years old.

The elder Curione possessed a Bible, which, in the hour of death, he put into his son's hands. That act was perhaps the cause of the love for Scripture by which the heir of the Curiones was afterwards distinguished. The depth of his filial piety made him look upon that Book as a treasure, before he knew the value of its contents.

Celio having begun his education, went to Turin, where his maternal grandmother lived. She received him into her house, where the anxious love of this venerable lady surrounded him with the tenderest care. Celio applied with his whole heart to the study of the classical orators, poets, historians, and philosophers. When he reached his twentieth year, he felt deeper longings, which literature was incapable of satisfying. The old Bible of his father could do this. A new world, superior to that of letters and philosophy—the world of the Spirit—opened before his soul.

There was much talk just then, both in the university and city, of the Reformation and the Reformers. Curione had often heard certain priests bitterly complaining of the "false doctrines" of those *heretics*, and using the harshest language against Luther and Zwingli. He listened to their abuse, but was not convinced. Instead of joining in this almost unanimous censure, Celio said to himself, "I will not condemn these Doctors before I have read their works."

It would appear that he was already known in the Augustine convent, in which, as in that at Wittemberg, some truly pious men were to be found. The grace of his person, the quickness of his intellect, and his ardent desire for religious knowledge, interested the monks. Knowing that they possessed some of the writings of the Reformers, Curione asked for them. The young man read those vigorous pages of Luther's "Babylonian Captivity" in which the Saxon Doctor speaks of the lively faith with which the Christian ought to cling to the promises of God's Word, and in which

he asserts that neither bishop nor Pope has any right to command despotically the believer who has received Christian liberty from God. A work was going on in Celio's soul. The truths he had read in the Bible grew clearer, and sank deeper into his mind. His spirit thrilled with joy when he found his faith confirmed by that of these great Doctors, and his heart was filled with love for Luther and Melancthon. "When I was still young," he said to the latter afterwards, "when I first read your writings, I felt such love for you that it seemed hardly capable of increase."

Curione was not satisfied with the writings of these good men. He longed to hear them. An ardent desire was kindled in his heart to start immediately for Germany. He talked of it with his friends, two of whom the Gospel had also touched. G. Cornelio and F. Guarino declared their readiness to depart with him.

The three young Italians, enthusiastic admirers of Luther and Melancthon, quitted Turin, and started for Wittemberg. They conversed about their journey, their feelings, and their hopes. They also spoke of the truth with simple-hearted earnestness to the people they met with on the road or at the inns. In the ardour of their youthful zeal, they even entered into imprudent discussions upon the Romish doctrines. They were bursting to speak. They could not wait until they had crossed the Alps. The spirit with which they were filled carried them away. They had been cautioned, and had resolved to be circumspect; but, "however deep the hiding-places in the hearts of men," said a Reformer, "their tongues betray their hidden affections." One of those with whom these Piedmontese youths had debated went and denounced them to Boniface, Bishop of Iveras, and pointed out the road they were to take. The prelate gave the necessary orders, and, just as the three students were entering the valley of Aosta, the Bishop's satellites, who were waiting for them, laid hold of them, and carried them to prison.

What a disappointment! At the very time they were anticipating the delights of an unrestrained intercourse with Melancthon and Luther, they found themselves in chains and solitary imprisonment. Curione had friends in that district who belonged to the higher nobility. He contrived to inform them of his fate, and they exerted themselves in his behalf. The Bishop, having sent for him, soon discovered that his prisoner was not an ordinary man. He resolved to do all he could to win him to the Church of Rome. He loaded him with attentions, and placed him in the priory of St. Benignus. It is probable that Cornelio and Guarino were soon released. They afterwards became distinguished by their evangelical zeal.

Although shut up in a monastery, Curione's soul burned with zeal for the Word of God; and, while regretting Germany, he

wished at least to use what light he had for the benefit of the monks who were commissioned to convert him. He was grieved at the superstitious practices of their worship. A shrine on the altar enclosed a skull and other bones, said to be those of St. Tibur, the martyr. These were presented to the adoration of the people. Curione refused to pay the slightest honour to these relics, and spoke to the monks against such idolatrous worship, instructing them in the true faith.

He resolved to do more. In the convent library he had found a Bible, to which no one paid any attention. He had also noticed the place where the monks kept the key of the shrine they held so dear. One day, taking advantage of a favourable opportunity, he went into the library, took down the holy Word, which David said was "more to be desired than gold," carried it into the church, opened the coffer, removed the bones, put the Bible in their place, and laid this inscription upon it—"This is the ark of the covenant, wherein a man can inquire of the true oracles of God, and in which are contained the true relics of the saints." He then, with emotion and joy, closed the shrine, and left the church without being observed. The act, rash as it was, had a deep meaning.

Some time after, at one of their festivals, when the relics were to be presented for adoration, the monks opened the shrine. Their surprise and rage were boundless, and they at once accused their young companion of sacrilege. He, being on the watch, made his escape.

Quitting Piedmont, he took refuge in Milan. In that city Curione zealously devoted himself to lecturing; but being, at the same time, disgusted with the practices of the monks, he gave himself with his whole heart to works of Christian charity. As famine and pestilence were wasting the country, he occupied himself in succouring the poor and the sick. In the convent he had appeared to be struggling for faith only. In the midst of the pestilence he seemed to be living for works only. He was eager to console every misery. Christ, having become the living Root of his soul, had made it a fruitful tree.

As soon as the scourge abated, every one was eager to testify a proper gratitude to him. One of the best families in the province gave him the hand of Margaretta, one of their daughters, who became the faithful and brave companion of his life.

Some time after this, Curione, believing that he had nothing to fear, and desiring to receive his patrimony, to revisit his native country, and to devote his strength and faith in its service, returned to Piedmont. His hopes were disappointed.

A Dominican monk was making a great noise by his sermons in a neighbouring city. Celio took a book from his library, and went with some friends to hear him. He expected that the monk

would draw a frightful picture of the Reformers, as was the custom of those times, as well as to extol the beauties of the worship, &c., of the Church of Rome. Towards the close of his sermon, the monk exclaimed, "Do you know why Luther pleases the Germans? Because, under the name of Christian liberty, he permits them to live in all kinds of excess. He teaches also that Christ is not God," &c. By continuing these monkish lies, he greatly inflamed the animosity of his hearers.

When the sermon was over, Curione asked permission to say a few words. Having obtained it, he said to the preacher, "You have brought serious charges against Luther. Can you tell me the book or the place in which he teaches the things you say?" The monk replied he could not then, but, if Curione would accompany him to Turin, he would show him the passages. The young man rejoined, with indignation, "Then I will tell you at once the page and the book where the Wittenberg Doctor has said the very contrary"; and, opening Luther's "Commentary on the Galatians," he read aloud several passages which completely demonstrated the falseness of the monk's calumnies. The people were exasperated at the monk's impudent lies. Some rushed upon him; others had some trouble to rescue him, and send him home safe and sound.

This made a great noise. The Bishop and the inquisitors looked upon it as a revolt against the Papacy. The valiant evangelist was seized, taken to Turin, thrown into prison, and, as soon as the news circulated, all his old enemies set to work. He was reminded of the relics taken away from the shrine of St. Benignus, the journey he had wished to take to Germany, and the conversations he had held on the road, and was threatened with the stake. He was locked up in a room in a mansion, which he remembered to have visited in his boyhood. Heavy chains were riveted on his feet, and two sentries were placed at the door of the house.

Curione felt that his death could not be far off; but, though in great distress, he still felt full of courage. His gaoler had riveted the chains so tightly on his feet that they began to swell, and were very painful. The anguish became intolerable. When he came as usual to bring him food, Curione begged him to leave one of his feet at liberty, and when that was healed, the gaoler could chain it up again, and set the other free. The man consented, and some days passed in this way.

This circumstance did not prevent him from making the most serious reflection. He should never see his wife and children again. He could no longer take part in the great work God was carrying on in His Church, &c. Death awaited him. But was it not lawful to defend one's life against the violence of murderers?

An idea suddenly crossed his inventive mind. He reflected and planned. When Peter was in prison, the angel of the Lord opened the doors and let him out. Celio did not expect a miracle, but he thought it was man's duty to do all in his power to thwart the counsels of the ungodly. He was not, however, very sanguine of success. God holds the lives of His children in His hands. The Lord will restore him to liberty, or send him to the stake, as He sees best.

Curione proceeded at once to carry out the curious, yet simple expedient which had occurred to his mind. He took the boot off his free leg, and stuffed it with rags. He then broke off the leg of a stool that was within his reach, fastened the sham foot to it, and contrived a wooden leg, which he fixed to his knee. His Spanish robe, reaching down to his heels, covered everything. When his gaolers entered, they did as they were accustomed to do every day—loosed the chained foot, and, as they had no suspicions, they put the fetters on the sham leg, and went away.

Celio was free! He rose—he walked—surprised at a deliverance so little expected. But all was not over. He had still to get out of that strong mansion, where so close a watch was kept over him.

He waited until night, and his keepers were sunk in sleep. The gaolers, knowing their prisoner was chained to the wall, had only pushed the door to, without locking it. Curione opened it, and moved along with slow and cautious steps. Although it was quite dark, he found his way by the help of his memory. He descended the stairs, but, on reaching the door, he found it closely shut. What was to be done now? He dared not make any noise. Recollecting that there was a window on one side of the door, he contrived to reach it, leaped into the courtyard, scaled the outer wall, fell into the street, and began to seek for a hiding-place, as fast as his wounded feet would permit him.

As no one could explain the prisoner's flight, his enemies reported that he had had recourse to magic to save himself from death.

Curione himself was surprised. He hastened to leave Turin, and took refuge in a secluded village in the Duchy of Milan, where his family joined him. His reputation as a man of letters had spread through that country, and certain Milanese gentlemen entertained a high opinion of him. They got him invited to the University of Pavia, where he was soon surrounded by an admiring audience.

The Inquisition at length discovered that the daring heretic who had escaped their hands was teaching quietly at Pavia. It issued an arrest against him, being determined to put an end to this independent man. Their officers lay in ambush, with the

intention of seizing him as he was leaving his house to go to the lecture-room, but the plot got wind. The students were numerous, and, supported by some of the chief people of the town, they escorted him to the academy, and home again when the lecture was over. The Pope, irritated at such resistance, threatened to excommunicate the Senate of Pavia, and Curione, unwilling to imperil his friends, quitted that town for Venice. From thence he proceeded to Ferrara, to live under that protection which the Duchess Renée extended to all who loved the Gospel.

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—By the request of your beloved parents, I commend a few thoughts to you. I feel a pleasure in so doing, as I can sympathise with you, having trod the same path before you. What a mercy to be met with by the Lord—to feel our ruin as sinners—brought, as guilty, to His feet to seek salvation! Then the discovery made to you leads you to conclude that you are not among God's chosen family. By what are we to know our election of God? You will say, "By the teaching of the Holy Spirit." True; but what are the lessons He instructs us in first? "He shall convince of sin." Perhaps you conclude these are tokens of your destruction. God's thoughts are not your thoughts. His are "thoughts of peace and not of evil." If He had meant to destroy you, He would not have shown you these things of righteousness and judgment, the righteous character of God, the requirements of the law, and the need of a better righteousness than you now possess. "Our righteousness is as filthy rags." The one of God's providing is Jesus Christ's. He will not leave you in the present distress of mind. When you have learnt this lesson well, He will give you to realize His great salvation. Where the tear of true contrition steals down the gloomy cheek, I should say there is the mark of election. Where the deep sigh or groan beneath the burden of guilt, and a heartfelt need of a Saviour, are, I should say there is the mark of sovereign choice. Where there is the prayer of sinking Peter, "Lord, save me!" or of the sin-burdened publican, put up in earnest desire, I should say there is the cry of the chosen of the Lord, or, as good old Kent expresses it—

"Ne'er had ye felt the guilt of sin,
Or sweets of pardoning love,
Unless your worthless name had been
Enrolled to life above."

So guilt felt, as well as love realized, is the fruit of eternal

love and choice. Your sin may appear to be of that nature and magnitude as to be past forgiveness. Look to Calvary! See that precious fountain opened there "for sin and uncleanness."

"Here's pardon full for sin that's past,
It matters not how black its cast;
And oh, my soul, with wonder view,
For sins to come here's pardon too."

What efficacy and virtue there are in the precious blood of Jesus Christ, God's dear Son, to cleanse from all sin! The devil will do his utmost to divert the mind from Christ and the glorious atonement—represent His blood as insufficient for your case—or tempt you to doubt the willingness of Christ to receive sinners, but "this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," and "him that cometh to Him He will in no wise cast out." He makes you willing, and then gives you to prove His willingness to save, and that "to the uttermost."

You may be led to conclude that your cry is unheeded because mercy is not speedily shown. You may be brought to this—"I will look once more towards Thy holy temple." May the Lord keep you looking until He appears for your deliverance, which He will assuredly do, according to His promise, "The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come; it will not tarry."

Accept my Christian love, and, with kind remembrances to your father and mother,

Believe me, yours faithfully,

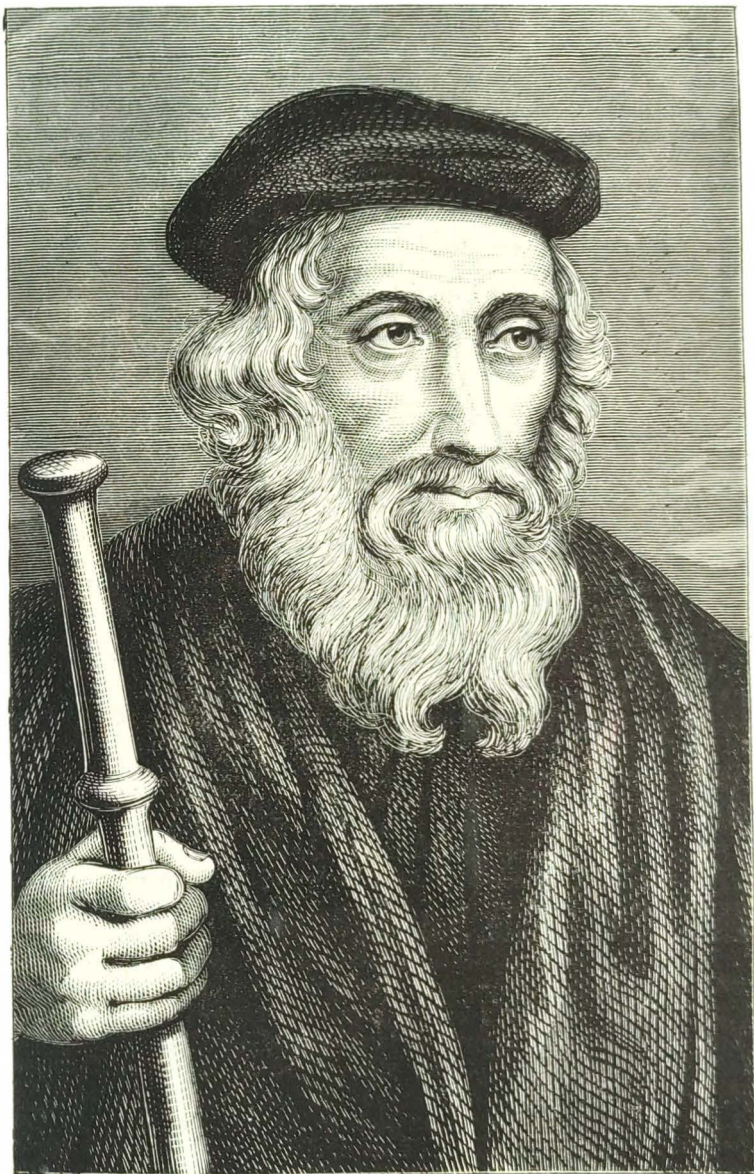
June 8th, 1861.

CHARLES NORRIS.

[Mr. Norris was for some years minister at Saffron Walden. He died in 1883.—ED.]

! OH, what times do we live in! Parties, disputes, quarrels, contentions who shall be the greatest—yea, almost hatred itself in the family of love! We have much *hearing*, and little *doing*. The Apostle James would be frightened to see the professors of the day, all *ears*, without *hands* or *feet*—nothing about them active but a gossiping tongue. For these things I mourn and preach and pray, not without some profit. I very seldom go into any company; and when I do, I return to my study blessing God that I am once more alone; and this makes the haven, of which I have the prospect just before me, a very delightful appearance, because there, and only there, "the wicked"—aye, and wickedness—"cease from troubling."—*Romaine*.

The Sower, April, 1886.



JOHN WYCLIFFE.

JOHN WYCLIFFE.

HOWEVER dark may have been any period of the world's history to which we turn, it will be found that God had witnesses who knew and contended for the grace, truth, and power of the Gospel. The Redeemer's promise—"Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world"—secured a succession of faithful men through the ages of Pagan and Romish idolatry. He holds the stars in His right hand. He gives each its position in the firmament, and appoints the moment of its rising. Each of His servants has his own sphere of labour, nor can he, without loss, "stretch himself beyond his measure." One ploughs the field; another sows the seed; and others enter into their necessary labours and reap the fruits of their toil.

John Wycliffe, one of these faithful witnesses, has been very aptly styled "The Morning Star of the Reformation." Little is known of his history, but it is generally accepted that he was born in 1324, in the little parish of Wycliffe, *i.e.*, the Wye-cliffe, or water-cliff, situated on the banks of the Tees, in the North Riding of Yorkshire. His ancestors had resided here from the Conquest, and received their name from the locality.

Nothing whatever is known as to the place or nature of Wycliffe's early education, but that he made rapid progress is certain, and at the age of sixteen he was sent to Oxford.

Wycliffe at Oxford made substantial progress, and attained a good position among the students. Latin he spoke fluently, but Greek was then little esteemed. The time and labour of scholars in those days were spent in acquiring proficiency in logic and philosophy, with a little civil and canon law. "There was no mention," says Foxe, "nor almost any word spoken of Scripture. Instead of Peter and Paul, men occupied their time in studying Aquinas, and Scotus, and Seneca." Foxe adds that Wycliffe was not behind his companions in even these attainments. "He was famously reputed for a famous divine, a deep schoolman, and no less expert in all kinds of philosophy."

But it was as a reader and lover of the Word of God that we see Wycliffe advancing. It required a degree of boldness possessed by few to seek to supersede Seneca by Scripture. This was Wycliffe's stronghold through life, grounding his teaching upon the Scriptures. The Word of the living God was his final appeal.

Little has come to us respecting the work of grace in the heart of the young man. That the Spirit of God did move upon the darkness, and say, "Let light be!" is certain, though we lament the absence of a clear and detailed account of the

change. But we have very little given us of any part of the Reformer's personal life, owing to his singular humility.

It was step by step that Wycliffe attained his light and power. Gradually, yet surely, the Word of God leavened first his soul and then his teaching. A true Reformer, the reformation he desired in others was first wrought in secret communion with God. Foxe tells us of the wrestlings of his soul with regard to the corruptions of the friars. "Perceiving the true doctrine of Christ's Gospel to be adulterate, and defiled with so many filthy inventions of bishops, sects of monks, and dark errors, and that he, after long debating and deliberating with himself (with many secret sighs, and bewailing in his mind the general ignorance of the whole world), could no longer suffer or abide the same, he at last determined with himself to help and to remedy such things as he saw to be wide and out of the way."

After several years of varied labours and constant anxieties, the Reformer, in the early part of 1379, fell sick at Oxford. The friars hastened to the bed-side of the dying man, and desired him to recant his heresies. The deputation consisted of four regents, representing the four orders of friars, and four aldermen. "You are upon the very brink of the grave," said they. "Ere it be too late, consider your faults, and make amends by a timely repentance." The Reformer maintained silence for some time, which was possibly misconstrued by the friars. But the solemnity of his position the rather caused Wycliffe to see things in their true colours; and, requesting his servant to raise his weakened frame, he gathered up his reviving powers, and said, "*I shall not die, but live, and again declare the evil deeds of the friars.*" This reply was more than his kind visitors had expected.

The Reformer's words were more than verified. He not only recovered to declare the iniquities of monkdom, but crowned his labours by being the honoured instrument of giving England the Bible.

For us who live in an age of Bibles, it is difficult to realize the degree of the superstitious ignorance in which the people of that day were held. The Word of God was accounted a dangerous Book. It was therefore forbidden to the laity, and neglected by the forbidders. Wycliffe had drunk deeply at the fountain of life. Finding the water clear as crystal, and the very life and health of his soul, he desired to place the Scriptures into the hands of his fellow-countrymen, that they might drink likewise. He therefore undertook to translate them into English.

To estimate the greatness of this undertaking, it is necessary to bear in mind that all previous efforts had been confined to small portions of the Word of God, and that even these were

more or less paraphrastic. The result of Wycliffe's labour was the first complete translation into English.

Writing in defence of his work, Wycliffe says, "As the faith of the Church is contained in the Scriptures, the more these are known in an orthodox sense, the better; and, since secular men should assuredly understand the faith, it should be taught them in whatever language is best known to them."

We have but few materials from which to write a history of Wycliffe's translation. We merely know that the New Testament was translated first, and that the translation was made from the Latin Vulgate, as Wycliffe had no knowledge of Greek. This was entirely the work of Wycliffe. In the Old Testament he was largely assisted by Nicholas Hereford, and his curate, John Purvey.

The translation throughout is most clear, simple, and forcible. The people could understand it. As a specimen, we transcribe Acts viii. 32, 33—"And the place of the Scripture that he redde was this: as a scheep He was led to sleynge, and as a lombe bifore a man that scherith him is doumbe withoute voice, so He openyde not His mouth; in meeknesse His doom was taken up; who schal telle out the generacioun of Him? for His lyf schal be takun awei fro the eerthe."

To Wycliffe belongs the honour, as an instrument in the hands of God, of the conception of this great work; and we do well to acknowledge the energy and zeal he displayed in its execution.

The last two years of his life were occupied in teaching and writing. His mind was both active and peaceful, but his unwearied labours had made marks upon his strong frame. He therefore secured an assistant, in the person of John Horn, in his pastoral duties; and to Purvey, his hearty co-worker and friend, we are indebted for the preservation of his tracts and sermons.

Towards the close of 1382, the Reformer was prostrated by an attack of paralysis, which betokened the approach of the end; and on December 28th, 1384, while he was among his people in his church at Lutterworth, he was visited by a second paralytic attack. This was his Master's call to rest from all earthly labour. He was carried to his home by loving hands. He continued silent for three days, and breathed his last on December 31st. His life and his work ended together.

Of the Reformer's writings, most of which have now been printed, there are about three hundred. His great work—and for which alone his memory is dear—was the translation of the Scriptures; and his intimate knowledge of Scripture is apparent through all his writings; and his attachment to the grand doctrines of the Gospel shines with a lustre which sufficiently accounts for the hatred of the Papal party.

Wycliffe held most distinctly the utter depravity of man through the fall of Adam—a truth much obscured in our own day—and the necessity for a perfect obedience to the law of God. He insisted largely upon the dignity of Christ's Person as the eternal Son of God, and as the Mediator between the justice of God and the sin of man. The substitutionary work of the Lord Jesus he clearly set forth. "Christ died not for His own sins, as thieves do for theirs; but, as our Brother, who Himself might not sin, He died for the sins that others had done."

The necessity of regeneration by a divine power; the exclusion of human merit from the justification of the sinner; the doctrine of justification by faith in the finished work of Jesus—these are abundantly taught in the Reformer's writings.

The love of Christ is so sweetly set forth in one of his tracts that a few lines must be quoted. Here is the secret of his strength—communion with Christ. "Oh, thou everlasting love, inflame my mind to love God, that it burn not but to His callings! Oh, good Jesus, enter into the inmost recesses of my soul! Come into my heart, and fill it full with Thy most clear sweetness. Make my mind to drink deeply of the fervent wine of Thy sweet love, that I, forgetting all evils, and all vain visions and scornful imaginings, Thee only embracing, joying, I may rejoice in my Lord Jesus. From henceforward pass not from me. Only Thy presence is to me solace or comfort; and only Thine absence leaves me sorrowful. Oh, Thou Holy Ghost, who inspirest where Thou wilt, come into me—draw me to Thee! Inflame my heart with Thy love, which shall without end burn upon Thine altar."

In his practical writings, Wycliffe insisted on a life becoming the Gospel, in accordance with the precepts of the Word.

In short, and especially in the later works, markedly in advance of his earlier writings, we find him a man of God, well instructed and thoroughly furnished.

The influence of Wycliffe's writings was not confined within our own shores. The Queen Consort, Anne of Bohemia, eagerly perused his works; and, by her influence, the doctrines they contained found a way to the Continent. John Huss and Jerome of Prague, by the instrumentality of these writings, were led to embrace the Gospel; and thus the "morning star of the Reformation" dawned on Europe. Further confirmation of the Reformer's influence in Europe is found in the fact that many copies of his tracts are preserved in the imperial library at Vienna.

"Go ye into *all the world*, and preach the Gospel to *every creature*," is a divine command that will remain in force to the end of the dispensation, and the life of a Church may be measured

by its obedience to it. We cannot too highly estimate the great work Wycliffe effected by his proclamation of the Word of life. His "poor preachers," men of good education, might be heard all over the kingdom, thus resembling the mendicant friars, preaching the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. In this way whole districts were, we may say, *indoctrinated* with the Gospel truth, producing effects goodly and durable. In our own day, we may see certain fields of labour specially white for harvest, the result of the labours of faithful men, clothed with the power of the Holy Spirit, leaving behind them a godly seed to perpetuate the truths they taught. The labours of Wycliffe's travelling preachers were abundantly honoured, and seeds were deposited thereby which produced precious fruit.

Thirty years after Wycliffe's death, the Council of Constance (1415) selected from his writings a number of statements, which it branded as heretical, and issued an order that "his body and bones, if they might be discovered and known from the bodies of other faithful people, should be taken from the ground, and thrown away from the burial of any church, according to the canon laws and decrees!"

This barbarous order, so characteristic of the Church which breathed it, was carried into effect about thirteen years after. The grave of Wycliffe was opened, his remains were disinterred and burnt, and the ashes were cast into the Swift. "Thus," says Thomas Fuller, "this brook conveyed them into the Avon, the Avon into the Severn, the Severn into the narrow seas, they into the main ocean; and thus the ashes of Wycliffe were the emblem of his doctrine, which is now dispersed all the world over."

Thus the truth of God, whatever may be the vicissitudes of its progress, shall obtain complete and final victory over every foe, until the grand purposes of its Almighty Author are fulfilled. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My Word shall not pass away." Happy for ever are they who are found on the side of God and His truth!—*From "Life and Work of John Wycliffe."*

I DO say that, so long as I cannot see any pulsation to indicate that there is life, though there may be the garb of outward profession, I cannot believe that the reality of the thing is there.—*Krause.*

IN reading the Scriptures, in order to acquire a useful knowledge of them, four things are highly necessary—sincerity with respect to the end, diligence in the use of means, a humble sense of our own weakness, and earnest prayer to God for the assistance of His grace and Spirit.—*J. Newton.*

"HIS FOOTSTEPS ARE NOT KNOWN."

(PSALM lxxvii. 19.)

"Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up His bright designs,
And works His sovereign will."

MRS. T—— told me this remarkable anecdote, which was narrated to her by the late Dr. Hawker himself :—

An old lady, who was a decided Pharisee, and whose religion consisted in reading her Bible and Prayer Book, and in going to church, was in the habit of attending his ministry. On one occasion, when she was absent, her dissolute son entered the church, where the Doctor was preaching. He was quite intoxicated, but, notwithstanding this, the statements which were made appeared to him so applicable to his mother that, on returning home, he said to her, "If what Dr. Hawker has asserted be true, and you die as you are, you will go to hell." The old lady was startled. She believed that she had been the subject of the sermon. She could not rest, but sent for the Doctor, and inquired what he had been saying about her. He replied that he had not spoken of her, nor indeed was she in his thoughts. But, after conversing with her for some time, and perceiving that she was ignorant of her sinfulness, and of God's free grace through Christ, he assured her solemnly that she certainly would go to hell if she died as she then was. The old lady found his words to be like a barbed arrow in her conscience. She felt the awfulness of her state. She began to seek for mercy and salvation through the Lord Jesus only; and, not many months after, died triumphing in redeeming grace. Thus wondrously did God accomplish His design by the instrumentality of a drunkard, "that no flesh might glory before Him."

G. S. B. ISBELL.

[How many professors are, like the old lady, resting in a form—knowing nothing of a change of heart—deceiving themselves with the idea that, because their creed is like that of their parents, they are right for heaven; or, because they profess the truth, therefore they are partakers of it! But the Word declares that no form will suffice as a substitute for the "new birth." A true Christian is "a new creature in Christ Jesus." Reader, what is *your* case?—ED.]

I SEE the unprofitableness of controversy in the case of Job and his friends; for, if God had not interposed, and they had lived to this day, they would have continued the dispute.—*John Newton.*

AN OLD DISCIPLE CALLED AWAY.

To the Editor of the Sower.

DEAR FRIEND,—We have been losing many of our friends and members of late by death, and among them our aged and highly-esteemed brother Baker, aged eighty-five years. The Lord began a gracious work in his soul before he was out of his teens. He worshipped among the Methodists at this time, and was very willing and active in working in the Sunday School. He, at one time, got together some very poor, neglected children, whose fathers were fishermen, and taught them to read, and spoke to them about God and their souls, and gave them also many useful lessons for daily life. He is very gratefully remembered to this day by some of them for his humble efforts for their good. He remained among various sections of the Methodists, in villages near Colchester, for about fifty years.

About twelve years ago, he came to live in the town, and began to attend St. John's Green Chapel, that being the nearest to his home. Soon after I removed here, in 1875, he frequently called upon me, as I resided but a short distance from him. Very often he would bring a tract for me to read and give my opinion upon it. I soon found his mind was much confused and unsettled with regard to the doctrines of free and sovereign grace. We had many long conversations with regard to election, regeneration, growth in grace, and final perseverance.

On calling one day, he seemed very happy, and said, "I have been in a muddle all my life. I have been like a man living down in a valley, where the fog is always over his head. Now I have got on a hill, I can see where I was. I can see what you say is quite right."

Soon after this he spoke to me about his being baptized, saying he could see very clearly that the apostles baptized only believers. He came before the Church, and gave a very clear and pleasing account of the Lord's work in his soul, and was baptized in his seventy-ninth year. He continued with us a constant hearer, and a beloved brother, till his death. He lived nearly a mile from the chapel, but this did not hinder his being in his seat on Sundays. He was no *fine* weather hearer, although of late he had, when walking, to lean on two staves. He was at the chapel twice in January.

After a brief illness, during which his wife died, with whom he had lived sixty-four years, he quietly fell asleep in Jesus on February 9th. Sometimes he was very deaf when he had a cold, but still he would be with us in the worship of God. He would be present, as he said, "for example's sake." He was much attached to the SOWER, and used to lend it to his neighbours,

among whom he was a kind of missionary, and is greatly missed by them. His prayers *were prayers*; his walk was a *testimony*; and his faith a powerful *reality*. His decease is a loss to us. He was a lover of Zion, and was ever seeking her peace. Many miss his kindly words and cheerful face. He was a great help to the minister. In fact, his motto was, "Good-will to men."

Oh, that the Lord would fill His people with a like spirit of love and zeal in every good thing!

Believe me, yours in the Gospel of the grace of God,
Colchester, March 5th, 1886. WALTER BROWN.

"OH, THAT I WERE AS IN MONTHS PAST!"

Lord, Thou didst once upon me smile,
And in Thy ways I, for awhile,
With much delight did walk;
My soul with Thee could oft commune;
My tongue to sing Thy praise would tune,
And of Thy mercies talk.

But now I feel, from day to day,
My heart to be as cold as clay,
And hard as any stone;
Throughout I am defiled by sin
I know, and yet, if heaven 'twould win,
Could neither sigh nor groan.

When sensible of mine estate,
As pressed beneath a crushing weight,
I earnest was in prayer;
But now I feel as destitute
Of feeling as a log—a brute—
Have no concern or care.

Oh, were the world at my command,
With all its treasures in my hand,
And all that worldlings prize,
With all I gladly would dispense,
To have but heartfelt penitence
In lively exercise!

Oh, Lamb of God, the heavens rend,
With power almighty now descend,
And break this rocky heart!
Before Thy presence chase away
Each obstacle, that nothing may
Keep Thee and me apart!

H. A.

NEVER believe it, that there is a single element in the breast of man that can draw him near to God.—*Krause*.

THE REPROOF OF LIFE; OR, FAITHFUL WOUNDS BETTER THAN DECEITFUL KISSES.

A FEW THOUGHTS UPON REVELATION iii. 20, BY G. H.

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me."—REVELATION iii. 20.

(Concluded from page 73.)

THE words we are going to meditate a little upon have led us to these reflections, for they are, as we began by saying, blessedly experimental, and of a practical nature. Let us go through them in order.

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock." The Lord, in this Epistle, evidently represents Himself as seeking to hold communion with those who are His own, as bought with a price. He is represented as "dwelling in the gardens," "walking in the midst of the golden candlesticks"; as present, that is to say, with His people, united in Church fellowship, to bless them in Church union, to visit them in their assemblies, and make the services and ordinances sweet and precious, holding communion with them in their diligent attendance thereupon. This they experience the blessedness and glory of when things are in a good state; but all this is greatly lost when the members sink, as a body, into carnality and sloth.

By the word "behold" we suppose the Lord to call the attention of those He addresses to the matter in hand. We are apt to be inattentive. "God speaketh once, yea, twice, yet man perceiveth it not." Is there a Christian man living, who knows anything of himself, who will dispute the truth of Elihu's assertion? Besides, not only are our minds, through the carnal nature which is in us, apt to be wandering, inattentive, and inconsiderate, but there are certain points which require, so to speak, special observation, being very difficult for us to understand. Such is the following statement of our Lord—"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten." We will appeal to any afflicted, sorely-trying child of God, against whom the Lord's own hand has apparently gone out, and ask, Is it easy for such an one to say, "This affliction, this rebuke, is merely that of God's eternal love"? We see, then, reasons for the use of the word "behold."

Now, what "door" is this that the Lord knocks at? Clearly not that of an empty house—not that in which all the inhabitants, so to put it, are dead. Not the mere plague-stricken house of the human heart generally, but the heart of the child of God. Christ comes not, in this Epistle, by which He really

knocks, to a congregation of the dead, but to a living Church. He comes to hold communion not with the dead, but those who are alive. God is the God not of the dead, but of the living. The following words abundantly point out this, if indeed the thing were disputable. The idea is, in substance, the same as that in Solomon's Song v. 2. It is not a sinner "dead in trespasses and sins," but the spouse of Christ, who there says, "It is the voice of my Beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to Me, My sister, My love, My dove, My undefiled." The "door," then, is the door of the child of God's heart. In that heart there is the living man of grace, the new creature, that divine principle implanted by the blessed Spirit which makes the man answerable to the words of Christ, "He that hath an ear, let him hear."

Now, how does Christ knock at this door? He Himself informs us. When He chastens with afflictions, and rebukes by His Word, then He knocks. So He says, in Micah, speaking of afflictions, "Hear the rod." Afflictions have a divine voice in them; they speak as from God to His living children. In them God says, "'My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord.' I do not correct thee thus for nothing. There is a needs-be for this trial.

"I only design
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine."

To despise the chastening is to think lightly of it, fret under it, impatiently want its removal; whereas, not to despise it is to accept it with reverence and gratitude from God, as a Father, seeking for grace to profit by it. Mr. Hart says—

"Thou highly shouldst esteem
The rod that's sent to purge thy pride,
And make thee more like Him."

When we thus esteem the affliction, as sent in Fatherly love by God, and even bless and praise Him for His great condescension in having any such Fatherly dealings with us, then we properly "hear the rod, and who has appointed it."

Christ rebukes His people by His Word when, as in the case of these Laodiceans, He even sharply reproves their evils. Thus, God says to Ezekiel—"Cause Jerusalem to know her abominations." It seems an invariable rule of God's dealings with His people that, when they go astray, He will, sooner or later, send His Word and Spirit to admonish them. Thus, in the history of Israel, we repeatedly read—"Israel sinned again." Then God, in His anger, brought them very low; then He sent a prophet to reprove and show them their abominations; and then, when their

hearts were humbled, pained, and contrite, God raised them up deliverers.

Well, then, this is Christ's knock—outward afflictions and inward reproofs. "My reins chasten me," says the Psalmist, "in the night season." "For the iniquity of his covetousness," says God, "was I wroth, and smote him; I hid Me, and was wroth." But when Ephraim heard the rod, and was made to smite upon his thigh, the Lord says, "Is Ephraim My dear son?"

"Yet, when they mourned their faults,
He hearkened to their groans;
Brought His own covenant to His thoughts,
And called them still His sons."

In these ways, then, Christ "stands at the door and knocks!" Thus He knocked in the days of John. Thus He knocks at the present time. But what a sweet view this gives us of afflictive dispensations and divine rebukes! They are invitations to communion with Christ. The soul grows careless, and settles on its lees. Christ will not allow such a state of things to continue. He will hold communion with His saints; therefore, by afflictions and rebukes, He stands and knocks. So, in Solomon's Song iv. 16, "Awake, O north wind," says Christ. Blessed it is for our souls if, when the Bridegroom thus cometh, we open to Him immediately.

But if these words afford us such a blessed unfolding of experience, shall we spoil them by false Arminian interpretations, or rashly reject them by our narrow-mindedness? May we always bear in mind the Lord's solemn words—"It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." And, again, the Word says—"The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." May we give to every word of God its true meaning, submit to what the Lord says, and not wrest His words in order to adapt them to our own preconceived ideas and fleshly notions.

But we pass on. "Behold, I stand," says Christ. The word "stand" leads our thoughts to Solomon's Song v. 2, where He says to the spouse, "My head is filled with dew, and My locks with the drops of the night." In both cases we have the same representation of things, and the inattention and prevalent carnality of the Lord's dear people indicated. So carnalized were even the godly in Laodicea, that Christ represents Himself as "standing at the door"; and though He had doubtless already given them many intimations of His presence by previous reproofs and varied dealings, they had hitherto disregarded His presence and been very insensible as to His absence. They went on frowardly in the way of their hearts. It was much the same with the spouse, with this difference—that the state of the latter

seems better than that of the Laodiceans, for, though very indolent and indisposed, she nevertheless awakes to a certain extent, and says, "I sleep, but my heart waketh."

Well, then, our conclusion is, that the state of the Laodiceans, spiritually considered, was very bad; and what increased that badness seven-fold was, the miserable self-conceitedness which prevailed. "We are rich," say these people, "and increased with goods, and have need of nothing"; and they knew not that they were wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.

Christ's present message in this Epistle would, we question not, according to God's diversified workings, produce in different persons different effects. Some, no doubt, through all-conquering grace, would rise up and open to Christ. Some, on the other hand, would still lie upon the bed of indolence. The flesh always lusts against the Spirit—works and wars against the life of God in the soul, and shuts the door, and would even bolt it against Christ, and keep it bolted likewise. The evil heart of unbelief which is in the child of God, as after the flesh, fights with the most strenuous opposition against all that is of God. Just so far, then, as the Lord is pleased to overpower all fleshly oppositions, or to leave them, in His sovereign and wise management, to in degree prevail, we either open the door at His voice, at His knock, or keep it shut against Him (Solomon's Song v. 2).

But it may be said, "If all depends thus upon the sovereignty of God, why the exhortation? Why the rebuke?" Can it be really necessary to reply to such questions? Though God has sovereignly decreed the end in respect to His children, and sovereignly dispenses His communications on the way to that end, He is pleased to effect His purposes by methods which His own wisdom sees best. One is that of exhortation and reproof, whereby He, in different degrees, produces in His children gracious effects of self-consciousness as to evil, godly sorrow, contrition, and a returning to Him that smites and addresses them.

No doubt, in the cases of these Laodiceans, some would be aroused, made to hear, and to comply with the Lord's words, thus opening the door. Others would have uneasiness produced in their minds. In the case of the spouse (Solomon's Song iii. 1), though for awhile she kept to the bed, the easiness of it was taken away. Others again, even amongst the godly, who were very deeply imbued with the Laodicean spirit, influenced by the prevalent carnal security of their minds and the example of others, would, no doubt, kick against, and display for a season much repugnance to the angel's message. Others, again, in the Church, who were only professors, would probably pronounce the entire address, the whole message, very legal. "If, indeed!" they would say, "If—ah! no 'ifs.' It

is all settled ; and if the Lord pleases to come into our hearts, just as if He cannot do so ! When He wants us He will have us, and when He wants to come into our hearts, in He'll come." Thus between them all, godly and ungodly, the poor angel of the Church would have rather a hard time of it.

And here, by the way, we may point out to our readers what may possibly have escaped their notice. The Lord sent these messages first to the angels of the Churches—those messengers of the Lord of Hosts who had to deliver them as from the Lord to the Churches—consequently, there would be an opportunity afforded for persons to display their real characters. As Christ says, "He that receiveth you receiveth Me," &c. (Matt. x. 40) ; and again (John xii. 48), "He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My words," &c. Thus the secrets of hearts and states would be revealed. Many in Laodicea, saying, "Lord, Lord !" would despise His speech by His messenger. Christ says, "Behold, I come as a thief." Now, a thief does not come in a way that those who are asleep shall notice his approaches. So Christ cometh not with carnal observation. If He came in His glory, who must not notice it ? If He comes by the Word of the ministry, or in the knock of a providence, He may stand a long while unobserved by even His drowsy children.

Thus we see why the Lord's words are couched in such a conditional form—partly for admonition, and to indicate the effects of sloth, worldliness, and other things when indulged in ; partly as an encouragement to earnestness and attention to Christ's words, whilst all the efficacy of the words must depend finally upon Himself, as accompanying them with His almighty, gracious power.

Now, what child of God does not know how, at times, the soul, left to the prevalency of inbred corruption, sadly declines from the ways of God ? When this is the case, what do we get by it ? Sweetness, blessing, consolation ? Let the living experienced man answer. He will readily say, "No !" "The diligent soul shall be made fat," but the slothful is under tribute. If God's children forsake His way, He visits their sin with scourges and the rod.

Well, again, when the Lord makes us hear His rod, attend to His knock, cleave to the Lord by steady faith, how is it then ? Why, soon we find, with the Psalmist, that it is good for us to wait upon God. All this is illustrated in Solomon's Song v. 2, &c. There the spouse, as we have said, is at first negligent, unready, carnal, drowsy. How did she fare through the prevalency of these things ? Why, her Beloved withdrew Himself, and, when she wanted Him, was gone, and she recovered not the blessedness of communion with Him until she had gone many a weary step

in sorrow and distress—until she had been smitten by the watchmen, and become sick with love. Then, after she has testified of Him to others, even though not sweetly present as she wished to her own soul, at length she finds Him again, but it is not on the bed of indolence, or on the mountains of the leopards. No; in Solomon's Song vi. 3, she says, "I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine; *He feedeth among the lilies.*" What a blessed experimental representation of the gracious actings of the Lord with the soul, and the soul with the Lord, we have in these words! So in our verse, for in it the same things are indicated. The promise made to opening the door is that of sweet communion. The door opens when the heart, all readiness, expands to Christ and says, "Come in, Thou Blessed of the Lord!"

" 'Fill all my soul,
And all my powers by Thine control.' "

The desires reach out after Him; the soul longs and pants for His presence.

" The favoured souls which know
What glories shine in Him,
Pant for His presence as the roe
Pants for the living stream."

"Let my Beloved come into His garden, and eat His pleasant fruits." Then, in answer to these vehement desires—these intense longings—Christ does come in. He fulfils His promise—"I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." It is a representation of communion, and has three parts—

1. The presence of Christ. This is His sensible, enjoyed presence, when the heart knows He is there. It is a spiritual, gracious entrance of the Lord into the soul. He comes not in a bodily appearance, but in His Word and by His Spirit.

2. Christ brings the graces of His Spirit in the believer's heart into sweet act and lively exercise. All his powers are engaged in love and adoration of Christ.

3. Christ unfolds to the soul the sweetness, fulness, richness, of His grace and love.

Shall we, then, despise all this blessed experimental description? Shall we rashly, rudely fling on one side the words of Christ? Shall we, because such things are unknown to us in our shallow experiences, and appear not to harmonize with our miserably straitened conceptions of God's truth, say such things savour of legality? Alas! for Laodicea, when she arrives at such a state of degeneracy as that! Depend upon it, when practical godliness is pronounced legality, and experimental, vital truth carped and cavilled at, because it will not fall in with our shallow doctrinal

conceptions and hard, dry, dead, mental systems of divinity, we are not very far off from the condition mentioned in a previous verse—"I will spue thee out of My mouth."

"Oh, that the Lord would guide my ways
To keep His statutes still !

Oh, that my God would grant me grace
To know and do His will !

"Oh, send Thy Spirit down to write
Thy law upon my heart ;

Nor let my tongue e'er use deceit,
Or act the liar's part !

"Make me to walk in Thy commands—
'Tis a delightful road ;

Nor let my head, or heart, or hands,
Offend against my God."

"THOU ART MINE!"

(ISAIAH xliii. 1.)

Who can compute the wealth of love
These gracious words enshrine ?
To sinners yearning for His grace
He whispers, "'Thou art Mine !'

"Mine, as My Father's gift to Me ;
Mine, as My ransomed bride ;

Mine, by My Spirit's conquering power ;
Mine, fully justified.

"Mine, by My sanctifying truth,
Made meet to dwell above,

Where thy full heart shall warble out
The rapture of its love."

E. D.

GOOD men have need to take heed of building upon groundless impressions. Mr. Whitefield had a son who he imagined was born to be a very extraordinary man ; but the son soon died, and the father was cured of his mistake.

CANDOUR will always allow much for inexperience. I have been thirty years forming my own views, and in the course of this time some of my hills have been sinking, and some of my valleys have risen. But how unreasonable it would be to expect all this should take place in another person, and that in the course of a year or two !—*J. Newton.*

A PLEASING AND ENCOURAGING TESTIMONY.

To the Editor of the Sower.

DEAR SIR,—Being desirous towards God that the truths of His glorious Gospel may be abundantly blessed, my heart is glad that there seems an arousing from slumber in connection with the truth. I have indeed lamented the lulling tendency that attends the way which many pursue, in setting forth the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ—a way that excuses sinful man, and helps to fill his mouth with excuses for neglecting the concerns of his soul; whereas, the Scripture plainly says, “they are without excuse,” as is so clearly shown in the first and second chapters of the Epistle to the Romans. Would that the *whole* of that Epistle were studied, prayerfully looking to the Lord, as well as some parts of it are dwelt upon! We cannot but hope that such a study would, by God’s blessing, be very helpful in discovering the deficiency of many in the ministry, and so show a means by which the Holy Spirit would be pleased to breathe more abundant life and power on the preaching of the Word, thus honouring those who are enabled to honour Him.

I cannot but feel thankful that the article in this month’s (March) *SEWER*, page 68, has come to light. Oh, that, in all humility and prayerfulness, we may each take heed to its solemn and much-needed admonitions! Because so many draw very erroneous inferences from certain portions of the Word, this surely can never be any reason that such portions are to be set aside altogether. Rather, is there not the greater need to set the same forth in a proper Scriptural light, ever seeking the Holy Spirit’s unction, enabling us to understand and to clearly set it forth? I do mourn over the eager and irreverent manner of some who readily brand a man as a free-willer, and condemn his ministry as unsound, when, perhaps, the preacher has not deviated from the plain teaching of the Scriptures, as set forth in the ministry of Christ and His apostles; and very likely the said preacher as thoroughly believes that “every good and perfect gift is from above” as any of those who condemn him. “My brethren, these things ought not so to be.”

Now, suppose we take Acts xxvi. 18—20, as an illustration. The merciful Saviour, having brought the once bold blasphemer to His feet and into His fold, is pleased to use him very greatly in bringing others there, and tells His now willing servant that He sends him “to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God,” &c. And Paul describes what he did thus—“Whereupon, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: but showed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and

throughout all the coasts of Judæa, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance." This is how he went about his Master's business. And is it not greatly to be deplored, if there are those who would unhesitatingly denounce even Paul himself, were he amongst us now, and pride themselves in their own fancied faithfulness (?) in so doing? Alas! alas! when men can so slight many parts of the Word of truth, and treat it as if it ought never to have been written! Oh, that there may be a solemn bowing before God in solemn confession of all such like evils, a receiving with meekness the engrafted Word, and real prayer for God's servants, and real prayer for God's rich blessing on His own Word! How much happier shall that assembly be where the minister shall preach the Word of God—"the truth as it is in Jesus"—with all boldness and clearness as it is written; and those that are the Lord's manifest people among them shall solemnly and silently pray that each portion of that Word may speed on its merciful mission, and that sinner and saint may receive blessing from God. We do not hesitate to say that God's rich blessing shall so rest on such an assembly, that happy hearts would have reason to exclaim—

"I have been there, and still would go;
'Tis like a little heaven below";

while barrenness and a wearying formality are so closely connected with a spirit that watches to find occasion for censure, and measures almost everything by its own little warped or stunted creed. What avails it to say that they believe in a man's "declaring the whole counsel of God," if several portions of the Word are treated with cool neglect, if not with disdain? I refer to such portions as Acts xxvi. 20, and others of the same character.

Let it be considered that, even while some may be gainsaying such Scriptures, the Lord, in rich grace and mercy, may be at that very time making those very same Scriptures a means and a message of life to many a soul.

Oh, for grace to *bless* Him for what He has caused to be written, well knowing that no part of His blessed Gospel Word was ever written in vain, but each part has its own special mission! Oh, the wonders that will break forth by-and-bye; and "the Word of His grace" shall bring glory, glory, glory, to "the God of all grace," and countless souls shall bear testimony to all parts of the Word, that it was made "the power of God to their salvation."

Does it seem anything short of madness, to cavil at that which God has so mercifully given? Oh, that there may be a

more careful and impartial searching of the Word; a more earnest prayerfulness of spirit for divine teaching day by day; a more fervent desire to be made a blessing to others; a real, sincere determination to glory only in the Lord; a holy watchfulness against all that would ensnare us; and a godly jealousy lest we should forget that "One is our Master, even Christ, and all we are brethren." Oh, may we more and more delight to

"Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him Lord of all."

March 4th, 1886.

B. B.

[We are pleased to find, from this and other like testimonies, that there are hearts which receive and appreciate faithful words spoken in love, and also that there is evidently a strong desire working in many for the power of the Spirit with the *fulness* of the Gospel, in order that a mere notional fatalistic profession of free grace doctrines may be thrust out from among the Churches, by the faithful advocacy of those doctrines in their entirety, in a savoury, wholesome, God-glorifying and Christ-exalting spirit and manner. The Lord's watchmen are to sound the alarm, and show unto men their sins; and they who are faithful desire so to do it as to be "pure from the blood of all men." It is ours to declare to sinners their state, to warn them of their danger, and show to them the only way of salvation, by faith in Christ, testifying to all "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," if peradventure God may give them repentance, and pluck them as brands out of the fire. Fatalism hardens and sears the conscience against the Word and truth of God, and encases sinners in an armour of notions which slides off the arrows of God's Word, under a plea of their helplessness and His sovereignty. They thus make their notions of truth a bulwark, behind which they seek to shelter in their sin, excusing themselves, and, in reality, accusing God. But the truth and grace of the doctrines of the Gospel humble the accused sinner, and make him take a low place before God, where his mouth is stopped, and he pleads guilty to the charges of law and conscience; and in due time is glad to hear the voice of Jesus, saying, "Look unto Me, all the ends of the earth, and be ye saved." Such will own that salvation is of the Lord, and will gladly give all the glory to Him who saves them by His grace. Oh, that the Church of Christ may awake to prayer for the power of the Spirit to descend upon ministers and people, that everything that now genders hardness and bondage may be supplanted by the grace and liberty of the Gospel of Christ! We hope we may yet see a better state of things in the Church of Christ.—ED.]

A NOTE OF WARNING.

WE desire to urge upon our readers the importance of prayer, personal and united, relative to events of great national importance which seem to be fast gathering upon us as a people, and which are especially important to all who are interested in Protestantism and the cause of Christ. What with Socialism on the one hand, and Popery on the other, each making the most extravagant and emphatic demands for supremacy, we may justly fear that, if the Lord does not frustrate their plans, the results will be most serious to our nation and the Church of God. We fear many of our senators would feel insulted were they asked to set apart a day for humiliation and prayer to God; but we do not see why all true Protestants should not devote a day for this purpose; and who can tell what the Lord might do in answer to the united prayers of those who fear His holy name?

The intolerant attitude of the Romanists towards the Protestants in Ireland makes us tremble for the result, if the Government concedes to the so-called Nationalists what they demand. We blamed the late Government for making promises to the Romanists which, if fulfilled, would have proved disastrous to the liberties of Protestants in Ireland; and we hope, if the present Government attempts to play into the hands of the Papists, that the Lord will overturn them and their policy too, and thus save the Protestants of Ireland from a repetition of what occurred in 1798. That the Romanists would not mind repeating those scenes the following extracts will clearly prove. May the Lord help us, as lovers of His truth and cause, to show a united front, and use every Scriptural means in our power against the advance of our dreadful foe:—

INCENTIVES TO ASSASSINATION.

THE Roman Catholic prelates and priests in Ireland seem determined to precipitate, if possible, the social and political revolution which now threatens to disturb the unity of the Empire. The meetings of the National League are now generally held under the presidency of the Romish priests. *United Ireland*, of the 23rd January, reports 113 meetings held during the preceding week, and in no less than sixty-eight of these meetings, a Roman Catholic priest, as president, was in the chair. These meetings, as the *Times* has heretofore remarked, “have afforded opportunities for disseminating far and wide the most pernicious doctrines, *subversive of property and liberty, of social order and Imperial authority*, and the speakers are clearly more and more outspoken and contemptuous in their denunciations of the Executive, and in their appeals to the spirit of rapine and revenge, in

their popular harangues." The incentives to crime and outrage enunciated at these meetings have met with no expression of disapproval on the part of the Romish Bishops. On the contrary, the cause of the National League has been openly advocated by the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Cashel, by the Roman Catholic Bishop of Meath; and on January 15th, 1886, Archbishop Walsh, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, when addressing the people of Thurles, intimated in very unmistakable terms that, if the Imperial Government was not prepared to grant legislative independence to Ireland, England would have to reckon with the dynamite party. The Archbishop urged that, if the issue of the elections was disregarded, the delay in granting the demands of the Nationalists could only lead, and that speedily, to one sad result. "That result," he said, "might be deplored by them all. The constitutional expression of a nation's voice was likely to be more effective for the accomplishment of its purpose than those other weapons to which even now some desperate men were waiting their opportunity to have recourse—the dagger of the assassin, and those other and, in some senses, more fearful engines of destruction which the progress of modern science has placed in the hands of those who make no secret of their determination to seek for the last hope of freedom for Ireland, if they could not find it elsewhere, among the ruins of English cities, and of English civilization. You," concluded the Archbishop, "the men of Tipperary, shrink with no less horror than I do from the contemplation of so sad a prospect. Let us trust, then, that those in whose hands, under Providence, lie the issues of the immediate future, will be wise in time."—*Times*, January 16th.

These threats of a resort to the dagger and to dynamite, if the Irish demands be not conceded, are repeated in the London Romish journal, the *Catholic Times* of the 23rd January. This journal, in its leading article, asserts that, if an attempt be made to put an end to legitimate national demands by measures of coercion, the result would be, as plainly intimated by Archbishop Walsh, "recourse to the dagger of the assassin, and the other engines of destruction which the progress of modern science had placed in their hands."

In his address to the people of Thurles, Archbishop Walsh took occasion to compliment for his patriotism his friend and travelling companion, Father Kavanagh, the parish priest of Kildare, and this rev. gentleman, in a subsequent speech, did full justice to the compliment. He stated, "I come from a great county," speaking of his Wexford birthplace, "where men rose up and said, 'We will fight for our homes and our altars' [an expression which was greeted with loud cheers for Wexford, and cries of, 'Who fears to speak of '98?' and 'Cheers for Vinegar Hill']. My two grand-

fathers," he proceeded, "carried pikes in that memorable time, and I thank God that I have inhaled their spirit ; and, though my office as a priest prevents me from that mission, I am prepared, I hope, as they were, to lay down my humble life for this great and glorious country."—*Times*, January 16th, 1886.

These allusions to Wexford, cheered by his hearers, and unrebuked by Archbishop Walsh, evince a spirit of inhumanity ill-befitting a professing minister of religion. The atrocities perpetrated by the Roman Catholics at Wexford, in the rebellion of 1798, are set forth in a petition, presented by Mr. John Smith to the House of Lords, in 1829, in opposition to the passing of the Roman Catholic Relief Act. This petition stated that the Protestants, at the time of the rebellion of 1798, were "followed with fire and sword into every retreat"; and the petitioner then proceeds to relate that "in Scullabogue Barn, near Wexford, 188 of these unhappy victims were burnt to ashes, with circumstances of cruelty which makes your petitioner's blood run cold at the recollection, a new-born babe being thrown by its burning mother out of the flames, and tossed into them again by a Roman Catholic rebel ; and after the fire, the rebels danced among the ashes of the Protestants, to make themselves, as they alleged, stout-hearted. That, in Wexford, ninety-seven unoffending citizens, whose only crime was, that they were Protestants, were piked in cold blood on Wexford Bridge, among whom, your petitioner has the mournful fact to relate, were his own *grandfather, father, and four uncles*."

We may well ask, Is it to this massacre of the Protestants in Wexford that Father Kavanagh alludes, when he eulogizes the action of his ancestors in "fighting for their homes *and altars*" ? As to Vinegar Hill, the reference to which was cheered by the rev. demagogue's admirers. Vinegar Hill is near Enniscorthy, in Father Kavanagh's county. It was here that, in the terrible year of 1798, Father John headed quite an army of Irish rebels, who perpetrated most appalling outrages to illustrate their savagery ; and these are the heroes of whom Father Kavanagh is proud ! Possibly Father Kavanagh would now approve of the revival of the rebellious scenes of 1798. But, be this as it may, judging from the language used by Father Kavanagh and other priests, as well as by bishops and archbishops, it would seem as if the Roman Catholic Church had specially thrown in its lot with the party of rebellion.—*Monthly Letter of the Protestant Alliance*.

[May the Lord in mercy avert the evils that threaten us at the present time, and may He stir up His saints to prayer and watchfulness, as the enemy advances. Remember, friends, that "wrestling prayer can wonders do."—ED.]

THE ANXIOUS INQUIRER'S PAGE.

GRACE.

GRACE is the unmerited favour of God in restoring lost, fallen sinners to communion with Himself. To rightly understand the riches of grace, it is necessary to have clear views of the nature and extent of the fall; and it is likewise evident that, before we can in any degree fathom this mystery, we must have some knowledge of the primeval state of innocence which man fell from. God created man upright, "in His own image," and indued him with all the faculties necessary for the maintenance of his high position as a son of God by creation. Above all things, Adam was blessed with the God-like endowment of a perfect freedom of will, by which his obedience, or disobedience, was purely voluntary and meritorious, meriting, in the one case, God's favour, and in the other, His displeasure. Thus, whilst God made man capable of standing, he was, by virtue of the absolute freedom of his will, capable of falling.

In reviewing the state of man in innocence, we are at once struck with the two prominent features of his blessedness, which consisted in *holiness* and *happiness*, and these two are dependent upon each other. In the gracious orderings of Divine Providence, one could not exist without the other.

Now, Adam's holiness consisted in perfect obedience to the will of his Maker, of which the rich reward was the happiness of perfect communion with Him. The obedience being that of a creature liable to fail, his happiness rested, so far, on a precarious basis. The moment the holiness of perfect obedience to God's will disappeared, that moment the happiness of perfect communion was withdrawn. Indeed, on the old tenure of a covenant of works, happiness no longer remained possible, for God was, by His own word, bound to punish the transgression of His will.

We are not informed how long our first parents stood without any failure of obedience. We only know that, in an evil day, Adam fell, and by his disobedience interrupted that communion with the Lord in which alone the happiness of mankind was found. By the fall, man became the miserable, wretched creature he still, without God's grace, continues to be.

" When Adam by transgression fell,
And conscious, fled his Maker's face,
Linked in clandestine league with hell,
He ruined all his future race."

In man fallen there is neither capacity nor inclination for true holiness. He, though still responsible to God, has neither power nor will to obey, and hence remains under the curse of a broken

law, without the remotest conception of what true happiness is—little thinking and little desiring that fellowship with God which is the only real happiness His creatures can know. But it is a blessed truth which the poet quaintly sings—

“The fall wrought the channel where mercy should run
In streams of salvation that never run dry;
Thus Satan was nonplussed in what he had done;
No purpose of mercy was altered thereby.”

Grace—rich, sovereign, distinguishing grace—steps in, and we rejoice in the fact—

“Grace first contrived a way
To save rebellious man,
And all the steps that grace display
Which drew the wondrous plan.”

That way was, by the provision of a better and nobler holiness than that which was irrecoverably lost at the fall. At the best, the foundation of Adam's happiness was only a creature holiness. Grace provides the righteousness of the Lord Jesus—the perfect obedience which He wrought—as the glorious foundation of an enduring happiness. The grace of our Lord Jesus is manifested in His leaving His Father's throne of glory, and taking upon Himself our nature, with all its sinless imperfections, such as hunger, thirst, weariness, and pain, in order that, as Man, He might yield the perfect and complete obedience to His Father's will which the law demands. He could not—and did not—need this righteousness for Himself. Being perfect in Himself, nothing could be added to His perfections; but He wrought the robe of righteousness, *as Man for man*, that, imparted and imputed to poor, fallen sinners, their eternal happiness might be secured by a righteousness in which is no flaw, because it is the finished work of the God-Man Mediator. The happiness to which sinners are thus restored is that of communion with God. As John writes, “Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.”

We have now traced the manner in which grace is “the free favour of God, restoring fallen man to communion with Himself.” On some other occasion we may attempt to describe the nature of that communion with God to which elect vessels of mercy are called by grace, and which is maintained by grace here below, and consummated in glory hereafter above.

Leicester.

E. C.

“DEATH has a sting, and natural men, though they may have some apprehension of it, perceive it not till they feel it—till they are stung by it past recovery.” [*Solemn truth!*]

OUR SEED-BASKET FOR YOUNG READERS.

APPLES OF GOLD IN BASKETS OF SILVER.

"The fruit of the Spirit is meekness."—GALATIANS v. 22, 23.

WHAT is "meekness"? If we answer by a long word, it is equanimity, evenness of mind, a kind of peacefulness which keeps the brain steady in prosperity and adversity alike, and under both agreeable and vexatious circumstances.

"The fruit of the Spirit is meekness," but not of a natural kind. The spiritual gift may be received by the most irritable, impulsive, and hasty creature; for "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, can keep the heart and mind" of *any* believer, *anywhere*, "through faith in Christ Jesus."

Here, as in all other respects, the Lord is First and Greatest. How beautiful are His own words—"Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Matt. xi. 28, 29). Yes, Jesus was meek—the Perfection of meekness—and from His life we learn what true meekness is *not*, as well as what it *is*. It is not that easy-going indifference that is never troubled by anything—not that slipshod "good-nature" which glosses over all ugly and hateful matters, and calls evil, good, and bitter, sweet. Meekness, like love, "is not easily provoked, and thinketh no evil," but, like her sacred companion, she also "rejoiceth not in iniquity" (1 Cor. xiii. 5, 6), "but rejoiceth in the truth."

Christ reprov'd and condemned hypocrisy, oppression, and deceit of every kind. He could "look round with anger" on His Pharisaic critics in the synagogue (Mark iii. 5). He could weep with those that wept, and rejoice with those that rejoiced; could sorrow at the grave of Lazarus, mourn over Jerusalem, and rejoice in spirit that the mysteries hidden from the wise and prudent were revealed to babes (Luke x. 21).

The mysterious "agony" in the Garden of Gethsemane, when "His soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death"—His prayer that, "if possible," that cup might pass from Him, or the still more wonderful cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" as He hung upon the cross—and, again, His glad greeting of the disciples on the resurrection morning, "All hail! All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth"—these, and numerous incidents in that incomparable life, assure us that meekness is not stoicism, but is compatible with the warmest love, the keenest sensitiveness, and the deepest feeling.

His meekness was identical with the one set purpose of His life. He came to do the will of God.

The Child of twelve years, discoursing with the Temple Doctors of Divinity, must be "about His Father's business." The Great Preacher declared, "His meat was to do the will of Him that sent Him, and to finish His work" (John iv. 34); and His whole course fulfilled the ancient prediction, "He shall not fail, nor be discouraged, till He have set judgment in the earth." "His eyes looked right on, and His eyelids right forward"; and whether the people "heard Him gladly," or excitedly "sought to take Him by force" and make Him a King—whether they cried, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" or "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"—He never wavered—never for a moment swerved. Temptation, persecution, honour, ridicule, suffering, and death all found Him pursuing His way to "the joy that was set before Him" "within the veil"—the joy of saving all His loved ones in Himself for ever and ever.

Nor does the picture of perfect meekness end with His departure from earth to heaven. One side-view more we are favoured with, in the call of Saul of Tarsus. It was "*Jesus of Nazareth*, whom he persecuted," that spoke to him from heaven. The glorified Redeemer was not too majestic to own the old title of His humiliation. He *despised* the shame while He endured it. He *wears it now* as a wreath of glory. Jesus Christ—"the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever"—is tender, meek, and condescending still.

But, leaving the great Pattern, let us look a little at some who have received of His Spirit.

In Abraham and Isaac this sacred fruit appeared. They trusted in God, and, though they passed through many changes, they were not often either unduly elated by prosperity, nor crushed to despair by opposition and trial. Joseph—as a slave in a foreign land, as an innocent prisoner, as a trusted and honoured governor—was enabled by divine grace to be meek in every varied station. Moses was the meekest man that ever lived, and during the forty years' journey in the desert, his meekness forsook him only on that occasion when he spoke angrily to the people, and twice smote the rock, instead of *speaking* to it, as God commanded (Num. xx. 7—12). The Apostle Paul, too, though naturally very excitable, had learned, whatsoever state he was in, to be quiet and contented—resigned to the will of God. And this is the essence of this remarkable grace, in which faith, peace, patience, and gentleness are beautifully blended. Full trust and confidence in God—an entire submission to His will *because it is good, perfect, and all-wise*—make the believer calm and quiet, and keep him from being *greatly* moved by any surrounding circumstance.

Let us look one moment more at the Saviour's promise before

quoted (Matt. xi. 28). He says, "Come unto Me, and I will *give* you rest." He gives saving, Gospel rest to all who come to Him. But we must "take His yoke upon us, and learn of Him," if we would *find* rest in our every-day experience—

" For passion rages like the sea,
And pride is restless as the wind."

It is hard for us to "kick against the pricks." Our fruitless struggles only wound us. Happy shall we be if meekness possesses our hearts, and, led by His Spirit, we follow Him closely who is "the Author and Finisher of our faith," "the Captain of our salvation," and the perfect Example of our life.

H. S. L.

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,—Yours came safe to hand, and I read it with delight, and with a heart full of gratitude to the God of all my mercies, for His goodness, not only to thy father and mother, but to thee also, that He should have thoughts of love and mercy towards thee, in stopping thee in thy mad career—to think of thy poor soul, and to put into thy heart a cry for mercy, through the blood of Jesus, the Saviour of sinners.

Oh, my dear friend, what can equal it? Not all this world calls good or great. And as He has brought thee through the Red Sea, so thou canst mount the banks, singing, "The horse and its rider hath He drowned in the sea!" A sweet and blessed place to be in; but mark—the wilderness is before thee, with all its enemies; but thou hast a gracious Captain to lead the way home. May He help thee to look unto Him.

My dear friend, thou hast four great enemies before thee, namely, a wicked heart, an alluring world, a tempting devil, and unbelief; and these thou wilt find to make war against thee. Ah! and they will make thee cry and groan—"O Lord, do Thou save me, for Thy mercy's sake!" I have been in this path forty-nine years, travelling this wilderness, and my cry now is, "Hold up my goings in Thy paths, that my feet slip not!" but I must say that—

" Still, as oft as troubles come,
My Jesus sends some cheering ray;
And that strong Arm will guard me home
That thus protects me by the way."

Oh, my young friend, my poor heart is on the stretch to enter the pearly gates! May Jesus continue to give thee a sip, a taste, by the way, to cheer thee, and to lead thee on. I am

fast hastening down the hill of time, and as poor David said, so can I—"Preserve me, O Lord, for in Thee do I put my trust. O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord ; my goodness extendeth not to Thee, but to the excellent, the saints, in whom is all my delight." I can say they are the excellent of the earth to me. Dream not of a road to heaven that has no crosses in it, for crooks and straits, prosperity and adversity, tribulation and peace, are the appointed lot of all that travel the path to the inheritance above. I am no stranger to these things.

I have travelled many hundreds of miles with your dear father, and we sometimes had sweet union and communion with the dear Lamb of God by the way ; and I hope to be with him, to cast my crown at His dear feet who bled for poor sinners. Bless His dear name ! I feel still to be a poor sinner ; and, as the Lord shows me more and more of my weakness and poverty, the more I see and feel my need of Him to keep me, and to uphold me in His paths. The Lord has shown me much of my weakness, but has not left me to show the world my nakedness.

Oh, my young friend, what a mercy not to bring sorrow into the hearts of God's people, nor to cause His enemies to rejoice, and say, "So would we have it!" nor to bring troubles and darkness into our own souls !

We have lost, of late, our dear old friend Rawlings. As I sat with him, he often said, "What a mercy to have a good hope through grace, and to sing—

" ' Prepare me, gracious God,
To stand before Thy face ;
Thy Spirit must the work perform,
For it is *all* of grace ! ' "

Here he hung his all—upon the finished work of the Son of God ! Mrs. J—— is very poorly—not able to sit up—but is on the Rock ! Oh, what a safe place ! She told me that Jesus had revealed Himself unto her, saying, "*I am thy salvation !*" Oh, what a wonderful mercy for a poor, feelingly-lost sinner to obtain a perfect salvation, through the dear Redeemer ! We are all pretty well, and the Lord is very precious unto us as a people, and blesses His Word among us, still having a favour towards us at Milton. Your friends are all well.

"May the Lord bless thee, and keep thee, and cause His face to shine upon thee," is the prayer of

Thine sincerely in the truth,

Milton, April 28th, 1881.

W. BAUGHAN.



BERNARD PALISSY.

BERNARD PALISSY.

IN the year 1538, a young man, with his wife and child, came to live in the small town of Saintes, in France. His trade was to measure land, make maps and drawings for public improvements, paint on glass, &c.; and thus for a few years he continued to support his family. One day, however, he had occasion to call at a gentleman's mansion near the Château de Pons, and the Seigneur showed him a beautifully-shaped cup, covered with a fine white enamel. It was made in Italy, and its extreme beauty so took Palissy's attention that he thought, "There is no man in France who can make such a cup as that. *I will be the man who will do it.*" His resolve made, he went home and told his wife that he would find out the secret, if it took him all his life. The difficulties in his way he could plainly see, for, to use his own words, "There will be the loss of time from my wonted occupation. Besides that, I must purchase drugs, make me furnaces, and all at first a clear outlay without fruit. I shall have many drawbacks, and it may be a weary while before I master the art. I shall be as a man that gropes his way in the dark, for I have no knowledge of clays, nor have I ever seen earth baked, nor do I know of what materials enamels are composed."

But, before Palissy retired to rest that night, he opened his Bible to read, as he generally did; and, turning to Exodus xxxv., read how God called by name Bezaleel, and "filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship and cunning work." "Then I reflected," said he, "that God had gifted me with some knowledge of drawing, and I took courage in my heart, and besought Him to give me wisdom and skill." The parable of the talents was often a great source of instruction and encouragement to him, in its natural signification. He felt God had given him knowledge, perseverance, and a mind to search out hidden things, and should he hide and forbear to improve his Lord's money? He says, "Though there be some who will at no time hear mention of Holy Scripture, yet I have found nothing better than to pursue the counsel of God, written therein." Here is an example indeed for any who have to labour with their head or their hands. How very few "workmen" like Palissy think of asking God to give them wisdom or skill to do their work well and thoroughly, much less do they consider that all the power, knowledge, or understanding we have comes from God (see Daniel i. 17, and many other Scripture proofs).

But it is necessary to go back a few years in Palissy's life, and find out how it was he thought of looking for help and direction in his Bible, where so very few in these Bible days

think of looking for it. Palissy lived near the time when God sent Luther, Calvin, John Knox, and many others to proclaim the Gospel of His grace, which, though still alive in the hearts of a few "hidden ones," was not openly published abroad until these Reformers were raised up. For many years before Palissy was born, the people of Europe were living in what are appropriately called "the dark ages," when no Bibles existed, save a few locked up in monasteries or rich gentlemen's houses. The preaching of the truth was unknown, and few cared for it, while those who did were hated and persecuted by their rulers, and often by their own neighbours and friends.

Now Palissy, before he came to live at Saintes, had met with a man named Phillibert Hamelin. This Hamelin had been led to go and hear the Reformer Calvin preach, and God had opened his eyes to see, his ears to listen, and his heart to "attend to the things that were spoken." He then managed to get some Bibles printed (not so easy a task then as it is now), and, carrying them with him, walked through France trying to spread the Gospel of God. Palissy met him at one of the towns he stopped at, and his conversation and exhortations were blessed of God to teach him the same truths also. He began to love the persecuted "heretic" (as the Protestants were called in those days), and his future life proved that he did not love his Bible only because his friend loved it, but because God had taught him Himself what good things were in it. It was to Palissy, three hundred years ago, what it is to God's people now—"a lamp unto their feet, and a light unto their path" (Psa. cxix. 105); "sweet unto their taste, and sweeter than honey to their mouth" (ver. 103).

But, with respect to his pottery, he made many experiments, and failed in his purpose. At last, his money gone and his wife ill, he says, "God willed that, when I had begun to lose courage, and was gone for the last time to a glass furnace, having a man with me carrying more than three hundred kinds of trial pieces, there was one among them which was melted within four hours after it had been placed in the furnace, and turned out white and polished in a way that caused me to feel such joy as made me seem as if I had become a new creature." He hastened home to his wife, and held it up before her as she lay ill in bed, crying, "I have found it!" which certainly pleased her for the time, but was not, as she hoped, an immediate change for the better. No; now the greatest struggle began. If Palissy wished to keep his secret to himself, it was necessary to have a proper furnace of his own, so he toiled day and night to build one. Then it had to be heated, and kept hot until the enamel appeared. But this effort failed also; and he says, "I suffered an anguish that I cannot speak; for I was quite exhausted and dried up by the heat of the

furnace. Further, I was the object of mockery. Even those from whom solace was due ran crying through the town that I was burning my floors. In this way my credit was taken from me, and I was regarded as a madman. It was even said that I deserved to die of hunger. All these things assailed my ears when I passed through the street; but, for all that," says the brave man, "there remained still some hope which encouraged and sustained me; so I said to my soul, 'Wherefore art thou saddened, since thou hast found the object of thy search? Labour now, and the defamers will live to be ashamed.'" And so the event proved. When almost in despair, he passed an inn, and saw two men sitting on the bench before the door, one of whom he knew was a potter by trade. Palissy thought, "If I could only get this man to help me, I would try again." While he considered, the innkeeper came to meet him, and spoke a few friendly words. They began to talk, and Palissy found that Victor, the deformed innkeeper, was one who had heard his friend Hamelin and other Huguenot preachers, and was at heart a lover of true "religion." Now, in those days, no one wished or dared to call himself a "Huguenot," unless he loved the truth of God better than his own life. It was not so easy then as it is now to use the name of Jesus Christ, to talk of justification by faith only, or to say, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins" through the blood of Jesus Christ *alone*, and not by the words of a man. Therefore, there were many who lived together in the same town, as Palissy and Victor did, and knew not that they were of one mind and heart. Palissy had found a friend. The innkeeper offered to give food and shelter to the potter as long as Palissy needed his help. It would take too long to tell how they built a proper furnace, made ready fresh materials, and finally realized all Palissy's hopes.

At the time when Palissy first discovered the enamel, there were to be found in the town and neighbourhood a good many of the Lord's "hidden ones." The preaching of Palissy's friend, Phillibert Hamelin, and others like-minded, was much owned of God in the district of Saintonge. Some monks in the neighbourhood, who had been brought out of the darkness of ignorance, and had tasted how sweet the light was, and how good it is for "the eyes to behold the Sun," laboured to spread the knowledge among the peasants around. Retaining their monks' name and dress, and their "cures," they succeeded in circulating the words of truth where an avowed Huguenot dared not go.

The seed sown in secret bore fruit; and, finding each other out, as God's people always did and will, they began to come together to read the Word of God and pray. Palissy himself was the means of commencing this. His own account is that, "moved with an

earnest desire for the advancement of the Gospel, he daily searched the Scriptures with Victor," and at length they two, taking counsel together, one Sunday morning assembled a few neighbours, to whom Bernard read "certain passages and texts which he had put down in writing, and offered for their consideration." His remarks thereon follow, concluding with this reminder, that, "while God gives wisdom, birth, or worldly greatness to such as shall never see His face with joy, He calls to the inheritance of glory poor despised creatures, who are looked upon as the off-scouring and refuse of the world. These He raises from the dunghill, setting them with princes, and making them His sons and daughters. Oh, the wonder of it!" He then begged his auditors to take it in turn to do likewise. They did so, "and," says Palissy, "this was the beginning of the Reformed Church at Saintes."

Space would fail to tell of what happened to many of this little Church—how persecution set in, and some sealed their faith with their blood. Three "reformed" monks were burnt in the year 1546, in the town, among whom was the schoolmaster of Palissy's eldest son, Nicoll. His second son, Mathurin, once endangered his young life much by his plain speaking. Palissy told Hamelin the story on his next visit: "Certain monks were sent last summer into the town, and their discourses were nothing but outcry against the new religion. It chanced that one of them, as he was preaching, taught how it behoved men to purchase heaven by their good works; but Mathurin, who stood listening, exclaimed, 'That's blasphemy, for the Bible tells us that Christ purchased heaven by His sufferings and death, and bestows it on us freely by mercy.' He spoke so loud that many heard him, and some disturbance ensued. Happily, Victor was near by, and he sheltered the lad, who might otherwise have paid dearly for his unadvised utterance." "In good truth," replied Hamelin, "it was a perilous thing, and these are fearful times. When a child of fifteen is not deemed too young for the stake—when young maidens have been stabbed for their singing—then it is no marvel if our children, being taught the truths of God's Word, should exchange their youthfulness of manner for a manly fortitude."

The little Church still continued to hold their meetings in secret, and often at night, for the vigilance of the authorities was great for a time, and then came a period of comparative peace and prosperity. Two of the principal persecutors having left the town, they ventured to use the Market Hall for their meetings, and so openly were the truths of God spoken and taught, that not only were many "pricked to the heart," but a measure of outward reformation was seen in Saintes. God made

His truth so powerful, and His people so respected and honoured for a time, that the opponents of the Gospel were silenced.

This blessing, however, only lasted for a short time, for soon came the massacre of Vassy. Then followed the calling to arms of all the Huguenots (of whom Saintes contributed many), and the town, left almost defenceless, fell an easy prey to a Catholic officer and his men, who ravaged and burnt it, killing and ill-using all who opposed them. Palissy says of it, "Deeds so wretched were then done that I have horror in the mere remembrance."

Having a special safeguard from M. de Montmorency—his house and furnace being under the Constable's protection—he was safe himself as long as he kept within doors; "but," says he, "where a short time before I heard Psalms and holy songs, and all good words of edification, now mine ears were assailed only with blasphemies, blows, menaces, and tumults."

The time for the rejoicing of his own personal enemies, however, was near at hand. He had given deadly offence when he remonstrated with the judges about Hamelin, and also many times since, for his outspoken reproofs of wrong-doing had not been few. In the confusion, they seized and put him in prison, and damaged his house and furnace. The latter would have been completely destroyed had it not been for the interference of Lord de Pons. Palissy's life, too, at this juncture was saved by his authority, as he was the king's lieutenant for the district. Doubtless, also, a fear of M. de Montmorency's wrath, if he should lose the clever workman who was beautifying his château, prevented them from having him summarily killed. But, though it was not possible to do it in Saintes, they thought it might be done by the Council of Bordeaux, so it was arranged to send him thither that very night by stealth.

Meantime, Palissy in prison was proving daily that "a Brother is born for adversity." The faithful Victor procured permission to visit him daily. Palissy did not seem to fear much that they would kill him. He says to Victor, "Be not so anxious. I am, at all events, secure from further harm, since the power is not in the hands of these judges." But, as they talked, the gaoler came in, and said to Victor, "You may stay half-an-hour longer to-night, if you wish it"; and, casting what seemed to watchful Victor a compassionate glance on Palissy, locked them in. But Palissy began to speak of his book he wanted to write, and how he whiled away the time by planning gardens and drawing a plan for a fortified town, the idea of which he copied from the shell of the purple murex, so Victor said nothing; but, when he was once more in the street, he recollected the glance, and wondered if it meant they were to be soon parted. He could not go home, but walked up and down, lifting up his heart to the God they

both trusted in, and considering how able He was to deliver them in this trouble. This hymn, often sung by them in those troublous times, came to his lips—

“ The time is dark, we faint with woe ;
 Our foes are mightier far than we ;
 They say, ‘ Their God forsakes them now,
 And who shall their deliverer be ? ’
 Lord, show Thy presence, prove Thy power,
 And save us at the latest hour.”

At length, about midnight, he heard the tramp of horses coming up a side street. They passed him in the shadow, and stopped at the prison gate. Victor watched, and saw a muffled figure brought out, and lifted on a horse behind a soldier. There was not a moment to lose. To make sure it was Palissy, he reeled forward like a drunken man and began to sing a carol. Then, just as the horse passed him, he shouted, “ Save us at the latest hour ! ” He was understood, for Palissy answered with a shrill whistle. Victor then ran off to Lord de Pons with his news, who immediately communicated with the Constable. Montmorency so interested Queen Catherine de Medici that she said, “ Let him live, and make my gardens, and decorate my new palace of the Tuileries. His heresies will not alter the colours of his glass and pottery ware.” So, before Palissy could be tried at Bordeaux, the pardon came, with a safe conduct back to Saintes, and a safe-guard while there. The pleasure felt by Victor when he saw his friend again a free man can well be imagined.

Much more might now be told of their pleasant and profitable conversations, but space fails. Soon after, the Queen sent for Palissy to go with his two sons (his wife having died some years before) and live in Paris ; and then Victor went into the country to take charge of the farm and orphan children of his brother who had been killed in the late massacres. Palissy accordingly went to Paris, and was preserved alive through all the trouble that followed. He had gone away on business when the massacre of St. Bartholomew made Europe ring with indignation, so “ God preserved me,” he said, “ in the midst of lions, and prepared me a shelter within the very walls of our enemies.” Many years, therefore, he lived in peace and honour, still retaining his old love for the beauties and wonders of God’s earth. In his leisure hours he made a museum of curiosities, and often publicly lectured upon them, and propounded to the learned men in Paris his old theories of things discovered years ago in Saintes. He wrote also many books, some of which are still quoted and used by the scientific men and naturalists of the present day. He gives his reasons for publishing his “ Discourses on Natural Objects ”—“ Considering

that I had employed much time in the study of earths, stones, waters, and metals, and that old age pressed me, I thought good to bring forward to light those excellent secrets, in order to bequeath them to posterity."

Palissy's trials, however, were not over. In the year 1585, when he was between seventy and eighty years of age, the king, Henry III., a weak tyrant, under the control of the Guises, issued the edict for the prohibition of the Reformed worship, prescribing death, confiscation of goods, or exile, to those who refused. Palissy had avoided all reference to his religion as much as possible in his lectures and writings latterly; but he was too well known as one who would not give up his religion at any man's command to be overlooked, and was thrown into the prison of the Bastille. For four years he lay there, with no communication with the outer world, his life only saved by the intervention of some of his old patrons, until at last he was remembered, and sentenced to death. The king, who had a personal regard for him, went to see if he could not prevail on him to retract even a little of his belief. "My good man," said Henry, "for many years you have been in the service of our family, and we have suffered you to retain your religion amidst fires and massacres; but, at present, I find myself so pressed by the Guises and my own people, that I am compelled to give you into the hands of your enemies. These two poor women whom I see with you in captivity are to be burned shortly, and so will you unless you retract." "Sire," replied Bernard, "I am ready to yield up my life for the glory of God. You say you feel pity for me. It is rather I that should pity you, who utter such words as these—'I am compelled.' This is not the language of a king; and neither yourself nor the Guises shall compel me, for I know how to die." "What an impudent rascal!" commented the courtier who has recorded this scene; but he is believed to have died a natural death in his prison, before the intentions of his enemies were carried out. The "two poor women" whom the king mentioned were two young girls who had refused to recant, and who shared Palissy's captivity for some time, until the day came when they suffered the fearful death from which he was saved.

WHEN a man is joined to Christ [by faith], Christ says to him, as it was once said to the Levite, "Let all thy wants lie upon Me, only abide not in the street."—*J. Newton*.

It was not in time God thought of calling His people—it was not when Christ died that He thought of it—it was not when Adam fell that God thought of it—but it was from eternity that God had a purpose of mercy towards His people.—*Krause*.

EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF THE LATE
ELIZABETH STEVENS,

OF STAPLEFORD, CAMBRIDGESHIRE, WHO DIED AT SWAVESEY,
SEPTEMBER 15TH, 1866, AGED EIGHTY-ONE YEARS.

To the Editor of the Sower.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—The enclosed diary was written by a relative of mine, and I have transcribed some parts of it from her MS., which was written in memorandum books. Her husband was a Strict Baptist minister in Cambridgeshire. She was a widow many years, and, on account of her religion, had to endure great persecution from her son and his wife. Many, many hours has she spent alone in the barn, fearing to go into the house ; and then, as she herself says, was not allowed to sit at the same fireplace or table. She had many good books, and her husband's life and experience in MS. ; and, to complete the hatred the daughter-in-law had to the truth, she took them into the garden, and made a large fire, and burnt them all before the old lady's face. But mercifully, in 1859, the Lord delivered her, and she removed to Swavesey, to live in one room, where she eventually "fell asleep in Jesus."

You may ask, What became of her persecutors ? That Scripture gives the answer—"The way of transgressors is hard." In 1860, the son was suddenly snatched away, to appear before his Maker. His wife lived on some years in wretchedness (though possessed of plenty of this world's goods), and at last died, having the terrors and pains of hell in her conscience before she left this world. All nearly related to her are now gone. I could tell you much, but must forbear.

I trust, with rest and the Lord's blessing, you are much better, and that you feel more able to pursue your labour of love. Everything in the present day seems to call forth anxiety. May the Lord bless your endeavours to spread His truth, and—

"While contests rend the Christian Church,
Oh, may we live the friends of peace !
The sacred mine of Scripture search,
And learn from man, vain man, to cease."*

Accept my Christian love.
February 27th, 1886.

Yours for Jesus' sake,
R. H.

March 30th, 1855.—I thought last night the Lord was going to take me home. I felt very bad and short of breath ; but it was

* We add our hearty AMEN to this beautiful prayer ; and, while we hope ever to earnestly contend for "the truth, the *whole* truth, and nothing but

not His will. I long at times to go and see that dear face that was spat upon for me, and crowned with thorns, that I might be crowned with glory. I trust I am not deceived in my hope. I know and feel in myself I am nothing but sin. My very best deeds would send me to hell, for sin is mixed with all I do, so that I have no hope there. It must be a free pardon—all of grace and love—through a dear Saviour. A precious “Christ and Him crucified” is all my hope.

April 4th.—Heard Mr. M—— from John iv. 4—“And He must needs go through Samaria”—because there was one that His Father had given Him to redeem from all sin—one whom He came to die for. There was no chance work about it. The dear Saviour of sinners knew who He was waiting for, when He sat on the well. He came to do His Father’s business, and He must needs go there to do it. He did it completely and well. Glory be to His holy name!

July 10th.—Mrs. Skinner and a few friends have gone to-day to Cambridge, to hear Mr. M——. We have had a very heavy rain after a dry time. The corn is in the ear. I was thinking the dear Lord, in mercy, has made the corn to grow thus far. But how easy it would be, should it please Him to take it all from us! It is His corn and wine and oil. Vain man says, “This is mine”; another, “That is mine”; but nothing is ours, only as the Lord is pleased to give us what He pleases. We have sinned all away, and can make no claim to anything. Oh, that we did but think more of our daily dependence on the dear Lord! He says, all the beasts of the field are His, and the fowls of the air. Oh, that my heart and others’ were more grateful for all His mercies, for the Lord has not dealt with us according to our deserts; for, if He had, we should have nothing but His wrath. But He is God, and not man. On that account we are not destroyed. He has remembered mercy, but all through a dear Saviour of sinners’ merits. Nothing but shame and confusion of face belong to us, but to the Lord mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against Him.

September 12th.—I hope this day I have had a taste of the love of God to my soul from those words, “O God, Thou art my God.” What a blessing! It is all I want, in time and in eternity, to have God for my Portion. It is heaven on earth, and it is all

the truth,” we also hope we ever may do so “in love,” as we believe “the love of the truth” in the heart will evidence itself by the possessor manifesting a spirit worthy of its name. May the Lord ever keep us watchful against that fiery, wrathful, censorious, and ungodly spirit of contention which distresses tender-hearted Christians, and causes the truth to be evil spoken of by its enemies. The more we “cease from man,” and follow Christ, cleaving close to His Word, the more peace shall we have in our souls and in the Church of God.—ED.

the heaven I want, to be where my God is, and to behold the face of my precious Saviour. This the sum and substance of all my religion—to be with my God. How dare I hope for such a blessing? Not from anything in me, I am well sure, but all through Christ. "In me dwelleth no good thing." I am a very worm of the earth, "less than the least." Oh, shall I dwell where Jesus is? My tongue shall never cease to praise Him who hath so loved me as to give Himself for me. "Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, praise His holy name." It is all free love.

October 16th.—My dear and only brother died to-day. He was sixty-five years old. I am the only one left of the family, and am past the age allotted to man, being seventy last March. Few and evil have been my days. I am a poor, sinful, helpless soul; but I have a good hope that I have an almighty Saviour, able and willing to "save to the uttermost all that come unto God through Him." I have no other name to trust in. His precious blood washes all my sins away, and His righteousness covers all my deformity. This is all my hope and comfort. I long to live near to Him, and love Him with all my heart.

October 19th, 1857.—Yesterday was the Sabbath, and I trust I felt a little hope—a little love to the Lord—a little going out from self and all things here to the Lord, and was enabled to cast all my troubles and sorrows on the Lord. His name being a strong tower of safety, there I was enabled to flee. The Lord, in mercy, gave me a precious promise in the morning from those words, "Ye are the blessed of the Lord" (Psa. cxv. 15). Thus it reads in my old Bible, and I found them to come with a little power and love, and to abide upon my mind very sweet and precious, so that I hope and believe they came from the Lord; and then followed, "The Lord God is a Sun and Shield. He will give grace and glory," &c. Precious words! I hope they belong to unworthy me. "Sure the devil can't deceive me so." And this morning, before I was up, I was thinking of those words, "Your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory." Oh, how precious it is to have a word of comfort from the Lord! How it calms the poor, distressed, burdened mind, drives doubt and fear all away, and helps me to say, "Let the world and its trifles all go! It is enough that Jesus is mine." No wants when Jesus is present. I then can say, Let them have the world; let them divide it as they will. I fear their portion is in it, but mine is above with Christ. I have no portion here. I have nothing that I can call my own, but having food and raiment, Lord, give me a contented and thankful heart and mind. I have got His Word, which is more precious to me than gold, when I can read it with a believing heart, and find and feel Christ precious to my soul.

I feel myself to be nothing but sin, prone to every evil. No help, no faith, no love, no hope in myself. I cast my naked, helpless, ruined soul on a precious, once dying, but now living Christ, and say, "Lord, save, or I must perish!" Stripped naked, I fly to Him for a robe to cover my naked soul, and a fountain to wash in that "cleanseth from all sin." I am a daily, yea, hourly sinner. I need daily pardon, daily forgiveness; but Christ ever lives to make intercession for sinners. This is all my comfort. I have committed my cause to Him, bad as it is, and trust in Him. I have nothing else to trust to. I would as soon look to Satan for goodness as look in my heart for it, for that "is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." I feel it is so daily, but I hope and trust, if not awfully deceived (for I am afraid of being deceived by my wicked heart and the devil together), I can say, "Lord, search me and try me, and let not sin lie hid in my heart." I pray to see myself as I stand before a holy God, clothed with the righteousness of Christ, where no spot is seen. It is so large and so full it covers all over; but if found in my own fig-leaf righteousness, hell must and will be my portion. But Christ is made of God unto His people all that I stand in need of. He is all my hope, He is all my trust, and He is all my comfort; and yet how little do I know of Him! I long to see Him. I long to know Him as I am known to Him. When He is a little precious to my soul, though but a very little, it is enough to make me long to go home with Him, to part no more. I dread the world; I dread sin; I dread my wicked heart. I know them well, for I feel what they will do for me, for they bring nothing but distress, and darkness, and sin of every kind; and can I love these enemies of my soul? No. I "hate them with a perfect hatred." I long to see them dead on the shore, and my poor soul set at liberty to fly to the Lord, and be for ever with Him, "where the wicked cease from troubling," and the weary find a sweet resting-place with a precious Christ, to go no more out.

I heard that dear man, Mr. Norris, whom I love for the truth's sake. His text was, "A bundle of myrrh is my Well-Beloved unto me: He shall lie all night betwixt my breasts." Oh, how reviving, how cheering, to my poor soul! No fainting with Christ in the heart. His evening text, "The myrtle trees in the bottom." If I am but a little shrub, like a myrtle tree, if a plant of His right hand, though I am not like a tall, towering cedar, but a little weak shrub, such as needs His protecting hand and watchful care over me every moment, He says He "will water it every moment, and keep it night and day, lest any hurt it." Oh, what a Friend! I hope He is mine now, and for ever and ever.

(To be continued.)

MEMOIR OF M. A. COTTIS.

MARY ANN COTTIS, the beloved wife of William Cottis, of High Street, Epping, fell asleep in Jesus on the 31st of October, 1885, in the seventy-eighth year of her age, and within a few hours of completing the fiftieth year of her married life.

The following is a brief outline of her history and call by grace.

Born of poor but worthy parents at Great Totham, Essex, and brought up in strict accordance with the rites and ceremonies of our so-called National Church, and after the straitest sect of her religion, she lived and grew up a Pharisee of the Pharisees, "walking according to the rudiments of this world after the law of a carnal commandment," yet thinking that she was following the Lord Jesus. Thus she lived until eighteen years of age, when she went to live in Oxford Street, London, with a Nonconformist family, and attended with them at Tottenham Court Road Chapel, the preacher being the venerable and renowned Matthew Wilks. But, having been trained so strictly to Church discipline, she was not, as may be supposed, at all favourable to Nonconformity, and, on entering the chapel, she despised the aged servant of God, and thought to herself, "I'm sure you will have nothing to say." The minister delivered his text, then paused, and took a deliberate survey of his audience, and thus gave his young hearer ample time to conclude, "Yes, that's just what I thought. You have nothing to say"; and so great was her merriment that she could scarcely refrain from laughing outright when the preacher very solemnly repeated his text—"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts ii. 23). These solemn words sank into her heart. The Spirit of the Lord sealed them home with almighty power, and the preacher was enabled to show the giddy one that it was her own sins that nailed Him to the tree. The awful solemnity of this discovery chased away her foolish thoughts, and caused far different feelings to arise in her mind. Her laughter was turned to mourning, and her joy to heaviness (Jas. iv. 9). As the preacher "reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come," her mind was greatly distressed. Her sorrow for sin became so intense that it was now more difficult to restrain her tears and sobs than at first it was to suppress her laughter. Noticing her grief, the aged minister paused, and slowly repeated these words—"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Psa. cxxvi. 5, 6).

This solemn divergence doubtless intensified the feelings of the

contrite one, and so vividly was the dear Redeemer set forth crucified before her, even as among the foolish Galatians, and like them she received the Spirit, "not by the works of the law, but by the hearing of faith" (Gal. iii. 1, 2), "which cometh by hearing," &c. (Rom. x. 17), "worketh by love," and is "the fruit of the Spirit" (Gal. v. 6, 22), "the substance of things hoped for" (Heb. xi. 1), "the purification of the heart" (Acts xv. 9), "the life of the just" (Heb. ii. 4). By it the believer "stands" (Rom. xi. 20), "walks" (2 Cor. v. 7), and is "justified" (Rom. iii. 28).

Thus the Spirit wounded, and gave faith to be healed. While thus gazing upon the Crucified One, she felt the healing power of the precious blood, of which it was her ever-dear delight to speak in all her following years. She often spoke of one of Newton's "Olney Hymns" (57), which so accurately describes her feelings of that time, notably the following verses—

"I saw One hanging on a tree,
In agonies and blood,
Who fixed His languid eyes on me,
As near His cross I stood.

"Sure, never, till my latest breath,
Can I forget that look ;
It seemed to charge me with His death,
Though not a word He spoke.

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

Thus marvellous was her translation from the power of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son (Col. i. 13). Thus was she enabled to rejoice in God her Saviour, and to comprehend the spiritual meaning of those words which perplexed a Jewish ruler, "Ye must be born again."

Very earnest was her desire now that her dear parents and their other children should be blessed with the same spiritual blessing, and she was the humble instrument in the conversion of her father and a sister, who both died a short time after this. She also printed a small pamphlet in verse, embodying the account of her own conversion, the Lord's merciful dealings with her soul, and testifying of the riches of His grace, in being found of one who sought Him not ; and her earnest desire was expressed in Newton's sweet hymn, commencing—

"I asked the Lord that I might grow
In faith, and love, and every grace ;
Might more of His salvation know,
And seek more earnestly His face."

The following verses of the same hymn were much valued in after life, as she lived to prove, with Newton, that prayers are often answered by crosses.

After residing about seven years in Oxford Street, she returned to her native village, and worshipped with the Independents at Witham for some two years, but was much exercised in mind about believers' baptism.

At this time she met with her future husband, who had recently left the dead ministry in the Established Church in search of a more excellent way, and they both attended the Strict Baptist Chapel at Witham, and were afterwards baptised in the river, near Wickham Mills, by the late Mr. Bather, of Coggeshall. They were married on the 1st of November, 1835, and resided at Broad Street Green, and united with the Church worshipping at Heybridge, the late Mr. Wm. Bugg being pastor for many years. Here they lived some eighteen years, and brought up six children; and here Mrs. Cottis suffered much from an affection of the spine, and for six years could not walk beyond the garden. From this she ultimately recovered. It was her great delight at this time (being unable to walk to chapel) to gather her young children around her, to read the Word of God, that their youthful minds might be stored with its truths, teaching them the necessity of the new birth, and praying for their individual salvation, that, as she was wont to express it, "not a hoof should be left behind."

Removing to Maldon, in 1853, they still attended the cause at Heybridge until the year 1858, when the whole family removed to Epping, where at that time there was no Baptist cause; but ever after its establishment, she was one of its most constant attendants.

About this time, her family being much concerned as to the success of a new business, she would calmly repeat a verse of Cowper's—

" To-morrow, Lord, is Thine,
Lodged in Thy sovereign hand;
And if its sun arise and shine,
It shines at Thy command."

Many and earnest were her prayers for her family, as one and another were laid on her mind; nor could she rest satisfied until some sweet portion of the Word of God was received in her lap of faith, wherein she carried a great many.

Time and space forbid, nor would memory serve to recount all the Hill Mizars in retrospect, the "sips of the brook" by the way, and the glorious prospects of the goodly land with which she was favoured. Her great delight was reading of those who, "through faith and patience, now inherit the promises."

She was very lame during the last few years of her life, owing to a fall, and a prolonged attack of diabetes wasted her body and rendered her very weak. Finally, a carbuncle speedily brought her earthly career to a close.

On taking leave of a daughter who had been on a visit, last summer (1885), she said, "What a mercy that we both have the same almighty Friend to go to, who not long since told me, 'Only in the throne will I be greater than thou'!"

On another occasion, feeling her great weakness, she said, "What a mercy that I have not now to seek the Lord! 'I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him.'"

A few days prior to her decease, a minister called to see her, and, on asking how she felt in her mind, she replied, "Well, no bright shining; but the Lord is a Rock. His work is perfect." To another friend—"It's all right! I can trust Him. He does nothing by halves."

The day before her death she said—

" 'Ah! I shall soon be dying!
Time swiftly flies away;
But, on my Lord relying,
I hail the happy day.' "

Her sufferings were very great at last. A few hours before she died, one repeated—

" Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are,"

when, raising her arms with all the energy her weak frame could command, she uttered these last audible words, "Soft as downy pillows are." Her arms fell heavily, a mortal paleness came over her face, and calmly and quietly her spirit prepared to quit the clay tabernacle, and in a few hours she gently fell asleep in Jesus.

Her mortal remains were interred in Epping churchyard on the 7th of November, "in sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection unto eternal life."

C. C.

To die well is a matter of every day. To die well is the action of the whole life. He never dies well, for the most part, that dies not daily. As Paul saith of himself, "I die daily" (1 Cor. xv. 31). He laboured to loose his heart from the world and worldly things. May we loose our hearts from the world and worldly things, and be dying daily! It will then be easy to die at last.—*Sibbes*.

THE WORD OF GOD MADE EFFECTUAL.

(ISAIAH lv. 11.)

IN the year 1882, in the month of June, I was called to hold an open service in a little village, known by the name of Belcham Walter, near Sudbury, Suffolk. It was one Lord's Day evening, and I was asked to take my stand opposite a row of cottages. I said, "No. Please let me go and stand lower down, out of the way"; but I could not prevail upon the people to let me. They said, "You must stand here." Well, according to their wishes, I stood opposite the row of cottages, and I made use of these words—"He came unto His own, and His own received Him not" (John i. 11).

When the service was ended, I was asked into a friend's house to take some refreshment; and, whilst I was staying there, a young man came to the door and stated that he wished to speak to me. He said, "Will you please come into my house? My sister wishes to speak to you." I went to the cottage, and was asked to walk upstairs, where I found a poor, afflicted young woman, reduced to a mere skeleton. "Well, my young friend," I said, "and how long have you been confined to this room?" "Seven years," was the quick reply; "and have never had any one come to tell me the things I have wanted to know till now; but the things you have been stating this evening have been the means of bringing peace and comfort to my troubled mind." She said, "My sins are pardoned, my guilt is gone, and now I am not afraid to die"; and, by reason of the blessedness she felt in her soul, her countenance was bright and shining. She said, "Jesus is mine, and I am His. Heaven is my home; and, if I never see you again, I shall meet you there." It was most sweet to converse with her. She said, "Thank you for coming." "No thanks to me, my friend," I said, "for I did not intend to stand where I did." "Ah!" she said, "the Lord knew where I was, and He could speak through the window." Then she said, "All the praise is due to His dear name."

It never fell to my lot to see her again, for the Lord very soon took her to Himself, beyond the reach of all harm.

May this little incident encourage those who desire to spread the name and fame of Jesus. (See Ecclesiastes xi. 6.)

G. CHATTERS.

"ARE you sure that you are born again of the Holy Spirit, and are believing in Jesus as your Saviour? Christ said, "Ye must be born again"; and "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life" (John iii. 7, 36).

THE ANXIOUS INQUIRER'S PAGE.

WANTING AND WAITING.

BY THE WELL-KNOWN HYMN-WRITER, B. BEDDOME.*

DEAR FRIEND,—With respect to your spiritual concerns, what shall I say? Your soul is in the best Hand. Your most important interests are lodged with the Great Redeemer. To Him the Father hath committed them; to Him you have been enabled by divine grace to commit them, and He will be faithful to His trust. A sense of an interest is desirable, but there may be an interest where there is not a sense of it. I wish I had your evidences. This I can say—I mourn. I look upwards. I want what I fear I shall never attain—to have my pen, my tongue, my life, all breathe, speak, nay, proclaim aloud, the Lord Jesus Christ, the wonders of His dying love and riches of His sovereign grace. I want more of that poverty of spirit whereby a Christian sees his own sin and misery, and yet hopes in God's mercy; performs works, and yet does not trust in them; ascribes all his failings to himself, and all his excellencies to Jesus Christ. But why should I multiply particulars? In all the lives that I have read, and they are not a few, I never met with so wanting and yet so undeserving a creature as myself. The Lord lead me to the fulness of Christ—not to make use of Him as a man does of his deeds and bonds and other securities for money, which he looks upon perhaps once in a long season, to see whether they are safe, and then takes no further thought about them, but I would live upon Christ as a man does upon his daily bread. I am satisfied that religion will never flourish in my soul till I am enabled so to do, for all religion begins in the knowledge of Him, thrives by communion with Him, and will be completed in the enjoyment of Him. Christ is the Christian's All. Sometimes I think I can say, as the Church (Isa. xxvi. 8), "Yea, in the way of Thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for Thee," &c.; but I want to say, as she does (Sol.'s Song iii. 4), "It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found Him whom my soul loveth," &c. Yet will I wait God's time, for that is best; and the longer the mercy is delayed, the more welcome will it be when it comes. Besides, we are told that the Lord is good to them who wait for Him, to the soul that seeketh Him. May

* The writer of this letter was a preacher of the Gospel for upwards of fifty years at Bourton-on-the-Water, Gloucestershire, as well as a sweet hymn-writer. He was only laid aside from his beloved employment of preaching the Gospel one Lord's Day before he died, and was even composing a hymn about six hours before he went to glory.

you know but little of the distresses I sometimes feel, and much of the comforts that I long and wait for.

“ O God, all-holy and all-wise,
Open my heart, open my eyes !
Reveal Thyself, reveal Thy Son,
And make Thy great salvation known.

“ As once of old, so now proclaim
Thy wondrous love, Thy gracious name ;
To me Thy pardoning mercy show,
And spread the joys of heaven below.

“ My tuneful voice I then will raise,
And all my powers shall tune Thy praise ;
I'll in Thy Church Thy works declare,
And celebrate Thy glories there.”

Here you have the language of my lips, the language of my pen, and, I trust, the language of my heart, though I find it hard to pray to God, and harder still to wait for God. “ I waited patiently for the Lord,” says David. Oh, that is not so easy a thing as some account it ! We are apt to kick against the pricks, to rebel under the smarting rod, and accuse God of severity when He does not immediately bestow the promised and expected blessings. I have much reason to complain of a stubborn and untractable heart—an unsubmissive temper of mind.

“ 'Tis sin disorders all my frame ;
Nor can this world afford me rest ;
The law does nothing but condemn ;
In Christ alone I can be blest.

“ 'Tis in His grace, 'tis in His blood,
I sweet refreshment hope to find ;
His blood can cleanse my crimson guilt ;
His grace can bow my stubborn mind.

“ Prostrate beneath His feet I wait
For a kind look or quickening word ;
Shine in on my distressed soul,
My King, my Saviour, and my Lord ! ”

Dear friend, pray for me, that what I want I may experience, and then you shall meet with the same return from

Your unworthy though affectionate friend,
BENJAMIN BEDDOME.

CHRIST has taken our nature into heaven to represent us, and has left us on earth with His nature to represent Him.—*John Newton*.

A LETTER FROM PASTOR CHINIQUEY.

Ste. Anne, Kankakee Co., Illinois, October 27th, 1885.

MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST,—May the Good Master bless you for the kind and Christian words you have addressed to me, His poor old unprofitable servant.

The kind appreciation you make of my humble work, "Fifty Years in the Church of Rome," is very precious to me, when coming from a servant of God. Such a testimony on your part repays me well for the ten years I have consecrated to the composition of that volume. Not a line of it has fallen from my pen without an ardent prayer going from my heart to the mercy-seat, asking the Author of every perfect gift to be my Light and my Guide in all I had to say. It was my intention, from the beginning, to show Romanism just as it is in its inside life, as well as in its *nefas*, anti-social, and Antichristian influence, not only on its poor blind followers, but on the nations in general.

Romanism is strong, and tolerated only because it is not known even by its own followers and victims. Popery is a fraud—it is the most gigantic fraud the world has ever seen.

Dear old England is so disastrously betrayed into the hands of the Pope to-day by her very leaders, only because they are deceived by the false varnish of Christianity under which Rome conceals the most degrading system of Christianity [so-called] this world has ever seen.

Oh, if the noble English people would read that book, and learn that Rome is the most implacable enemy of her rights and liberties, how happy I would feel!

My prayerful hope is, that that volume will be, by the mercy of God, one of the best antidotes presented to the disciples of the Gospel against Popery and Puseyism. Pray that I may not be disappointed!

Please accept the few *opusculi* I address you by this day's mail, and ask all those who love our Saviour Jesus Christ to unite their fervent prayers with yours to the mercy-seat that I may be faithful to the end, even if I have to seal my testimony with my blood.

Ora—ora instantan pro fratre,

Mr. A. Brandon.

C. CHINIQUEY.

ARE you sure that you spend nothing in gaudy dress, unnecessary ornaments, expensive food, or vain amusements, which might be spent in a better purpose—in relieving the poor, sending the Gospel to the neglected at home, or the heathen abroad; distributing tracts at home, or when travelling?

OUR SEED-BASKET FOR YOUNG READERS.

APPLES OF GOLD IN BASKETS OF SILVER.

TO MR. CHRISTOPHER LOVE, MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL, LONDON,
WHO WAS BEHEADED ON TOWER HILL, IN THE TIME OF
OLIVER CROMWELL. FROM HIS WIFE.

SWEETHEART,—Before I write further, I beseech you to think not that it is your wife that now writeth to you. I hope thou hast freely given up thy wife and children to the Lord God, that said, “Leave thy fatherless children ; I will preserve them alive ; and let thy widows trust in Me.” Oh, that the Lord would keep thee from having one troubled thought about thy relations ! I desire to give thee freely up into the Father’s hands, and not only look upon it as a crown of glory for thee to die for Christ, but as an honour to me, that I should have a husband to leave for Christ. I dare not speak to thee, nor have a thought within myself, of my unspeakable loss, but wholly keep my eye fixed upon thy unspeakable and inconceivable gain. Thou leavest but a sinful, mortal wife to be everlastingly married to the King of Glory ; thou leavest thy children, and brethren, and sisters, to go to the Lord Jesus, thy Elder Brother ; thou leavest friends to go to the enjoyment of holy angels, and to “the spirits of just men made perfect.” Thou dost but leave earth for heaven ; and, if natural affections begin to rise, I hope that spirit of grace that is within thee will quell them. And, knowing that all things here below are but dung and dross in comparison of those things above, I know thou keepest thine eye fixed upon the hope of glory, which makes thee to trample upon the loss of earth.

My dear, I know that God hath not only prepared glory for thee, and thee for it, but I am persuaded He will sweeten the way for thee to come to the enjoyment of it ; and, when thou art putting on thy clothes that morning, think that thou art putting on thy wedding clothes, to go to be married to thy Redeemer. When the messenger of death cometh to thee, let him not be dreadful, but look upon him as the messenger that bringeth thee good tidings of eternal life. When thou goest up to the scaffold, think what thou toldest me—it was but thy chariot to draw thee to thy Father’s house ; and when thou layest down thy dear head to receive thy Father’s stroke, remember what thou saidst to me—that, though thy head were severed from thy body, yet thy soul shall soon be united to Jesus Christ, thy Head, in heaven. And though it may seem bitter, that by the hands of men we are parted a little sooner than otherwise we should have been, yet let us consider it is the decree and will of the Father ; and besides, we could not have lived much longer together, and it will not be long

ere we shall enjoy one another in heaven. Oh, let us remember these things, and comfort one another ! Oh, be comforted ! It is but a little stroke ere thou shalt be "where the weary are at rest, and where the wicked shall cease from troubling thee." Oh, remember that, though thou eat thy dinner with bitter herbs, yet thou shalt have a joyful supper with Jesus Christ at night !

My dear, by what I write to thee I do not undertake to be a teacher of thee, for this comfort I have received of the Lord by thee.

I hear a warrant has come to the Lieutenant. I am ready to think it may be concerning thee, to send thee to thy journey's end to-morrow, and that because they may possibly be hindered if they stay till the day appointed ; but I am persuaded thou art so far from being afraid of it, that thou dost long for the day which next, under God, to hear of thy willingness to die, will be the greatest comfort in the world.

I can write no more, but commit thee to the hands of that God with whom thou and I, ere long, shall be. Farewell ! farewell !

July 11th, 1651.

MARY LOVE.

P.S.—One comfort I would have thee carry to thy grave. If ever God did good to my soul, thou wast the chief instrument of it, for I never looked after God till I saw thy face.

Awake, my soul ! Adore
 The God that died for thee !
 Oh, praise Him evermore,
 The wondrous One-in-Three :
 Let all thy powers His love proclaim,
 And high extol His matchless name.
 A name above all praise ;
 A name beyond all thought ;
 A name whose shining rays
 Enlightens those He bought :
 Oh, shine within this heart of mine,
 And sweetly whisper, "I am thine !"
 Revive my drooping soul ;
 Oh, send one cheering ray !
 Lord, Thou canst make me whole,
 And teach me how to pray :
 Draw my affections, Lord, to Thee ;
 Let me Thy grace and glory see.
 Preserve me from all sin,
 While journeying here below ;
 Oh, keep me clean within !
 Oh, wash me white as snow !
 For me a mansion, Lord, prepare,
 And let me love Thee ever there.

F. B.

HOME RULE AND HERESY.

"THE Law and Procedure of the Church of Rome in Cases of Heresy" have all been provided, defined, and published to the world. They are derived chiefly from successive Bulls of Popes, more than thirty in number, from the Bulls of Pope Innocent IV. to Paul IV. and Pius V., and constitute a series of laws on the subject of "heresy" of supreme and now infallible authority. These laws have oftentimes, in days gone by, been carried into effect with terrible consequences, and doubtless will again, when occasion offers and opportunities occur, in those countries where Rome Rule is so completely established as to render the "law and procedure" completely successful.

The nature of the "law" and the character of the "procedure" of the Church of Rome, in cases of heresy, are given in the treatise "On Heresy," by Prospero Farinacci, the greatest Papal juris-consult of modern times, constituting the "fifth part" of his vast work on "Criminal Law." This work is dedicated to Pope Paul V., and to all the "Sacred College." It has the special authorization and protection of the Pope and of the "Master of the Apostolic Palace," who pronounces its doctrine to be "*probatissimam, theologiis omnibus et jurisperitis valde utilem et Sanctæ Inquisitionis tribunalibus perutilem*" ("most approved and exceedingly useful for all theologians and juris-consults, and of great value in the tribunal of the Holy Inquisition"). The treatise itself had the especial licences of the Emperor of Germany and the King of France, and was republished at Frankfort in 1618, at Venice in 1620, and again at Frankfort, with the collected works of Farinacci, in 1632. The author (Farinacci) was himself a great favourite with the Popes, Pope Urban VIII. habitually calling him "*Buona Farina*."

As we know not how soon we may have Home Rule, or rather, Rome Rule, completely established in Ireland, by means of a National Parliament sitting in College Green, it might be well that the Protestants of Ireland should be made acquainted beforehand with something of the nature of the "Law and Procedure of the Church of Rome in Cases of Heresy," and for this purpose we will transcribe from the precious "treatise" of Farinacci, above-mentioned, sufficient of the particulars to acquaint them with the principles and detail of this important subject. We will quote from the author's first edition of 1616, printed at Rome—the edition which belonged to the College of St. Bonaventura, in that city. The volume is folio, and of nearly seven hundred pages, printed in double columns, and has been translated and summarized by the Rev. R. C. Jenkins, M.A., Hon. Canon of Canterbury. The treatise itself is divided into

four principal chapters, dealing with the four subjects—(1) "Of Heresy in General"; (2) "The Procedure in Cases of Heresy"; (3) "The Citation, Defence, and Sentence"; (4) "The Consequents of a Condemnation for Heresy."

1.—OF HERESY IN GENERAL.—"Heretics are those who believe otherwise in matters of faith than the Roman Church believes, and those also who doubt or dispute the supreme power of the Pope in temporal as well as spiritual matters" (p. 14). Nor is actual disbelief necessary in a charge of heresy, for doubt itself brings us within its scope (p. 30). "*Dubius in fide hereticus est*," even though the doubt be limited to a single article of the faith—a general or universal doubt constituting the still more terrible sin of apostasy (p. 33). All princes and lords who, after summons from the Church, neglect to extirpate heretics, or fail to persecute them, are *ipso facto* deprived of their possessions, and treated as heretics (p. 148). Those who neglect to correct a heretic, and reduce him from his error, are to suffer the penalties of excommunication, infamy, confiscation of goods, and banishment (pp. 155, 156). The receivers of heretics, conversation and communication with heretics, and all social relations with them, involve the suspicions of heresy, and justify the application of torture (p. 194). All business relations with heretics are prohibited, as well as contracts or gifts. Apostasy involves the penalties of death, confiscation of goods, privation of estates and dignities, excommunication, and every other consequent of heresy (p. 209).

2.—PROCEDURE IN CASES OF HERESY.—Inquisition into guilt may be made without any actual report ("*Non præcedente diffamazione*") (pp. 271, 657). Sentence of acquittal never exempts from a second trial on the same charge, or be cited as a precedent. No lapse of time creates a proscription against a charge of heresy (p. 663). No faith to be kept with heretics by private persons or by public authorities (p. 661). Cities or States falling under a general charge of heresy may be destroyed or alienated (p. 663). The legal process is to be conducted summarily, without noise or excitement, and with a judicial appearance ("*Summarie, sine strepitu, et figura judicii*") (p. 262, 263). Heresy being a public crime, all kinds of persons are admitted as accusers (p. 266). Torture is to be applied when the truth cannot otherwise be elicited (p. 288). Copy of accusation not to be given to the accused, for those who appear against heretics are admitted, not as accusers, but as denouncers (p. 269). Denunciation causes inquisition to be made, and, an evil report accompanying it, justifies the application of torture (p. 275). There are fourteen degrees of heretics between the manifest and the occult classes (p. 280). Absent or contumacious heretics are to be tried,

condemned, and burnt in effigy. A French archbishop and five bishops were thus burnt in effigy in the presence of the Pope on December 11th, 1566.

3.—THE CITATION, DEFENCE, AND SENTENCE.—Means of defence are not to be denied to heretics, but names of witnesses and accusers are to be suppressed (pp. 309, 310). No appeal is allowed after the definitive sentence (pp. 312, 313). That an impenitent heretic should not only be condemned to death, but also burnt, is a penalty approved by the divine, canon, and customary laws (pp. 434, 435). The secular power is bound to carry out the extreme penalty fully and without delay (p. 363).

4.—THE CONSEQUENCES OF CONDEMNATION FOR HERESY.—A heretic may be attacked and killed with impunity—seized and captured without judicial sanction (p. 442), and can be spoiled of his goods. Even if a cleric, he can be attacked and slain. Every act done by a heretic is null and void. All debtors are freed from their debts and obligations to him (p. 451). The goods of heretics are to be confiscated (p. 458). Their houses and meeting-places are to be destroyed, and never rebuilt; also the houses of those who refuse admittance to Inquisitors searching for heretics (p. 469). The dowry of a wife marrying a heretic is to be confiscated, and assigned to those who capture the heretic, and herself “suspected” of heresy (p. 473). The children of heretics are to be deprived of their inheritance, and of every kind of support (p. 527). All heretics by reason of baptism belong to the Church, and are liable to capital punishment. The effects of condemned heretics are to be divided into three portions—“one to devolve to the State, the second to go to the officials of the Inquisition, the third to be distributed in behalf of the faith, and for the extirpation of heretics” (p. 506).

With the above extracts we may, we think, leave off. They may possibly suffice to show what the Protestants of Ireland have to expect when Home Rule is granted, and when the Papal authorities can completely control the Executive Government in Ireland. Such a change may possibly be brought about through the treacherous policy of a further proposed settlement of the land question—that is, through paltry material bribes and largesses of land to the farmers of the north. But it is to be hoped that, in such a case, the Protestant people will have the wisdom and the grace to stand incorruptible and immoveable. History tells us of at least one man who sold his birthright and lost his blessing for a morsel of meat, or a mess of pottage. But that man is held up as a counsel and a caution to posterity for all time; for afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he “sought it carefully with tears.”—*The Dublin Church Advocate*.

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I cannot tell you how glad I was to receive your kind letter. There is an old saying, "It is best to strike the iron whilst it is hot," and I am so glad you were enabled to do so. Your letter needs no apology, I can assure you. It did my heart good to read it, though, perhaps, many times ere this my dear friend has been tempted to wish she had not sent it to me. Ah! I am no stranger to these feelings. I well remember once writing to my dear father a little of my soul's feelings and exercises, and then, afterwards, I should have been glad if I could have called that letter back; and for why? Because I was afraid I was deceived, and what made it worse, I feared that I had deceived others—not that I wanted to go back to where I once was, for I felt I did not mind what I had to go through, if the dear Lord would but assure me I was His and He was mine; and, bless His dear name, He has never suffered me to desire to go back again, and I have at times been enabled to truly sing—

"Yes, I to the end shall endure,
As sure as the earnest is given,
More happy, but not more secure,
The glorified spirits in heaven."

Ah! but say you, "Have I ever had the 'earnest' that blessed verse speaks of?" That is one good earnest of heaven you speak of in yours—love to the Lord's dear people. What do you love them for? Ah! say you, "Because they belong to the Lord." Then says the Apostle John, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." And again, "He that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." What was it but love to the things of God that caused you to feel such a union to me—one perhaps you had never seen before?

And then, again, another earnest of heaven you have is—your bad heart is such a trouble to you. You feel it is so hard, and yet you pant for a soft one. You feel it is so filthy, and yet you sigh for a clean one. Well, my dear friend, you are in the same path as dear David was, who cried to the dear Lord from the bottom of his soul, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me!" Oh, I could not tell you how I am distressed at times, because of my hard, unfeeling heart! The poet just expresses my feelings and yours too, does he not?—

"Uneasy when I feel my load;
Uneasy when I feel it not;
Dissatisfied for want of God,
Though oft of Him I've not a thought."

But then, dear friend, I know that there must be a soft, a

feeling heart, or we should never feel grieved on account of our hardness and barrenness.

And then another earnest you have is—you do want to be made right—to be blessed with a good religion. So did David, and so do all the Lord's dear people. How he prayed, "Search me, O Lord, and know me; try me, and know my thoughts!" &c. Now, none but the Lord's people desire to be searched and tried of God. You cannot tell me of one wicked person or mere professor that wanted God to decide the case for them; and yet have not you often prayed, in substance—

" Lord, decide the doubtful case;
Thou who art Thy people's Sun,
Shine upon Thy work of grace,
If it be indeed begun " ? &c.

One more earnest of heaven you speak of is—you feel at times as if your heart would go out of your body after God and His salvation. Now, this is earnestness indeed; but I have felt it—yea, and love to feel it now. You read in the 119th Psalm, and see if the dear Psalmist did not feel so too.

Now, my dear friend, I have just noticed a few of your feelings and desires, which I am sure are the first-fruits of the Spirit the Apostle speaks of in the eighth chapter of Romans, and are, therefore, so many earnest of heaven; and my heartfelt desire and prayer to God for you is, that He would be pleased to speak the word Himself to your poor troubled heart, and then you will indeed rejoice in God's salvation.

May the dear Lord enable you still to press on. "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find." And I can tell you, my dear friend, that it is such a blessing you are seeking that, when it does come, you will feel thankful that the Lord enabled you to seek and wait for it; and you will also feel, like the Queen of Sheba, the half of the blessedness of a felt interest in God's salvation had not been told you. It must be felt to be known, but it can never be fully expressed.

But I must not be tedious. I shall hope to hear from you as often as you feel able. I hope we shall both have cause to bless the Lord for our correspondence. I will try and answer whenever you write, though I feel my unfitness for anything of the kind; yet at times I have said, and really felt it—

" Is there a lamb in all Thy fold
I would disdain to feed?
Is there a foe before whose face
I'd fear Thy cause to plead?"

From yours affectionately,

Battle, January 26th, 1886.

A. BOORMAN.

A CALL TO ACTION.

THE following remark appeared in a certain paper relative to the resolution in the House of Lords on the opening of museums, &c., on Sundays :—

We are thoroughly glad that the vote of the House of Lords last night has practically settled the question, and that one of the last survivals of English Puritanism has now received its death-blow.

Respecting this, a writer in the *English Churchman* says :—

I am not quite sure that all the aristocrats who voted in favour of the Bill would be willing to give up their Sunday dinner-parties, private amusements, and Sunday travelling, to afford their servants the opportunity of spending the afternoon in the British Museum ! The following announcement from Berlin deserves the thoughtful attention of the working classes. It shows how a large contingent of labourers are deprived of a Sabbath Day's rest, without any additional emolument :—

"The Emperor is now so far restored to health that he intends to be present next Sunday at a *matinée* at the Royal Theatre, got up by some members of the aristocracy for the benefit of the Grey Sisters."

Let us contrast with this, and with gratitude acknowledge, the kindly feeling of our beloved Sovereign, displayed in the following announcement :—

"Her gracious Majesty the Queen, sympathising with over-worked tradesmen and their assistants, has given orders that no provisions of any kind shall be permitted to be brought to the palace on Sundays."

We commend the following notice to our readers, and sincerely hope that every one will use their utmost endeavour to act in concert with those who thus view the subject in its true light, and, by petitions and otherwise, oppose this wicked endeavour to publicly desecrate the Lord's Day. Mr. Wilmshurst, Blackheath, London, S.E., will give any information desired as to petitions, &c. :—

At a meeting of the Metropolitan Museums Committee, which has been held at 20, Bedford Street, Strand, it was resolved : "That this Committee very deeply regrets the vote of the House of Lords, on March 19th, to throw open the museums and similar institutions to the public on the Lord's Day, and accordingly resolves that a strong appeal be made to the country generally, to ministers of religion, to Sunday School teachers, to Christian Churches, and especially to the working classes, to induce them, by petitions and otherwise, to influence the House of Commons to refuse their assent when a similar motion, of which Sir Henry Roscoe has given notice, shall be before them.

Friends, let us make our voice to be heard in this matter, and at once too !

The Sower, June, 1886.



CALVIN AT WORK IN EARLY LIFE.

GOD'S THOUGHTS NOT AS MAN'S THOUGHTS EXEMPLIFIED IN CALVIN'S EARLY CAREER.

ONE evening in the month of July, 1536, a carriage from France arrived at Geneva. A man, still young, alighted from it. He was short, thin, and pale. His expressive features were indications of a profound spirit, an elevated soul, and an indomitable character. His intention was to pass through Geneva hastily, without stopping more than one night in the city. Scarcely a carriage arrived from France without being surrounded by Genevese and French refugees, in order to see if it brought anybody whom they knew. A young Frenchman, who had gone to the place where the carriage put up, recognized in the traveller his friend and teacher, John Calvin.

The joy of meeting was mutual, and Calvin, who had come to Geneva without a plan, and even against his will, learned from his friend, Du Tillet, that Popery had been driven out of Geneva shortly before; that the zeal, struggles, trials, and evangelical labours of William Farel were incessant; and that Farel was contending almost alone for the triumph of the Gospel. Calvin had long respected Farel as a most zealous evangelist, and Du Tillet could not keep the news of his friend's arrival from Farel. The thought that this extraordinary man was now in Geneva delighted Farel. He went with all haste to the inn, and entered into conversation with him. He had long been looking for a servant of God to help him, yet had never thought of Calvin. Now a flash of light shone into his soul. An inward voice said to him, "This is the man you are seeking." From that moment Farel's heart glowed with a marvellous zeal for promoting the Gospel. "Stay with me," said Farel, "and help me. There is a work to be done in this city." Calvin replied, with astonishment, "Excuse me, I cannot stop here more than one night." "Why do you seek elsewhere for what is now offered you?" replied Farel. "Why refuse to edify the Church of Geneva by your faith, zeal, and knowledge?"

The appeal was fruitless. To undertake so great a task seemed to Calvin impossible. But Farel would not be discouraged. He pointed out that, as the Reformation had been miraculously established in Geneva, it ought not to be abandoned in a cowardly manner—that, if he did not take the post offered to him in this task, the work might probably perish. Calvin could not make up his mind. He did not want to bind himself to a particular Church. He preferred travelling in search of knowledge, and making himself useful in the places where he chanced to halt. "Look first at the place where you are now," answered Farel. "Popery has been driven out, and traditions abolished; and now

the doctrine of the Scriptures must be taught here." "I cannot *teach*," exclaimed Calvin. "On the contrary, I have need to *learn*. There are special labours for which I wish to reserve myself. This city cannot afford me the leisure I require." "Study! leisure! knowledge!" answered Farel. "What! must we never *practice*? I am sinking under my task. Pray help me!" The young Doctor had still other reasons. His constitution was weak. "The frail state of my health needs rest," he said. "Rest!" exclaimed Farel. "Death alone permits the soldiers of Christ to rest from their labours." The Reformer had not expressed his whole thought. He shrank from appearing before the assemblies of Geneva. The tumults, the indomitable temper of the Genevese, intimidated him. To this Farel replied, "The severer the disease, the stronger the measures to be employed to cure it. I entreat you to take your share. These matters are harder than death." The burden was too heavy for his shoulders; he wanted a younger man to help him. But the young Calvin still could not yield. "I am timid," he said. "How can I withstand such roaring waves?" At this Farel could not restrain a feeling of anger. "Ought the servants of Jesus Christ to be so delicate," he said, "as to be frightened at warfare?" These words touched the young Reformer to the heart. His conscience was troubled, but his great humility still held him back. "I beg of you, in God's name," he said, "to have pity on me! Leave me to serve Him in another way than what you desire."

Farel, seeing that neither prayers nor exhortations could avail with Calvin, reminded him of a frightful example of disobedience similar to his own. "Jonah, also," he said, "wanted to flee from performing the Lord's work, but the Lord cast him into the sea." The struggle in the young Doctor's heart became more keen. He was violently shaken. He bent before the blast, and rose up again; but a last gust, more impetuous than all the others, was shortly about to uproot him. Farel's heart was hot within him. At that supreme moment, feeling as if inspired by the Spirit of God, he raised his hand towards heaven and exclaimed, "You are thinking only of your tranquillity. You care for nothing but your studies. Be it so. In the name of Almighty God I declare that, if you do not answer to His summons, He will not bless your plans." Then, perceiving that the critical moment had come, he added an alarming adjuration to this declaration—he even ventured on an imprecation. Fixing his eyes of fire on the young man, he exclaimed, "May God curse your repose! May God curse your studies if, in such a great necessity as ours, you withdraw, and refuse to give us help and support!" At these words Calvin trembled. He felt that Farel's words did not proceed from himself. It appeared to him that the hand of God

was stretched down from heaven. He could not free himself from that powerful grasp. He was powerless to move. At last he raised his head. He had yielded. He had sacrificed the studies he loved so well. His conscience now convinced, made him surmount every obstacle in order that he might obey.

The call of Calvin in Geneva is perhaps, after that of the Apostle Paul, the most remarkable to be found in the history of the Church. It was not miraculous, like that of the Apostle on the road to Damascus; and yet, in the chamber of that inn, there was the flash of light and the voice which the Lord made to sound in Calvin's heart, and which broke down his obstinacy and prostrated him as if a thunder-bolt from heaven had struck him. At the same time, confidence in God filled his soul. He desired no longer to run counter to the call, but to permit himself to be guided by the hand of his Master.

From that hour the propagation and defence of the truth became the sole passion of his life. He never forgot the fearful adjuration which Farel had employed; and whenever he met with obstacles, he called to mind "the Hand stretched down from heaven," and, knowing its sovereign power, he took courage.

Calvin, coming after Luther and Farel, was called to complete the work of both. Possessed of an organising genius, he undertook to form a Church, placed under the direction of the Word of God and the discipline of the Holy Ghost. Spiritual powers must act in the midst of the flock of Jesus Christ. "In the kingdom of Christ," he said, "all that we need to care for is the life—the *new man*."—*D'Aubigné's "Reformation."*

GOOD WISHES.

THE present season prompts my mind to send
 These, my kind wishes, to my Christian friend—
 I wish you much increase of every grace;
 I wish you strength to run your Christian race;
 I wish you patience under every rod;
 I wish you much sweet fellowship with God;
 I wish you joy and comforts all divine;
 I wish your evidences bright may shine;
 I wish you very strong in "precious faith";
 I wish you well through life, and well in death;
 I wish you safe on the celestial shore;
 And *there*, I wish you well for evermore.

SAMUEL MEDLEY.

THE God who planned salvation for the sinner must produce it in the sinner.—*Krause.*

"BEHOLD, HE PRAYETH!"

I COMMANDED the brig *Arab*, of Liverpool, and was on the coast of Valparaiso. One night, while my crew and myself were assembled in the cabin, in prayer to that good and gracious Being who had preserved and protected us amid the perils and dangers to which we had been exposed, and who had brought us in safety to the haven of our desires, a boat came alongside. The chief mate went immediately on deck. I heard some high words, and almost immediately came down, in a great hurry, an officer in the Chilian service, as it proved afterwards. After getting at the bottom of the cabin ladder, he made a full stop, seeing us in the attitude of prayer. I was kneeling opposite to where he stood. I confess I was much surprised. He stood for a few seconds, went up the ladder again, stopped about a minute, came down again, came to the cabin table, and knelt down. This astonished me the more, the service still going on, one of the crew praying at the time. I soon after ended the service, feeling a good deal agitated. On rising from our knees, he appeared to be greatly affected, made a feeling apology for thus having interrupted us in our devotions, and remarked it was what he had not observed for the twelve years that he had been in South America. I said that I believed we were singular in that respect in this place. He referred in a feeling manner to the way in which he had been instructed by his godly parents. He told me for what purpose he had come on board—to borrow some lines and warps to transport some vessels out of the bay which were taking troops to Coquimbo, as the country was now in a state of revolution. On departing, he took hold of my hand and said, "God Almighty bless you, sir!"

I learnt afterwards from the Custom House officer that his name was Bell, a native of Sunderland, in England. I felt it deeply impressed upon my mind that I should write to him. With this impression, it now being twelve o'clock at night, I sketched the following letter:—

"January 28th, 1830.

"MY DEAR SIR,—The circumstance of your coming on board the *Arab* last evening, the situation in which you found us, and the apparent effect it had upon you at the moment, I cannot but attribute to the providence of Him who directs everything in this lower world, and I look upon it as one of those mysterious ways in which it pleases Him to direct our attention to 'the one thing needful'—the salvation of our immortal souls. I confess I was much surprised at the circumstance, and more so after you were gone, and I learned your rank in the service in which you are engaged.

"May you, my dear sir, enter under the banner of the Captain of your salvation, and prove yourself as courageous, hardy, and zealous; and, according to His promise, which faileth not, He will give you a crown of glory, 'incorruptible, and that fadeth not away.'

"I should not, my dear sir, have presumed thus to address you, but from the feeling manner in which you expressed yourself, and from calling to mind past days with a seeming regret, as you left your blessing with me. May He who sees the writer, and knows the motive with which this is dictated, bless the reading of it to your soul. May He who holds our fragile lives in His hands guard our heads in the day of battle; and, if we meet no more on earth, may we meet in heaven, and be found at His right hand when He shall 'judge the world in righteousness.'

"Captain Bell."

I sent the letter by the chief mate in the morning, and he had not long returned when Captain Bell was announced. I went on deck to receive him. On his coming on board, he immediately took hold of my arm and hurried down into the cabin. When down, he said, "Oh, sir, you have almost broken my heart!" He hurried into my state-room, sat down upon my trunk, and burst into tears. I was deeply affected. I endeavoured to compose him by directing him to look to the Saviour who died for sinners such as he and I, and that He would not cast him out. "Oh," said he, "I am a great sinner! Nothing but the prayers of my good old mother have preserved me in the day of battle." He lifted up his clenched hands, while his looks bespoke the feelings of his soul, and said, as in an agony, "Lord, have mercy upon my poor soul, for Christ's sake! Oh, sir," said he, "pray for me! Let me have your united prayers." He took me by the hand and blessed me, and said he had not a minute to spare. He then ascended the cabin ladder, pulled his cap forward over his face, and hurried into the boat, with the promise of writing to me the first opportunity. I saw him no more. He sailed for Coquimbo with the troops, and succeeded in his enterprise.

On my return to Valparaiso, in about two months afterwards, I learned that a general engagement had taken place between the armies of General Freyre and General Pratts, wherein my much-lamented friend, Captain Bell, fell. The Lord's ways are not as our ways, neither His thoughts as our thoughts. I trust that he is now celebrating the praises of redeeming love. His mother and sisters were members of the Church at Corn Market Chapel, Sunderland, each leaving a testimony that they have gone to be with Jesus.

London.

T. A.

EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF THE LATE
ELIZABETH STEVENS,
OF STAPLEFORD, CAMBRIDGESHIRE, WHO DIED AT SWAVESEY,
SEPTEMBER 15TH, 1866, AGED EIGHTY-ONE YEARS.

(Continued from page 124.)

November 30th, 1857.—When shall my poor shattered barque enter the harbour of eternal rest and peace, to go no more out, to endure no more storms, to hear no more the sound of war? I feel to-day friendless, and homeless, and helpless. Oh, my Lord, be Thou my Friend, my Resting-place! Be Thou very near to me! Leave me not in this time of distress, when no hand can help me but Thou—

“Hide me, oh, my Saviour, hide,
Till the storms of life are past!
Safe into the haven guide;
Oh, receive my soul at last!”

My son James seems to make very light of the state of my mind, but if he felt it as I do, he would not. A man may bear the infirmities of the body, but a wounded spirit who can bear? No; and I could never bear what I have, had not the Almighty God, who knows the hearts of all, supported me and kept me in the trying hour. My anchor still holds fast, being fixed in Christ. He is a solid Rock. He knows where I am and what I am, and knows I can do nothing without Him. On Christ I hang, like a drowning man who has got hold of a rope. I cannot let go my hold. It is all my support in this dark day.

December 5th.—

“When will that happy hour appear
To change my faith to sight?
I shall behold my Lord at home,
In a diviner light.”

When shall I hear that welcome voice, “Child, your Father calls! Come home”? My soul would fly into His arms at that transporting word. “When my heart is overwhelmed within me, lead me to the Rock that is higher than I.” Christ is a Rock—a Refuge in distress—a safe Hiding-place from the storms. There are many storms—seldom a clear sky. The storms of life, and all through life, and then the storm of death will come. But Christ is a Refuge, and He says, “I will be with you there. Even in the dark valley of death I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” None but Jesus can do a helpless sinner like me good. Come, my dear Lord, and say unto my soul, “Fear not; I am with thee: be not dismayed; I am thy God and Saviour. I will help thee, and uphold thee, and guide thee through life’s thorny

path, and at last receive thee to glory, to behold My face without a cloud."

December 8th.—A bruised reed I feel myself to be—as helpless as a child—but Christ is my strength and all my comfort. I lean on His almighty arm, going up and out of the wilderness.

I have had almost a sleepless night, but not altogether an unpleasant one. The Lord, in love, does condescend to visit His people in the night-season, when all is silent and still. The Lord, in mercy, led my mind to meditate on those words in Matthew xviii. 6—"Take heed that ye offend not one of these little ones," &c. Oh, what love the Lord bears to His little, feeble, helpless ones! He carries them in His bosom. He says, "He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of His eye." Oh, how dear they are to Him! And well they may. Think what they have cost Him—His own heart's blood! And He is dear to His children—to His poor little ones. None so precious as Christ to them. Once, when Israel had sinned against the Lord, He refused to go with them, but He said He would send an angel with them. Moses said, "If Thy presence go not with us, carry us not up hence. Wherein shall it be known that we are Thy people, if Thy presence go not with us?" Nothing but the presence of Christ can satisfy a child of God. If the people of the world did but know and consider that the Lord takes notice of all the hard speeches and cross looks they give to His people, they would be afraid to offend them. But their Lord knows all, and He takes special notice of all; and there is a day not far off when all will be brought to light, and they will have to receive the reward of the deeds done in the body; for He says He puts their tears in His bottle. He remembers them all—the many sighs and cries I have breathed, when no eye or ear knew it, to the Lord, praying that He would, in mercy, turn the hearts of my children to show me a little favour. The Lord knows it all, and He says what is done to His little ones He takes as done to Himself. They cannot hurt Christ, but they may hurt His little ones; and Christ takes it as done to Himself, and will remember it against them another day, for "their Redeemer is strong; He will thoroughly plead their cause." I can call God to witness that my happiness in this world has been bound up in the happiness of my dear children. It has been all my pleasure to do them good. They have been idols, I believe; but the Lord has made themselves to break the snare by their unkindness to me; but I bless the Lord it is not so now. No; I am delivered from that. I wish them well, and can and do pray for them. But Christ is far more precious to me than my children. I can leave them when the Lord is pleased to call me home, to be for ever with Him. No more cries or tears, but for ever shut in with the Lord, where "there is fulness

of joy, and at His right hand, where there are pleasures for evermore." I shall then see it was the right way the Lord took to wean me from all things I cleaved so fondly to, by making those very things very bitter and trying to me. Oh, how I have felt it! This was the way the Lord took with David. How his children rebelled against him! And yet to the last he said, "Oh, Absalom, my son! Would God I had died for thee!" But the Lord took him away. "From all your idols will I cleanse you." The Lord will never suffer anything before Himself in the heart of one of His children. Whatever it may be, the Lord will embitter it to us. He will make us gladly resign it, that He may be All in all—First and Last—the "Chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely."

December 12th.—I have got almost to the border. A few more steps, and I shall step into Jordan's stream. The waters may be cold, and the passage dark, but Christ says, "Fear not! I will never leave you, nor forsake you." He has promised to be with me even down to old age—even to hoary hairs. Take the world and give me Christ. Oh, how precious it is, when friends all forsake, to have Christ to go to! Though my poor heart often bleeds with sorrow, and feels ready to burst within me, yet the dear Lord says, "Cast all your care on Me. I care for you. I will deliver you." Oh, how unworthy of such blessings am I! I feel myself the vilest of the vile—the basest of sinners—therefore I am welcome to Christ, to receive Him, with all the blessings that belong to Him, as my Portion. I shall praise Him when I get home. My poor, vile body is such a heavy clog to my soul; but, when my clay tabernacle is laid in the dust, my soul will wing its way to God. I long to have the prison doors broken open, and my soul set at liberty, like Noah's dove. For this I daily sigh and cry, for here I find no rest.

Heard Mr. M——, from those words, "For the tree of the field is man's life" (Deut. xx. 19). Christ is the life of every believer. Every spiritual breath must be breathed into us before we can breathe it out in desires and prayers to Him. The Lord has taught me that my wisdom, strength, and holiness are all in Him; and "when He who is my life shall appear, then shall I appear with Him in glory." "Oh, what a Friend is Christ to me!" "If the Son therefore make you free, ye shall be free indeed." I feel so much bondage and slavish fear, and I long to enjoy more of this blessed freedom and liberty to mount above this vain, sinful world, and have my thoughts and desires all fixed on Jesus—to be hourly going out in my mind after my Lord and Saviour—to tread the world beneath my feet—

"But oh, for this no power have I!
My strength is at Thy feet to lie."

January 1st, 1858.—Lord, grant that old things may be done away, and in this New Year may more light, more love, and more faith be given me.

“Do not I love Thee, dearest Lord?
Oh, search my heart and see!”

I grieve that my heart is so prone to depart from my loving Lord and Saviour; and, though I am the vilest of all His children, yet He comes with His love, speaks to my heart, and tells me I am His. Then I long to be with Him in glory. He knows how my mind is tried from day to day. I am forced to keep saying, “Lord, keep my heart and mind from thinking or from speaking evil. It makes me tremble till my knees knock together. It is almost more than nature can bear. Let me not fall a prey to the enemy of souls, but keep me, Lord, and make this little room a Bethel to my soul.”

(To be continued.)

NIGHT THOUGHTS BY A WATCHMAN.

GOD'S ELECT.

ARE *you* one of God's elect? “True election's known by calling.” They are a highly-favoured people. They are loved with the everlasting love of God the Father. They were given to, and chosen in, Christ Jesus before the world began. They are redeemed for ever by the precious blood of Christ, and all their sins are washed away, so that they stand without spot or fault, accepted of God the Father in Him. They are perfectly justified in His righteousness, and shall never be condemned nor punished for their sins, according to the holy law of God, for Christ hath delivered them from its curse. Christ, who loved them and died for them, “ever lives to make intercession” for them before the Father in heaven. He lives for them—each of them—for whom He died. He loves them as much to-day as He did when He died for them on the cross; and He will never, never let one of them perish. He is their Shepherd and Guardian, to guide and protect them all through this life, and then bring them to the Father's home above, to be with Him for ever in glory. Oh, happy, happy people who *have* God and His grace, and *shall have* God and His glory and rest, with all His saints and holy angels, for ever and ever!

Are *you* one of God's elect? They are a peculiar people—very peculiar. They have a new heart and a new mind, and these make a great change in them. They differ very much from other people, and they differ very much from what they were before

God gave them the NEW HEART. They have no delight in the vanities, pleasures, and sins that others delight in so much ; and when they go to church or chapel, they are not pleased with fine singing and a grand sermon. They often go sad, unhappy, cast down, and full of fears ; and if God does not speak a word to their heart—if they do not hear something that meets their case—they come away miserable. They want to know if their sins are forgiven. They want to be assured that they are children of God, and that God will help them, and appear for them in their troubles. They feel and know that they have very wicked hearts, which give them much pain, for they would gladly be free from all sin, in thought as well as in word and deed.

Some of God's elect seek Him by prayer and reading, and by constantly attending His worship for many years, before they can say, "I know that *my* Redeemer liveth." And there are others who can sing rejoicingly—

" 'I know that my Redeemer lives !'
What comfort this assurance gives !
He lives for ever who was dead !
He lives, my ever-living Head !

" 'He lives—all glory to His name !
He lives—my Jesus, still the same !
Oh, the sweet joy this sentence gives—
'I know that my Redeemer lives !' "

Are *you one of God's elect* ? It is not a believing in the doctrine of election, nor a believing yourself to be elected, that marks out and distinguishes God's elect, and yourself as one of them. A sheep's skin may be put upon a dog, but this will not make it love the sheep, nor eat their food. There must be the inward life and nature of the sheep as well as the outward sign, before there can be any true harmony with them. God's elect love God's Son, as He said, "If God were your Father, you would love Me." They hear and love the Word of God, the house of God, the people of God, and the servants of God. They are never so happy as when they are engaged in some way for the honour of God, for they truly desire to honour God in all their ways ; and when, by reason of temptation, or the weakness of their faith, or the power of indwelling sin, they fail to honour, or by some word or act, dishonour, His name, they are grieved to their heart, and are ashamed before Him, and are ready to wish that they had never been born. They thus are ever learning their weakness and ignorance, and that, if ever they are saved, it must be all of free grace, and all by the wisdom and power of God. In this way they learn that it is, and ever must be, by the free, electing love and grace of God that they are, or ever were,

made to differ from others, and from what they once were in themselves, and they give Him all the praise for it. It is those who are thus born and taught of God, and only those, who ever will truly trust in the Lord for salvation, and get to heaven at the last.

Election to salvation ends in salvation. The chain cannot be broken. The links, regeneration, repentance, faith, love, preservation, are united to election, and end in glorification. If there be no election, there is no salvation. Are you one of *God's elect*?

Dear reader, if you have been called by grace, taught to look to, and to lean upon, Christ for salvation, you are one of these favoured ones appointed to salvation, and you must expect tribulation in the world. It is as much appointed for you to suffer as it is for you to be saved. In some way or other, sorrow and trouble will find you out. Darkness and fear will take hold of you. Temptations and trials will make you sigh; but remember, all is appointed, and must work for good—

“ 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 in the road.

“ In pity to the souls His grace designed
To rescue from the ruins of mankind,
He called for clouds to darken all their years,
And said, ‘ Go spend them in the vale of tears. ’ ”

W. B.

OH, could we but so “ lift up our eyes and look ” upon many fields abroad and at home which, to dull sense, appear unpromising, as He beheld those of Samaria, what movements, as yet scarce in embryo, and accessions to Christ, as yet seemingly far distant, might we not discern as quite near at hand; and thus, amid difficulties and discouragements too much for nature to sustain, be cheered, as our Lord Himself was in circumstances far more overwhelming, with “ songs in the night ” !—*J. Brown.*

MR. SPURGEON says, “ My conviction is, that the lovers of the old Gospel are far more numerous than the cold other-gospellers suspect, and that the orthodox are increasing every day. The mania of ‘ advanced thought ’ has nearly had its day, and a sorry day it has proved to many. The will-o'-the-wisp has flitted on and on towards the pestilent swamps of Socinianism. At one time, the splendid goddess was resplendent in fine apparel, but the foolish creature has danced itself threadbare. Its tattered garments of pretentious knowledge no longer conceal its deformity.”

"EXAMINE YOURSELVES."

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"—PSALM cxxxiii. 1.

"But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace."—JAMES iii. 14—18.

"For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?"—1 CORINTHIANS iii. 3.

ALAS! this is a day when strife, and hate, and war,
Are spreading in the Church of Christ, both near and far!
The fire igniting tongue, obedient to the heart,
Unbridled is by some who from the Lord depart.

Whence come this strife and war? Oh, most accursed sin!
From pride and carnal zeal and jealousy within.
Come, tell me, you who make such things your daily meat,
When last you saw the Lord, and found His Word most sweet?

How long is it since you leaned on the Saviour's breast,
And found divine repose, and with His smile were blest?
Can you your Jesus love, and yet your brother hate?
Oh, sad indeed the thought!—this were a dreadful state!

How stands the matter, then, as in the sight of God?
Have you, or have you not, departed from His Word?
When in the closet shut, and there with God alone,
What does your conscience say, while bending at His throne?

Do you His pardon crave, and yet will not forgive
An erring brother's fault with whom you soon must live?
No longer let the sun upon your wrath go down;
Think of His grace who wore the thorns—a painful crown.

Go to His mercy-seat, and seek repentance there;
Then show the injured one how great your sorrows are;
No more let him by thee be hated or reviled,
But, by the grace of God, be ye both reconciled.

We bless Thee, gracious God, that some in union dwell,
And live in brother-love, in spite of sin and hell;
They still to Jesus cleave, nor from His Word depart,
But walk in peace and truth, and grace sustains their heart.

These, these are Jesus' friends; His Spirit they possess;
They love His peaceful flock, nor would a lamb distress;
With these my soul would dwell—one with them ever be,
Now in the fold below, and through eternity.

A LOVER OF TRUTH AND PEACE.

"I WILL MENTION THE LOVING-KINDNESSES OF THE LORD."

AN ACCOUNT OF THE LORD'S DEALINGS WITH FRANCES PAGE,
WHO ENTERED HER ETERNAL REST ON MAY 1ST, 1885, AGED
SIXTY-ONE YEARS.

I WAS a child of very early impressions. At about seven years of age, I was much cast down on thinking of death and the judgment day, feeling I should be lost. At one time I cried so much, my mother asked me the cause. I replied, "I wish I could read." I wanted something the world could not give. I made many promises to be better, but could not keep them. I could not go to bed without saying prayers and hymns, thinking I must do something. Little did I think, at that time, that I had sinned enough to destroy my soul a thousand times. But oh, the mercy of God that followed me up, so that I could not sin cheaply, or without great remorse of conscience!

I had a dream which made some impression on my mind. I thought I was in the Sunday School, among many other children, and that the Lord Jesus Christ came in, and began to take one and another; and my fears were great lest I should be left. But I was the last one taken, and we followed Him. In my dream I tried to pray, but could not.

As I grew up, I became more worldly-minded, and made choice of those things which often caused me to shed tears of bitterness. I did all I could to get out into worldly company; but that faithful monitor, conscience, would tell me it was wrong. Little did I think that by these things the dear Lord was at work with my never-dying soul, and showing me the emptiness of all out of Christ.

I was about eleven years of age when I made the first start in life to earn my daily bread. I went to the Wesleyans, and they, thinking me steadier than some young people, invited me to join their class-meetings; but I did not, as I felt I was not good enough. But I found no food for my soul, for they told me I was to believe I was saved, and that I wanted taking by the hand and leading to Christ. While hearing them preach, these words would often come to me—"Come out from among them, and be ye separate." Oh, the darkness and blindness we are all in by nature! Being at one of their prayer-meetings, they called upon me to speak in prayer; but oh, the horror of my mind I cannot express, so that my prayer was summed up in a very few words. I asked them if they thought there was any hope for me. They told me, as before, I was to believe. I think this was the last time I was permitted to go.

I was then living at Watringbery, near Maidstone, about the year 1842. My master was a Dissenting minister. During my stay there, my fears and distress were very great—often very low and dejected with the thoughts of death and eternity. I remember hearing my master preach from these words—"All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me, and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." I wept much, feeling a need in my soul for a bleeding Jesus. But I had much deeper to go after this, for I had never abhorred myself in dust before the Lord.

I come now to the more particular place, to show where the Lord was pleased to cause the Word of truth to enter into my soul. Being at home, I went with my parents to the dear little chapel at Ninfield, in Sussex. There, under that man of God, Mr. Crouch, I was led to see I was a great sinner in the sight of God. Here I was undone, without the least hope. I came out in the midst of the sermon, and fell down outside of the chapel. My sins were set before me like mountains. I felt I was lost, and that hell was ready to receive me. My mother came out and tried to comfort me, but I could not be comforted. I cried, I mourned, I wept. My trouble was greater than it ever had been; and often, while hearing the preached Word, I have wished no eye could see me; but, knowing that God's eye was upon me, my feelings have been so strong that I have cried out inwardly, "Oh, thou hideous monster, sin!" &c. I was made to cry out, "Oh, Lord, have mercy upon me, a poor, lost, and guilty sinner!"

Now the scene was changed. It was not whether I would be saved, but, Would the Lord have mercy upon me? Now I wanted no drawing to the house of God, but think I may say I felt a longing for the time to come. I proved, like one of old, that, when the commandment came, I died to all hope of being saved by my own works. I could say—

" 'Tis a point I long to know—
Oft it causes anxious thought—
Do I love the Lord, or no?
Am I His, or am I not?"

About this time, it pleased the all-wise God to lay me upon the bed of affliction, and brought me nigh unto death, as I thought. One night I had a view (although faintly) of the sufferings of Christ, so that I said, "Oh, mother, my sufferings are nothing!" I tried to look to Him, and for the first time I had these words given to me—"He that loveth is born of God." They came with sweetness, and made room for themselves in my poor aching heart.

My health being restored, I was again placed out in the world.

Many things I can look back upon with a thankful heart, seeing the kind, preserving hand of God towards me. Many traps were laid for me, and, but for His mindfulness of me, I should have been a ruined girl. Oh, help me to bless and praise the name of the Lord for opening up to my mind free and sovereign grace! His love is from everlasting to everlasting. But here I began to backslide into the ways of the world again, "as the dog to his vomit, and as the sow which was washed to her wallowing in the mire." I mixed with other young people, which often proved a snare to me, and I a willing captive. But here the family with whom I lived removed, so that I returned home. Oh, the long forbearance of the Lord, in not cutting me off in my guilt! That faithful inward monitor would smite me, so that I have feared I should sink, to rise no more. I have walked my bed-room in great distress of mind, crying out, "Woe is me, for I am lost!"

But this ended my roving disposition. This was in the month of December, 1844, when I was again favoured to be under the sound of the blessed Gospel, where I humbly trust I was fed and nourished. I now had a sweeter relish for the truth. I seemed like a strayed sheep brought back to the fold. I used to long for the Sabbath to come.

I remained at home all that winter and worked hard. My poor dear father was a great trial to me, as he was much given to drink; and I, being young in the ways of truth, could not bear to see any one make a profession of the truth and wallow in the ways of sin. I have sat in my bed-room in the cold winter evenings, and have been called bad-tempered; but, poor man, he did not know the labour of my soul on the account of sin.

About this time, I met with a dear woman who used to walk six or seven miles to hear the truth. I have many times accompanied her. This caused a great trial for me, as my father opposed my going. But I prayed to God to forgive him, when I had these words with sweetness, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for My sake." Often it would come—"Blessed are ye!" The sweetness my tongue cannot express, nor can my pen begin to set it forth. It made me quite contented with my lot, and I went to bed happy, and had some hope that I should see my father brought to be a sober man, which I did in years afterwards, and there was hope in his death.

In the following April, 1845, I got a situation in Hastings, where I was favoured to go to hear the truth. I also found a good woman who was made a great comfort to me. Now all things went on well for a few months, when it pleased God to lay me upon a bed of affliction, and I was brought down very low. I wanted to read my interest in the Lamb of God. I felt no desire

to get better, if I could but receive peace to my troubled soul. I found these words sweet to me, "He that loveth is born of God."

In the following April, on the 9th day of the month, I was very much cast down, so that I had no hope. I walked up and down the garden, crying out, "Lord, have mercy upon me, for I sink in deep waters! I am in great bitterness on account of my sins." I thought I would once more open the Bible, and it pleased the dear Lord to cause me to open it upon these words, "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth weeping, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." This raised me to hope far above what I had realized before. Oh, the sweet time in my soul! I could now bless and praise the Lord with joyful lips. My heart was joyful in God my Saviour. Oh, the sweet tears, abasing myself and exalting the Lord! I could now, for the first time, believe my name was written in the Lamb's book of life. I felt I was redeemed with the precious blood of Christ.

On the 21st of May, 1846, I returned to the situation I left before I was ill. I now prized my Sabbaths, and was often refreshed. The Word at this time was meat and drink to my soul. Oh, the emptiness there seemed in the world! My cry was, "Keep me from evil, that it may not grieve Thee nor wound Thee afresh, Thou blessed Son of God." I knew, in and of myself, I was all wounds, which sin had made, from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet. I felt my very tears, sighs, and groans needed washing in the precious blood of Christ.

In the year 1848, my mind was greatly exercised about the ordinance of believers' baptism. How I cried to the Lord to make it very plain! I sunk in fears, lest, when I came to the Lord's table, I should be eating and drinking unworthily. My dear friend, now Mrs. Honyssette, went with me to see our dear minister, Mr. Fenner. He talked very encouragingly to us, so that I felt made willing, feeling such a love to the Lord's ways. But after I left him, these words distressed me—"He that putteth his hand to the plough, and looketh back, is not fit for the kingdom of heaven," so that I went on trembling and hoping until the time came. There were seven baptized besides myself. When I came up out of the water, these words came with power and sweetness—"Leaning on Christ, my Beloved." The blessed feeling continued all that night. I slept with one who had been one of the seven, so that we laid and talked of the things of God until a very late hour. We should have sung but for making a noise. But darkness of mind soon came on, so that I often feared whether, after all, the work in my soul was of God.

Now came on barren Sabbaths, so that I felt there was not one

like me in all the world. I felt like one twice dead and twice cold—more dull than anything.

I remember, at one time, going into my bed-room and trying to pour out my complaints, when the Lord gave me such freedom in telling Him my sin and guilt, and I felt, for the first time, He would be just in sending me to hell, so that I cried out, "Just, Lord! Just, Lord!" when these words were applied with power—"Arise, and be of good cheer!" and they came again and again, so that I call that one of my golden days.

I was now greatly exercised about the solemn state of marriage. Three months did I call upon the Lord to make it plain that my intended marriage was ordered by Himself, and I was answered by these words—"The lot is cast into the lap, and the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord"; and so I have ever had cause to believe it was, for I had one of the best of husbands.

Things went on comfortably for five months, when it pleased God to take to Himself my dear mother. This was a sore and painful trial to me. She was a woman who had attended the truth, but was always so fearful that her spot was not the spot of God's children. I many times begged of the Lord to appear for her, and often was answered by these words—"Surely I know it shall be well with them that fear God."

The Sunday before her death I went to see her, and found her asleep. She had not been sensible for a fortnight. I so feared she would die in her sleep, and the Lord had not made Himself manifest, to the joy and rejoicing of her soul. I went down into the garden in a dreadful state of mind, begging of the Lord to appear for her. I fell down under the hedge, and groaned; and, wonderful to say, the same afternoon she awoke, and sat up in the bed, and said, "The Lord has come!" and that she was not afraid to die now. Her soul was raised up above her many fears, and she longed to be gone. She lived four days after this, and, I believe, was happy the whole of the time.

At this time, the Lord gave me such a sweet, melting experience of His love to my soul, for I felt He had saved my dear mother and myself too. Many were the sweet and precious promises that came to me at this time. I left her the evening that she departed this life, never to behold that lovely face again. But my loss was her eternal gain. Just about the time she breathed her last, the words came—"Happy soul! Safely landed!" I now leave her to rest in her dear Redeemer's presence.

(To be continued.)

THAT ought not to be your support in health which will not support you on a sick and dying bed.

THE FRIENDSHIP OF JESUS.

THERE is a something in the friendship of Christ which fills the mind with astonishment. It is a friendship that brings with it happiness, and which, like the Redeemer Himself, is from everlasting to everlasting. The superiority of this friendship appears—

First, in that Christ is a rich Friend. A man may have a friend warmly attached to his interests, but unable to administer to his necessities ; but Jesus hath all the riches of nature, grace, and glory in His possession. There is not a want but He can supply—not a blessing but He can bestow. Possessed of uncontrolled authority and dominion, He can make the greatest persecutors relieve the wants of His people, and bring them relief from unexpected quarters. Even the Prince of Darkness must subserve His purpose, and at His command bring support to the distressed saints. Hence the poorest believer, who hath Jesus for his portion, may adopt the language of the Apostle—"Having nothing, and yet possessing all things." In Christ he has every blessing, for it is His fulness that supplieth all in all.

Secondly, Christ is an ever-present Friend. It is possible for a man to have a friend whose affection for him is fervent, but he may be absent in the hour of distress ; but Jesus is ever present with His people. Whatever may be their trials, still He is near them. He directs every trial through which they pass, beholds all the workings of their minds under trials, and proportions their strength and consolations to their afflictions. Amidst the various dangers through which they are called to pass, the arms of the Redeemer's everlasting love are underneath, and His eye of compassion continually watches over them. This is His encouraging promise—"Fear thou not, for I am with thee ; be not dismayed, for I am thy God." No artifice of Satan against His people is unknown to the Redeemer, and their persecutors cannot be more ready to injure than He is to defend them. "I am with thee," is His promise, "in all places whither thou goest ; and I will not leave thee till I have done that which I have spoken concerning thee."

Thirdly, Christ is an unchanging Friend. Earthly friendship may be broken. Man is a fickle creature, but Jesus is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Amidst all the changes that His people pass through, with regard to their frames and feelings, His love is still the same. Amidst all the various trials and temptations they experience, they are ever, in His sight, as those that have found favour. In all their afflictions there is no wrath, for "there is not [according to the original text of Romans viii. 1] one condemnation for them that are in Christ Jesus." "As I have sworn," saith the Redeemer, "that the waters of

Noah shall no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I will not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee."

But what renders the friendship of Christ so glorious is, that it is everlasting in its duration. Death will snap asunder the most endearing bonds of human friendship, but the friendship of Christ will survive the wreck of worlds. It will convey every ransomed soul to the realms of light, and to the constant source of his enjoyment. This is the declaration of the Redeemer, who is faithful and true—"I will not turn away from them to do them good, but I will put My fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from Me." Afflict them He may—cause them to walk in darkness, and lead them through many sharp soul-exercises—but He has graven them in the palms of His hands, and they shall never, never be forsaken of Him.

And let every humble follower of Jesus remember that this description of His friendship is not imaginary, for He is a tried Friend. Thousands have depended upon Him, and found Him a Friend that loveth at all times. They have passed through various trials—been persecuted and harassed in the world—but Jesus hath not forsaken them. They have enjoyed His presence, fed upon His truth, been upheld by His power, and are now saying, in the celestial kingdom, "Oh, what a Friend was Christ to me!" Thousands who are now travelling to glory can say that Jesus is a Friend that loveth at all times. They have often been cast down, experienced the uncertainty of human friendship, and are brought to adopt from experience the words of David—"My soul is even as a weaned child"—but they can say respectively, "This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend."

Oh, reader, make this solemn inquiry—What know I of the friendship of Christ? And let every regenerate child of God learn to prize more this friendship. Come to Jesus under all your temptations, wants, and sorrows, as "a Brother born for adversity." Come to Jesus as your never-failing Friend. Cast all your care upon Him, and look for grace to rest upon that promise—"His place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks; bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure."

But how solemn the thought—we must be either friends of Christ, or enemies! Reader, is it a matter that concerns thee? Art thou exercised to know what thou really art in the sight of God? The Lord only can decide for thee. May He grant thee thy request, then all will be well.

Cambridge.

ELIJAH COE.

I DON'T want to be a fine preacher; I don't want to be a curious preacher; I don't want to be an oratorical preacher; but I want to be a God-blessed preacher.

THE ANXIOUS INQUIRER'S PAGE.

QUEEN ESTHER; OR, THE VENTURE OF FAITH.

"So will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law : and if I perish, I perish."—ESTHER iv. 16.

WE have often thought that each narrative recorded in sacred Scripture illustrates some special feature of the grace of God, some particular phase of Christian experience, or some peculiar part of the work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of the Lord's people. This is as true of the Book of Esther as of any other portion of the Word. The fact has often been referred to that the name of God does not occur throughout the history, yet the power of God is most conspicuously displayed, the hand of God most clearly revealed, and the grace of God most sweetly illustrated.

Our text exhibits Queen Esther resolved to enter into the presence of the king, even at the risk of perishing for presumption, because of the urgency of her need and the desperate nature of her case, her only and last hope being in the mercy and clemency of the king.

Assuming our readers are well acquainted with the narrative, let us proceed now to describe, in the first place, Esther's position; secondly, her venture; thirdly, its success.

1. *Esther's position.*—She was surrounded by dangers and perils—sorely "troubled on every side." Whatever step she might take must apparently lead to almost certain destruction. In this perplexity, we gather from the former part of the verse, her recourse was to the mercy-seat. This is a sweet lesson to start with. In imminent danger, she repairs to the God of heaven, and seeks for the petitions of others on her behalf. Let us consider the difficulties and obstacles which environed her on every side, and, in doing so, we shall perhaps find the experience of most seeking souls traced out in a somewhat unexpected way.

The first discouraging circumstance was this—namely, that she had not seen the king's face for thirty days (ver. 11), and knew not why. Many a true child of God experiences, in the midst of deepest affliction, even as the spouse in the Canticles, that the God of Israel is a God who "hideth Himself."

Secondly, she feared presuming to rush into the presence of the king without being called, and, to her grief, she had not been called for a long time. Just so, because a humble soul can get no word from the Lord to encourage approach, there is a tender fear of presuming. One may have (like Queen Esther) to go long without either seeing the King's face or hearing His voice.

Thirdly, she desired to draw near the throne, but she knew

that, according to the law of the land, only those might do so *who were called*. The character is distinctly described. She had not been called, and hence, conscious that she was not the right character, she feared to approach the royal presence. But those who cannot come as right characters have to learn to venture as wrong, to be made right, like Esther.

Fourthly, an apparently insuperable obstacle next presents itself, for the *law was against her* (ver. 11). There is ample room here for profitable meditation, but, simply indicating the fact, we pass on to notice that the result of this was that, if she did venture, it must be as a transgressor.

We find a fifth difficulty in the very painful dilemma she was in. If she stayed away, she must perish. Mordecai laid that very clearly before her. If she went, she was also condemned to die by the law. Her only hope was that, in going to the king, she *might* be saved by an exercise of his grace and favour. Her sole expectation of deliverance lay in the king's pardoning her transgression, otherwise, perish she must.

Now, we cannot help hoping that many of the readers of the SOWER have just such a hope as this. It may seem very slender, yet, if God has thus brought us to know our danger, and taught us by such lessons as we have indicated that our only hope of escape from destruction is in the King's grace, it will prove to be "an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast," and it will lead us, as it did Queen Esther, to make the venture of faith which we have now to describe.

2. *Esther's venture*.—"So will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law : and if I perish, I perish." Destruction *threatened* her if she went, and *awaited* her if she did not go ; therefore, casting herself as a humble suppliant upon the providence of God, she resolved to venture. The feelings of her trembling, anxious heart are expressed in the beautiful words of the poet—

"I can but perish if I go ;
I am resolved to try ;
For if I stay away, I know
I must for ever die."

She was compelled to go, and her experience finds its counterpart in that of every true seeker. We want our dear readers to mark the most important point, that all legal ground was cut from under her feet.

By *nature* she was a Jewess, and therefore doomed by the law to die, with the rest of that nation. By *practice* likewise, as we have seen, she was under the curse, for the law was, that any one venturing to the king unbidden should be put to death, except he pleased to pardon. Thus Esther must come to the king

condemned by the law, both as to nature and practice. She could not approach trusting to anything she *had* or *was* in herself. On legal ground she could not stand. She is shut up to the hope of salvation (if saved at all) as a transgressor, by the king's sovereign favour, good pleasure, and mere grace. It is a most needful lesson that, if we are saved, it cannot be by the law, but must be by free grace alone; and that all our doings—even our very approaches to the King—apart from His grace, are transgressions.

Esther next dons the royal apparel. What was that? Why, the robes the king gave her when she became his! For the robes to come in she was indebted to his favour. So, poor sinner, when you would approach the King of kings, “be ye clothed with humility.” And this is His gift—a gift He bestows on all who are taught by grace to anxiously inquire the way to God.

The queen, arrayed in these garments, now draws near. We behold her standing “in the inner court of the king's house, over against the king's house” (chap. v. 1). It is a beautiful and instructive sight. See the poor, trembling transgressor of the law standing at the gate, longing for an audience of the king, and trusting alone (all other refuge utterly failing) to his mercy.

Reader, dear reader, art thou *thus* standing by mercy's door? It is the only way of escape from wrath and death. “The king saw Esther the queen standing in the court” (chap. v. 2) in queenly beauty, yet, by nature and practice, under the condemnation of the law. This scene is well calculated to set forth the utterly undone state of poor sinners, on the one hand; and on the other hand, the glorious riches of free grace are manifested in the result.

Meanwhile, however, how acute must have been her feelings of suspense, anxiety, dread, hoping against hope, during the waiting-time! She must have soliloquised thus—“Will he pardon my transgressions? Will he receive me? Will he hear me? Or will he condemn me to that destruction to which on all grounds I am by his own law exposed, and which I clearly deserve, for I cannot even plead ignorance. I knew that, by venturing unbidden to him, I must bring upon my own head the penalty of death, should he deal with me ‘according to law,’ and, therefore, could not say one word if it were inflicted.”

Ah! Esther is brought to the place of stopping of mouths. When this is the case, deliverance is near. Never *did*, and never *can*, a sinner perish here!

With something like a feeling of holy exultation the writer proceeds to record and describe—

3. *Her success.*—We may note, first, that she found an open door. Not one single reader of these lines who is brought, as

Esther was, to seek salvation from death and destruction by grace alone, shall find the door of His mercy closed. No, no!

"The door of His mercy stands open all day
To the poor and the needy who knock by the way."

It is true you may, like her, be kept standing awhile; but the way to the throne is open. Then see! the King smiles! "She obtained favour in his sight" (chap. v. 2). However, you may not see this. Doubtless Esther was almost afraid to look up at first. But she could not see the king's smiling face till at length she did venture to do so. (Dear seeking one, venture to look up!) With what joy Esther beheld the "golden sceptre" extended to her! "So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre" (chap. v. 2). We learn here, she was not content with admiring its form and beauty—she *touches* it. So believers want a *feeling sense* of the King's grace. The stretching forth of the sceptre assured Esther that the law was cancelled (compare chap. iv. 11), and her safety secured thereby. In the same way, the application of grace (its being revealed and reached to us, that we may enjoy a feeling sense of the same) is the surest and most satisfactory evidence of the King's love, and that the law, which before was against us, is now, *through grace*, in our favour. "There is now no condemnation." "Then said the king unto her, What wilt thou, Queen Esther? and what is thy request? It shall be even given thee to the half of the kingdom." A truly royal speech, and to it she replied in a most queen-like way. She does not intend to go another thirty days, if she can help it, without the king's presence, therefore, finding access, she does not ask for "half the kingdom," nor anything of the kind. She asks for a *visit from the king* "this day." All the desires of a gracious soul are summed up in a longing for the presence of the Lord.

Thus, so far from perishing, she found her trials end in peace, prosperity, the manifestation of the king's love and favour, and the sweet enjoyment of his presence, whilst all her foes were destroyed and all her requests granted. This was the issue of Queen Esther's venture.

The good Lord bless these tracings of the Gospel according to Esther to those for whom they are written; and, as His is the power of the grace so blessedly displayed in the history of Esther, so to Him be all the glory.

Leicester.

E. C.

You pray God to mortify you to the world; and when a man runs away with your money, you are angry with God for answering your prayer.

APPLES OF GOLD IN BASKETS OF SILVER.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."—GALATIANS v. 22, 23.

THE last-named "fruit of the Spirit," *temperance*, seems to have a large and somewhat varied meaning. It is by some writers rendered *self-control*, and is at other times said to mean *moderation*. But perhaps its best definition is given in the words of Peter—"Be *sober*, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter v. 8); and in Paul's Epistle to Titus, ii. 11, 12—"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live *soberly*, righteously, and godly, in this present world."

Sober is an interesting word, and, if taken in its commonest sense as the exact opposite of *drunken* or *intoxicated*, it furnishes us with some important suggestions as to its spiritual import.

Soberness is *steadiness*. It seems to denote clearness of judgment and a settled aim—not "carried about by every wind of doctrine," and tossed hither and thither, like the restless waves.

Many things beside strong drink intoxicate the brain and unsettle the mind and heart. *Learning* may make people "giddy with their elevation" above ordinary mortals; and, worse still, it may render them "*wise above what is written*." A most dangerous height this—a fearful precipice which has *destroyed* many, and grievously injured many more whom grace has rescued from the jaws of eternal death.

Pleasure, especially forbidden pleasure, has blinded many a mind to its best interests.

Love of gain has so infatuated others that they have lived only to make money, like the rich Vanderbilt, of whom so much was said a while ago, who toiled to the last, as if his very life depended on adding to the stores he could never spend.

Fashion and *Society*, too, have their devotees, who, like the drunkard, are enslaved by *one passion, one taste*, and have little thought or wish for anything besides. All such persons are *intemperate*.

Sound common sense has often demonstrated the folly of these and many other extremes, but the Gospel is the best and most effectual cure. The Word of God in the *heart*, as well as in the memory and on the lips, teaches the secret of true "moderation," and shows us how to estimate "the things that are seen" at their proper worth. Spiritual temperance, then, is "the happy medium" in the best sense of that often-quoted term, "using

the world as not abusing it," and taking all earthly gifts with a thankful heart from Him who "giveth us all things richly to enjoy," while yet our best affections are set, not on earthly, but on heavenly things.

Cowper has beautifully set forth "temperance" in his description of "Hope"—

" If led from earthly things to things divine,
Nature employed in her allotted place,
Is handmaid to the purposes of grace.
By good vouchsafed makes known superior good,
And bliss not seen by blessings understood—
That bliss revealed in Scripture with a glow
Bright as the covenant-ensuring bow,
Fires all his feelings with a noble scorn
Of sensual evil, and thus hope is born.
Hope sets the stamp of vanity on all
That men have deemed substantial since the fall ;
Yet has the wondrous virtue to educe
From emptiness itself a real use :
And while she takes, as at a Father's hand,
What health and sober appetite demand,
From fading good derives with chemic art
That lasting happiness, a thankful heart.
Hope, as an anchor firm and sure, holds fast
The Christian vessel, and defies the blast.
Hope ! nothing else can nourish and secure
His new-born virtues, and preserve him pure.
Hope, with uplifted foot set free from earth,
Pants for the place of its ethereal birth ;
On steady wings soars through the immense abyss,
Plucks amaranthine joys from bowers of bliss,
And crowns the soul, while yet a mourner here,
With wreaths like those triumphant spirits wear."

Sustained by this hope, may we "run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus," and learning of Him whose ways were always *straight* and *even*, in exact conformity with all the requirements of God's perfect law, and whose precious blood cleanses His imperfect followers from all their sins and shortcomings ; so shall we be among that happy number against whom no divine condemnation will ever be placed, who are reconciled to God by the death of His Son. And "if God be for us, who can be against us ?" If He has justified us, who can condemn ?

H. S. L.

SATAN does not care what our religion is, so that it is not the true one. If we do not like to wallow as the sow in the mire, he will fill us with pride and self-righteousness, which is an abomination to God.

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,—It gives me pleasure to read what you say of yourself. "*Faint*, yet pursuing," is not the worst case a soul can be in, especially when there is, as you express, "a longing for God's teaching," &c. True indeed, "none teacheth like Him," and none but Himself can seal His own truths upon our hearts. His sealing is most desirable. "A new heart" is the same thing as "a new creature," a "being born of God," "regeneration." There can be no spiritual conviction of sin, or spiritual desire and longing after God's mercy, until this first work of conviction by the Holy Spirit has been wrought in the soul. Faith in the Gospel promises must ever be preceded by a discovery of our true state as sinners; and when that discovery has so wrought in the soul as to take away our false hopes of ever being able to mend our case ourselves, then, until faith is given to take hold of and plead the promises, the sinner is shut up indeed, conscious of his helplessness, and that he has no claim on God for any help. He is a captive, and nothing can open a door of hope in this prison but faith. Then what a gift is faith! "Without faith it is impossible to please God." "All things are possible to him that believeth." This soul-exercise is most needful. It makes a man to be nothing at all in the matter of salvation, and God to be All in all.

To feel our hearts to be "stupid, cold, and dead," and no power to raise ourselves out of our graves, "unable to love what is good," &c.—what is all this but feeling the truth that we are lost sinners, and need just such a free and full salvation as God has revealed in Christ Jesus? Ask conscience whether such an one is not sensible of his insensibility. Though, as to prayer, he may feel dumb before God, yet the very *feeling* of his state speaks—it goes up to God in sighs and groans which cannot be uttered. It is as necessary for the well-being of a tree for it to grow downwards, spreading its roots in the earth, as to be shooting out its branches above. We look for, and observe, the upper growth, but the under growth, though not so pleasant, is quite as needful.

I would say, "Search the Scriptures," with prayer. It is far better to plead such a promise as, "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out," than to reason, or say, "If I had such a manifestation as such an one, I think I should not doubt again," &c. I believe you would. Those visitations are not given for the soul to rest upon. They are blessed way-marks and evidences, and greatly to be desired; yet, "the just shall live by faith," and faith is a waiting, begging grace—a constant going with an empty hand to receive fresh supplies of grace and strength.

I am, your sincere friend,

E. MORGAN.

NOTES ON THE IRISH QUESTION.

LORD ROBERT MONTAGU has just issued, through Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton, a volume of more than seven hundred pages, on "Recent Events, and a Clue to their Solution." While referring to the machinations of the Jesuits to set up a separate Roman Catholic State in Ireland, the book is also an indictment of the leaders of both parties in the British Parliament.

That the Roman Catholic hierarchy are the wire-pullers, and our leading legislators their tools, we have little doubt; and the Protestants of Ireland are well aware of this, hence their strong opposition to, and threatened resistance of, Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule scheme, which would make the Papists a powerful majority in the Government of Ireland, the ardent advocates of which, in anticipation of this long-coveted position, have openly declared that there can be no satisfactory peace in Ireland until Protestantism is exterminated from among them.

In view of the dangers likely to result from Home Rule, and remembering the affairs of '98, large meetings have been held in Ulster, and the Orangemen have decided to offer armed resistance, if needful, against a Dublin Parliament, as they are determined not to be separated from the rest of the British Empire, where they are not in a minority, but are part of a powerful, liberty-loving majority. This view we receive as the correct one, and we most earnestly hope that God may, in mercy, overturn the devices of every statesman, of whatever name or party, who would deliver a number of our Protestant population to the anything but tender mercies of the Papal hierarchy.

As we go to press, one report says :—

The feeling in Ulster against the Home Rule Bill is intense, and many independent ladies and old men, it is said, are preparing to leave the country. Some families are contemplating selling out their stocks and emigrating to the Colonies. Vigilance Committees have been appointed in every district to receive subscriptions and distribute arms. Large subscriptions have already been handed in, and promises of support are coming in from England and Scotland.

At a meeting of the Committee of the Irish Loyal Anti-Repeal Union, held at Belfast, the Rev. Dr. Hannay, vicar, presiding, a Sub-Committee was appointed to arrange about holding a Loyalist Convention at Belfast, to which delegates from all parts of the country should be sent. It was announced that large sums had been received from England, in reply to the circular for assistance. Numerous letters were read from gentlemen residing in England, with offers of armed assistance.

Oh, that the Lord would arise, and make a way for our escape, as a nation, from these terrible evils which threaten us on either hand !

The Sower, July, 1886.



THE COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON.

THE COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON.

THE names of Whitefield, the Wesleys, Romaine, Toplady, and others, carry our minds back to an eventful period—to a time when, amidst the coldness and apathy which seemed to have settled over the land, God raised up men whose preaching, like a flame of fire, warmed many hearts, and, in spite of opposition and enmity, left a light which no human power could extinguish. From London City to the mountains of Wales, or the moors of Yorkshire, and to the masses of the miners gathered together in the Cornish villages, this wave spread, touching the very hearts of the people, for it was the power of the living God sending forth these men to enforce the claims of His righteous law, the awful consequences of sin, and the all-sufficiency of the Saviour. Their labours were not in vain. To all that planting and watering God gave an abundant harvest.

Associated with these men, one woman's name is worthy of remembrance, for in her sphere she wrought abundantly, and there is abundant proof that the Lord blessed her labours.

Selina Shirley, the second daughter of Earl Ferrars, was born on August 24th, 1707. When about nine years old, she was taken to the funeral of a child of her own age, and dated her first serious impressions from that event.

In June, 1728, she married the Earl of Huntingdon, a man of high moral character, who during his life manifested great affection for her, and at his death left her the entire management of her children and their fortunes. After her marriage she was the "lady bountiful" among her dependents, endeavouring, she afterwards declared, to establish her own righteousness by fasting and alms-deeds. Rigidly just in all her dealings, a diligent inquirer after truth, frequent in sacred meditation, and a regular attendant at public worship, she was admired by others, and thought herself she had gained great heights in religion. She could afterwards see that, at that time, she was a stranger to that change of heart with which begin new life and new desires, which no amount of natural religion can ever bring.

The Church clergy, as a body, were then very cold and negligent, caring neither for their own souls nor for the souls of their parishioners; and when Whitefield and the Wesleys began their work, not only were the common people aroused by these "Methodists," as they were called, but with many ladies of rank and fashion, the zeal and fervour of their preaching became the topic of conversation.

One day, as Lady Huntingdon was conversing with Lady Margaret Hastings, the latter spoke of the happiness she had felt since she had known and believed in the Lord Jesus Christ for

life and salvation. The conviction came to the Countess that to this happiness she was a stranger. That word was the means of showing her the depravity of her own heart. How many can recall in their own experience the path she was now treading—the efforts to conquer the evil of her nature! She endeavoured to dispel the thoughts which brought so much distress. The more she strove, the greater the failure, until that place was reached where the soul is brought in utterly helpless, utterly sinful, in the sight of a pure and holy God. A dangerous illness brought the fear of death before her. She stood like Joshua, the high priest, before the Lord in filthy garments, all her supposed righteousness gone. Then went forth the gracious command, “Take away the filthy garments, and clothe her with change of raiment.”

The change was so great that it could not pass unnoticed, and some even attributed it to insanity in her family. Benson, Bishop of Gloucester, was sent for to reason with her on the unnecessary strictness of her conduct. Finding he could not influence her he left her, bitterly lamenting that he had ever “laid hands” on George Whitefield, to whom he attributed the change wrought in her. She called him back to say, “My lord, mark my words. When you come upon your dying bed, that will be one of the few ordinations you will reflect upon with complacency.” It is worthy of remark that Bishop Benson, just before his death, sent ten guineas to Whitefield as a token of his approbation, and begged to be remembered in his prayers.

The first Methodist Society was formed in 1738, in a plain chapel in Fetter Lane, London. Here Whitefield and the Wesleys often preached, and here Lord and Lady Huntingdon attended. Lady Huntingdon was the means of introducing preachers who were not members of the Church of England, and lay preaching among the Methodists rapidly spread. The chapel in Fetter Lane was afterwards left to the Moravians, from whom Lady Huntingdon and the Methodists withdrew.

The influence of this godly woman no doubt brought many of the nobility into religious concern; but she had much to endure for joining a people who were deemed so rigid and peculiar.

When Whitefield commenced field preaching, persecution greatly increased, magistrates, in many cases, refusing to interfere to afford the Methodists protection. Lady Huntingdon wrote to one of the principal Secretaries of State, who laid the letter before George II. The result was that the king ordered all magistrates to afford them protection.

In 1746, the Earl of Huntingdon died, to the great grief of

the Countess, and, during the next few years, she was greatly tried by severe attacks of illness. She subsequently made several tours into Wales, Yorkshire, Lancashire, and other counties with Whitefield, Romaine, and others, and attended their services for preaching.

About 1767, Lady Huntingdon established a college at Trevecca, in Wales. She afterwards chartered a ship to send some of her students to America. After her death, the College was removed to Cheshunt, Hertfordshire.

Lady Huntingdon built many chapels, which are still called by her name.

In 1756 she visited Brighton. While walking in the town, a lady accosted her with the words, "Oh, madam, you are come!" Lady Huntingdon said, "What do you know of me?" "Madam," the lady replied, "three years ago, I saw you in a dream, dressed as you are now, and felt that you would come to Brighton, and be the means of doing much good." This lady died about a year afterwards, leaving a testimony that Lady Huntingdon had been the instrument of her conversion.

On another occasion, Lady Huntingdon, while at Brighton, visited a poor soldier's wife whom she heard was dying under painful circumstances, for her whole time and energy were devoted to doing good. She spoke to her so earnestly and affectionately of her awful state, and the certainty of eternal punishment if she died unrenewed and unwashed in the Saviour's blood, that the poor woman began earnestly to beg for mercy, and entreated her visitor to come again. Some women who had overheard the conversation assembled at the time of her second visit, until there was quite a congregation of women. A blacksmith one day came in, and would not retire. Lady Huntingdon decided to talk to them as if the man were not present; but the Lord met with him on that occasion, and he lived twenty-nine years after, a monument of saving mercy.

In 1761, a chapel was opened in Brighton, and towards the cost Lady Huntingdon sold £700 worth of jewels.

George III., after an interview with Lady Huntingdon, always spoke of her in the highest terms. He told her he had heard so many strange stories of her that he was anxious to see if she was very unlike other women, and assured her that her zeal and abilities could not be consecrated to a more noble purpose. "I wish," the king said to one of the bishops who had censured her, "there were a Lady Huntingdon in every diocese in the kingdom." He afterwards wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury, complaining of the balls and festivities he frequently gave and attended.

In 1786, the Papists in Belgium laid a plot to assassinate the Countess. She was invited to visit Brussels, but, in the overruling providence of God, she was delayed several days in her journey to London, and the plot was discovered.

Her liberality to all in need was very great. She once said the Lord had not given her anything. The remark being questioned, she said, "He has only *lent* it me, and I am determined to repay Him."

In 1790, Lady Huntingdon broke a blood-vessel. At this time she said to a friend, "I confess I have no hope but that which inspired the dying malefactor at the side of my Lord. I must be saved in the same way—as freely, as fully—or not at all. And as I have always lived, the poor, unworthy pensioner of the infinite bounty of my Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ, so I declare that all my present peace and my future hope of glory, in whole or in part, depends fully and finally upon His alone merits, committing my soul into His arms unreservedly, as a subject to His sole mercy to all eternity."

A day or two before her last illness, she spoke of a remarkable manifestation of the Lord's presence, which she thought might be an indication of her departure. Often during her last days on earth she would exclaim, "I am encircled in the arms of love and mercy. I long to be at home." On the day on which she died, she said, "I shall go to my Father this night. Can He forget to be gracious? Is there an end of His loving-kindness? My work is done. I have nothing to do but to go to my Father"; and, on June 17th, 1791, her redeemed spirit joined that multitude who have "washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

"Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called." "I bless God," the Countess of Huntingdon was wont to say, "it does not say, not *any*, but, not *many*."

DAISY.

LINES BY DR. EARLE,

ON HEARING A BISHOP READING THE BURIAL SERVICE OVER
AN INFIDEL NOBLEMAN.

"I HAVE no hope!" his lordship says, and dies.
"In sure and certain hope," the bishop cries.
Of these two worthy peers I pray thee say, man,
Who was the lying knave—the priest, or layman?
His lordship dies an infidel confessed—
"He's our dear brother," says the reverend priest.
An infidel! "Our brother," yet he cries;
And who dare say the reverend prelate lies?

ENCOURAGEMENTS TO PRAYER.

"Thou hast heard my voice: hide not Thine ear at my breathing, at my cry."—LAMENTATIONS iii. 56.

THIS Book is said by some to have been written by Jeremiah from an overhanging rock, witnessing the miseries of God's people, and their sufferings under the Chaldean besiegement. The former part of this chapter is distressing and gloomy; then further on, brings into a better state of things—what the Lord is and has done—that He "doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men" (ver. 33).

The text is of two parts—first, the Lord had heard; secondly, present help needed—"hide not Thine ear at my breathing, at my cry."

Prayer is expressed under various ideas—breathing, panting, gasping, like the last of life's cry, the cry for help, like the morning wretched, and the nightly troubled. In the day of affliction "Thou hast heard"—been gracious and delivered. Hide not Thyself under present distress, but send, oh, send deliverance!

Prayer is the important action of a Christian life. How feeble all other graces are when this is neglected! By this we seem to draw in fresh life and vigour from on high. How defenceless we are without prayer! This brings us into the garrison of strength. By this we lay our burden at the feet of Jesus, hanging our helpless souls on almighty power. By this we put our case into the hands of Another, who brings us into the presence-chamber of the Most High, and coming forth, we savour of Him. They take knowledge and say, "That man has been with Jesus."

God loves and honours prayer and praying souls. Sometimes He answers prayer at once, in providential difficulties, in imminent danger, in sore temptations, as David, when on his knees, overwhelmed with guilt. How sweet the voice, "Fear not; thy sins are all forgiven"! Sometimes the Lord delays His answer, as when Peter was in prison. His friends met to pray. Day after day passed and no deliverance came. At length the last night came before his intended death. He was a captive still, and, in a few hours more, expected his blood would redden the scaffold, and his voice be for ever hushed on earth. But the praying band still met. They felt God could save at the last extremity. God could make a way. On that same night an angel of the Lord came, smote Peter, and his chains fell off. He came out a free man, and at the very door where they were met to pray they saw the living answer to prayer. Could they trust for the future, sur-

rounded by dangers which became darker and darker ? To man, in his own strength, this is a simple impossibility.

Prayer purposed by God may yet be delayed. I have heard of an old fisherman who was a most notoriously wicked character. He had a godly wife, who made him a subject of prayer for twenty years. There was no hope but to the heart of his wife, and, at the end of the twenty years, she had the joy of seeing the brand plucked from the burning. Praying ones, still pray on !

The Lord sometimes answers prayer by giving us better things than we asked for. Our Lord prayed, being in an agony, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from Me !" He was to drink it to the dregs, but an angel was sent to strengthen Him. Paul prayed for the thorn to be removed, but, instead of this, he went to the grave rejoicing in his infirmity, "that the power of Christ might rest upon him." Perhaps one may be praying for health, but, instead of this, the Lord gives much of His love, sympathy, and friendship, so that the couch of pain has been a haven of peace, and the very rod has blossomed and borne fruit, like Aaron's. He may not have saved from persecution's flame. You may have been thrust into the fire, but there has been One with you, and "the form of the Fourth has been like the Son of God." You have come forth, leaving nothing but the bonds behind ; and never till now did you know how God could succour in trial and bring forth. Perhaps you have bent over a loved one. "Spare the object !" has been the language. But no. He has given great grace. Your heart has been taken from earthly things, and He has brought you into closer fellowship with Himself.

Sometimes He answers prayer by the very contrary to what we pray for, and out of the apparent disaster the true blessing springs. "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not," said our Lord to confident Peter. Yet, *in the fall*, it did seem to fail altogether ; yet from the smouldering embers of Peter's faith leaped with double energy the full flame, drawing the erring Apostle, with tears and much self-mistrust, nearer and closer to the Lord. He felt his own weakness, which made him cling to Christ as his strength. When he was weak, then was he strong.

I have read of a godly woman, in the north of England, who had an only son. His welfare was the object of her constant thought and prayer. From his cradle she had sought God's grace on his behalf. Nothing she desired so much as this. He grew up thoughtless and perverse. When old enough, he was placed in a mercantile house, in a large manufacturing town, where he speedily went from bad to worse, became a drunkard, gambler, and everything that was bad. His health soon gave way. His system weakened by profligacy, he was ordered from England at once, to seek at some celebrated baths in Bavaria new strength.

When his mother heard of his projected departure, she felt her heart sink. Her hopes were gone. He was going to a place where infidelity was rampant and the Gospel derided. God, however, in His wonder-working providence, had sent to that very spot a minister of the Gospel, in company with an afflicted wife, for her to have the benefit of the baths. While there, he conducted service. The young man was present. The Gospel reached his heart. He was awakened from his sleep with an overwhelming sense of his guilt and danger. He sprang from his bed, prostrate in agony, and felt, if God did not help him, he must die. Hope eventually dawned upon his mind. Though guilty, he found peace in the Saviour's blood, and a short time after, died in the Lord.

Where the mother's hope gave way, there God was pleased to work ; and often, where we expect the bonds of death will rivet the chain, there they are burst, and the captive is released. "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness." From the death of our Lord springs our life ; therefore I would say, "Pray on. Wrestle on still. God will surely arise for thy help and deliverance."

CHAS. NORRIS.

SORROW TURNED INTO JOY.

THE day before I composed these lines, I laboured under many fears and much distress of soul, because I found myself no more resigned to the will of God under my afflictions. I was tempted to think all my religion had been feigned—that I never had the disposition of a child of God. Indeed, such was the darkness of my mind, that I could see no reason to believe I ever had. I prayed over and over that God would be pleased to remove my darkness, and speak peace to my troubled soul, but found no relief.

As the evening drew on, the distress of my soul, with my bodily illness, increased. A solemn night, I thought, was before me ; but before I entered upon it, I once more attempted to lift up my soul to God ; and whilst I was pouring out the desires of my heart before Him, I felt such calmness of soul, such dependence upon His faithfulness, such resignation to His will, that I could say, from my heart, "Lord, here am I ! Do with me as seemeth good in Thy sight." I then found I was willing to suffer anything, so that I was but the Lord's ; and of this the Lord gave me a blessed token. Thus I found my distress sweetly removed, and, instead of having a night of confusion, I had a night of peace, and slept better than I remember to have done for three months before.

Verily, God is a prayer-hearing and a prayer-answering God. Oh, that this, and every instance of His goodness, may encourage my soul to seek Him!

SUSANNAH HARRISON.

"Behold, here am I; let Him do to me as seemeth good unto Him."—

2 SAMUEL XV. 26.

HERE at Thy feet I lie,
O my eternal God,
Content to live, content to die,
Or still to bear Thy rod.

Thy hand hath bowed my will;
I now submit to Thine;
I know that Thou doest all things well;
Thy wisdom is divine.

How calm is every thought!
My words shall all be mild;
Content to bear the hardest lot,
So I but be Thy child.

Let me but feel Thy love,
And find my Jesus near,
My faith and hope shall soar above,
And banish every fear.

Yes, I can bear these woes
While Jesus' arm sustains;
His love doth all my soul compose,
And makes me love my pains.

My God, support me still,
Nor leave my soul alone;
To Thee I now resign my will;
Oh, let Thy will be done!

HAD I a voice that could reach from pole to pole, I would proclaim that "there is no name given under heaven whereby men can be saved but the name of Jesus."

THE world gives its best things, like the best wine, first, and its worst things last. The longer we serve the world, the more disappointing, unsatisfactory, and unsavoury will its gifts prove. Christ, on the other hand, gives His servants their best things last. They have first the cross, the race, and the battle, and then the rest, the glory, and the crown. Specially will it be found true at His second advent. Then will believers say emphatically, "Thou hast kept the good wine until now."—*Ryle*.

EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF THE LATE ELIZABETH STEVENS,

OF STAPLEFORD, CAMBRIDGESHIRE, WHO DIED AT SWAVESEY,
SEPTEMBER 15TH, 1866, AGED EIGHTY-ONE YEARS.

(Concluded from page 150.)

January 4th, 1858.—These words struck my mind in reading John xvi. 24—"Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My name; ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." I thought, "How kind of the dear Saviour to tell us to ask in His name!" I sometimes fear I ask too great blessings for a sinful worm like me; but there is enough in Him to supply all my need. There is a fulness of grace, and mercy, and love in Him, and He hath said, "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it." He is the Storehouse of all blessing. Oh, how well a free pardon suits me, without any merit or goodness of mine!

"No goodness nor fitness expects He from us;
This I can well witness, for none could be worse."

All I can do is to fall at His dear feet and cry, "Guilty!" Lord, receive me graciously and love me freely; and, when I get home, I will give Thee all the praise, which is Thy just due.

When the Lord is pleased to take me, I should like Mr. N—— to speak from these words, John xvii. 24. If a taste of His love is so sweet and precious, what must it be to dwell in His presence? Here I now and then get a little feeling of His precious love, which causes me to say—

"Let the world and its trifles all go;
'Tis enough that my Jesus is mine."

I shall see His dear face without a cloud. No more cause for Him to hide His dear face from me. Fly on, my days, with haste! Moments of sin and months of woe, you cannot go too fast to bring me to my God. Sinful worm that I am, to think, that I should have such a prospect! He hath told me He hath "loved me with an everlasting love, and hath given Himself for me." What can I say to such wonderful love? All I can say is—

"When this frail body dies,
And mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess within the veil
A life of joy and peace."

January 21st.—I know and am satisfied that nothing is too hard for the Lord—even my hard heart, which is the hardest thing in

nature—but even this His love can melt. When Thy love is made manifest to my heart, then it melts in love to Thee.

“ 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.”

Oh, may my heart be often dissolved by it !

“ If the trumpet gives an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle ?” But the trumpet of salvation gives a sure and certain sound. It proclaims a free and full salvation to poor needy sinners such as I. I know and feel that hell would be my portion but for the salvation of Christ. I have no hope in anything else. I go naked to Him to be clothed—

“ Black, I to the fountain fly ;
Wash me, Saviour, or I die !”

When I think of His wonderful love, and what He has done for poor sinners, how the thought arises in my mind, “ Was it done for me ? Has He paid my debts ? Did Christ bear my sins ?” He does help me to plead His merit, and to trust to His all-prevailing intercession.

January 22nd.—I bless the Lord for the peace He has given me in my own soul ; and it cheers me to hear the footsteps of my son James, though I am not allowed to sit down at the same table or the same fire-place with him and his wife. I would love to hear them read God’s Word, and talk with them of the goodness of the Lord. But how different at present ! If there is no change before they die, where God is they never can come. “ As the tree falls so it lies.” As death leaves us judgment will find us. Oh, that they had a heart to think of these solemn things !

January 23rd.—My trials seem this day almost more than I can bear. None but the Lord knows the trying place I am in. When I am for peace, then war rises up. I have revealed my case to the Lord. I call to mind what He has done for me. I say, “ Did ever one trust in the Lord for deliverance and get disappointed ?” Oh, no ! My soul, think of His former loving-kindness. “ The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed,” &c. As sure as there is a God, I shall be delivered out of this trying spot somehow or other, I know not how. Faith says it must be to prove that God still hears and answers prayer, and I cannot find in all His Word that the feeble prayer of one of His children was ever yet despised, and I shall live to prove it true, “ for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.” “ Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.” I have had many weeping nights

and days in this room, with cries and tears to the Lord, and He remembers them all.

January 26th.—I heartily thank the Lord for all His favours to me, and that all my friends have not turned their backs upon me, but feel still a heart to show me favour. But Thou, Lord, art my best Friend, my Sin-Bearer, my Sin-Pardoner, and my Redeemer. All my hope is in Thee. I must have sunk under the wrath of God for ever, but there is hope for me in Christ, who came to seek and save the lost. He has made me feel my state by nature, and revealed Himself to me as a Saviour every way suited to my case. Bless His holy name! I only want to know and love Him more. Oh, what sweet, happy moments they are when I can pour out my soul to Him, and He pours His free love into my heart! This is heaven upon earth. Oh, what rich blessings Christ brings with Him—the fatted calf, the oil and wine, to cheer the heart and make the face to shine! What royal dainties, “without money and without price”! “The poorer the wretch, the welcomer here”; and Jesus says, “Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved!” The more I have of these things the more I want. I long for the time when I shall want no more.

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

“ ’Tis strung and tuned for endless years,
And formed by power divine,
To sound in God the Father’s ears
No other name but Thine.”

WHY say you, “None desire hell”? That is very true, but they desire sin; and pray what is the effect of sin? (Rom. vi. 23.)

DOUBTINGS are your sins, but they are Christ’s drugs and ingredients that the Physician maketh use of for the curing of your pride.

EARTH AND HEAVEN.—This mixture of sorrow and joy here (Ezra iii. 11—13) is a representation of this world. Some are bathing in rivers of joy, while others are drowned in floods of tears. In heaven all are singing, and none sighing; in hell all are weeping and wailing, and none rejoicing; but here on earth we can scarcely discern the shouts of joy from the noise of the weeping. Let us learn to “rejoice with them that do rejoice,” and “weep with them that weep”; and ourselves to “rejoice as though we rejoiced not, and weep as though we wept not.”—*Henry.*

"I WILL MENTION THE LOVING-KINDNESSES OF THE LORD."

AN ACCOUNT OF THE LORD'S DEALINGS WITH FRANCES PAGE, WHO ENTERED HER ETERNAL REST ON MAY 1ST, 1885, AGED SIXTY-ONE YEARS.

(Concluded from page 158.)

ABOUT five months after this the Lord gave me my first child. I had her name given me some time before she was born (Hephzibah), believing she would be a vessel of mercy. Things went on comfortably for some time. In twelve months the Lord gave me the second child. I named her after my dear mother (Susan).

Here it pleased God to lay me upon a bed of affliction, so that we had a nurse in the house five months, night and day. This was a very heavy trial, but the Lord deepened His work in my soul—opened up more of my wicked heart to my view. But many were the times the Lord helped me to hope in His mercy, and many times I sank very low, and "deep called unto deep." I was brought very near the gates of death; but God, who is rich in mercy, raised me up again.

Here I saw the good helping hand of God in sending me money from the ends of the earth, for my sisters abroad sent my father a few pounds, and he, knowing our trouble, gave me a part of it. Oh, that I could praise the Lord for all His mercies to me!

My health being in a measure restored, I kept a day-school for little children, which I continued about two years, which was the means of paying off many little debts that we had unavoidably incurred during my long illness.

Being in trouble one day, these words were given to me—"The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want." Oh, the sweetness I had from these words! I felt sure the Lord would appear for me. About this time a friend called and gave me a sovereign, saying I had been laid on her mind. Here I was blessed with a thankful heart, believing the Lord knew all things.

In 1852, the Lord gave me my third child. Here I saw the wonder-working hand of God towards me. As soon as I was taken ill I felt new strength given to me, and the Lord brought me through far better than all my fears. I felt His presence truly with me, so that, if it had been His blessed will, I could willingly have died, I was so happy. My mouth was filled with blessing and praising the Lord, who had done such great things for me, giving me a living child, and setting my soul at happy liberty, which was the greatest mercy. I laid in

the sweetest frame of mind—not a wish to live. I was obliged to call the child's name Mercy. Truly, I felt it to be all mercy. Promise after promise came with sweetness and power. I wanted all who came to see me to help me bless the Lord. I could say, "He is the altogether lovely and the Chiefest among ten thousand."

I had now three children, and no place of truth nearer than Ninfield, three miles, or to Hastings, seven miles, so that I often went hungering for the bread of life, and came home eating the crumbs with sweetness. It was in those days like bread cast upon the waters, the Lord enabling me to meditate upon it sometimes for days afterwards. He has often brought me low both in grace and providence, that I might see His blessed helping hand. I have been melted in spirit before the Lord, when a little needlework has been sent for me to do. We read that not a sparrow can fall to the ground without His knowledge, and the very hairs of our heads are all numbered. Oh, for more faith to "trust in the Lord at all times" !

On one occasion, I was much broken in heart at the Lord's goodness to me, in putting it into the heart of a lady to give me a large parcel of clothes for my children. We are brought low that we might prize the gifts of God. Things were trying at this time, but there are some bright spots to look back upon. I struggled hard with my dear husband to procure the necessities of this life, but now the Lord gave me another child, a son, which took my time.

A short time after this, my husband went into business at Bexhill. We had not a pound of our own, so we hired the money, which the dear Lord enabled us to pay off in due time. Here we were often brought to see the good hand of God towards us. Having to keep a horse for the business, we were able to take our children to hear the truth. My husband was heavily afflicted with asthma. His sufferings were very great at times. At one time, he being very ill in the night, I begged of the Lord to direct me what to give him for relief, and wonderful to say, in ten minutes he was greatly relieved, and was soon asleep. It was to me as though the Lord was present in the room, and I said, "Talk about consecrated ground ! Truly this is a consecrated spot." The Lord so blessed my soul that I wet my pillow with tears of love and contrition. We remained in this place of business twenty-three years.

At one time, the Lord laid me aside on a bed of pain and deep affliction, so that for five years I could not walk but a very short distance, and was brought, to all appearance, to the gates of death. I was sixteen weeks in the Hastings Infirmary, which the Lord led my mind to, and greatly blessed the

means used to strengthen my body. I had these words to go in with—

"He pleads thy cause in heaven above,
And everlasting is His love."

It often seemed as though He gave me favour in the sight of those who waited upon me.

There are many spots to look back upon in that sick ward, when sweet promises were applied to me in times of need, to relieve my troubled breast. On one occasion, these words—"These are they which came out of great tribulation," &c. At another time, these words—"And David encouraged himself in the Lord his God." I fed upon them for days; and these—"Although my house be not so with God, yet He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure"; and these—"Thy shoes shall be iron and brass, and as thy days, so shall thy strength be"; and these many times—"In six troubles I will be with thee, and in the seventh I will not forsake thee." The deeper my afflictions have been, the sweeter have been my helps from the Lord. I must speak well of His blessed name.

In due time I was raised up from this long and painful affliction, and enabled to be a comfort to my husband and children, and can say there is nothing too hard for the Lord. I have felt as if I could say, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul." During this long affliction our expenses were great, and we got very much behind, so that I often had to see the good hand of God in sending money in just as it was needed. I have been melted down in tears at seeing the goodness of God to me, a sinful worm of the earth; and so I might go on rehearsing His loving-kindness.

Dear Mr. H—, I am sorry my dear mother here ends her account of the way the Lord led her in the wilderness, not speaking of her widowhood, which to her was a most painful and solemn dispensation. My dear father died in the Lord on June 6th, 1877, leaving my dear mother with four daughters and one son, the youngest thirteen years of age. Having a great desire to be near your valued ministry, she gave up her business at Bexhill to my brother, and went into one at Hastings, where the Lord enabled her to just struggle along honourably until her death. Her nature was most unselfish, as she had symptoms of cancer for some months before she could tell us of it. When obliged to break it to us, our grief was very great, feeling sure it was the forerunner of her approaching end. She suffered very much with her eyes, the doctor saying it proceeded from the breast. She

went into the hospital at St. Leonards, and underwent an operation with one eye, in November, 1884, during which time she felt to be specially helped. She told the doctors, when on the operating-table, she felt she was in the hands of a good and gracious God. Indeed, all through her affliction we could but remark with what composure and patience she was enabled to bear it, considering her naturally persevering spirit. She told us when she felt coming out from the chloroform she was disappointed, as she felt so near to her heavenly inheritance. She was much supported through the trying night which succeeded the operation. She said the Lord kept pouring in His precious promises, or she felt she could not have borne it.

In the beginning of April, 1885, the doctor advised her to go into the hospital again, for the benefit of her eyes, where she went under much painful treatment. But the Lord was shortening tribulation's days, for she was taken with an attack of bronchitis, to which she was very subject, which was the means the Lord used to gently take her to Himself on May 1st, 1885, aged sixty-one years.

Many precious things fell from her lips, but not making a note of them at the time, they have many of them escaped our memory, but hers was a living testimony. My dear sister, being with her in her last moments, asked her if she felt the Lord to be with her. She answered, "Yes, I do"; so that we have the comfort of a dying testimony also.

Before leaving her home for the hospital for the last time, she sat by the bed-side of an afflicted daughter and tried to sing—

" Then hail, ye happy mourners !
How blest your state to come is !
You soon shall meet with comfort sweet—
It is the Lord's own promise."

This was on the morning of the day she was taken to the hospital. A friend going to see her, about ten days before her death, my dear mother told her she felt to be very near the swellings of Jordan, but that she had no fear. Indeed, the fear of death had been quite removed for some time, as, in the first part of her illness, she said she did not dread the consequences of death, but it was the article of death seemed trying to her. But the dear Lord, in His great mercy, removed even this, and the change at last was so sudden that the valley was quickly passed. We might almost say with the poet—

" One gentle sigh her fetters broke ;
We scarce could say, 'She's gone !'
Before her ransomed spirit took
Its station near the throne."

I will now close by quoting a verse which my dear mother felt to be her experience during the solemn sufferings she was called to pass through—

“Through floods and flames, if Jesus lead,
I'll follow where He goes;
‘Hinder me not!’ shall be my cry,
Though earth and hell oppose.”

Truly we may say, “The memory of the just is blessed.” May the Lord bless this account to many a weary soul is my heartfelt desire.
M. C. D.

DELAYED RESULTS.

THE want of immediate or apparent success is among the severe trials which Christian workers are called to endure. To toil long without any obvious results is painfully trying; but it is a test of faith to which the faithful servants of God are often subjected. He that sows is not always he that quickly gathers the ripened grain, with rejoicing that he has not laboured in vain. The bringing in of the sheaves from the field where tearful sowing is done is often delayed. Success, at first, is dealt out but sparingly, in a multitude of cases. The sower is not so soon a reaper as he longs to be, in what seems to him a godly impatience.

It has always been thus. God tries the faith of His servants by keeping them in suspense. Jeremiah says, “It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait.” The most excellent and faithful have thus been tried. That for which they anxiously looked did not appear according to their desires or their expectations, as to either the time or the way of appearance, if, indeed, aught on earth is ever to be seen. The preaching of Noah produced but little effect, from first to last, so far as gaining converts was concerned. He waited long before his words were confirmed, and before the end of his ministry was accomplished. Very wearisome must have been that one hundred and twenty years of waiting. Many a time he must have felt that he was labouring in vain; and never at all did he see the world converted and saved. Without doubt, however, he was permitted to feel that the true end of the work given him to do was accomplished.

It is one thing to be outwardly moral, and another thing to be inwardly converted.

By your conversation, evidence that you have got Christ in your heart, heaven in your eye, and this ensnaring world under your feet.

"NEVER CROSS A BRIDGE UNTIL YOU COME TO IT."

"NEVER cross a bridge until you come to it!" was the counsel usually given by a patriarch in the ministry to troubled and over-careful Christians. Are you troubled about the future? Do you see difficulties rising in the Alpine range along your path? Are you alarmed at the state of your business—at the uncertainties hanging over your life—at the dubious prospects in reserve for your children—at the gloomy contingencies which fancy sketches, and invests with a sort of life-like reality—at the obstructions wicked men present to the progress of the Redeemer's cause? Do not cross that bridge until you come to it. Perhaps you will never have occasion to cross it; and if you do, you may find that a timid imagination has overrated greatly the toil to be undergone, or has underrated the power of that grace which can lighten the Christian's every labour.

In approaching the Notch of the White Mountains from one direction, the traveller finds himself in the midst of conical hills, which seem to surround him as he advances, and forbid further progress. He can see but a short distance along his winding road. It seems as if his journey must stop abruptly at the base of these barriers. He begins to think of turning back his horse, to escape from hopeless inclosure among impassable barriers. But let him advance, and he finds that the road curves around the frowning hill before him, and leads him into other and still other straits, from which he finds escape simply by advancing. Every new discovery of a passage around the obstructions of his path teaches him to hope in the practicability of his road. He cannot see far ahead at any time; but a passage discovers itself as he advances. He is required neither to turn back, nor to scale the steep sides of towering hills. His road winds along, preserving for miles almost an exact level. He finds that nothing is gained by crossing a bridge before he comes to it.

Such is often the journey of life. How much of its toilsome ruggedness would be relieved by careful attention to the above admonition—"Never cross a bridge until you come to it"! Or, to express the same counsel in a form that does not involve the charge of a Hibernicism, "Be careful for nothing; but in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep [garrison] your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

YOU may seek joy where you will, but if you seek it out of Christ, you seek life in death.

"THROUGH FIRE AND WATER INTO A WEALTHY PLACE."

A LETTER FROM MR. ISAAC BEEMAN, OF CRANBROOK, TO
JOHN KEYT.

"He doth deliver."

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I believe you are glad to hear of Zion's prosperity, and it is written, "they shall prosper that love her." She is the city built for the eternal habitation of the Most High. This has often filled me with sweet astonishment. She is compact, or so joined together, and so enclosed with walls and bulwarks, that render her impregnable. "Wisdom hath builded her house," is the language of Omniscience to this city; "the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, to the testimony of Israel." "There are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David."

The testimony of Christ is the spirit of prophecy, and where the Holy Spirit is not, the testimony is not, for who can testify of what he never heard or saw? "The thrones of the house of David" can only be found where the Spirit of judgment rests, for them that fill these thrones to sit in judgment and judge God's house.

It seems every member of this is enclosed within the walls, though the city is not as yet finished; and I may tell you, my friend, we have had a strong proof of this lately. One of my most spiritual and beloved friends, about seven months since, was taken ill in body, and during his illness all his comforts and evidences of divine life were taken from him, and he fell into deep despondency. He was one who, for seven years together after his deliverance, heard the Word from the lips of poor me in the most affectionate and lively manner. He, notwithstanding, when the spirit of despondency seized him at first, wept and grieved at his loss continually for a long time, till his bond seemed quite fixed, and according to his own thoughts, his destruction was sure. I went five different times, sixteen miles to see him. When I told him of his deliverance and his former comforts and life, all I could get from him was, "I thought so, but I," says he, "was deluded, and you are deceived in me." But I or Mrs. Beeman could never give him up. He became so bad that he could not read. All was against him, he said, and that made him afraid; yet he held fast the way of salvation. "You are right," says he, "but all is lost to me." No rest or quiet for him night or day, and in nights but little sleep. This was a great trial to me and others, but a greater to him. Seven long calendar months, as he says himself, was he in this state,

and hardly dared to read a chapter in the Bible. No tongue can tell, he says, what he went through.

A fortnight last Monday, he took up John Bunyan's "Grace Abounding," and opened it. Oh, how the Lord works! It happened to be the very place where John mentions the dolorous cries and wringing of hands of that miserable wretch, Francis Spira, which increased his feelings of misery, already almost unbearable. But oh, see! Towards evening these severe feelings wore off a little, and a little sweetness dropped on his spirit. He retired to bed about nine o'clock, and as he laid these feelings increased, till every unpleasant feeling was removed, and all condemnation was removed, and the shining of God's pacified countenance in the face of a precious Christ made him clasp his hands and cry aloud in praising sovereign, free, and super-abounding mercy to such a vile and unworthy wretch as he. He had a rushlight candle burning, and he got up and read some of the Doctor's posthumous letters, and some he had from me, till four o'clock in the morning. We had travailed for him in secret prayer many days, and now the good Lord, who is faithful and true, has restored comfort to him and to his mourners, and I desire to praise God in this. He has given a singular confirmation of the doctrine I speak, for I never knew one in my life so long and sharply exercised when such a glorious deliverance succeeded. He came last Sunday, and heard me speak from the whole of the 122nd Psalm. He dined with us this day in perfect calmness and peace, and now waits his dismissal from the stage of time.

These are a few straggling hints. I rather expect him to stay a night when he comes next Lord's Day, when I expect to hear from his own mouth of his deliverance. Read this to my friend W—. Read Deuteronomy ii. 6, 7. All is given. You told me in your last how sweetly "Thou hast lacked nothing" was felt by you in the morning, after writing the last sent. My dear friend, none know without trials the sweetness of God's Word sent home into their hearts in a time of need, which works faith, love, humility, and gratitude in the heart of a tried soul. Oh, how he then, in thanks and praise, pours out his soul to a loving God!

Yours most affectionately,

Cranbrook.

ISAAC BEEMAN.

CHRIST is a forlorn hope. You will not come to Him till every other refuge fails.

If it were come to exchanging of crosses, I would not exchange my cross with any. I am well pleased with Christ, and He with me.

THE ANXIOUS INQUIRER'S PAGE.

ASSURANCE.

"And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness."—1 JOHN v. 19.

THE Apostle has just been treating of sin in a professed believer (ver. 16), and of the duty of his fellow Church members, when they discover the sad fact, to pray for him. All sin, as to its nature, is deadly, and it deserves death—not only the natural death of the body, but eternal death also. But the sins into which God's chosen and redeemed people fall are not so. This is not because sin in them is any better, or less culpable, than in others; but wholly because the grace of God in them preserves them from continuing in a state of sin until death temporal, and then death eternal, overtakes them. Through prayer, used as a means—used in obedience to the command of God—"life" shall be given to the erring brother, *i.e.*, he shall be quickened, revived, restored from that state of spiritual apathy, coldness, and deadness of soul which indulgence in sin always produces. There is a certain sin which is "unto death," because it is unpardonable (Matt. xii. 31, 32). If we could be quite sure that one had really committed that sin, it would be useless to pray for the forgiveness of that person. Of this, however, we are quite sure. No person who has been born again has committed it, or can commit it (those who are tempted to believe they have, would not be so troubled if they had); nor can he continue in any sinful course, and die in that state—that is, a regenerate person cannot possibly lead a sinful life, nor can sin have perfect dominion over him, as over the unregenerate. The grace of God causeth him to differ. The new man begotten within his soul keeps him from such a life as that (1 Pet. i. 5), and Satan can no more touch that new nature than he could touch the holy nature of Jesus (John xiv. 30). Satan can only tempt us through our sinful flesh, and the new nature overcomes and keeps that under (1 Cor. ix. 27).

In our text there is—

I. A GLORIOUS FACT.—"*We are of God,*" *i.e.*, we who have believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God, "*we are of God,*" "*born of God,*" or "*begotten of God*" (ver. 18). We are His "*little [or beloved] children*" (ver. 21). All such persons are endued with a child-like nature—humble, meek, trustful, obedient, sincere, gentle, loving (Matt. xviii. 3). We have partaken of "*the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost,*" and many who are not able to remember the time, place, or circumstances, have manifestly passed through

this great change, or they would not now be humble, panting followers of Jesus Christ—

“ Ne’er had we felt the guilt of sin,
Or sweets of pardoning love,
Except our worthless names had been
Enrolled to life above.”

This heavenly enrolment was the cause or reason of our regeneration, and regeneration is the fountain or spring of faith (ver. 1); therefore the “godly sorrow” for sin which we have experienced—reliance upon the Person and work of the Redeemer as the sole ground of our justification—strength to believe in Him, and accept Him as our Prophet, Priest, and King—hope in God’s mercy through Him—love towards Him and towards all connected with Him (His people, Word, commands, and ordinances)—these graces prove unmistakably “that we are of God,” and mark us as distinct from the rest of mankind, so proving our election of God. And, as we are thus manifestly “of God,” we shall assuredly, after death, go to God, for observe—

II. THE ABSOLUTE CERTAINTY OF THIS FACT.—“*We know*,” &c. Worldly people call this fancy, speculation, enthusiasm; but not so. It is a good thing even to have a *hope* in God—yes, though there should be not much sweet enjoyment, or but seldom. But the Christian’s hope is different from all other hopes. It is not a *mere* hope, but one which is *certain* of realization. It is founded upon the merits of Jesus Christ, and the solemn oaths and promises of a covenant God. Blessed be His name, “He cannot deny Himself.” “Hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?” “God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent.” “*We know*” certain things, because God hath declared them, because Christ hath declared them, and sealed them with His blood. “All that the Father giveth Me *shall* come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.” “Come unto Me, . . . and I will give you rest.” “Ask, and ye shall receive; for every one that asketh receiveth.” “If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.” “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My Word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, *hath everlasting life*, and shall not come into condemnation; but *is passed from death unto life*.” If God can lie, and if Jesus can deceive, then (and not otherwise) can it be possible for some poor, trembling penitent to come to Him and yet be cast out. But, bless His dear name—

“ The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,
He’ll never, no, never, desert to its foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavour to shake,
He’ll never, no never, no never forsake.”

"But," you say, "how may *I* know that I am of God?" In the tenth verse we read, "He that believeth on the Son of God *hath the witness in himself*"; and in John iii. 33—"He that hath received His testimony hath set to his seal that God is true." Again, "For as many as are *led by the Spirit of God*, they are the sons of God. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Rom. viii. 14, 16). Does not your own heart witness, and the blessed Spirit also, at least sometimes, when reading or hearing the Word? Do you not now and again feel comfort, and lifting up, and joy? And does not your heart sometimes say, "Bless God, I can come in there. That describes my case. I see now, just at this moment, that I differ in heart and mind from carnal and worldly men"? Does not the Lord the Holy Ghost sometimes bring home some precious word—it may be a promise, it may be a precept—with such sweetness and power that you feel constrained to run in the way of obedience?

And you may know it, too, by certain fruits and effects. Examine Galatians v. 22, &c., and see if you have any of these "fruits of the Spirit," because, if you have, though in ever so small a degree, that is a plain proof that the tree has been made good. You will see this more clearly (if the Lord is but pleased to shine upon you), by way of contrast, while we notice in our text—

III. A SOLEMN TRUTH.—"*The whole world lieth in wickedness.*" Oh, that is solemn indeed! "The whole world," *i.e.*, all the world outside the saved Church of Jesus Christ, "*lieth in wickedness*"!

We find in Scripture, as in our common conversation, the same word has sometimes several very different meanings. Thus, for instance, suppose you hear one exclaim, "What a lovely world is this!" you understand him to mean the *beauties of creation*. Again, if one says, "I am in the world all the week," he means *business*. If I say, "At night all the world sleeps," I mean *people*. If one talks of "the present world and the world to come," you understand him to mean *time* and *eternity*. So, again, we talk of the "Jewish world," the "Christian world," the "musical world," the "commercial world," by which expressions we mean to designate a *portion* only of the human race. In the Sacred Writings, the word "world" sometimes means *creation* (Heb. i. 2); sometimes all that is *evil* (1 John ii. 15); sometimes the *Gentile races* (Col. i. 6); sometimes *the Church*, which consists of all the redeemed, both Jews and Gentiles (1 John ii. 2); but here it evidently signifies all the *unsaved*.

Thus we see that there is a "whole world" saved, not a single individual of which can possibly be lost (John x. 28); and a

"whole world" lost, with not one saved. This latter "whole world lieth in wickedness." All are born in sin, and the unsaved remain so. Sin is their element, as water is the element of a fish. They live in it, love it, find delight only in the practice of it. This is plainly seen from the fact that the things of true religion and a lovely Christ have no charm for them. Even those of them who are moral, virtuous, and religious (as they deem themselves), are attracted only by carnal ceremonies, or preaching that is pleasing to the flesh. They are puffed up with self-righteous pride, hate all that is truly spiritual, and deride the "poor in spirit." These all have their "conversation" (i.e., living) in sin of some sort, either gross or refined (Eph. ii. 2). The "wrath of God abideth on them," and they are "condemned already," because they have "not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God."

The Revised Version reads—"lieth in the evil one." Yes, they are in his power, under his authority, led "captive by him at his will." Oh, what a solemn condition to be in!

Does your heart say, "Thank God, I see I am different from that"? Then you know that it was nothing but *His grace* that made you to differ.

"Ah!" says one, "I've no religion to speak of, and no goodness—very little faith, or hope, or love—sometimes apparently none at all—and yet I do differ from that 'whole world.' I'm sure of it, for I feel that I must cling to Jesus, sink or swim, and follow after Him. Although I cannot say I am saved, yet I cannot live in sin, nor according to the course of this evil world." Then you must be "of God." May He be pleased to assure you of it, and lead you into the joy and rest which are the peculiar heritage of the people of God (Heb. iv. 3).

Dunstable.

A. E. R.

I LOVE Christ's glooms better than the world's worm-eaten joys.

A CROSS of our own choosing we cannot have, honeyed and sugared with consolations.

ARE you sure that you will live another day? Are you sure you will go to heaven when you die? And, if so, can you give a Scriptural reason for being so? Does your life give evidence that your feeling sure is well-founded, and not presumption? Are you sure that you are, by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, taking the road which leads to present and future happiness—the way of faith in Christ—a faith which works by love? Are you sure you are not deceived by a "name to live" while you are spiritually dead?

APPLES OF GOLD IN BASKETS OF SILVER.

FROM MRS. LOVE TO HER HUSBAND.

MY HEAVENLY DEAR,—I call thee so because God hath put heaven to thee before He hath taken you to heaven. Thou now beholdest God, and Christ, and glory, as in a glass; but to-morrow heaven's gates shall be opened, and thou shalt be in the full enjoyment of that glory "which eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, nor the heart of man ever conceived." God hath now swallowed up thy thoughts with the joys of heaven; but, ere long, thou shalt be fully swallowed up in the enjoyment of heaven. Oh, marvel not there should be such quietness and calmness in thy spirit, whilst thou art rolling into this tempestuous storm, because thou perceivest, by the eye of faith, a haven of rest, where thou shalt be with Christ, the Glory of heaven. Oh, lift up thy head with joy, when thou layest it upon the block, in the thoughts of this—that thou art laying thy head to rest in thy Saviour's bosom, which, when thou shalt awake, shall be crowned, not with an earthly crown that fadeth away, but with an heavenly crown of glory. Oh, be not discouraged when thou shalt see a guard of soldiers triumphing with their trumpets about thee; but lift up thy head, and thou shalt behold God with a guard of angels, His holy angels, triumphing for the receiving thee into glory. Oh, be not discouraged at the scoffs and reproaches thou mayest meet with in thy short way to heaven, for be assured that God will not only glorify thy soul and body in heaven, but He will as surely make thy memory glorious on earth. Oh, let not one troubled thought for thy wife and babes arise within thee! Thy God will be our God and Portion. He will be a Husband to thy widow, and a Father to thy children. The grace of thy God will be sufficient for us.

Now, my dear, I desire willingly and freely to resign up my right of thee to my Father and thy Father, who hath the greatest part and interest in thee. Though men have separated us for a time, yet our merciful God will bring us together again, where we shall eternally enjoy one another, never to separate more. And let me hear how God bears up thy heart, and let me taste of the comforts that support thee, that they may be as pillars of marble to bear up my heart.

I can write no more. Farewell, farewell, my dear, till we shall meet where we shall bid farewell no more; till which time I leave thee in the hands of a tender-hearted Father, and do the best till we shall rest with thee in heaven.

August, 1651.

MARY LOVE.

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.

MY DEAR FRIEND IN JESUS,—I received your letter on Friday morning, which led my thoughts to my gracious covenant God and Father, in and through the dear Redeemer, Christ Jesus ; and I was favoured in some measure with the Spirit of adoption pleading that my Heavenly Father would guide and direct me by His infinite and unerring wisdom the way which He would have me go, for I read, in my daily and blessed treasure, that there are ways, paths, and steps for the believer to walk in, and that the way of man is not in himself. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. x. 23).

Feeling thus my weakness and need of divine teaching, raises the cry, "Lord, to whom can I go but unto Thee?" But I humbly pray that the Holy Comforter would at this time take of the things of Christ, and reveal them unto me, that I may be enabled to declare them unto you.

You speak of vengeance due to you. Ah! as you and I stand in ourselves, we have merited the hottest displeasure of God. But I believe, by the spirit that is given you, vengeance is not prepared for you. Your cup of wrath was drunk by your dear Redeemer and Surety, for He took it out of His Father's hand and drank it to the very dregs, and wrung them out, that there should not be the least drop remain for you and me. Oh, may the Lord give you and me an appropriating faith in the dying love, blood, and righteousness of the Lord Jesus, then we shall be enabled to rejoice in a perfect and complete salvation.

You complain of a hard heart and coldness of affection, which, to my grief, I very often have to mourn over. But you say, "Oh, that you could love Him more and serve Him better!" Why, I know of no greater evidence that we have got something worth possessing, than when we ask for more of it. I cannot find in the Scriptures anything a stronger proof of spiritual life than the cry for more grace, more love, stronger faith, firmer hope, &c. Those groans and sighs you will never lose altogether till you awake up after His likeness. I know of nothing to soften or melt the heart like the love and blood of Christ. Oh, how precious to feel a little of it! Here you can answer, you know you have.

I hope you are enabled to remember that there is more in Christ for you than there is in self against you. Oh, for a heart to feel and describe what there is in Jesus for us poor, helpless worms—to dwell more on what our blessed Lord and Saviour has done for us, is doing, and has promised to do! He has given Himself for us, and all He sees good for us, and has promised we shall be with Him for ever in glory. May you be enabled to sit

at His feet as a suppliant suing for mercy—as a child, to be taught His real worth. Sitting is a position of rest ; and what a blessed rest and peace does faith obtain at the foot of the cross, when the soul gets a glimpse of the Redeemer ! Sitting implies we are at home.

It is said of the man who was possessed of the devil, that he was brought to the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind. Oh, for a heart to praise the Lord for every blessing !

I could wish you had the privilege of hearing Mr. Player yesterday. I think there must have been a word for you. He was so encouraging to the weak, and you cannot say you have *no* love for God's people.

Well, God is the God of love, and Jesus, as the Friend of sinners, in His merits and intercession, is just such a Saviour as you and I need ; and He will make Himself precious to you in His own time and manner, for, although you are afraid of sinking, you will not, for I have been in the horrible pit and miry clay, but the Lord has brought me up, and so He will you, and set your feet upon the Rock, and establish your goings upon the faithfulness of your covenant God. May He, the God of hope, fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost, and be favoured to hold daily and sweet communion with Him, your eternal All.

I hope soon to see you, and remain,

Your friend in Jesus,

Wimbish, June 23rd, 1834.

A. EVERETT.

A STEADFAST HEART DESIRED.

Fix Thou my heart, O God of grace ;
Incline my soul to seek Thy face ;
Let me from Thee no more depart,
But guard, and guide, and keep my heart.

My wandering ways I oft deplore,
And hope my heart will rove no more ;
But soon, alas ! with grief I see
How easy, Lord, I'm drawn from Thee.

'Tis Thou alone canst stay my soul,
And all the power of sin control ;
To Thee alone my spirit flies,
And on Thy grace and love relies.

Since I am weak, be Thou my strength,
And bring my soul to heaven at length ;
There may I love Thee and adore,
And mourn a treacherous heart no more.

NOTICES OF BOOKS, ETC.

A Momentous Question. By G. HAZLERIGG. W. Wileman, 34, Bouverie Street, London, E.C. Price 2d.

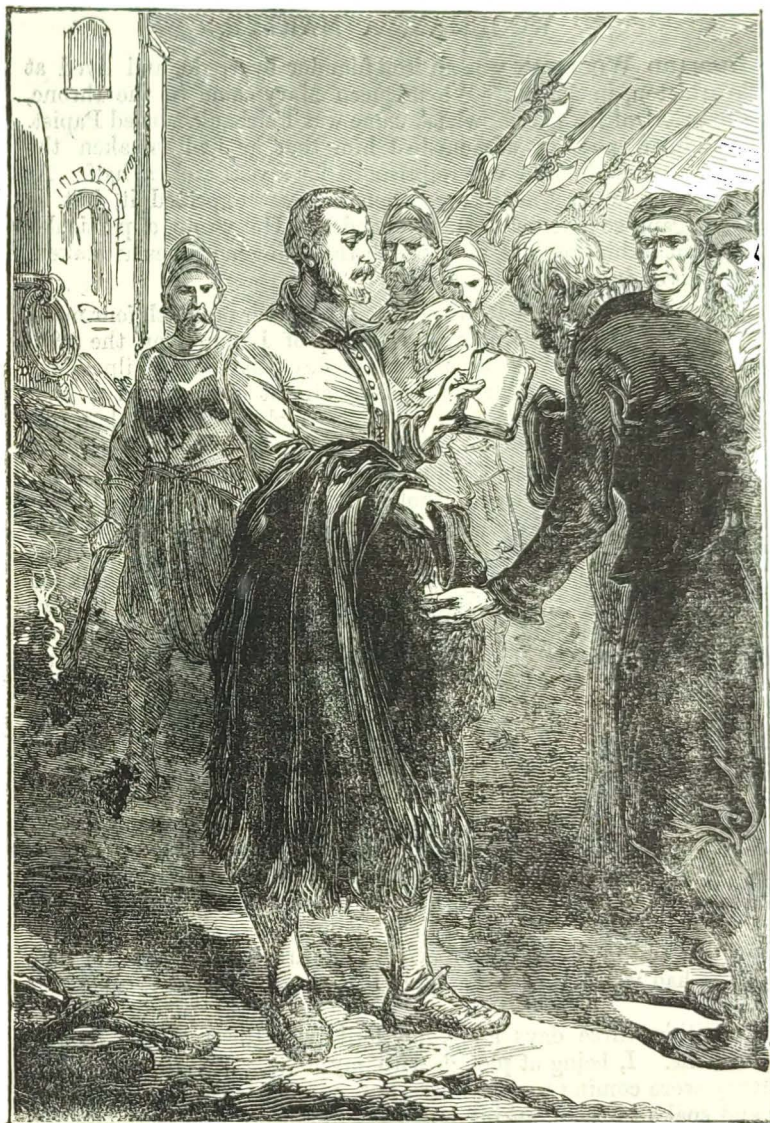
THIS excellent tract will, we hope, prove very useful among the Churches at the present time, as a little messenger of truth, peace, and good-will. Mr. Hazlerigg takes the words, "The Spirit of the Lord . . . are these His doings?" as the groundwork of the subject he desires to bring before the people of God; and, in a very plain, truthful, faithful, affectionate, and impartial manner, he deals with some of those things which have taken place among a section of the professed lovers of truth, seeking to show what are the real points at issue, where mistakes have been made, wrong done, and the evil of making strong and unwarrantable assertions against those who may be thought to have differences of opinion upon certain matters not affecting the truths of the Gospel nor the unity of the Churches.

We give one extract from the concluding part of the tract, and heartily recommend the whole to the attention of every lover of Zion, of truth and peace, and may the Lord give us to see good results arise from the spread of this faithful testimony:—

To sum up our remarks, then. If the Spirit of the Lord is with us, and guides us in our words and ways, love and zeal for the truth, love for souls, love to the brethren, a Christ-like, lowly, tender, humble spirit will be in them. Love will not lead us to usurp the judgment-seat of Christ, and assume to ourselves the prerogative of God. We shall not pretend to know what may be in men's hearts, or attempt to pass a peremptory final judgment upon their states. We may practically judge of their words and actions, whether in harmony or not with the Word of God, and of the spirit they display, whether Christ-like or not. We shall not pretend to fathom their hearts, leaving that to the great and only Heart-Searcher. Through love we shall not impute to men motives by no means apparent, and which they disavow. We shall make allowances of a proper kind for their failings, and put the best construction upon their words and acts; not searching out iniquities, accomplishing a diligent search. We shall give to others the credit properly due to them, and not even desire to detract from their reputations, disparage their actions, or mar their usefulness. These unquestionably, and others of a like nature, will be the actings of those who are under the leading of the Holy Spirit. Of the opposite we may say, "The Spirit of the Lord . . . are these His doings?"

THE COMING ELECTIONS.—Children of God, friends of truth, and lovers of liberty, help no man or party who, under any pretext, would strengthen the hands of either Romanists or Ritualists. "Home Rule" means *Rome Rule*, as now proposed. Justice may be done to Ireland without giving up the reins to Rome's agents. Watch unto prayer.

The Sower, August, 1886.



PREPARING FOR THE STAKE.

AN INTERESTING ACCOUNT OF RICHARD WOODMAN, A MARTYR.

RICHARD WOODMAN was an iron-founder by trade, and lived at Warbleton, in Sussex. When Queen Mary came to the throne, the priest of his parish, whose name was Fairbank, turned Papist. Woodman publicly admonished him that he had forsaken the truth, upon which he was imprisoned for a year and a half. At length he was set at liberty when he least expected it, but he was again sought for and apprehended. He wrote a particular account of his troubles, from which the following pages are taken, and given in his own words :—

GENTLE READER,—It pleased God to deliver me, with four more, out of the hands of Bonner, the Bishop of London, on the 18th of December, 1555, being the same day that Mr. Philpot was burned. I had then been in prison almost a year and a half, and I laid in his lordship's coal-house eight weeks all but one day. But it pleased God to direct his heart to set us at liberty, requiring nothing else of us but that we should be honest men, and members of the *true* Catholic Church, that was builded upon the apostles and prophets, Christ being the Head of the true Church. We all affirmed that we were members of the true Church, and purposed by God's help therein to die; and hereupon we were delivered, but Bishop Bonner desired many times that we would speak good of him. He had burnt good Master Philpot the same morning, with whose blood his heart was so drunken (as I suppose) that he could not tell what he did; for, but two days before, he promised us that we should be condemned the same day that he delivered us, and on the next day after, he sought for some of us again.

After I was delivered, the Papists said that I had consented to their doctrines, which was false, and they soon knew the contrary, for I went from parish to parish, and talked with them; and it angered them so that they complained of me to my Lord Chamberlain, telling him that I baptized children and married folks, with many such lies. Then the Commissioners sent out citations for me, and my Lord Chamberlain had directed warrants for me; but I had warning of their lying in wait for me, and came not there.

Within three days after, my lord sent three of his men to take me. I, being at plough with my folks, right in the way as they were coming to my house, but not mistrusting them, went and spake to them, asking how they did. They said they arrested me, and that I must go to my Lord Chamberlain. These words made my flesh tremble and quake, because they were so sudden.

I said I would go with them ; but I desired that I might first go to my house, that I might break my fast and change my clothes, and they said that I should. Then I remembered myself, saying in my heart, " Why am I thus afraid ? They can lay no evil to my charge. If they kill me for well doing, I may think myself happy." I remembered that I was formerly contented gladly to die in that quarrel, and had so continued ever since ; and should I now fear to die ? God forbid that I should, for then were all my labour in vain !

So by-and-by I was persuaded, I praise God, considering it was but the weakness of my flesh which made me loth to forego my wife, and children, and goods ; for there was nothing but speedy death to be expected. But, as soon as I was willing in my mind to die, I felt regard for nothing in this world, but was as glad and joyful, I praise God, as ever I was. This inward battle in my heart lasted not a quarter of an hour, but it was sharper than death itself for the time, I dare say.

When I had had my breakfast, I desired them to show their warrant, wishing to see what the charge against me was, that I might be better prepared to answer. To my great surprise, one of them answered that they had not their warrant there, when it was put into my mind that I need not go with them ; so I told them I thought it strange that they should come to take me without a warrant, and that it seemed to me they came of themselves, thinking it would please their master, for I had heard that the warrants against me were called in again, as I satisfied my lord and the Commissioners, by a letter, that the charges against me were false. Wherefore I told them I would not go, unless they took me by force, and that they might do so at their peril. I then rose and went to my chamber, and it pleased God to send a fear among them, and they went out of my house.

I then spoke unto them, and said, " If you have a warrant, I desire you to show it unto me, and I will go with you with all my heart ; but if not, I desire you to depart in God's peace and the king's." Then one of them answered me, and said, " We have not the warrant here, but it is at home, at my house. You can but make us fetch it." Then I said, " Fetch it, if you will ; but, before you have it, you come not within my house but at your own peril." So I shut that door, and went my way out of the other door. They got help to watch my house while they fetched the constable and many more, but I was gone ; notwithstanding, they searched every corner of my house. I thought they would search it again that night, and so I stayed abroad ; and indeed there came seven men and the constable, and searched my house again.

After this I came home, and my wife told me all their doings.

Then I supposed they would watch all through the country for me, and the sea-coast, that I should not escape beyond sea, and that they would not think I should be nigh home. So I told my wife that I would take up my lodging in a wood near to my house, as I did indeed; even under a tree; and there I had my pen and my ink, and other necessities, and continued six or seven weeks, my wife daily bringing me meat. Yea, I thought myself blessed of God that I was counted worthy to lay in the woods for the name of Christ. Then it was reported that I had been seen and spoken to in Flanders, whereupon they left off lying in wait for me, for they had watched all the country and the sea-coast from Portsmouth to Dover, even as God had put it into my mind that they would.

When all was quiet, I went abroad among my friends and brethren, and at length I went beyond the sea into Flanders and France; but I thought every day was seven years, till I was at home again. So I was there but three weeks, and as soon as I was at home, and it was known to the priests, they procured warrants for me, causing my house to be searched sometimes twice a week. This continued from St. James's tide to the first Sunday in Lent (1557). Sometimes I went from home for a fortnight or three weeks; at other times I was at home for a month together; but my enemies could not lay hands upon me till my hour was come, and then, as is fully proved, *my own brother* after the flesh delivered me into the hands of my enemies; he knowing when I was at home.

My father and he had as much of my property in their hands as was worth fifty-six pounds by the year clear [equal to four hundred a year now]. I had delivered it into their hands to pay my debts, and the remainder to be for my wife and children. But they reported that it was not enough to pay my debts, which grieved me sorely, for it was two hundred pounds more than my debts [equal to nearly two thousand at the present day], so it was agreed between my father and me that I should have it again, and the day was appointed. The reckoning should have been made on the same day that I was taken. My brother supposed that I should then have put him out of most of the land he possessed, for it was almost all mine, as the country well knows; whereupon he told Gradillar, my next neighbour, and he told Mr. Gage; and the sheriff sent twelve of his men in the night, and they laid in the bushes not far from my house till about nine o'clock, the hour they had appointed.

They had taken one of my men and two of my children, whom they met with in my land, and kept them till the hour they had appointed, when another of my children, a little girl, saw them coming all together, and she came running in, and cried, "Mother,

mother, yonder come twenty men!" I was sitting in my bed, and making of shoe-things, but hearing these words, and suspecting that I was betrayed, I jumped out of my bed and whipped on my hose, thinking I could have got out of doors before they had come. My wife, being startled at the child's words, looked out at the front door, and saw them hard by. Then she clapped to the door, and barred it fast, just as I came out of my chamber into the hall, and then barred the other door. The house was beset immediately, and they threatened to break the doors if they were not opened.

Now, there was a place in my house which had never been found out, though it had been searched at least twenty times, and sometimes by nearly twenty men at once. Into this place I went. As soon as I was in, my wife opened the door. They entered, saying, "We know he is in the house, and we must search it. We are the sheriff's men. Let us have a candle. We are told there are many secret places in your house." So she lighted a candle, and they sought up and down in every corner they could find, and had given over, and many of them had left the house, and gone into the churchyard, and were talking with my father, and with some that he had brought with him.

When they could not find me, one of them went to him [it was Woodman's own brother] who told them that I was at home, and said they could not find me. Then he asked whether they had searched over a window that was in the hall. That same place I had told him of myself. Many times, when I came home, I used to send for him to bear me company, but as it happened, I had not told him the way to it. Then they began to search again. One of them looked up over the window, and spied a little loft, with three or four chests. The way in was between two of the chests, but they could not perceive it. Then he asked my wife which was the way into it. She, thinking they would find it out somehow, told them the way into it was out of a chamber they had just left; so she sent them up, and cried out to me, "Away! away!" Then I knew that there was no remedy, but that I must make the best shift for myself that I could. The place was boarded over and fast nailed, and if I had come out the way I came in, I must have come out among them into the hall. Then I set my shoulders to the boards that were nailed to the rafters, to keep out the rain, and broke them, which made a great noise; and they that were in the chamber looked out of a window, and spied me, and made an outcry. But I got out and leaped down, having no shoes on.

I ran down a lane that was full of sharp cinders, and they came running after, with their swords drawn, crying, "Strike him! Strike him!" These words made me look back, and there

were none near me within a hundred feet, and that was only one—the rest were a great way behind. As I turned hastily, I trod upon a sharp cinder, and trying to save myself, I stepped into a great miry hole, and fell down, and before I could rise he came upon me. His name is “Parker the Wild,” as he is called in all Sussex; but if I had had my shoes on, they would most likely have gone away without their errand, even if there had been five hundred more, if I had reached the plain ground, and I was within a stone’s throw of it. But it was not God’s will; for if it had been, I should have escaped them all, had there been ten thousand of them.

Then they took me, and led me towards home, to put on my shoes and other clothes. Then said John Falconer, “Now your master hath deceived you. You said you were an angel. Why did not you fly away from us?” Then said I, “Who ever heard me say that I was an angel? This is not the first lie by a thousand that has been told of me; but if they had said that they heard me say that I do trust I am a saint, they would not have said amiss.” “What! do you think to be a saint?” said he. “Yea, that I do, and trust in God that I am already so in God’s sight, for he that is not a saint in God’s sight is a devil; therefore, he that thinketh scorn to be a saint, let him be a devil.” Just as I said this, they brought me to my own door, where I met my father, who told me to remember myself. I answered him, “I praise God I am well remembered [aware] whither I am going. This way was appointed of God that I should be delivered into the hands of my enemies, but woe unto him by whom I am betrayed! It had been good for that man that he had never been born, unless he repent with speed. The words of Scripture are now fulfilled on me—‘For the father shall be against the son, and the brother shall deliver the brother to death,’ as it is this day come to pass.” Then said one, “He doth accuse his father—a good child indeed!” I replied, “I accuse him not, but say my mind; for there was no man knew I was at home but my father, my brother, and one more, who would not hurt me for all the goods in this town.” All this while, and during some other talk, I stood outside my door, for they would not let me go in. So I put on my shoes and my clothes, and then they put a band about my arms, made of a dog’s slip, and my heart rejoiced that I was counted worthy to be bound for the name of God. So I took my leave of my wife and children, my father and my friends, thinking I should never see them any more in this world, for it was thought by all the country that I should not live six days after I was taken. But I knew it was not as they would, unless God permitted. I know what God CAN DO, but what He WILL DO I know not; but I am sure He will work

all things for the best, for them that love Him and fear Him.
[This was on the 15th of March, 1557.]

Here follow a few extracts from a letter written by him to "Mistress Roberts, a Christian woman, at Hawkhurst," in Kent:—

"DEAR SISTER,—It is not as many affirm in these days, that say, God asketh only a man's heart, for St. James saith, the devils have faith, and tremble for fear, and yet are but devils still, because their minds were never to do good. Let us not, therefore, be like them, but let our faith be made manifest to the whole world by our deeds; and in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, as St. Paul saith, let your light shine as in a dark place. 'How is it that some will say that their faith is good, and yet they do the deeds of the devil?' St. Paul saith that 'to believe with the heart justifieth, and to confess with the mouth maketh a man safe.' Oh, good God, all men may see that no man or woman can have a true faith unless they have deeds also.

"I have no mistrust; but, by God's help, all the world shall see and know that my blood shall not be dear in my own sight, whensoever it shall please God to give my adversaries leave to shed it. I do earnestly believe that God, which hath begun this good work in me, will perform it unto the end, as He hath given me grace, and will always, to bear this easy yoke and light burden, as I have always found it to be, I praise my Lord God; for when I have been in prison, wearing sometimes bolts, and sometimes shackles; sometimes lying on the bare ground, sometimes sitting in the stocks; sometimes bound with cords, so that all my body hath been swollen, and like to be overcome by the pain that hath been in my flesh; sometimes obliged to lie in the fields and woods, wandering to and fro; sometimes taken before the justices, sheriffs, lords, doctors, and bishops; sometimes called 'dog,' 'devil,' 'heretic,' 'traitor,' 'deceiver,' 'thief,' with divers other such like foul names; yea, and even they that did eat of my bread, that should have been most my friends by nature, have betrayed me—yet, for all this, I praise my Lord God. All this that hath happened to me hath been easy, light, and most delightful and joyful of any treasure that ever I possessed; for I praise God they are not able to prove one jot or tittle of their sayings to be true. But after the way that they call 'heresy,' I serve my Lord God; and at all times, before whomsoever I have been brought, God hath given me mouth and wisdom which all my adversaries have not been able to resist. I praise God therefore.

"Wherefore, if prophecy should fail, and tongues should cease, yet love must endure; for fear hath painfulness, but a perfect

love casteth out all fear, which love I have no mistrust but God hath poured it upon you so abundantly, that nothing in the world shall be able to separate you from God. Neither high nor low, rich nor poor, life nor death, shall be able to put you from Christ, but by Him, I trust, you shall enter into the heavenly Jerusalem, there to live for ever, beholding the glory of God."

We have not room to add particulars of Woodman's examinations. He was condemned because he refused to become a Roman Catholic, and, on the 22nd of June, he was burned alive at Lewes. Woodman endured this fiery trial with faith and patience, but the particulars of his last sufferings are not recorded.

Reader, through the goodness of God, you are placed in very different circumstances to those of Richard Woodman. What returns have you rendered to the Father of all mercies? Do you rest all your hopes on the "one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus"? (1 Tim. ii. 5.) Is your spiritual life derived from His death? Do you depend on Him as your "Advocate with the Father"? And are you living to the glory of Him who "hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light"?

"THE LORD IS RISEN INDEED."

BEHOLD my Saviour and my King,
From death's dominion freed!
Break out, my voice, and joyful sing—
"The Lord is risen indeed!"

He spoiled the power of sin and hell,
And though He once did bleed,
Now, O my soul, exulting tell,
"The Lord is risen indeed!"

Who once led captive, now in chains
Behold Him captive lead;
And sing in loudest, noblest strains—
"The Lord is risen indeed!"

For men, through sin condemned to die,
In heaven He lives to plead;
Then raise your songs of triumph high—
"The Lord is risen indeed!"

Trust Him, my soul, nor doubt His grace;
For thee He'll intercede;
And sing to His exalted praise—
"The Lord is risen indeed!"

J. NEWTON.

THE BOASTING OF THE MIGHTY AND THE SAFETY OF THE SAINTS.

“Why boastest thou thyself in mischief, O mighty man? The goodness of God endureth continually.”—PSALM lii. 1.

SUCH is the dreadful depravity of the human heart, and such the enmity of the seed of the serpent against the seed of the woman (that is, Christ), that, if they can find matter of reproach, they not only rejoice, but even boast. Never do the wicked show themselves so like their father the devil as when they act the part in the text. If they see one child of God make a trip, how do they magnify themselves against the whole family! Well may they be addressed as a “mighty man.” How strong is their rage; how great is their cruelty; how powerful is their tongue, even like a sharp razor, working deceitfully! They exult and triumph as though they had even swallowed up the objects of their envy.

But, blessed be our gracious God, the triumphing of the wicked is short, for though they boast that one is down, and hope to see the rest soon follow, yet they are disappointed, for the Lord raiseth up them that fall, and establishes the feet of the others, to the utter confusion of Satan and all his agents. “Why boastest thou thyself in mischief, O mighty man?” Thy boasting will soon be over, mighty as thou art. Like thy father, thou art chained, and cannot come one step farther than thou art permitted. Our God sits at the helm, and will not suffer thee to raise one billow that shall eventually injure us. Thou mayest rage, and foam, and show thy malice, but thou hast little cause to boast. Thou couldst not vent one hard speech against us unless our God had some wise end to answer by it. How wilt thou gnash thy teeth when thou seest thy wrath overruled for our good! And this will certainly be the case; therefore, if thou hatest us, it would be thy wisdom to hold thy peace. But thou actest like thyself, for thou hast no knowledge, and therefore thou boasteth. But oh, thou mighty man, what is the cause of thy boasting? Dost thou think the Lord has forsaken us? If so, thou art mistaken. Dost thou think thy mischievous desires are come to pass? In this thou art also wrong. “Why then boastest thou thyself in mischief,” seeing it is sure to return upon thy own head? for thus a faithful God declares—“His mischief *shall* return upon his own head, and his violent dealing *shall* come down upon his own pate” (Psa. vii. 16). The more thou boasteth, the greater will be thy disappointment when thou findest all is vain; the greater also will be thy punishment, and therefore cease to boast.

But why may a Christian thus argue with this mighty man

Even because "the goodness of God endureth continually." Let the wicked rage and boast as much as they will, the Lord remains the same. If a child of God fall to the breaking of his bones, yet his sonship cannot thereby be made void. Sin will indeed bring a dark cloud over the evidences, and the poor fallen child may be ready to question whether its former experience is genuine. Yet this does not alter his real state. Yea, perhaps Satan and unbelief may so far prevail, through the withdrawing of the light of Jehovah's countenance, as to cause him to think that he has all along been deceived, and shall prove a castaway at last. Sin is that hateful thing that the Lord *cannot* look upon; and if His own children *indulge* it in their bosoms, it will cost them dear. Such a hateful thing is sin that, when our dear Surety stood enwrapped with the sins of His people, though they were His only by imputation, yet God His Father could not look upon Him. Can we then suppose He will continue the light of His countenance to a soul that is deliberately giving way to sin? No; this is contrary to His very nature. Sin He abhors; and if His children indulge it, He will withdraw from them, and suffer them to smart severely by the very thing they have indulged. Yea, He will "visit their sins with a rod, and their transgressions with stripes," the worst of which is the hiding of His face and a sense of wrath, which always, more or less, is felt in the soul that has backslidden from God. "In a little wrath I hid My face from thee" (Isa. liv. 8). The Prophet also prays, "Be not wrath very sore, O Lord, neither remember iniquity for ever" (Isa. lxiv. 9).

I need not multiply proofs, as all the experienced children of God know it by the paths they have been called to travel. But though this is the painful experience which backsliding produces, yet all this cannot alter the real state of a child of God. But who can tell the joy the wicked feel at seeing one cast down into the mire of sin? Yet they have but little cause for this joy, for "the goodness of God endureth continually." The same goodness which first brought the soul up from the grave of spiritual death is still in exercise. Did the Lord ever quicken a person from a "death in trespasses and sins," and make him a partaker of the divine nature, and then leave that soul to fall a prey to the jaws of the devourer? No, never; for though He hath promised that, if His children (*i.e.*, the children of the spiritual David) forsake His laws, and walk not in His statutes, &c., "their sins will I visit with a rod, and their transgressions with stripes," yet He adds, "Nevertheless My loving-kindness will I not utterly take from them, nor suffer My faithfulness to fail." Hence it is that David defies his enemies—"Why boastest thou thyself in mischief, O mighty man? The goodness of God endureth continually." He will yet raise up the soul that is bowed down, and not leave him

in the hands of his foes. Yea, He will often thus set his feet upon a Rock, and establish his goings, that his footsteps slip not ; and in this way He so much the more magnifies the riches of His grace, His superabounding grace, to the abounding of sin. Thus the Lord disappoints His and our enemies.

Even so, Lord. Amen.

Old Sampford, April, 1819.

S. REYNOLDS.

"HID UNDER HIS SHADOW."

JOHN PATERSON, of Penvenie, was one of the godly Scotch Covenanters who were much persecuted on account of their religion. One remarkable deliverance from the hands of his enemies, as an instance of God's protection, he was fond of relating :—

I had gone [he says] to a preaching in the Black Glen. While we were in the full enjoyment of the meeting, and our souls were being fed with the Word of our God from the mouth of His servant, the alarm was given that the troopers were coming down upon us. The meeting broke up at once, and we separated, each one taking the way that seemed to him safest and best. I was bent upon getting back to a cave where I used to hide. Indeed, I knew of no other hiding-place within my reach. At first I thought that all the soldiers had gone off in different directions after the other people, but, as I crossed the bridge above Longstone Moss, I heard a shout behind, and, looking back, I saw a party in full career after me, who evidently had me in full sight. I took the road straight over the bog, knowing that ground that would bear me, as I ran lightly over it, would give way under the horses of the heavily-armed soldiers. It turned out in some measure as I had expected. All through the moss I kept my own with them. They gained nothing on me, but, on the other hand, I gained nothing on them, and I knew that, when the moss was once passed, the ground would allow them to get on more quickly than I could ; so I looked about for some hole or corner into which I might creep, and, by the Lord's goodness upon me, hide myself from the face of my enemies. As I sought, and prayed the Lord to hide me under the shadow of His wings, I came upon a deep, mossy furrow, running across the bog. I lay down in the rushes, and the bents closed over me, hiding me from view, and once again, as often before, I was made to know the joy there is in feeling that we are in our Father's hands, that He is with us, and careth for us. But, even while rejoicing in the safety I had found, I heard a sound that struck upon my heart like a death-knell. It was the barking of dogs, hot and keen on

the scent of their prey, and I knew that from them there was no escape. No hole, however dark—no furrow, however deep—could hide me from them. That sense of smell which God had given them was sure and unerring, and these men were now using it to hunt God's children to the death. "Oh, Lord," I cried, "I am still in Thy hands. Even yet canst Thou save me, if it so please Thee; but if it be Thy will that they should take my life, do Thou keep my soul fast resting on Thee, and let me meet death without fear and without sin."

Oh, my brethren, you know as well as I can tell you, how sweet it is to cast one's self upon the Lord in the hour of danger! I heard the bark of the dogs come nearer and nearer. I cautiously raised my head a little, and looked through the rushes, and could see them not very many yards off, their heads down, their noses scenting out my very footsteps, and they coming straight and sure to their prey. Again I cried to the Lord, "Into Thy hands I commend my spirit!" and I was preparing to rise, that I might save myself at least from being torn by the dogs, when suddenly there was a whirr among the long grass at my head, and close past my face, like a flash of lightning, dashed a fox, frightened from his lair by the near approach of the dogs. With a loud yelp the hounds turned from my track to rush after him, and the soldiers, too, in the eagerness of this unexpected chase, forgot the poor Covenanters whom they had been hunting. Fox, dogs, horses, and men dashed over the moor in wild excitement, and I was left to give praise and thanks to the Lord, who had again spread over me the shadow of His wings, and had again delivered me in safety from the hands of my enemies. When they were fairly out of sight, I rose to go home. I passed round about the hill, walked up the burn to throw the hounds off my scent, and reached the sweet resting-place in safety, to find my dear wife waiting for me in sore anxiety and fear, and ready to join with me in wondering praises to the Lord, who had watched over His unworthy servant, and kept him even as the apple of His eye.

R. F. R.

THE Holy Spirit and His work are much misrepresented by sensationalism. We have sensational preaching, tracts, music, &c., to arouse (it is said) the unthinking crowd to the contemplation of high and heavenly things. But no amount of sensationalism can command the work of the Holy Spirit. He is a Sovereign Person, who works when, where, how, and upon whomsoever He wills. He is not confined to any body of men. He first took visible possession of His Church on the day of Pentecost, and continues to do so, for every believer is "a temple of the Holy Ghost."

TRUTH AND ERROR.

DID not Satan misuse Scripture itself, his sole aim being thereby to tempt, to seduce, to overthrow? And thus quoting it partially, what was it then but erroneous—an aiming to carry out his own malicious purpose, wilily hiding a part of the truth? May we ever remember to “*search* the Scriptures,” seeking the guidance of the Spirit of Truth to lead us into *all* truth, rather than to pick out some little sentence to suit our own mind, and so wield it as though that was everything, and even its very closely connected words were nothing. This surely seems as unwise as it would be to extol highly some few bricks in a well-built house, and think little or nothing of all the rest, although they were of equal worth.

I well remember, some years ago (I was but young in the good way then), a man with whom I was acquainted, and who was connected with a Christian profession, so that I supposed he was well acquainted with the Scriptures; yet he *did* not, and *would* not, believe that John vi. 37, contained any more than the latter half of the verse until (being in his house) I made him get me a New Testament, and I there showed it him. Now, this man was quite surprised, and appeared displeased, because it somehow interfered with some of his ideas.

Now, suppose other persons similarly deal with the latter part, and talk and act as though the *former* part of the verse was their main theme, and thus propagate the doctrine of Fatalism therefrom, what a dreadful abusing of the solemn words of Christ is this—what a wresting of Scripture from its gracious and beautiful connections—each part thus so mercifully blended together being big with blessings, for which we feel bound to praise the Lord, who has made the same so really helpful, encouraging, and comforting to our hearts. Oh, yes, record it again—“All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.”

Blessed Saviour, what a dreadful curse and punishment didst Thou, as our Substitute, come to endure, and what precious Gospel blessings didst Thou come to bring! What words of grace didst Thou utter, and what grace hast Thou shown in causing us to lament our undone, lost, and polluted condition, and in causing us happily to know the rest, and peace, and joy, which it is Thy delight to give! Oh, help us to praise, praise, praise, our gracious Triune God for ever! Amen.

Oh, how many wonderful truths are there in this one chapter! May we highly prize them all. May we bless God for them all, that ever a precious Gospel was given, when we might have been left to endure the curse. Oh, let us bless the Lord with all our hearts!

Let us remember the Saviour's own words in verse 27, as well as in verse 44, and may the Lord "give us understanding in all things."

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and instruction in righteousness"; and the words which follow on show one gracious purpose for which it is given—to furnish God's ministers with words suited to every occasion—"that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." And none of the glorious doctrines of the Gospel could ever be meant to stand in the way of the sinner's humble approach to the Saviour, and to God by Him; nor to hinder him in pouring out his heart's desires at the throne of grace.

Surely we need not hesitate to say that whatever tends to encourage men to make light of sin, tends to encourage sinners to sit at ease in their perishing condition, tends to harden them in their state of enmity to God, tends to stifle conscientious conviction, tends to throwing a stumbling-block in a poor coming sinner's way, tends to making light of any part of God's revealed Word—surely whatever tends to do these things, or any other things of the like kind, must be erroneous.

To tell sinners they can do nothing in their soul's salvation, but that, if God has a purpose of mercy towards them, He will bring them some day, may be a part of truth. To tell anxious ones they can do nothing towards the salvation of their souls—that they will only make matters worse—that many are deceived, and they had better wait and see—this may have the semblance of truth, but I solemnly thank God that the teaching of Christ was far different.

True as it is that we cannot do anything to save our souls—the Lord Jesus Christ is the only Saviour—yet the solemn words of truth, rightly understood, show to us our guilty, sinful, lost, polluted, and destitute condition; and also declare to us that God who alone can pardon the guilty, save the lost, cleanse from pollution, and make His mercies to abound to the destitute, supplying their needs "according to the riches of His grace." And that Word also declares to us that Jesus said, "If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins." "Shall die in your sins; and whither I go, ye cannot come." "He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." He also said, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." And I say, Blessed be God for all the words of truth.

Oh, may the mighty Spirit of grace breathe life, discover to us

our guilt and our needs, and lead us to come unto that gracious Saviour in whom all fulness dwells—a fulness of every blessing a poor sinner can need ! Oh, blessed Word, which tells us that “it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell” ! “Bless the Lord, O my soul !” It is indeed a “joyful sound.”

“A fulness resides in Jesus our Head,
And ever abides, to answer our need ;
The Father’s good pleasure has laid up in store
A plentiful treasure to give to the poor.”

And, though we cannot do anything to save our souls, yet this is the God “with whom we have to do.” We must have “to do” with God, confessing our sins, entreating His mercy through a Saviour’s precious blood—“Lord, save me !”—or, going on still in our wickedness, we shall woefully find that “the end of these things is death.”

O God, for Christ’s sake, command Thy blessing, for we know, and gladly own, that “Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever ! Amen.”

B. B.

THE CONFIRMING OF THE WORD.

ANOTHER sign with which God confirms His Word is, the transformation of the life. Bear with me while I urge this. If you cannot bear this, I do not believe God has done anything for you by His grace. I know there are cold, speculative religionists in these days, that would hear me from morning to night on full and clear doctrinal statements, as long as I should talk of eternal love, covenant union, invincible grace, unalterable securities, special privileges, and all the salvation of the poor sinner resting entirely in Christ ; and they are very precious things, of which I hope never to lose sight ; but we must not stop there. If I go a step further, and proclaim in their hearing, “Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed in the renewing of your minds,” then, forsooth, they call me “legalist.” It is very little matter what they call me now. It used to annoy me wonderfully twenty years ago, but, blessed be God, I am waiting now for one call, and that is, the call *home*, and it is of very little consequence what men call me. “To my own Master I stand or fall.”

I mean to say, then, you are anything but a Christian, if you cannot bear this—that the man whom omnipotent grace makes to differ from the world, the man who has his own experience confirmed with the signs I have just been naming, is so transformed that “old things pass away, and all things become new.” He is so transformed that sin has become “an evil and a bitter thing” to him. He is so transformed that his old companions are shunned and avoided unless they can conform to his practices and pursuits.

He is so transformed that he seeks new associates ; and instead of being tied to earth, and bound even to the company of Christians, nothing will do for him but the company of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and he must "walk with God," and "have his conversation in heaven." The man who, before God "confirmed the Word with signs following," could hear and pass an opinion, and love sin as much as ever, now hears, and whether his opinion is passed or no, he is humbled, and loathes himself, and gets away from the creature, and cries for grace and salvation in Christ Jesus ; and then follows the "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do ?" He wants, then, all his powers and members, which he before yielded servants to sin, slaves to sin, to be servants to righteousness unto holiness, "and the end thereof to be everlasting life."

Oh, tell me no more of the apologising for the frailties of human nature ; tell me no more of putting down to this point of extenuation and that, the gross sins of public professors and public preachers ; tell me no more of explaining away this and concealing that ! I want transparent Christians—Christians that can let the world and the Church look them through and through. If they can find any spot, let them tell of it ; but if not, then the poor soul, standing transparent before the world and the Church, will retire and own, "Lord, I am vile !" and deeply feel it too, and constantly plead for soul-transforming grace. Know ye not that "the grace of God, that bringeth salvation, teaches us" to whom it brings the salvation "that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world" ? Know ye not that the Scriptures abound with exhortations to the children of God, in whom these signs and wonders have been wrought, that they should keep their garments unspotted by the flesh—that "their heads should lack no oil"—that they should "walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise"—that they should "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them"—that they should "be holy, even as He which hath called them is holy" ? Why, the Word of God is full of these exhortations !

And, my hearers, if they belong not to the Christian, pray to whom can they belong ? I am sure it is of no use to give them to dead men. You might as well exhort that post. It is of no use to give them to those who have never felt the plague of their own hearts. They will tell you they mean to obey when the devil will let them, or when their own caprice will let them. And, therefore, if they are not addressed to the children of God, they are of no use at all. But you know they *are* ; and therefore we earnestly insist that one of the signs which follow the preaching of the Gospel, and by which the Lord confirms His Word, is the transformation of the life of the man who receives the truth in the love of it.—*Irons.*

OBITUARY OF MRS. COVER.

ON the 23rd of January, 1886, Charlotte, widow of the late Stephen Cover, died at Orchard Terrace, Chichester, in the eighty-third year of her age.

When very young she was left an orphan, but in her childhood experienced many checks of conscience, and she afterwards said the dear Lord kept her from desiring the vanities of this ungodly world. He gradually opened her eyes, and showed her that her "heart was deceitful, and desperately wicked," and for two years the misery she felt was very great.

In the providence of God, she was brought under the ministry of the late Mr. E. Parsons, where the Lord was pleased to bless her with a sweet hope, on Christmas Day, 1839, from the text, "Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins" (Matt. i. 21), the enjoyment and comfort of which lasted for several months.

She was favoured in having a partner in life who feared the Lord, but he was taken from her on August 15th, 1869. Her sorrow under this bereaving stroke was great, but after a while she was wonderfully supported by these words being brought with divine power to her mind—"He is not dead, but sleepeth."

She was much blessed under the preaching of the late Mr. Hallett.

In her diary, December, 1869, she writes, "The dear Lord has laid His afflicting hand upon me. Bless His dear name, He did give me a sweet hope in His mercy for many months before, and I had enjoyed much of His presence." When she recovered, she was helped and comforted in hearing Mr. Woods speak of the troubles of Jacob and Joseph, and the Lord's interposition for them.

In January, 1885, she partially lost the use of her limbs, and continued in this state until her death. Being very weak, she could read but little towards the last, but at times enjoyed much, and when in suffering would say, "'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name.' Do, dear Lord, keep me from murmuring! All Thy time will I wait, O God. All I want is to be in heaven."

About an hour before her death, a friend said, "Underneath are the everlasting arms." She said, "Yes, yes!" She continued speaking until the last, but so low that she could not be understood, then peacefully passed away.

She was a great lover of the SOWER, and used to call it "the dear little SOWER," and would often say, after reading it, "That is worth more than thousands of pounds." Much more might be said of her, but I forbear.

M. COVER.

THE ANXIOUS INQUIRER'S PAGE.

A MESSAGE OF MERCY.

"Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him: for they shall eat the fruit of their doings."—ISAIAH iii. 10.

It is a great mercy to have an interest in the Word of God. Many a true Christian and many a humble seeker have an interest in it who have no present enjoyment of it. Our standing in Christ, and the state of our feelings, are two different things. All who correspond to the character described have an interest in the promises, although that interest is only realized when the promises are applied by the Holy Spirit, and received by precious faith.

The Lord's own message of mercy to the "righteous" is, that he shall enjoy the blessedness of finding that all will be well. This assurance confirms his present interest in a promise of future comfort.

May the Lord guide the pen of the writer and the heart of the reader, whilst an attempt is made to describe, first, the character of the "righteous"; secondly, his promised well-being; thirdly, the explanation given of the fulfilment of the promise—it is fulfilled when they "eat the fruit of their doings."

I. *The character of the "righteous."*—The simplest meaning of this term is, that it signifies "those who are right." By nature all are wholly wrong. The righteous man is he who is made right by the imputation of the Saviour's righteousness. This is his standing, and, as the result of the act of God's infinite love accepting him in His Son before time, he is by the power of the eternal Spirit brought into a right state in time. It is this right state we seek to say a few words upon.

1. The righteous are rightly *called*. They are called by grace. Some of our readers find their greatest troubles arise from questioning their call, and may be ready to ask, "Is there any test by which a poor, trembling believer may be assured respecting his calling?" There is such a test. All who are called by grace find by experience that their spiritual life is sustained and maintained by grace alone, and hence are taught and brought to feel their dependence upon grace every day. Only the righteous soul can truly sing—

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

By grace such are enabled to continue seeking, hoping against

hope, waiting for a revelation of Christ to their souls. Through grace the smoking flax of desire is not quenched, but rather increased. Through grace the bruised reed of saving faith is not broken, but rather strengthened.

2. The righteous are rightly *taught*. They are taught by the Spirit of the living God the misery and guilt of sin, and the preciousness and value of a Saviour; and so they are brought by divine teaching to loathe and leave the former, and love and cleave to the latter.

Again, they are taught the truth of God's Word experimentally. It is worked out in their daily experience of God's dealings, both in grace and providence. They travel the path it describes, endure the sorrows it speaks of, are sometimes comforted by its promises, and desire to be guided by its precepts. Those must be right who have a Bible religion.

3. The righteous are rightly *led*. They are led by the Angel of the New Covenant, whose ministry and mission is so sweetly described in Exodus xxiii. 20. Jesus, the "glorious Leader" of the Church, guides her by the way He Himself journeyed, namely, the path of sorrow and the path of prayer.

Let us see if we are truly following Him in this narrow way. It is an evident truth that all sorrow arises from one source, namely, *sin*. The sin of His people overwhelmed His heart with grief. Our sin, in its guilt and consequence, was the alone cause of the Redeemer's sorrow (Isa. liii. 3, 4). If we have never grieved for our sin, we are in no sense partakers of Christ's sufferings. But all the righteous are, more or less, led to mourn for sin, because it pierced Him.

Again, some part of Christ's sufferings arose from the hidings of His Father's face. Every true Christian knows something of the same woe.

Then, the way Jesus went was emphatically the path of prayer, and in His steps His children are led along. Feeling their need of help and mercy, they cry for the supply of their need continually, even if it be only as when Jesus "groaned in the spirit, and was troubled."

4. The righteous are rightly *comforted*. Mr. HART expresses the desire of every living soul in the fervent prayer—

"Let no false comfort lift us up
To confidence that's vain."

It is possible for a real Christian to be so deceived by self and Satan as to take comfort wrongfully—i.e., from a wrong source. Our comforts must be brought to the "balances of the sanctuary," and if they are not according to the revealed will of God, they are but vanity. It is a sure rule that true comfort can never be

otherwise than according to God's most holy Word. If it is not grounded and based upon that, it will prove to be false, and, like base coin, of light weight. I do not mean to assert that every consolation a Christian enjoys must come by the application of the letter of the Scripture, but that it will be according to the spirit and power of that faithful witness which reveals the mind and will of God.

The "righteous," then, are those who are rightly called, rightly taught, rightly led, and finally, rightly comforted. Now we must describe—

II. *The promised well-being of the righteous*: "It shall be well with him."—It is obvious that this promise relates to the future, which, after all, is what is most needed; because, so far as the *past* is concerned, the Christian is ready to admit all has been well, even if he is not always able to adore the wisdom and grace which, in his right mind, he cannot but acknowledge have marked every step of the way the Lord has led him hitherto. Then (for the *present*) one can seldom find a child of God really willing to change places with another, which goes to prove that, on the whole, each one considers it better with him than anybody else he is acquainted with. But oh, how many fears about the *future* rise in the heart most thankful for the past and present! The fact that the Lord's own word, His own faithful promise, in our text secures and assures the *future* well-being of the righteous richly and sweetly proclaims His great graciousness, love, and mercy.

We will enter upon a consideration of the application and fulfilment of the promise in respect to those trials which may await the righteous in their future path.

1. "It shall be well" with them when *most sorely tempted* by Satan. This is one of the times and cases when it seems to be most ill with them. But there is a profit gained in temptation—an advantage which accrues to every tempted child of grace. In respect to this "it shall be well," because temptation is Satan's sieve, where, "sifted as wheat," the righteous get self-will, self-righteousness, self-satisfaction, self-conceit, and self-pity, well shaken out of them, after these evils have been well shaken up and manifested. In temptation, then, the saint learns his own weakness and Satan's power, the end being that he grows in distrust of self, and looks to the Strong for strength.

If one should ask *why* temptation is overruled for good, and ends in victory, the answer is, Because all tempted sons have an interest in the Saviour's words to one of old, namely, "I have prayed for thee." The believer's security in temptation is the intercession of Jesus.

(To be continued.)

GOSPEL LIBERTY.

(ISAIAH xii. 1, 2.)

WHEN first sweet mercy's gentle beam
 Shone in upon my mind,
 How altered did all Nature seem !
 What raptures did I find !

The lowering gloom which veiled the skies
 Then vanished from my sight,
 And all that met my ravished eyes
 Was beautiful and bright.

I praise Thee, Lord, and I adore
 Thy grace divinely free ;
 Thou wilt be wroth with me no more,
 But bless and solace me.

My sins Thy vengeance did provoke ;
 I well deserved to bleed ;
 But Thine own Son sustained the stroke,
 And thus my soul is freed.

Salvation's come to me at length ;
 I'll trust, and will not fear ;
 The Lord Jehovah is my strength,
 My Saviour ever near.

Great were my fears, and more my guilt,
 And hell my rightful doom ;
 But Jesus His own blood has spilt
 In the vile sinner's room.

Justice can ask no higher price,
 Nor more could mercy give ;
 Sinners could need no more than this,
 Nor creatures more receive.

Satan can have no stronger Foe,
 Nor I a firmer Friend ;
 My praise shall like His mercy flow,
 And never know an end.

R.

It is a great blessing to have the world taken out of our heart and put under our feet.

LATIMER says, "Faith is a noble duchess. She hath ever her gentleman usher going before her—'the confessing of sins.' She hath a train after her—the fruit of good works and walking in the commandments of God. So, if you will try faith, remember this rule. Consider whether the train be waiting upon her.

APPLES OF GOLD IN BASKETS OF SILVER.

A BIBLE STUDY.

"Is not the Lord gone out before thee?"—JUDGES iv. 14.

It is now towards evening. The heat of the day is subsiding, as the sun droops in the west. A slight breeze is felt. It stirs the leaves of the palm trees. The shepherds are leading their flocks forth to feed, from the shade where they have been resting through the middle hours of the day. Carmel and Tabor stand out clearly, and cast a shade around, as the sun sinks lower and lower in the west, when lo! a man is seen hastening away, straining every power, casting aside every weight. Sword and shield are left; chariot and horse are useless here. Across the plain, through the valley, up the hill. Tabor and Carmel, Hazor and Ramah, are passed. Kedesh is at hand, and the plain of Zaanaim is spread out before him. Wearied with running, and longing for rest, he espies a tent pitched by the wayside. A woman comes out to meet him. "Turn in, my lord, unto me; fear not." "Give me, I pray thee, a little water to drink, for I am thirsty"; and she opened a bottle of milk, and gave him drink, and covered him with a mantle. Here he may rest for a season, for though there is war in the land, yet is there peace between the master of the tent and the guest. Let us leave him sleeping, and inquire who he is? Where has he been? What has he done? And why this hot haste to escape? How is it this woman comes to invite him into her apartment of the tent? And where is the husband gone?

We must first turn to the first verse of the fourth chapter of the Book of Judges, and read the sorrowful, yet familiar, expression so often contained in that Book—"And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord." Joshua had been dead a long time. Othniel had delivered them from the King of Mesopotamia. Ehud had delivered them from Moab. The land had rested four-score years, and now, forgetting past mercies and favours, they "did evil again." "And the Lord sold them into the hand of Jabin, King of Canaan," who for twenty years "mightily oppressed the children of Israel." A mighty king was Jabin, and a mighty captain he placed over his host—nine hundred chariots of iron—and a great multitude obeyed the commands of Sisera. Tall of stature, comely in person, great in strength, the pride of his mother, he dwelt in Harosheth of the Gentiles, northward of the waters of Merom. His master dwelt in Hazor, nearer the possession of the Israelites, but easy of communication with the captain of his army. His people had spread southward to the river Kishon, and his name was a terror in all the tents of the land. Children were hushed, highways

were forsaken, travellers walked in solitary paths, at the name of this powerful king and his captain, Sisera. But the Lord had set a bound, a mark, a time, that could not be passed over by these enemies of His people. A look of favour from Him, a breath of His Spirit, the feeling of their helpless state and their oppressions, cause a crying unto the Lord. Will He hear and deliver again, or has He cast them off for ever? Will He be favourable, if they seek Him this once, and deliver them from the power of Sisera? Who is their director at this critical time? for, with such an enemy in their gates, there is need of a mighty man to combat in the Lord's cause, and to lead out the people to war. We find the Lord's mind is different in this matter. He can save either by many or few. He chooseth such means and such time for the deliverance of His people as shall bring most honour to His own arm and glory to His own name; so we read, "Deborah, a prophetess, judged Israel at this time." Was it in state, in the walled cities, she held her judgment seat? or in the south, distant from the land of the oppressor? No; verily in the midst of the district affected most by the power of the enemy. She dwelt under a palm tree in Mcunt Ephraim, and thither the tribes went up for judgment.

We may pause for a moment here, and examine the different objects presented to us in our view in this portion of the Word of God, and find four points worthy of special notice—first, there are the people that have sinned against God; secondly, the oppressor to chastise them, and cause them to seek help from the Lord; thirdly, the means used; and fourthly, the deliverance.

In looking at this people, we find something similar to our own state by nature. Sold under sin, and mightily oppressed, the people of the Lord for years serve a hard master; and, though surrounded by every evil power, and in heart departing from Him, and in open rebellion against His laws, worshipping idols, and following the fashion of the world, yet "preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." Thus in Egypt we find, the more the people were oppressed, the more they grew, the oppressors furious, and laying plans to consume them. So, in the case of the Israelites, under the oppression of Jabin and Sisera, it caused the people to leave their idols, which they had vainly served for a season; and as Israel cried for help, when the time of the promise drew near in Egypt, so now these cry unto the Lord for deliverance from the power that has dominion. "He brought down their hearts with labour; they fell down, and there was none to help. Then they cried unto the Lord." The Lord never leaves His people without a way of approach to His throne, or without means whereby His banished ones may return. Thus, even now,

although Israel was in a backsliding, sinful condition, in affliction, and oppressed by the enemy, there was still a means whereby He could hear their cause pleaded, and send messages of counsel and encouragement for their deliverance.

Under the yoke of Jabin, King of Canaan, they were "minished and brought low," and the hearts of the men of war grew faint. But the word of the Lord came to Deborah, and she sent to Barak, son of Abinoam, and called him out of Kedesh-naphtali. "Hath not the Lord God of Israel commanded?" Here we find the authority of Barak to go out, not blindly, but manifestly chosen by the Lord for this important mission. Where will he go to perform the service? "Toward Mount Tabor." Who are to keep him company, and how many? "Take with thee ten thousand men of Naphtali and Zebulun." But will the Canaanites, under Jabin and Sisera, come down to battle? And if so, can we overcome? "I will draw unto thee to the river Kishon Sisera, with his chariots and multitude; and I will deliver him into thine hand." Faint of heart still, Barak, the man chosen, was slow to go out to battle. The fame of Sisera had filled the hearts of the people with dread, and now he is suing for the company of Deborah—"If thou wilt go with me, then I will go."

Then we find a fresh character introduced into the plan of deliverance, and this to humble the heart of Barak, and to cause him to honour the Lord. And yet he must do his part—to go up to Tabor and collect the people, meet the enemy, overcome, and take the spoil. But the journey was not to be for his honour, "for the Lord shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman." Here are the means of deliverance to be used, the number of the army, the leader of the host, the issue certain, but still the battle to fight.

And so it is now, in our own case, day by day, and our Lord still directing and appointing the means for delivering His people from the hand of Satan, gradually accomplishing His divine purpose of mercy to poor sinners; sending forth His servants with the Gospel trumpet, to call the people near; delivering from darkness, breaking the oppressor's yoke, and setting His chosen people free, and all to bring glory to Himself for ever and ever.

We may add one word here touching the doctrine of God's electing grace, and say, this blessed doctrine, known in truth by a poor sinner, will be such a God-exalting matter in his heart and soul that he will not sit down, as some say, with folded hands, and say, "What is to be will be," but, with holy Paul or David, will seek to glorify God in serving Him, and call upon those that fear God to draw near, while he declares what God has done for his soul. Also, we do most firmly believe and advance that every heaven-born soul will live and walk humbly before God, and grieve if he brings any reproach upon His holy name, through a loose

walk or idle word. "Salvation is of the Lord," and yet He condescends to use feeble man as the means of making this known to His chosen.

So Barak "went up with ten thousand men at his feet, and Deborah went up with him. And they showed Sisera that Barak was gone up to Mount Tabor." The proclamation of war ran through the Canaanites' land. Chariots and multitudes were quickly gathered together, all the host of Jabin obeying Sisera as one man, to bring again into subjection the revolted people of Israel. The massive chariots rolled through the streets of the cities. There was war in the gates. The mother of Sisera, with her wise ladies, may have watched their departure to battle, anticipating their triumph and speedy return, with "every man a damsel or two; to Sisera, a prey of divers colours"; and every chariot heaped with spoil; and the bonds of oppression fastened more surely than before. Like a flood the armies rolled down the plains toward the rising of Tabor, and the heart of Barak beat fast as he surveyed the great host. Will he prevail and overcome, or will he flee before the enemy? Then came the word of encouragement, sorely needed—"Up, for this is the day in which the Lord hath delivered Sisera into thine hand. Is not the Lord gone out before thee?" What a mercy that such a word was sent at such a time, and what a power it gave to nerve the arm for battle!

And what a mercy even now it is to have such a word from the Lord in our many conflicts with our greater enemy, Satan, and all his hosts! It may be sent to a minister, discouraged and cast down at the little success of his testimony, no one believing his report; every heart fast closed up against the Word; no one quickened; congregation getting thinner; coldness and death seeming to prevail; like the disciples, toiling, and yet taking nothing; casting forth the net in the darkness, in good report and evil report, till, like Jeremiah, they make a resolution not to speak any more in His name; and then comes the word, "Cast forth thy net on the other side. The Lord is gone out before thee." Goliath drew near to David. But the Lord was gone forth; the giant falls. Pharaoh pursues Israel, and when closing up with the defenceless people, destitute of spear or sword, the Lord intervenes, and lightens the way of Israel, and makes darkness to Egypt, and leads them on to destruction; but going before His people, dividing the water before them, to make Himself an everlasting name (Isa. lxiii.).

It may come as a word to encourage teachers in a Sabbath School, when wearied with their efforts, and sorely tried through the perverseness of the children; cast down, yet not despairing; finding their strength almost gone, and yet no signs of the Lord's blessing; and then a whisper may be sent to encourage—"Yet

once more, for who can tell? The battle is the Lord's. Their hearts are in His hand. The work is His. Grace cannot fail, and if He bless, all must be right."

It may come sweetly to the visitors of the sick, who feel the solemnity of the work and their own unfitness. And is it not a great matter to visit the dying, and take faithful words, and to hold out the word of promise to the tried, the faithful promise of God to the fearful soul, and the word of warning to the wicked? Unbelief may hinder—something may come and check your desire for their good—but, when a word comes from the Lord, "'Go in this thy might.' Go in the name and fear of God," who can tell but God may be gracious, and smile upon thee, and make the visit a blessing, for "is not the Lord gone out before thee?"

"So Barak went down from Mount Tabor," and the battle was joined. But the Lord was there, and vain was the rush of the chariots; vain the surging multitude against the chosen few. The arm of Omnipotence held back the raging hosts, "and the Lord discomfited Sisera and all his host." Chariots are forced into the brook, and swept with their occupants away. Sisera fled away on his feet, his army broken up and smitten down, fleeing hither and thither, pursued by Barak, and falling upon the sword, until there was not a man left. Reason and unbelief look to numbers; faith, better instructed, looks to God. "They that be with us are more than they that be with them." "If it had not been the Lord that was on our side, when men rose up against us, they had swallowed us up quick." But the Lord had gone out before, and broken the power of the enemy.

But where is the captain of the host—the leader of the enemy? Every chariot and horse and rider destroyed but he; and where is he fled? We have seen him before, as he fled homeward from the battle, straining every nerve to reach Harosheth in safety, but in vain. This is the day of his death, but he knoweth it not. He is fleeing for safety, and trusting to a league of peace with Heber the Kenite. Already the victorious Barak is on his path to slay him. Already Sisera has caught a glimpse of his pursuer, and he turns aside to the tent for shelter. Here the interest centres, for the Lord's word must be fulfilled, whatever may befall the people. A woman comes out with well-feigned hospitality, and the man follows at her bidding into the tent. Heber the Kenite is away in the field with his flocks, or haply he may have gone down to join Sisera in the battle with his followers, and be lying in the river Kishon, numbered with the slain. Be this as it may, the woman brings him into her tent (a portion set apart for her use)—an unusual occurrence, and altogether improper in the East—and he knows not that it is for

his life. Wearied with fighting and fleeing, he laid down, and she covered him with a mantle, and, after charging her to conceal his presence in the tent from his pursuer, he fell asleep. "She put her hand to the nail, and her right hand to the workman's hammer," and went softly, and smote him through the temple with the nail, and fastened him to the ground. "So he died."

No man assisted the woman in this daring act; no maidens waited upon her to help; no weapons of war were taken up, only the pin of the tent and the mallet, both of wood; but the Lord had gone before, and given directions for the blow, and had sold the mighty Sisera into the hand of a woman. Barak arrives in pursuit, and again Jael goes out, and, knowing whom he sought, and that the purpose concerning him was accomplished, brings him in. "And, behold, Sisera lay dead, and the nail was in his temples." "So let all Thine enemies perish, O Lord." "And the land had rest forty years." J. D.

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.

"Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished."—
PROVERBS xi. 21.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS,—What a solemn and yet instructive Book is the Book of Proverbs, both morally and spiritually considered; and how plainly the line of demarcation is drawn between the righteous and the wicked!

We have often thought it would be well for us if it were more read in public and private. It is a safe guide for daily life, and when we have been enabled to study it prayerfully, and act according to its precepts, we have found it most profitable. May God help us to fall under reproof—to walk consistently before all. May He instruct those who teach the young, and may our young friends be led to peruse this blessed Book, for our earnest desire for them is, that they may learn therefrom to be obedient to their parents and teachers, for obedience is the best proof of love; and may we who are godly parents train up our children in morality and the fear of the Lord.

But to return to the portion selected. It is a most solemn declaration, and has often occupied our thoughts. We believe a person may have a clear knowledge of the doctrines of grace, and be able to speak of them to God's saints; and if their conduct is outwardly right, the children of God may, for a time, be somewhat pleased with their company. They may be able to explain God's Word with some ability—may join a Church, speak of their doubts and fears, and even weep before God's children—and yet be unable to give any account of their regeneration by the Holy Ghost.

Here is the hypocrite joining hand in hand with the saint. But are there no evidences by which such characters may be discerned? and is there not a parting place? Yes. One evidence is, their hatred of those whose religion separates them from the world, and who earnestly contend for a religion that separates, not merely from the outwardly worldly, but from those who practise the more secret sins of covetousness, money-grasping, gossiping, slander, and such like abominations. Although they may talk very smoothly about love, mercy, and general matters, if they are reproved or dealt faithfully with concerning these secret things, there is a parting place.

Another mark against them is, their rejection of a separating ministry, for though they join hand in hand with real believers, and seem to approve of what they hear, their consciences are seared as with a hot iron. This is proved not only by observation, but from the Word of God. Look at David and Ahithophel. It is said, they "took sweet counsel together, and walked to the house of God in company." Judas also obtained part of the ministry with the other disciples, and Demas was walking hand in hand with the saints of God when he sent his love to them by Paul; but was there not a solemn parting place with these? How, at times, these things have tried us to the quick, and brought us to God's feet! "The wicked shall not be unpunished," so that, however they may deceive, and however bright they may appear to us, they are in God's sight the wicked; and His Word declares that, "the wicked shall be turned into hell," as well as the outwardly profane, "the nations that forget God." Here is a solemn parting place.

On a death-bed our religion will be put to the test. What proof have we of being among the righteous? Depend upon it, if we have been brought to cry sincerely, and plead with God for mercy, we are not hypocrites; and if we have, though feebly, felt the sweet love of God, and a hope that He will have mercy upon us, we are blessed persons. And, as such, we shall want a right religion, and shall desire God to search us through, though the flesh will not like the process; and if we are left to fall in any degree, and He brings us back with weeping, how precious will His love appear! Oh, may the Lord lead us to examine ourselves, and assure us that, "though hand join in hand, and the wicked be punished," we shall "stand without blame before Him in love."

Yours in love,

Hilpertou.

ARTHUR WATTS.

WE should desire not so much to see the end of our affliction as to see the end of God by the affliction (James v. 11).—*Wakeling.*

The Sower, September, 1886.



THE MASSACRE OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW.

THE MASSACRE OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW.

FRANCE, like other countries in Europe, had its Reformers, perhaps one of the most celebrated of whom was William Farel.

While studying at the University of Paris, he read the Scriptures, which, together with the teaching of a godly professor named Le Fevre, were the means of leading him to a knowledge of the truth.

As Farel and his friends were persecuted in Paris, they retired to Meaux, as the Bishop there favoured the Reformers, and from his pulpit they were enabled to sound forth the Gospel. Le Fevre also had the four Gospels translated and printed in French, which were to be found in almost every house and workshop in Meaux.

The Catholic clergy, finding their flocks rapidly deserting them, appealed to the authorities, which resulted in the Bishop being heavily fined, and his friends having to flee for their lives.

Amongst those that received the Gospel at Meaux was a woolcomber, named Le Clerc, who preached the truth very acceptably to his fellow-townsmen ; but he was quickly branded as a heretic, and fled to Metz. At a short distance from this town there was a small Romanist chapel, filled with images, at the sight of which Le Clerc felt his spirit stirred within him, and, having effected an entrance to the place, he smashed them to pieces. The next day was a grand Romish festival, and, when the procession reached the place, and saw what had been done, they vowed vengeance on the transgressor.

Suspicion having fallen on Le Clerc, he was seized and quickly condemned to suffer. First, his right hand was cut off, and then his flesh was torn from his body with hot pincers ; and lastly, he was roasted over a slow fire. As long as he could speak, this brave martyr was heard saying, "Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands."

About this time Farel also narrowly escaped losing his life, for, happening to meet a Romish procession, he seized one of their images and threw it into the river, saying, "Poor idolaters, will you never put away your idols?" The Romanists, in their anxiety to save their god from drowning, gave Farel an opportunity to escape, which he availed himself of, and at once took refuge in Switzerland.

The ranks of the Reformers were now rapidly swelling, amongst whom were found men of rank and learning, prosperous merchants and honest artizans, so that the Huguenots eventually became a considerable power in the land. Why they were called Huguenots is not very clear. Probably it was a nickname. At first they were called "Gospellers," and then "Religionnaires,"

or men of the religion, and lastly, "Huguenots," which probably designated them as persons who walk the streets of a night ; or some think the name signifies "The Confederates," but no less than fifteen definitions are given from which the name may have arisen.

In 1534, the Huguenots in Paris sent to ask Farel if they should still meet privately, or be more public in their profession. Having consulted with his friends, Farel drew up some "Truthful Articles," setting forth the evils of Popery. These he had printed, and ordered to be put up in the principal towns in France. On a certain night men went round the cities and posted the bills. Next day there was great consternation, especially in Paris. One of the bills was taken to the King, who offered a reward for the capture of the offender.

The man who summoned the meetings of the Huguenots having been secured, he was threatened with death unless he revealed the names of all he knew. To save his life he told who they were, many of whom were apprehended and burnt. Amongst them was a poor paralytic, who had to be carried to the stake. Soon after this event, a young man had to suffer martyrdom for speaking against images. He was told to put out his tongue, which the executioner pulled further out with pincers, and, having cut it out, he slapped the martyr with it in the face, and then threw it amongst the crowd, who quickly threw it back again at the poor sufferer ; yet in this maimed condition he went willingly to the stake.

But these events were but the rumblings before the storm, the skirmishes before the battle. It was a sad day for France when their King, Henry II., married that infamous Italian woman, Catherine de Medici. Great pomp characterized the wedding, but the festivities could not be completed without the burning of four Lutherans, which only spoke too plainly of the sufferings that were to follow.

Let us give one illustration. A meeting of Huguenots was attacked, when some were killed, and others apprehended. Amongst the captives was a widow named Philippa, who was condemned to suffer with two of the elders. She had to stand by while their tongues were cut out, and when ordered to do the same, she did so willingly. "You don't fear, then ?" said the executioner. She replied, "If I don't fear for my body, why should I fear for my tongue ?" The knife flashed, and her tongue lay at her feet. She was then placed in a cart with her bleeding companions, and taken to the place of execution. It is said that her sufferings were witnessed by the King himself. After being compelled to gaze upon the agonizing death of her friends, she was then seized, and her feet held in the flames until they were

burnt to the bone ; then she was held head downwards until her scalp was burnt and her eyes scorched out, after which they mercifully strangled her ; and then another martyr had joined that company which John saw under the altar, who had been slain for the Word of God and for the testimony that they held (Rev. vi. 9).

Henry II. did not have a long reign, his death being caused by an accident he met with in a tournament. His son, Francis II., succeeded him at the age of sixteen. He only reigned the short period of sixteen months, being, it is supposed, poisoned by his mother. He left a young widow, who afterwards became celebrated as Mary Queen of Scots. It was during his short reign that the Huguenots first took up arms in their own defence, and commenced a struggle that lasted for fourteen years.

Charles IX. succeeded his brother at the age of nine years, the Queen Mother acting as Regent during his minority.

One of the most powerful men in France at this time was the Duke of Guise, a rabid Catholic, and guilty of great cruelty against the Huguenots. On one occasion he surrounded an assembly of Huguenots, and for an hour allowed his troops to stab, hack, and hew the defenceless people. Sixty of them were killed, and two hundred wounded.

The Catholics were delighted when they heard what the Duke had done, and, when he entered Paris after the massacre, he was received with great rejoicings. Others were not slow to follow his example, and, as numerous massacres occurred, the Huguenots flocked for safety to the standard of the King of Navarre, Prince Condé, and Admiral Coligny, and determined to fight for their lives. Mutual reprisals took place, and many of the images and churches of the Catholics were destroyed ; but it is said that, "if the Protestants destroyed statues of stone, the Duke of Guise destroyed living men." The Duke was shortly after this assassinated by a man who had had several of his relations destroyed by his cruelty.

The Huguenots were often defeated in battle, but as often rallied, till at length their army threatened Paris. This alarmed the Queen Mother, who made a treaty with them, and gave them several towns to possess as their own, as guarantees of good faith. For two years there was peace, but it was a treacherous lull before the hurricane.

The Huguenots would have thought so, had they been present at an interview that took place between the Queen and the Duke of Alva, in 1564. The Duke offered Catherine the assistance of the Spanish army to extirpate heresy, as he had already attempted to do in Flanders. The Queen told him that the Huguenots were powerful. "Then," said the Duke, "strike at the leaders,

for one salmon is worth a thousand frogs." The Queen assured him that she only waited her time ; therefore, during the two years' peace, she was carefully maturing her plans, which, alas ! were only too successful.

In 1572, the plot was ripe for execution. Henry of Navarre was offered the King's sister in marriage, which the other Huguenot leaders urged him to accept, hoping by this means to prevent further strife. The marriage took place in Paris on the 18th of August, all the principal Huguenot officers being present on the occasion.

The day after the marriage, while the festivities were being continued, a secret council was held at the Louvre, when it was determined to slaughter all the Huguenots at once.

On August 22nd, Coligny attended a council at the Louvre, when the King's assassin was ordered to murder him. As Coligny was riding home in a carriage, reading a paper, the assassin fired and wounded him in the arm. For this deed he was rewarded with two thousand crowns, and otherwise honoured. Of course, the King professed great horror of the deed.

On the 23rd, Catherine again assembled the conspirators, who went in to the King and told him that the Huguenots were plotting his death, in which they would surely succeed unless he anticipated them. Maddened by these representations, the King said, "Kill all ! Let none escape to reproach me." Having obtained the King's consent, they proceeded to carry out the plans already arranged.

Just after midnight, on the 24th of August, the Queen and her two sons went on to a balcony at the Louvre, there to await the coming massacre. At two o'clock, the great bell at one of the churches rang out over the sleeping city. It was the appointed signal. Almost immediately, a pistol shot fell on the ears of the royal listeners, and they knew that the horrible carnage had begun. Soldiers, who had been kept in readiness, rushed out into the darkness, shouting, "For God and the King !" all of them wearing a white sash on their arm, and a cross in their hats, that they might distinguish one another in the darkness of the night.

The young Duke of Guise hastened to Coligny's lodgings, where his soldiers burst in the door, and, rushing to an upper chamber, stabbed the wounded admiral to death, and flung his body out of the window into the court below. "I know it is he," said the Duke, as he kicked the body with his foot. "Courage ; we have begun well ; now for the rest."

Shots could be heard in every quarter. Even the King, it is said, fired upon his flying subjects from a window of the Louvre. Chains had been drawn across the streets to prevent their escape.

Neither age, sex, nor condition were spared, and very few escaped.

Palissy the Potter escaped, as there was not another Palissy who, by his art, could decorate the Queen's gardens and palaces. Ambrose Paré, a celebrated Huguenot physician, having 'once saved the King's life, was hid by that monarch in a private room. The retinue of the King of Navarre was murdered in the palace, and he was then summoned, with his brother, Prince Condé, before the King, who fiercely demanded of them which they would have—"the Mass, the Bastile, or death"? To save their lives, they professed the Romish faith.

This fearful carnage, known to history as "The Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day," lasted three days in Paris, but in the provinces it was continued for six weeks, and from sixty thousand to one hundred thousand persons were killed.

Catherine wrote in triumph to the Duke of Alva, and when that monster, Philip II., heard the news, it is said that he laughed for the first time in his life.

Rome went into a perfect delirium of joy. Bells were rung, cannons were fired, the Pope and his cardinals went in procession from church to church to return thanks. Pictures were ordered to be painted, to immortalize the deed, and a medal was also struck, one of which can now be seen in the British Museum, having the Pope on one side and an angel slaying people on the other.

The poor French King only survived two years of a wretched existence after this event. The scenes of St. Bartholomew's Day haunted him, so that he was wretched, restless, haggard, and miserable. Asleep or awake, the murdered Huguenots seemed ever present, with their ghastly faces and their bodies weltering in blood, reproaching him with the deed. He died a fearful death in tortures impossible to describe, his blood forcing itself through the pores of his skin, yet attended to the last by a Huguenot doctor and nurse.

The Huguenots that escaped fled to their guarantee towns, especially to the principal and strongest of them, which was the fortress of La Rochelle. This town was invested by the royal army, and, after battering the walls for five weeks, they made several assaults, but each time the valiant Huguenots, shouting their battle song, "Let God arise, and scatter His enemies!" hurled them back. The last assault was fearful. The soldiers had all their guns shotted, and fired at one place in the wall, by which means they effected a breach; but the defenders at once crowded into it, and fought for their dear life and liberty. The women also mounted the walls, and poured down boiling tar, hot iron and showers of stone upon the attacking forces, which speedily

had to retreat. The town was saved, for the royal army, having lost twenty thousand men, were obliged to raise the siege.

Henry III. succeeded his brother Charles, and, as the King of Navarre had succeeded once more in raising an army, it was deemed advisable to make peace with the Huguenots. But this did not please the Catholics, who formed a "Holy League," with the Duke of Guise at their head ; for, as Henry of Navarre was the next heir to the throne, the Romanists were determined, when the time came, to make the Duke of Guise their king, as they said, " We will not have Protestant Henry of Navarre, but Catholic Henry of Guise."

After the wars of the League had lasted for several years, the Duke of Guise was asked to visit the King. As he entered the palace, the gates were barred behind him. He went into a room, and stood by the fire till he was sent for by the King ; but, as he drew back the tapestry which covered the door, he was met by forty-five gentlemen with daggers, and at once fell to the ground pierced with forty wounds. The King presently came in and kicked the dead body of his enemy, just as the Duke of Guise before had kicked the body of Coligny.

The Queen Mother died twelve days after this event, and eight months after, Henry himself was assassinated. Such was the end of the Guises, of Catherine, and her sons. They all bore upon them the indelible brand of St. Bartholomew.

Truly gratitude should fill our hearts that we are favoured to live in the days of religious liberty, and the sufferings endured by the Lord's children in days gone by should lead us to estimate at its true value that faith which enabled them to endure such a great fight of affliction.

Respecting such persecutors, we would say, Pity the poor Papists ; pray for their welfare ; use every means to bring before them, both by word and precept, the knowledge of God in the Gospel of Jesus Christ ; but, at the same time, let the sea of blood, the tortures of the Inquisition, and the flaming fire, through which the many thousands of martyrs have waded, lead us to abominate, to detest, and to resist, even unto blood, that Popish system which has been the cause of such untold misery, and the fetters of which designing men are now trying once again to rivet upon us.

" O Lord our God arise,
Scatter our enemies,
And make them fall !
Confound their politics ;
Frustrate their knavish tricks ;
On Thee our hearts we fix ;
God save us all ! "

EBENEZER.

"A BRUISED REED SHALL HE NOT BREAK."

(ISAIAH xlii. 3.)

AN ! "bruised reed," surrounded by the power
Of Christ thy Friend, and guarded every hour,
Firm to His word, He never will forsake ;
The Father says that reed He'll never break.

This tells His grace, His tenderness, and love ;
And all these reeds His faithfulness shall prove ;
He bids thee rest contented as a reed,
For Christ stands by thee in thy time of need.

Bruised is thy soul beneath the lion's paw,
And prostrate thou, crushed by a threatening law ;
But Jesus' hand supports the drooping stem ;
He comes to save thee—none shall thee condemn.

"He shall not break"—ah ! what does this imply ?
None other shall—He will not let thee die ;
Bruised by the plaguing heart's indwelling sin,
His blood will heal the smarting bruise within.

These bruising teach our weakness and our woe ;
His promise tells us where for help to go ;
How oft temptation's wind this reed will shake !
Still, though 'tis trampled on, 'twill never break.

He says He will not, and none other may ;
Both sin and devils own His sovereign sway ;
How safe, poor reed, though plagued and chastened too !
With such a Friend, what can the lions do ?

Pressed sore and bruised till flickering life would flee,
But kept by Him whose soul was bruised for thee ;
His wounds thy healing, and His death thy life,
His bursting tomb gave victory to the strife.

How often bruised beneath a daily cross ;
Opposing friends and cruel arrows worse ;
Until the load becomes too great for thee,
Then Jesus smiles, and sets the burdened free.

Sometimes we're bruised 'neath His correcting rod
To know more of ourselves and of our God ;
The beauty of our King in sorrow's day ;
Thus our own beauty fades and dies away.

Although thy doubts and fears distress thee sore,
And bruise thy little faith, they'll do no more ;
'Tis bruised faith to Christ will trembling cling,
As timid birds that use their spreading wing.

Thy thoughts of death and judgment's awful day
Will sweep thy strength and courage oft away ;
And sad, sad fear will fill thy soul with pain ;
It seems the reed will ne'er hold up again.

When reeds are bruised the sap receives the blow ;
Thus Jesus takes our sorrows and our woe ;
We sink, we faint, we feel we're left alone ;
But power and love are in our weakness shown.

A little dew, a little oil and wine,
Some gentle rays from Christ on thee to shine,
Behold the sap will raise the weakling up ;
God's "wills" and "shalls" quite fill salvation's cup.

Jesus says, "Fear not ; judgments all are past ;
I'm Alpha, I'm Omega, First and Last ;
Thy pains and bruises end with mortal breath ;
Fear not—I hold the keys of hell and death."

Oh, mystery of mercy, here I trace
The eternal wonders of eternal grace !
Our hope rests here—all blessings freely given ;
Poor worms and bruised reeds get safe to heaven.

Chelsea.

A. B.

TRUTH MUST PREVAIL.

To be silenced is not always to have the worst of an argument. When Hananiah, in the name of Jehovah, by eloquent speech and no less eloquent symbol, demonstrated that Jeremiah's prophecies were all wrong, we read that the Prophet Jeremiah quietly "went his way," leaving his opponent to exult as a victor among the priests and the people who thronged the temple. A man who knew that he was on the Lord's side, and that he had spoken the truth of the Lord, could afford to do that. The bitter sequel showed whether Hananiah or Jeremiah was right.

There are occasions when it is the part of a wise man to follow this precedent of Jeremiah. When one is in the midst of scoffers, who have demonstrated to their satisfaction that there is no God, that the Bible is a fiction, and that immortality is a dream, it is sometimes better, having once delivered one's testimony, quietly to go one's way, rather than to spend precious time in fruitless parleying. What does it matter if the enemies of God's truth enjoy an occasional cheap triumph ? The truth itself is sure, beyond the reach of arguments, however brilliant ; of sneers, however cutting ; of gibes, however witty. Knowing that, the Christian can afford to go upon his way, even though, for a time, it seems as if he were silenced, and to wait quietly for the time which will justify all truth and put to shame all falsehood.

A REMARKABLE DEATH.

JAMES FABER, a name famous in France among the revivers of evangelical truth and sound learning, at a very advanced age, was flying from the violence of the persecution with which the professors of the Reformed religion were oppressed in France. He withdrew himself to the country of the Queen of Navarre, the wise protectress of the Protestant cause.

On a certain day, the Queen sent and invited him to dine with her, gathering a number of learned and godly men, with whose conversation she was wonderfully delighted, to be guests with him. While the rest of the company with a great deal of cheerfulness enjoyed their meal, Faber discovered many signs of a deep sorrow. The Queen asked the reason, to which he replied, "How can I, O Queen, be cheerful myself, or contribute to the cheerfulness of others, who am the most wicked creature upon the face of the earth?" "But what," said she, "my friend, can that wickedness be which you have committed, who from your youth up have appeared to lead a most holy life?" He answered, "I have lived to a hundred and one years pure from every stain of lewdness, and do not recollect anything particularly on account of which I should fear leaving life with a troubled conscience, except one, which, however, I hope may be forgiven." For a while he could not proceed, on account of the tears that gushed from his eyes; but at length recovering himself, he said, "How shall I appear before the high tribunal of God, who have sincerely instructed others in His holy Gospel, and rendered them more brave and constant in its profession than myself, so that not a few amongst them have courageously endured a thousand tortures, and even death itself; and yet I, their poor, dastardly minister, contrary to the will of the Lord, have by a shameful flight sought to lengthen out that life which will very soon of itself forsake a decrepit old man, to whom nothing more glorious could have happened than that I should have willingly sealed those divine truths, whose power I have so often experienced, with that little residue of blood that is now creeping in my veins?" To which the Queen, as she was very remarkable for her eloquence, and richly furnished with the knowledge of the sacred Scriptures, suggested several considerations which were adapted to mitigate his grief, upon which the venerable man, resuming his subject, thus spoke—"Well, then, I see nothing remains but that I should go home to God, having first, if it be agreeable to you, made my will; and I do not choose to defer it, for I perceive the summons from my God is come."

Presently fixing his eyes upon the Queen, "I appoint you," said he, "my heir. I bequeath all my books to Mr. Gerard, the

minister, and as to my clothes and all else I have in the world, I give them to the poor. The rest I commit to God"; upon which the Queen, smiling, said, "But in this disposal, what shall I get, my friend, by my appointment of being your heir?" "The care," he replied, "of distributing my effects among the poor." "I accept it," said she, "and protest that this heirship is more acceptable to me than if my brother had left me the whole kingdom of France.

The good man by this time signified that he should be glad to take a little sleep, and taking leave of the guests, he laid down upon a couch that was near at hand. The company apprehended him to be only asleep, but it proved that he slept in the Lord, without one struggle, sigh, or groan. The Queen often mentioned the remarkable death of this good man.

R. F. R.

THE UNCTION OF THE WORD.

I REMEMBER, when hearing dear Gunn, and Hawker, and others, in earlier days, to have sat under the Word with such meltings, such attractings, such overpowerings, such constrainings, such ardent longings, such believing aspirings, that I have forgotten all about the congregation and the pew, lost (if I may so speak) in a heavenly reverie upon eternal realities, enjoying the unctuous application of promises, the unctuous communications of love divine, the unctuous meltings, drawings, anointings, feastings, softenings of the soul, bringing it into communion with God. Why, I know some present have had seasons when they have sat under the Word as cold, as dry, as barren, as wandering, as careless, as if they had no grace at all, and almost wishing the sermon were over; and under the very next discourse, there has been such a melting unction, such a heavenly dew, such a sweet and powerful application of the Word, such a penetrating of the heart with all its powers by divine application from above, that they have wondered at the shortness of the sermon, and cried, "Lord, evermore give us this bread!"

Now, this is what I call unction. This is one of God's signs that go forth with the Word. When God brings the poor sinner to trust wholly in Christ, is it not a sign that He confirms the Word? When God regenerates sinners by His own Word, putting power into it from above, is it not a sign that He confirms the Word? And when God brings the poor soul, under the unctuous bedewing of the Spirit, to receive life in larger supplies and richer abundance from the Holy Spirit, is it not a sign which proves that the Lord is at work there, and that He is "confirming the Word with signs following"?—*Irons.*

NIGHT THOUGHTS BY A WATCHMAN.

HANGING HANDS—WHAT TO DO WITH THEM. GOD'S HELP IS
MANIFESTED IN MAN'S WEAKNESS.

"Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down." "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," saith "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever."—HEBREWS xii. 12; xiii. 5, 8.

THE Epistle to the Hebrews is a letter of exhortations. It was written in a time of much tribulation by one who had suffered much himself. The writer well knew the effect of trials on the human heart, and of the temptations of the devil upon the weakness of the flesh. He was also fully acquainted with the fears and the follies of the inexperienced. He speaks with the faithfulness and affection of a father in Israel. He would not alarm and reprove without a just cause, nor would he forbear to cry aloud in a time of danger. Such a leader and teacher is of great value in the time of distress and difficulty, not only to caution and counsel, but to direct and encourage. Knowledge, steadfastness, faithfulness, and sympathy are requisites in every guide, in order to his being followed with any degree of confidence. Wherever these qualities are found, they should be honoured. There are not too many in the possession of these heaven-born graces and gifts, and who are using them for the good of others, at all times, as was the manner of the Apostle Paul. His knowledge was great, his sympathy with the suffering boundless, his love to the saints quenchless. He suffered "all things for the elect's sake, that they might obtain the salvation in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory."

First, notice the painful propensity to negligence, through continued discouragements. Most of us are ready to halt at a very little difficulty. Our hands drop almost as soon as we take hold of the burden. We are anxious to be relieved of our post before half the watch is past. There is a mind to throw down the axe when we meet the first hard knot in the tree. That is a brave man who keeps his face to the storm when it long continues to rage. Where is there a real worker who has not often been ready to give it up because of felt inability or want of success? How needful the exhortation and the promise, "Be not weary in well-doing, for in due season ye shall reap, if ye faint not." There are many causes for the heart being faint and the head sick. Not only the fact of one's inability, but the all-prevailing and deep-rooted consciousness of sin, and self, and pride, ever and always being mixed with one's service, if service it may be called.

There is, however, one thing which abides, and is often the

ground of hope and encouragement in the darkest night of doubt and desertion, namely, all the Lord's sent servants and real worshippers know that they *really desire the glory of God* in what they try to do in His name. Their aim is right, their object is good. They can appeal to the Lord as to their desire to be right and to do right before Him. It is to these who are doing the right thing, and treading the narrow path, that the exhortation is addressed. It is only the true worshippers and the sent workers who meet with the opposition of the devil, and the world which lieth in wickedness under his power. And besides this, they each have a body of sin and death, with a heart full of all evil, to fight against. The flesh ever dislikes the way and the work, and therefore it must be crucified and put off. All these, united with the constant uprisings of fear and unbelief, may well make the hands which serve to hang down, and the knees which support to be feeble. Each true-hearted labourer will need often an encouraging word from his Master, for "heaviness in the heart of a man maketh it stoop, but a good word maketh it glad" (Prov. xii. 25), and He knoweth "how to speak a word in season to him that is weary" (Isa. l. 4).

"Why, drooping saint, dismayed?
Does sorrow press thee down?
Has God refused to give thee aid,
Or does He seem to frown?"

"In darkness or distress,
His love's the same to thee;
Without declension, more or less,
Immutable and free."

Secondly, observe the call to action—"lift up the hands." The Lord's servants have never cause to despair, but they have constant need of His animating voice to rouse their sinking spirits. In the presence of the greatest dangers and difficulties He said "Go forward!" to the people at the Red Sea. It is His to command, and ours to at once endeavour to obey. Whatever He exhorts us to do, we should ask of Him power and wisdom to enable us to do it. He knows we have no might, nor skill, nor will of our own to fulfil His biddings. We must, therefore, lift up our hands in supplication. "Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord. Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens" (Lam. iii. 40, 41). While the hands of Moses were held up the people were sustained. "And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up

his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side ; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword. And the Lord said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book " (Exod. xvii. 11—14). This is written for our learning and imitation. From this we may correct our mistakes and take courage, and lift up our hands in the *expectation* of help. God will take hold of the hands which are held forth to Him, and will hold them fast. Such is His promise, and He is both able and willing to perform the word He has spoken, saying, " For I, the Lord thy God, will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not ; I will help thee " (Isa. xli. 13).

We may also lift up our hands in *holy triumph*, and say with the Church of old, " In the name of our God we will set up our banners." We may boast indeed while we make our boast in the Lord, for what shall harm us while we are followers of that which is good ? " This is our victory over the world, even our faith." Therefore the hands should be lifted up in *loving activity*. " What thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might " (Eccles. ix. 10). " Fear thou not : let not thy hands be slack " (Zeph. iii. 16). " 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." " They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

The result of labour in the dark and cold days of winter and early spring is seen in the fields being clothed with food, and God's servants know that " their labour is not in vain in the Lord." The husbandman that laboureth " waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and the latter rain. Be ye also patient." Whether you are labouring in a most fruitful garden, or digging on a barren rock, if the Master has placed you there, there abide. He will pay you your wages. Nor shall your service be in vain. He can turn the wilderness into a fruitful field, and make the inhabitants of the rock to sing for joy. Elijah was serving God as fully and as acceptably while he sat alone by the brook Cherith, from day to day, as when he stood in the midst of the multitude, and before the king, calling down fire from heaven upon the altar of sacrifice ; or as when he wrapped his face in his mantle, and prayed rain-clouds out of the sea. David was as much the Lord's anointed when he fled for his life from the presence of Saul, and hid himself in the wilderness, as when all Israel came to Hebron to make him king.

" Take, my brethren, the prophets who have spoken in the

name of the Lord, for an example of suffering, affliction, and of patience"; and lift up your hands in praise and thanksgiving for the past help and the promised help for the future, for "as thy days, so shall thy strength be."

W. B.

A WORD TO SLEEPERS.

YOU are to improve your graces,* because souls truly gracious have a power to do good. I do not say that a man, in his natural estate (though Arminians do), hath power in himself to do supernatural acts, as to believe in God, to love God, and the like; for I think a toad may as well spit a cordial, as a natural man do supernatural actions. I do not say that all the grace we have is not from God, nor that man in his natural estate is not dead Godward, and Christward, and holinessward, and heavenward. But this I say, that souls truly gracious have a power to do good. It is sad to think how many professors do excuse their negligence by pretending an inability to do good, or by sitting down discouraged, as having in their hands no power at all. "What can we do," say they, "if the Lord does not breathe upon us, as at first conversion? We can do nothing." I think in my very conscience that this is one reason of much of that lightness, neglect, and omission of duties that is among professors in these days; so that God may complain, as He doeth in Isaiah lxiv. 7—"There is no man that stirreth up himself to take hold of Me." They are as men asleep, that sit still and do nothing. But certainly they that are united to Christ are not acted upon as dead stocks, as if, every time and moment of their acting Godwards, they received new life from the Spirit of Christ, as at first conversion they did. And I am confident, for want of the knowledge and due consideration of this truth, many professors take such liberty to themselves as to live in the neglect of many precious duties of godliness, for which, first or last, they will pay dear. . . . All these exhortations are void and of none effect, if there be not some power in souls truly gracious to do good, as all these exhortations to watchfulness, "to stir up the grace of God that is in us," and "to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling"; and that also—"Give all diligence to make your calling and election sure." To what purpose are all these precious exhortations, if the regenerate man have no power at all to act anything that is good?

THOMAS BROOKS.

THE devil is never idle; he always goeth about. The world is his diocese, and he is every day on his visitation.

* No doubt Brooks means as does the Word, Hebrews v. 14.

"IN GOD IS MY SALVATION."

"Because Thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of Thy wings will I rejoice."—PSALM lxxiii. 7.

THE Apostle said, "Who hath delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver ; in whom we trust that He will yet deliver." The Psalmist says, "Because Thou [God] hast been my help"—"a very present help in time of trouble"; an all-sufficient help for every circumstance ; a suitable help for every exigency ; a Helper of the helpless ; a Friend of the poor and needy. He sustains and holds up under every load. When things seem to get to the worst, He helps with a little help ; but still we deeper sink, the discovery of our ruin and state is more dreadful, and then how precious to prove Him to be a Helper under such trying circumstances ! Well may we say, "Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God" (Psa. cxlvi. 5). He giveth "grace to help in every time of need." He not only helps, but delivers, when none else can. He then shows His power, breaks the bonds, and sets the guilty free, saying, "Thou hast destroyed thyself, but in Me is thine help."

It is not always that we can defend the ground taken, but He holds us in His hand, from which none can pluck. He saves, and who can unsave ? From this reflection the Psalmist came to this conclusion, "Therefore in the shadow of Thy wings will I rejoice," no doubt having reference to the stretched-out wings of the cherubs over the mercy-seat. What a mercy to find access there, and realize the truth, "There will I meet with thee, and commune with thee." Under the shadow of His wings we find protection from danger, security from the storm and tempest. When the pelting rain is without, how sweet to shelter here ! What foe can reach us there ? The enemy was not suffered to put a foot in this hallowed and sacred enclosure. Jesus shields us by His blood, His righteousness, and prevailing intercession. Here we can sing—

"Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress ;
'Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head."

These wings have a cherishing influence to support and comfort. As the mother-bird spreads her wings over her trembling, shivering little ones, and thus cherishes, warms, and revives them, so Christ is to our drooping, downcast spirits. Under His shadow we revive. In creation we see His outstretched goodness, power, and wisdom. His heart is love and affection. The love of a mother is intense and great. Our God takes up that idea and

says, "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you, and ye shall be comforted" (Isa. lxvi. 13). A mother's comfort is lip comfort, lap comfort, breast comfort. Like as the mother wraps the little one in a cloak, to secure it from the beating storm, so Christ, in His much greater love and care for His people, exposed Himself to danger to save them. All penal wrath falls on Him, and not one drop is left to reach them. How precious to feel His care for us in the deepest trial—to be casting all our care upon Him, feeling He careth for us!

"In the shadow of Thy wings will I rejoice"—the joy of confidence, flowing from what the Lord has been to us, and still is to us. We have no wish to change our residence. The Lord has never deceived, and we have that confidence in Him that He never will. We have found Him to be all we needed in the past, and, though dangers and difficulties were great, and may be so, still we will "trust and not be afraid." We will "joy in tribulation, and glory in infirmity, that the power of Christ may rest upon us."

"Oh, sacred Covert from the beams
That on the weary traveller beat!
How welcome are Thy shade and streams!
How blest, how sacred, and how sweet!"

"And when that awful storm takes place
That hurls destruction far and near,
My soul shall refuge in that grace,
And take her glorious shelter there."

Lastly, the joy of salvation and final victory—salvation in its virtue and sensible preciousness. The soul is brought to taste the beginning of heaven on earth, the blessedness of the friendship of God, and the prospect of full and final victory over every foe and out of every difficulty, when we shall reach the full glory of a Saviour's smile, and see Him face to face for ever and ever. Amen.

C. NORRIS.

THEY who will not hear the voice of conscience shall be sure to feel the worm of conscience.

THE Lord comes to His people oftentimes as He did to His disciples when on earth, walking upon the waters of their affliction; and when faith is in exercise, they too are enabled to walk upon them. And as He said upon that occasion, "It is I," so they are enabled to recognise Him, and to respond, in the language of one of old, "It is the Lord; let Him do what seemeth Him good."—*Wakeling*.

APPLES OF GOLD IN BASKETS OF SILVER.

DARKNESS AND LIGHT.

DARKNESS and light are figurative terms for many principles and things, and the natural associations of day and night are very suggestive, and often made use of in Scripture. Darkness stands for ignorance, because the man walking in the dark cannot perceive his way (see John xii. 35, 36), and "the fool walketh in darkness" (Eccles. ii. 13, 14), but Christ is the Light of wisdom and truth.

Then darkness sets forth *sin*, for thieves and drunkards prefer night for their evil deeds; and various evils are described by Paul as "the unfruitful works of darkness" (Eph. v. 8—14), while the "children of light and of the day," being "transformed and renewed" by the Spirit of holiness, "prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God," and so they "*walk as children of light.*"

Hence *Satan's dominion* is "the power of darkness," while the kingdom of God's dear Son (Col. i. 13) is "the inheritance of the saints in light," for which He makes His people meet, and into which He brings them by His grace, "that they may show forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into His marvellous light" (1 Peter ii. 9).

Darkness stands for *death*, which is said to be a land as dark as darkness can be (Job x. 21); and the "second death" is called "outer darkness" in Christ's parables. But those who follow Jesus shall have the "light of life." "The path of the just shineth more and more" until its *end*, which is "the perfect day," the noontide glory of the presence of the "Sun of Righteousness"; and of the heavenly country we are assured that "there shall be no night there," but the daylight of perfect life shall for ever shine.

Darkness stands for *false and idolatrous teaching* (Isa. xlv. 19), but God's Word is "a light" and "a lamp," and His words bring light into the mind and heart. They enter, and make the foolish "wise unto salvation" (Psa. cxix. 130).

Then *mysteries and secrets* are spoken of as darkness, which the light of revelation makes known. "Clouds and darkness are round about God" (Psa. xcvi. 11); and the "deep things" of His mind, "the mystery of His will," could never have been known had not He Himself declared them. His Spirit has revealed them in the Word (1 Cor. ii. 9), and by shining in the hearts of saved sinners, He gives "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. iv. 6). "In His light they see light," for "the secret of the

Lord is with them that fear Him, and He will show them His covenant."

And darkness is used to describe *sorrow* and *fear*. "Weeping may endure for a night," but to God's weepers "joy cometh in the morning" (Psa. xxx. 5); and sometimes, as a wonder of mercy, "He giveth songs in the night" (Job xxxv. 10) to His people, and in the midst of sorrow and trial they can sing, like Habakkuk in scenes of desolation, or Paul and Silas bruised, bound, and imprisoned.

"Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart" (Psa. xcvi. 11). The harvest will be abundant and sure, therefore "who is there among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of His Servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? [bright shinings,] let him trust in the Lord, and stay himself upon his God" (Isa. l. 10), because "the Sun of Righteousness shall arise upon you with healing in His beams."

May we echo the Psalmist's prayer, "O send out Thy light and Thy truth; let them lead me; let them bring me to Thy holy hill, and to Thy tabernacles" (Psa. xliii. 3); and, illuminated by His love, may we so "let our light shine before men that they, seeing our good works, may glorify our Father who is in heaven," while we, walking in the light, have fellowship with God and His people, rejoicing in that precious blood which "cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7).

H. S. L.

CHRIST THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH.

GOD the Son was from everlasting appointed and set up a glorious covenant Head, in whom all the responsibility should be vested, with whom all the terms should be contracted, for whom all the provisions should be made, and by whom the whole work of salvation should be effected. This is the glorious covenant Head of the Church. "Who is He?" say you. I answer, None other than God the Son, the Second Person in the glorious Trinity as revealed to us. Not a manhood—not a fabled, fancied human soul, any more than a human body. The compact was with the Persons of Deity. The Father loved and adopted; the Son loved and made Himself responsible as a covenant Head; the Spirit loved and registered their names in union with Christ's in "the Lamb's book of life," as the glorious covenant Head; and all that pertained to the after operations and work of Jehovah, in the salvation of the Church, was consequent upon that first grand, glorious arrangement which made Jesus "Head over all things to His Church," which "declared the decree," which set Him up as the everlasting Son of the everlasting God, and gave the whole

Church into His hands, and into union with Himself, to be forever saved in Him.

Moreover, this Headship became manifest and evident in the incarnation of the Son of God. This glorious Person, the Second Person in the eternal Trinity, God the Son, could not die, could not obey, could not suffer; and yet He had entered into a covenant compact for that purpose. Then saith He to the Father, "A body hast Thou prepared Me." "I must have a body and a soul"—for He must have a soul to "pour out unto death," and a body to appear in as the Representative of His Church upon earth. In this incarnation of the Son of God (that glorious mystery which is thus described—"His name shall be called Immanuel, God with us"), the precious Christ of God "took upon Him, not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham." Do mind, it was not the seed of Adam—it was not a mere human nature—but it was human nature in the covenant line, for Abraham was declared to be the covenant head. It is not said that He took mere human nature, but human nature in the line of Abraham, and in the line of David, as the covenant Head.

Now, observe the proof of His Headship, before we come to His dying. It was not an angelic form in which the Son of God appeared in Bethlehem's manger. It is indeed true that angel hosts, as servants of the Most High, were sent there to minister to Him, but He never took their nature, but the nature of the very people whom the Father had given into His hands, for whom He had made Himself eternally responsible, and whom He came into the world to redeem. There was an obedience of a perfect description to be rendered to Jehovah's law in that very nature that had sinned, and the obedience of angels could not have been accepted as the obedience of mortals; and therefore our precious, glorious covenant Head took upon Him "bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh," "in all things made like unto His brethren, yet without sin," for this express purpose, that He might have a nature to perform obedience in and with, exactly in accordance with the nature that had sinned—in itself having no sin, for He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners," yet having all the sins of all the election of grace laid upon Him (as it is written—"The Lord laid on Him the iniquities of us all"), that in the nature which had sinned He might obey the law, suffer the penalty, accomplish the whole work, vanquish the prince of darkness that had conquered humanity in the garden of Eden, and so bring in an everlasting salvation for His whole Church.

And this incarnation was in His Headship character. He became incarnate as the Head, not of the world, but of His Church—"Head of His body the Church." You cannot find me

an expression in Scripture that ever refers the Headship of Christ to any but the "election of grace." It was in this character and for this purpose He came into the world ; and the love that He bore to His Church from everlasting was such that He would, as an act of love, marry her nature, in order that His Church might possess His divine nature implanted in the soul, as it is written, "That ye might be partakers of the divine nature." So that, in the glorious Headship of Christ, as proved and brought forth to our view in His incarnation, I see a double link of union—Jesus comes down to become one with His people, and communicates His own life and grace, that His people may become one with Him in a vital sense.

"If we believe that *He died.*" But may I pause to ask if you believe that He is the covenant Head of His people in the manner I have stated?—that He became incarnate for that very purpose, to manifest and prove Himself the covenant Head of His Church? I beseech you, do not let your former prejudices misguide you. You who are so fond of that old Popish dogma of universal redemption, do not let it misguide you here ; and if you cannot find any one instance in which Jesus is represented as the Head of the world, I pray you, do not yield to such folly any longer, but yield for once to truth, and let it be acknowledged. Do you believe that the Father made Him "Head over all things to the Church," and that His incarnation was on purpose to prove and testify it to His saints who should live on the earth to the end of time? Then, if this be an object of your faith, mark what my text refers to in His vicarious death.

I call it "His vicarious death" because no other phrase that I am familiar with will keep up the train of thought relative to His Headship. It was not a promiscuous death ; it was not an uncertain death ; it was not a sacrifice, that may or may not be of use, as it happens to turn out by the caprice of man ; it was not a death of uncertainty, so that He Himself could not know whether it would be of use to a sinner or not. Oh, no ! The Son of God had never entered upon so solemn a compact, and passed through so solemn a scene, without certainties. It was a vicarious death on the behalf of His Church, in the name of His Church. Not only was His obedience in her behalf, and counted hers, but His blood-shedding was for her sake. It was the demand of justice urged upon all the members of His mystical body, and paid by the covenant Head. It was the penalty stipulated for before all time for her eternal salvation. It was the sum agreed upon by the Persons of Deity before time, by which all the Persons and perfections of Deity should be glorified and honoured, and all the election of grace everlastingly saved.—

Irons.

THE ANXIOUS INQUIRER'S PAGE.

A MESSAGE OF MERCY.

"Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him: for they shall eat the fruit of their doings."—ISAIAH iii. 10.

(Concluded from page 216.)

2. "It shall be well" with the righteous when *troubled with many cares*. Martha-like spirits find it hard to believe this. Worldly anxieties seem to hide the Saviour from our eyes. Temporal cares are the thorns that too often choke the good seed—cause much carnal-mindedness, distance from God, unbelief, fear, and foreboding. We think, if we could be free from care, we should serve the Lord more devotedly, experience less distraction, and be more free to meditate on His Word. These are the conclusions we are ready to draw when overwhelmed with anxiety and cares respecting our families, our circumstances, our health, or our friends. However, the promise contains no limitations, but roundly and fully asserts, "It shall be well with the righteous." No state is excluded. The promised well-being is universal.

Now, how can it be true in the case we have mentioned? It *must* be, because the Lord saith it. Listen, beloved! "It shall be well" with the righteous when troubled with many cares for these reasons—first, because, no matter how great or heavy the burden, the Lord will help them to bear it; secondly, it will be sanctified to their souls' good and God's own glory; and "it shall be well" with them, thirdly, because they will ultimately be delivered from all their cares.

3. "It shall be well" with the righteous when *distressed with many fears*. When we sink in the "Slough of Despond"—when heart fails, and flesh fails, and self fails—Satan, taking advantage of our weakness, sends forth battalion after battalion of fears into our souls. Then what sad work ensues! However, all this really arises from looking to self.

One may ask here, "When God hides His face, what else can we look to?" Without answering this question directly, we may prove the statement just made—that the fears of the righteous arise from looking to self. For example, it is no uncommon thing for a child of God to fear he will never be able to hold out to the end. The cause of his fear is, that he measures the apprehended future difficulties of the way by his present strength, and concludes it is not sufficient. Satan endeavours to keep us here. It is much the same with all the fears to which the Christian is liable.

Now, "it shall be well" with the righteous when he sinks even in these deep waters, because his fears shall never be realized, and also because, underneath all fear, faith will be strong enough to enable him to adopt the language of one of old, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." The time of fear is the time for faith to work.

4. "It shall be well" with the righteous, moreover, when passing through *darkness of soul*. Oppressed, bound, unable to see his way or to trace the hand of his God, darkness hides the path from his sight; darkness covers the mercy-seat; darkness obscures the Word which once brought joy and rejoicing to his soul. But even then "it shall be well," for "as his days his strength shall be." "Sorrow may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning," and divine support is vouchsafed until the day dawns.

5. "It shall be well" with the righteous until and in the *hour and article of death*. The promise includes everything that can happen during life, and in death no evil shall befall the righteous. Yet how many dread the river of death! How cold and dark its chilly waters flow; and often, the nearer the aged pilgrim draws to its brink, the colder, darker, and more gloomy does it appear until they step down into it, and then—and then—then *there is no river at all!* Its waters have fled. When the feet of the priests touched the Jordan, the waters parted, and they passed over to Canaan's shore dry-shod. Oh, yes—

"In every state secure,
Kept as Jehovah's eye;
'Tis well with them while life endure,
And well when called to die."

We will not leave this part of our interesting subject without inquiring *why* "it shall be well" in every state, case, and place in which the righteous may find themselves? The reason is, because they are eternally loved, and infinite love is ever engaged in making it well *with* them and well *for* them. The text is the decree of eternal love, and in sweet accordance therewith the Apostle declares, "All things work together for good," to the right characters. "It is well with the righteous" also, because they are united to Jesus by an everlasting bond of covenant grace; therefore we may add, it is well with *them* because it is well with *Him*. As He is, so are they, for He has said "none shall pluck them out of His hand." That word secures their future and eternal well-being. Furthermore, how can it go ill with those who are redeemed by precious blood? How great the price! How perfect the cleansing! How complete the atonement! How full the fountain! How glorious the Sacrifice by which the well-being of the righteous is secured!

III. *The explanation of the fulfilment of the promise.*—The well-being above spoken of is realized when they “eat the fruit of their doings.” The truly righteous are especially right in respect to the fact that they are not only *hearers* of the Word, but *doers* of it. One may hear and have some notions about seeking the Lord, desiring, repenting, believing, &c., and be altogether wrong. Those who by grace *do* these things are alone right, and these “eat the fruit of their doings,” the root and fruit, the faith and its works, being alike the gift of grace. The fruit of repentance is remission, and both are of God. The righteous desire grace, and “eat the fruit of their doings” when grace is granted, which is in sufficient measure to evermore ensure their well-being. The righteous look to the Lord, and the fruit of that is, they obtain mercy, which affords a delightful feast to their souls. It is God who works in them both to will and to do, and then in spiritual exercises they “work out their own salvation with fear and trembling,” and eat the fruit thereof with joy.

There is no experience of salvation without there is a doing of such things as seeking the Lord, crying for mercy, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, mourning for sin, &c. Yet the righteous are not saved *for* doing these things, but *in* doing them; and it pleases the Lord, of His rich grace, to join finding to seeking, answer to prayer, remission to repentance, and giving to asking. The latter, the seed sown in the heart by the hand of God; the former, the fruition of grace, which affords heavenly enjoyment to the saints by enabling them to realize that it is indeed well. All is of God, and the fruit of all is to the praise of the glory of His grace.

Leicester.

E. C.

HEAVEN begins on earth. We must have a foretaste of it here to enjoy its fulness hereafter. The Apostle calls it “the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession.” To carry out the figure, it is a small amount of the same kind paid in hand to assure us of the full instalment in due time.

LET not him who is of a sorrowful spirit be cast down because he cannot rise to the heights of joy and gladness that others speak of, for although he may be alone, passing it may be under a cloud, yet he is on safe ground, if still clinging to, and in humility sits at the foot of, the cross, waiting for the Saviour to say, “Friend, come up higher!” Yea, the time will come when his weeping shall be over; conflict, labour, and travail shall cease; and he shall experience that, “at God’s right hand, there are pleasures for evermore.”

A LETTER FROM PASTOR CHINIQUY.

Ste. Anne, Kankakee Co., Illinois, May 20th, 1886.

MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST,—Surely my Heavenly Father has seen my tears and He has heard my humble supplications, since He has inspired you to address me such cheering words as those I find in your kind letter of May 5th. In the midst of the great tribulations through which I have to pass, it does me good to receive such fraternal and Christian words. Every sentence of your letter is a balm to my bleeding soul. I thank and bless you for them.

You want to know some details of the disasters which have visited me. As those deeds are deeds of darkness, we know them only by the smoking ruins by which they have surrounded me. The incendiary who set fire to my press on November 1st was seen by two policemen from a distance through the window, when performing his diabolical work. They ran to take him, but he was gone when they arrived at the door; and it was too late to stop the fire.

The second fire was called "a mysterious fire" by the chief of the fire police, who is a Romanist. The day before, a young Roman Catholic, whom my printers had engaged against my advice, had said to one of them, "You print a bad book. It will bring you bad luck." As there was no fire in the office since many days, it was evident that the fire was the work of an incendiary. It was just the day that the stenographic plates were finished, and that the twenty-eighth edition of "The Priest, the Woman, and the Confessional" was finished also, so that my ruin was evidently premeditated. I had put my last cent in those works, and borrowed three thousand dollars to complete them, besides ten years of labour given to them; and all went into smoking ruins in less than one hour!

With Job, I had to say, "The Lord had given it to me; the Lord has taken it away. May the name of the Lord be for ever blessed, and may His will be for ever done."

My noble-hearted friend, Dr. F. H. WHITE, of London, visited me not long after. He saw something of the marvellous doings which the Lord has wrought in this place. Though, the evening when he had to speak, there was a terrible rain and wind storm, our large chapel was literally crammed by our dear converts from Rome; and the address they heard from him will never be forgotten—"Christ All in all." He also addressed our Sabbath School, composed of one hundred and fifty children (all children of converts from Rome); and he could judge for himself that the work which is done here among Roman Catholics is mar-

vellously grand and glorious, for it is "the Lord's work," and to Him, and Him alone, the glory and the praise must be given.

But that noble English Christian minister could see also with his eyes that the rage of our mighty enemy is great and terrible, without mercy! He could see that, if our Protestant brethren do not come to our help, it is impossible for my poor people and myself to fight alone such powerful, such giant power. We must succumb under the blows of Rome. Yes; our great evangelical work must soon be a deplorable ruin if our co-soldiers do not extend to us a helping hand.

Mr. White has kindly made an appeal in our favour, and has already brought very generous answers from several Christian brethren and sisters in England, who, like the angels of the God of mercy, have come to our help and strengthened our hands. We cannot bless them enough for what they have done. If all our co-soldiers who have the means and the heart to support the Gospel cause would only send us the crumbs from their tables, we should soon have enough to repair the breach made by the foe, and we could renew the battle with a new vigour. Yes; if every one of those whom the true Good Samaritan has entrusted with His oil would let a drop of it fall on our bleeding wounds, those wounds would soon be healed.

This place is the real battle-field chosen to-day by the great Captain of our salvation to fight against His implacable foe, Popery. It is here that the greatest modern victory against Rome has been won. It is from here that, by the great mercy of God, blows have been struck on the chains of the poor slaves of Rome which have broken the fetters of more than thirty thousand of them, and made them free. For that very reason, Rome is concentrating all her power and her malice to destroy us here. The conflict in which we are engaged is a mighty one; it is a noble one also.

Well, soldiers of Christ from England, as well as from America, come to our help with your ardent prayers to the mercy-seat. Come to our help with your supplicating hands raised to heaven. Come to our help with the means entrusted to you by the good Master, and we shall soon gain the day. More glorious victories will be won; more humiliating defeats inflicted upon the common enemy; more immortal souls, washed and saved in the blood of the Lamb, shall be gathered.

Truly yours in Christ,

Mr. A. Brandon.

C. CHINIQUY.

P.S.—Among our last converts is a Protestant lady who, when young, had been seduced by a Roman Catholic teacher (an aunt of hers). She had gone to a nunnery for two years. It was then

and there that her eyes were opened to some of the daily abominations going on behind the thick walls of the nunneries. She fled away, read the volume, "Fifty Years in the Church of Rome," and the ignominious yoke of the Pope has been exchanged for the sweet one of Jesus. She is now under my humble roof, preparing a most interesting book of her experience in the nunnery. To-morrow night (D.V.) she will address our dear converts. Help me to praise the Lord for this new manifestation of His mercies. "Let all people praise the Lord, for His mercy endureth for ever."—C. C.

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.

A POETICAL LETTER ADDRESSED TO A CLASS OF GIRLS AT
REHOBOTH SUNDAY SCHOOL, COVENTRY.

DEAR CHILDREN, I fear that your hearts will be grieved,
Because you are still of your teacher bereaved;
Affliction has been for a season her lot,
And now she is resting a while in my cot.

What a mercy it is she is in the Lord's hand !
And He will uphold her, and cause her to stand ;
In life or in death He will ever defend,
Uphold and support her right on to the end.

But I trust she'll return to her loved work once more,
And that you will love her as much as before,
And thank the dear Lord for His kindness and care
In raising her up and bringing her there.

In the meantime, dear children, still meet in your class,
To study God's Word, where you may, in that glass,
Each see your condition, and gaze on your face,
To see if you are a partaker of grace.

I trust you are some of you seeking the Lord,
And feeling a love to His ways and His Word ;
And if such is the case, then 'tis certainly true,
If you really are seeking the Lord has sought you.

And those He seeks after are surely His own,
Whom He has redeemed, and will place on His throne ;
Whenever He seeks a poor sheep gone astray,
He finds it, and leads it safe on in the way.

He is the Good Shepherd, and cares for His sheep ;
He searches, and finds them, and safely will keep ;
He brings them all home from the mountains of sin,
Leads them on to His fold, and shuts them all in.

He washes them, feeds them, and clothes them with care,
And then He pronounces them lovely and fair ;
He is their Protector, their Guard, and their Guide,
And He has engaged for their wants to provide.

In every trial He'll help and defend,
Until the rough path of the desert shall end,
And then He will take them to mansions above,
To bathe evermore in the ocean of love.

But can it be said, my dear children, of you,
That each one is seeking this Shepherd so true,
And that the whole class will be found in His fold,
And all His bright glory with rapture behold ?

If one should be missing in that solemn hour
When Jesus shall come in His glory and power
To make up His jewels, oh, what a sad case
To be banished for ever in shame and disgrace !

A Sunday School scholar to sink into hell,
And there in deep anguish for ever to dwell !
With many sweet Scriptures impressed on the mind,
And yet not a glimpse of sweet comfort to find !

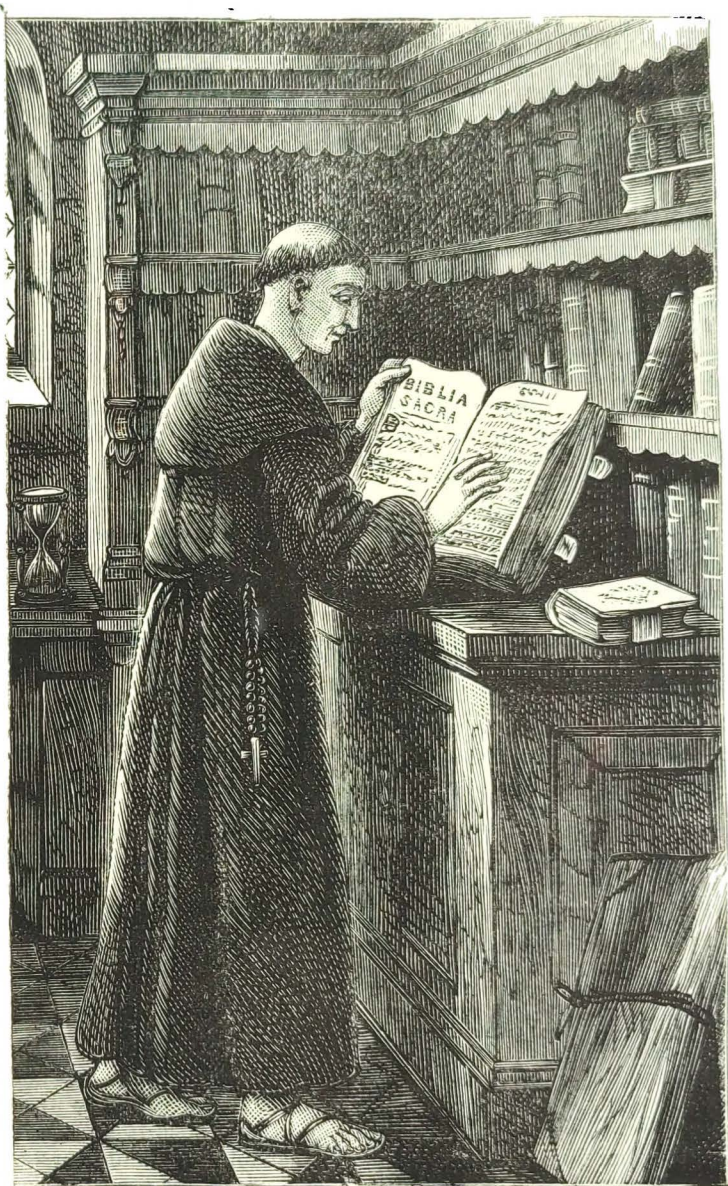
But on this sad subject I cannot now dwell ;
I hope you will none of you sink into hell ;
But seek the dear Saviour and taste His free love,
Then dwell in His heavenly mansions above.

Your teacher is better, and sends her best love,
But I wish her to stay and still further improve ;
When her health is established you'll then see her face ;
Now your other dear teacher must fill up her place.

That Jesus may send His good Spirit divine,
In each of your hearts in His mercy to shine,
Is the earnest petition and ardent desire
Of both your dear teachers and also

C. SPIRE.

ALL things work together for the good of the child of God, yet he is apt to "despise the day of small things"—the threads of life. My brethren, great things, eternal things, may depend upon the turn you take in your daily walk, the side of the street you walk upon, or the look you give. So with the troubles and trials of life—the "light afflictions" and the little daily worries we have to meet. We shall see by-and-by that they were necessary—were links in the chain, shades in the colouring, the chiselling and polishing of the Hand of unerring wisdom, to discipline, to educate, to prepare the soul for the "rest that remaineth," the "inheritance of the saints in light."—*Martin*.



LUTHER READING GUTENBERG'S BIBLE.

THE TEACHINGS OF THE REFORMER OWNED OF GOD.

WHAT wonderful results have often followed circumstances which, considered abstractedly, appear to be but of little account. The history of the Church of God affords many such instances, in various ages, which have caused us, as we have read them, to exclaim, "What hath God wrought!" The finding of an old Bible by Martin Luther in the library of the Erfurt Monastery might, of itself, be thought to be a trivial circumstance, but when we look back upon the course of the glorious Reformation, we are filled with awe and gladness as we contemplate the many and mighty events connected with that happy episode. Luther, when he met with that Latin copy of Gutenberg's Bible, which he read with such delight and profit, said, "If I could have a Bible of my own, I would ask no other treasure." And when he did become possessed of one, he for years read it through regularly once a year. We can scarcely realize the reverence with which people in those days looked upon the Word of God, especially when it had been translated so that they could read in their own tongue the wonderful works of God. We can, however, believe that as they perused its sacred pages, or listened to its burning words, it seemed to them like meeting God face to face.

As it was spread abroad, divine power attended the reading and preaching of it by godly men who, like Luther, had been enlightened by the Holy Spirit, and made to drink in its precious truths, to the liberating of their souls and consciences from the galling bondage of Popery. Yea, "so mightily grew the Word of God, and prevailed," that many of the wonderful incidents recorded as some of the results thereof make us long, as we read them, to see like effects produced in our day. We here give one interesting incident of the success of the Word of Truth, as recorded by Dr. Merle D'Aubigne—

"The time had come in Geneva when men who were taught by the Spirit of God, and who earnestly desired to teach and enlighten the poor benighted and ignorant Romanists, proclaimed that 'God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth,' by inward faith in the heart. William Farel preached with fervour. He was accustomed to say, 'God sends rain upon one city when He pleases, while another city has not a single drop,' and he exhorted all whose hearts were thirsting with desire for the preaching of the Gospel, to pray that the Spirit might be given to them. We cannot give his discourses, but we know they bore good fruit. The proof was soon visible.

"On one occasion, after the sermon was over, Farel prepared

to celebrate the Lord's Supper publicly, according to the Gospel form, and standing with his brethren before a table, he gave thanks, took the bread, brake it, and said, 'Take, eat.' Then, lifting the cup, he added, 'This is the blood of the New Testament, which is shed for the remission of sins.' The believers were beginning to draw near to receive the Communion of the Lord, when an unexpected circumstance fixed their attention. A priest of noble stature, wearing his sacerdotal robes, left the place where he had been sitting among the congregation, and approached the table. It was Louis Bernard, one of the twelve priests of the cathedral, and possessor of a wealthy benefice, and brother of him who had been touched at the time of Farel's first preaching. All eyes were fixed on him, anxious to see what would happen. Was he going to say mass? Did he want to dispute with Farel? Or had he been converted? The priest went up to the table, and then, to the surprise of all, he took off his sacerdotal vestments, flung away cope, alb, and stole, and said aloud, 'I throw off the old man, and declare myself a prisoner to the Gospel of the Lord.' Then turning to the Reformers, he said, 'Brethren, I will live and die with you, for Jesus Christ's sake.' All imagined they saw a miracle. Their hearts were touched. Farel received Bernard like a brother. He broke bread with him, gave him the cup, and, eating of the same morsel, thus signified that they would in future love one another with a sincere affection. This priest was not the only person who threw off the foul robes of his former life, and put on the white robe of truth and virtue. Many Genevans from that day began to think and live differently from their fathers; but Louis Bernard was a striking type of that transformation, and the crowd, as they quitted the church, could not keep their eyes off him. They saw him returning full of peace and joy to his father's house, wearing a Spanish cape, instead of the usual priest's hood. All the evangelicals went with great joy to greet him.

"Another circumstance, quite as extraordinary, still further increased the beauty of this time. During the rejoicings of this first evangelical Pentecost, a Knight of Rhodes came to Geneva in search of liberty of faith. A Knight of Rhodes was a strange visitor in that city. It was known that those warlike monks had been expelled from Jerusalem by Soliman, and had finally settled in Malta. But why should this one come to Geneva? This ex-knight, whose name was Pierre Gaudet, related how, being born at St. Cloud, near Paris, he had heard the Gospel, and that, having chosen for his glory the Cross of the Son of God, he held the world in contempt. The scandal he had thus brought upon himself and his family had forced him to flee. He had taken refuge with an uncle, but, feeling the need of Christian com-

munion, he had come to his brethren, that he might enjoy it. The Huguenots received him like a friend."

Oh that, as we read these wonderful doings of the Lord in gone-by days, we may be led to inquire, since the Spirit of the Lord is not straitened now any more than He was then, How is it that we see so little of His mighty power among us? And may the God of heaven so fill us with the spirit of prayer that we may never cease to cry unto Him, like one of old, "O Lord, revive Thy work!" until "the Spirit be poured out upon us from on high," and the salvation of Zion shall go forth "as a lamp that burneth."

"SAY UNTO MY SOUL, I AM THY SALVATION."

"SAY unto my soul." Dear Lord,
Speak it to me through Thy Word;
What I ask for, much I need,
For my debt is great indeed.

Say unto me, "Yes, I am,
Through the bleeding, dying Lamb,
Thy salvation, full and free;
Yes, His blood was shed for thee.

"Yea, My love for thee is great;
Well I know thy helpless state;
Come, while I Myself make known,
For I hear thy every groan.

"All thy needs I will supply;
Mercy's streams are never dry;
On they flow from age to age—
Drink—thy raging thirst assuage!

"Drink—it gives eternal life;
Triumphs over every strife;
Do not back to Egypt fly,
Or thou must for ever die!"

Through Thy promised love and grace,
Lord, I run the heavenly race,
Fight the fight, the victory gain,
And the heaven'y crown obtain.

Blessed Comforter, descend!
Point me to this loving Friend;
Say His blood and righteousness
Is my glorious wedding-dress.

Clothed in robes so pure and bright,
Fitted for the Father's sight,
All the praise and glory be
To the wondrous "One in Three."

GLIMPSES OF THE PAST.

THE CONDER.

ALTHOUGH we do not believe in hereditary grace, yet, in some instances, it is remarkable how the Lord's promises are manifestly seen to shine forth in some families. That instead of the fathers shall be the children, and that His Spirit that is upon His servants, and His words which He has put into their mouth, does not depart out of their mouth, nor out of the mouth of their seed, nor out of the mouth of their seed's seed, &c. (Isa. lix. 21.) Which is noticeable in the family under consideration, and, although for the most part moving in an humble sphere, yet were amongst the excellent and honourable, being distinguished by the grace of God, made useful in their day and generation, in times when it was not so easy to serve the Lord in making a profession of His name before the world as at the present time, but God, who had called them by His grace, enabled them, notwithstanding all opposition, to continue even to the end.

The first of whom any account is preserved is Richard Conder, senior, who was a dairy farmer at Croydon-cum-Clopton, in Cambridgeshire, of whom the following anecdote is related by one who was present at the time.

"I used," says he, "when young, to accompany my father to Royston Market, which Mr. Conder also frequented. The custom of the good men in those days when they had done their marketing was to meet together in a private room, where, without interruption, they might talk freely about the things of God, how they had heard on the Sabbath day, and how they had gone on the week past, &c. I was admitted to sit in a corner of the room. One day, when I was there, the conversation turned upon this question, 'By what means God first visited their souls and began a work of grace upon them.' It was Mr. Conder's turn to speak, and his account struck me so I never forgot it. He told the company as follows :

"'When I was a young man, I was greatly addicted to football playing, and, as the custom was in our parish and in many others, the young men, as soon as church was over, took a football, and went to play. Our minister often remonstrated against our breaking the Sabbath, which, however, had little effect, only my conscience checked me at times, and I would sometimes steal away and hide myself from my companions. But, being dexterous at the game, they would find me out, and get me again among them. This would bring on me more guilt and horror of conscience. Thus I went on sinning and repenting a long time, but had no resolution to break off the practice, till one Sabbath morning our good

minister acquainted his hearers that he was very sorry to tell them that, by order of the king (James I.) and Council, he must read them the following paper, or turn out of his living. This was the Book of Sports, forbidding the minister or churchwardens or any others to molest or discourage the youth in their manly sport and recreations on the Lord's Day, &c. While our minister was reading it I was seized with a chill and horror not to be described. "Now," thought I, "iniquity is established by the law, and sinners are hardened in their sinful ways. What sore judgments are to be expected upon so wicked and guilty a nation? What must I do? Whither shall I fly? How shall I escape the wrath to come?" And God set in so with it, that I thought it high time to think about my eternal safety. And from that time I never had the least inclination to join my vain companions any more. So that I date my conversion from that time, and adore the grace of God in making that to be an ordinance for my salvation, which the devil and wicked governors laid as a trap for my destruction."

At the death of the old gentleman his son, Richard Conder, succeeded him in the farm, and, through grace, partook of the same spirit with his father; insomuch, that on the restoration of Charles II. and the ejection of the Nonconformist ministers, he joined himself to a church gathered by Francis Holcroft, the Puritan, who, for preaching the Gospel in private houses, in woods, and fields in the night, when he could not by day, was imprisoned twelve years in Cambridge Castle. But the Lord stood by him and gave him favour with the jailor, named "Prophet," who often let him out on Saturday evening after it was dark, and he returned on Monday morning before daylight, in which practice he was not detected. A vehicle might often be seen crossing the old bridge in the evening on its way to Cambridge to bring back Holcroft, who was to preach at midnight in Eversden Wood; and, till within a few years, there remained in the midst of the wood, serving as a shelter for the confessor in bonds, a fine old oak, known as the "Pulpit Tree."

One or two things are worthy in passing of being noticed, of how the Lord delivered him out of the hand of his enemies. It was one judge that came the circuit. He was so enraged against God's servant, that he gave it out in his charge that he ought to be proceeded against as a felon. And there happened to be among the rest a good woman, one of the church, that heard his charge, that was much concerned about it, when the word came with weight upon her mind, "The Egyptians that ye see to-day ye shall see no more for ever." Whereupon she went away, saying she did believe that he (the judge) would never come any more to give his charge in that place. But after a time, he came on

the same circuit again, and was coming again to Cambridge, which, when the woman did hear of it, she did muse on it; but she had so affirmed it and lived in the faith of it. But, while she was musing on these things, word came to Cambridge that the judge was taken ill while at Bedford giving his charge, and was taken down from the bench dead. This raised her again to triumph in the Lord. But the Church had many enemies, namely, the constables, who proved the law then in force, which was twelve pence per week and twenty pounds per month for absenting from the church. "At one time, the meeting was forced," says Richard Conder, "and cattle taken away from Mr. Stacey, of Meldreth, and sold to meet the tax which was laid on the meeting by Captain Storey. The cattle not realizing sufficient, Storey, still in his rage breathing out threatenings against the Church (but being at that time in London), that when he came down in the country how he would persecute them, but while he was at dinner he died with a piece of rabbit in his mouth, as we heard, and his journey back into the country was in a sheet of lead. And after this, there arose Captain Dublit, and he took God's servant, Mr. Holcroft, upon the way, when he was coming to my house to preach the Gospel, and carried him away to the Fleet prison in London, where he lay all the frosty winter."

When Francis Holcroft died in 1692, Richard Conder preached and administered in the hall of his own house gratis to a little congregation for some years until his death, at the age of 69, in 1718. Near his house was a fine spring and a pleasant grove. Here, in the summer-time, his flock sat down in companies, ate their morsels, which they brought in their pockets, and conversed of the things they had heard. For a short time after his death, a Mr. Dixey ministered to the people till about 1725, when Mr. Jabez Conder, second son of Richard Conder, who was settled in a farm at the adjoining village of Wimpole, fitted up a meeting-house at Croydon, where he preached, and became their pastor. Under his ministry this little interest considerably increased, but it was of short duration, for a year or two afterwards he met his death by an awful providence. He had married Elizabeth, eldest daughter of William Linkern, a farmer of Everton, Bedfordshire. On the 28th of October, 1727, he and Mrs. Conder rode over to Potton to visit their mother, Mrs. Linkern, and their son John, who boarded with her, and went to school to a Mr. Hicks, a clergyman in that place. Leaving Mrs. Conder there, her husband went forward to Biggleswade, where his brother-in-law, Mr. Linkern, junior, resided. In the afternoon, as he was returning to Potton at a gallop, a cow, which it seems had only one eye, hearing the noise of the horse, started suddenly across his path. The horse ran against her, fell over her, and threw Mr. Conder

off with such violence as occasioned a large contusion over his eye, and gave such a shock to his whole frame as broke a blood-vessel within him. A neighbour that was with him recovered his horse, and setting him upon it, conducted him in this wretched condition to Mrs. Linkern's, perfectly sensible, but so weak, that he expired within a quarter of an hour. Thus, as the MS. says, the Lord having smitten the shepherd, the sheep were scattered, and though they kept up their Church state for a time, yet many increasing trials and much opposition at Croydon caused them to think of giving it up, and uniting with some of their brethren at Great Gransden, as Mr. Benjamin Dutton, a Strict Baptist minister, had come among them. Some were willing to follow the Lord fully in the ordinances of His house, and some were not; but the majority being willing, we renewed our covenant with our brethren at Gransden June 2nd, 1732, as follows: "We do, in the presence of the Lord Jesus, the awful crowned King of Sion, and in the presence of His holy angels, and people, and all besides here present, solemnly give up ourselves to the Lord, and to one another by the will of God, solemnly promising and engaging, in the aforesaid presence, to walk with the Lord and with one another in the observation of all Gospel ordinances and the discharge of all relative duties in this Church of God, and all others as the Lord shall enlighten and enable us."

But to return to the "Conders." Mr. Jabez Conder left an only child, John, afterwards Dr. Conder. The event of his father's death happening when he was between thirteen and fourteen years old made a very deep impression on his mind, and he was wont to say in after years, "Then he first knew that lesser sorrows produce tears, but greater ones stun and stupefy." After a few years, his mother married again to Mr. George Hawkes, a farmer of Clavering, Essex, but was soon after taken with a painful knot in her breast, which proved to be a stone cancer, and from which she never recovered. The celebrated Mrs. Stevens dressed her breast a long time, and noticing her son John, tried to persuade him to go to St. Omers (a Papist college) for education, but by the wisdom of God, he was enabled to choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. He removed from Mr. Hicks, of Potton, to the Grammar School at Hitchin, called the Biggin, under the care of Mr. J. Newman. Whilst here, he was taken with the small-pox, but the Lord dealt mercifully with him, and he soon recovered.

(To be continued.)

A MISER grows rich by seeming poor: an extravagant man grows poor by seeming rich.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF MR. W. H. LEE.

IN a little tract, written by Mr. Lee himself, entitled, "How a Rebel was Brought Down," we have the following interesting narrative of his conversion :—

Up to the year 1857 I was living a worldly life, without hope and without God, quite ignorant of my state before my holy and just Maker. In that year my dear wife was removed by death, leaving me with four young children, one boy and three girls, the babe half-an-hour old.

A few days after her death, grieving over my bereavement, I took the two eldest girls into a field for a walk, and being so full of trouble, I fell on my knees, which I had never done before, and entreated the Lord to provide for me and my dear children, when these words came with power to me—"The Lord will provide." I rose up, and repeated over and over, "The Lord will provide"; and He graciously provided, and raised one up to attend to their wants, and thus temporal things went on well for a time, but I still enjoying the pleasures of this world—still dead in sin. I attended the Church on the Sunday, paid all men their due, which I thought sufficed for what was required of me.

In the year 1873 I was laid on a bed of affliction with diabetes and paralysis, not being able to help myself in the least. Death now seemed to stare me in the face. I foolishly (in my heart-blindness) promised the Lord that, if He would raise me up and let me attend to my farm once more, how good I would be, as I then occupied nearly three hundred acres of land in Norfolk. But instead of the Lord raising me up at that time, my soul-trouble began. Then I cried out, "Oh, that I had never been born—that I had been as the beast that had no soul!" I then sank into great despair, fearing that I was eternally lost. My distress was so great that, had I been near a pit, I think I should have plunged into it, to rid myself of my misery, and end, as I thought, my wretched feelings. How utterly ignorant, dark, and wild is man in his fallen state!

The doctor, at this time, advised me to retire from business, as he said I should never be able to bear the fatigue and anxiety again. I then gave up, and removed to Kirkley; but being so afflicted, and scarcely able to walk, I was very troubled, not being able to hear anything for the relief of my troubled soul, and begged of the Lord to open some way for me, when, to my surprise, one day I saw some men, nearly opposite my house, preparing to build, and, upon inquiry, found it was to be a place of truth—a Strict Baptist Chapel. I then hoped the Lord was answering my desires, and bringing His Gospel nearly to my door; but I had never heard of these despised people before. My health

improving, I attended regularly, yet could find no rest for my soul, but had deeper convictions that I had broken the whole law of God, and my soul-trouble now became a heavy burden to me.

Going to bed one night in great distress, feeling I should sink where hope could never come, I tried to pray, but could not even remember the simple prayer my dear mother taught me when young. I tried to say what is called the Lord's Prayer, but could not remember the words. I then fell asleep for a short time in that miserable state. I awoke with this prayer in my soul, with wretched feelings, and, as a poor sinner, cried out, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" "Give me Christ, or else I die!" Then I was blessed with a sight, by faith, to my believing heart and mind of Jesus on the cross, with His eyes fixed on me, and mine kept steadfast on Him, but not a word He spoke. Then I cried with a loud voice, "Lord, have mercy upon me!" repeating it many times. My sins still rose up before me, which were too heavy to bear. I then felt a great weight, as it were, fall off my shoulder. I rose up a little, and the next moment such unspeakable joy flowed into my soul as I never had before. Tears of peace and joy fell, and I could then praise the Lord. The Saviour then vanished from my sight, and I said, "Can this be true? It is no dream, for I am wide awake, with my eyes open"; and these words came with power to me, as if spoken by one present, "It is a truth, and no lie." I thought I would not tell any one, fearing they would think I had lost my reason; but I could not hold my peace, so I called children and friends together, and told them what a blessed Saviour I had found; and this state of peace, love, and joy lasted, as meat for me, many days.

The Lord, in His own time, laid the ordinance of believers' baptism very forcibly on my mind, and I openly professed the Lord's mercy to me, and was baptized on February 13th, 1881, at Providence Chapel, Kirkley, Lowestoft, by Mr. A. Brandon, Minister of the Gospel, Chelsea, and that day was a good time to my soul. God be blessed and praised for His goodness to such an unworthy worm as I feel to be. But many, many fears and sinkings have I had since then, and many assaults and temptations from my great enemy, Satan. I now hope, and rejoice in the hope, of being "for ever with the Lord," to sing that never-ceasing song, "Crown Him, yes, crown Him Lord of all!"

The following hymns, from Gadsby's Selection, have been by the Lord the Spirit made very comforting, sweet, and precious to me—1,025, 376, 560, 983.

Kirkley, Lowestoft.

WALTER H. LEE.

After considerable suffering, during which he realized many tokens of the Lord's mercy and favour, Mr. Lee entered into

rest eternal, where sickness, sorrow, and sighing can never come.

The following is a copy of the mourning card:—

IN AFFECTIONATE REMEMBRANCE OF
WALTER HENRY LEE,

Of Kirkley, Lowestoft,

Who departed this life May 21st, 1886,

AGED 66 YEARS.

“Into Thine hand I commit my spirit: Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.”—PSALM xxxi. 5.

Interred in Kirkley Cemetery, May 25th.

Brockley, June 1st, 1886.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Your mourning card gives one cause to rejoice. The cripple needs his crutches no longer, because he is no longer a cripple. A sight of the beautiful gates of Paradise would have made your dear friend leap as a hart, and bound towards Him who is the light and glory of those blissful mansions.

He was a remarkable instance of the sovereignty of God. The nature and time of his call by grace, and his affliction; answers to prayer; means of grace brought within a few steps of his abode; his will and God's power in leading him and bringing him to make a public profession, all seem worthy of record in some magazine.

“Why should the wonders He has wrought
Be lost in silence or forgot?”

You will, amongst your few, much miss the dear old gentleman. May the Lord send in others to fill his place.

What a mercy to know your chapel was a house of bread to him! He long found he could not feed on husks, or be satisfied with an empty form of religion which never touches the heart.

How many, it is to be feared, rest there, even under sound truth! As Berridge says—

“Contented with the husky part,
The moving lip and silent heart.”

How many times has this been my prayer—“Be not silent unto me, O God; lest if Thou be silent, I become like unto them that go down into the pit.” When He speaks His voice is known—yea, though it be among a thousand others.

With Christian love to Mrs. Hobson and yourself,

I am, yours sincerely,

JAMES BOORNE.

THE ANXIOUS INQUIRER'S PAGE.

A WORD OF WARNING.

"Seeing, then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?"—2 PETER iii. 11.

To learn who the Apostle here addresses, we must read the first chapter of his first Epistle, and we shall find it was not a promiscuous multitude, but those whom he describes as "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father"; "begotten again"; "kept by the power of God." He speaks of them as a people who have passed from death unto life, and who can never come into condemnation; and yet, when holding up to their view the end of all material things, he asks, "What manner of persons ought ye to be?" Surely many professors of our day would not find much favour in his eyes, whose party zeal, self-complacent and censorious spirit, are about the only traits that distinguish them from the profane and careless world around them—who are like children crying in the market-place, "We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced"—who have itching ears, but have never learned to bridle their tongue. The word "ought" is discarded by them as legal. The wisdom which cometh from above—which is "pure, peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits"—is by them ignored. A minister of truth whom they happen to appreciate is to them like one who can play well on an instrument—they hear his words, but will not do them. They dream they eat, but will one day awake and find themselves empty.

Reader, what manner of persons are you and I? Are we born again of God's blessed Spirit? Has His holy law, as a school-master, brought us to Christ? Are we this day "more than conquerors, through Him who loved us, and gave Himself for us"? If so, is there nothing more to be done but to divide the spoil? Yes, verily. Peter says, "For hereunto were ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow His steps"; and Christ Himself has said, "Whoso forsaketh not all that he hath cannot be My disciple." Alas! what mistakes and errors I have fallen into—the false steps I have trodden—since light first broke into my mind! I often have to say, with trembling of heart, "O my threshing, and the corn of my floor!"

When convinced of the fallacy of free-will doctrines, I joined a place of truth, but I slipped by degrees into a false security, and presumed on the unchangeable love of God to me, without the use of His appointed means. I left off to watch and pray.

I followed Him at a great distance. "The world, the flesh, and the devil" got between me and my Leader and Guile, and I became like the man we read of—"half-dead."

Oh, professor, take heed lest the light that is in thee be darkness. Thou mayest go to and from the house of God as a door moves on its hinges, and yet be no further from thyself and thy sins, and no nearer to God, to Christ, the Fountain opened for sin, than thou wast at the hour of thy birth. It is one thing to hear the Word with joy, to be able to split hairs in divine things, to be a fair and flourishing professor both in thine own eyes and in the eyes of others; but it is quite another thing to be really drawn by the cords of love to forsake all that thou hast, to deny thyself, take up thy cross daily, and follow Christ through evil and through good report. As the poet says—

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

"Seeing, then, that all these things shall be dissolved"—the earth and all that it contains—its beauty and grandeur, its riches, pleasures, business, in which the sons and daughters of men do swim and sport themselves. These things are their heaven, their rest; and they say, "To-morrow shall be as this day, and more abundant"; and this will be the thought of millions at that dread moment when the mighty angel declares that "time shall be no longer," turning their mirth to heaviness, and their laughter to bitter wailing. But if that voice were heard this night, how would it find us who profess to have been delivered from the world and its toys? Have we provided ourselves with bags which wax not old, or treasure in the heavens that faileth not? Are we so weaned from all present things as to possess them as though we possessed them not? Do we weep over all earthly losses as though we wept not?

Reader, you may say, "It is much easier to speak or write about these things than to fulfil them." Truly, it is so. This is God's work, and not ours; but it must be brought about by His Spirit dwelling and working in us, or we shall never be able to stand either in death or judgment. Here is a man rich in this world's goods. He hears the Gospel, gives something towards its support, professes a love of the truth, but withal manifests a greater love for the things that are seen than for those which are not seen. He says he cannot do the things that he would, but does not appear much grieved thereby. His countenance is much more troubled if he has bad crops or makes a bad market, while the afflictions of Joseph or the misery of Lazarus make no emotions in his

heart. Come, man, thy gait will not do. You know a man who looks back at every step leaves but a sorry track behind him. Thy silver and gold, thy flocks and herds, thy barns filled with plenty—yea, thine own body—are all dissolving things, and may be dissolved at any moment. Nothing but a genuine work of grace in the heart will enable thee to endure the terrors of that day. Nothing short of a hope which “entereth into that which is within the veil” will abide when all nature sinks in ruin. None will lift up their heads then but those who now are of humble and contrite hearts, who tremble at His Word, who are ever knocking at His gate, ever hungering, thirsting, and panting after Him, “looking for and hastening unto the coming of their Lord.”

“Such, in that day of terrors, shall be seen
To face the thunders with a God-like mien.”

“What manner of persons ought ye to be?” While I write this, I have to look back on my past life with shame and self-aborrence, but feel all the more constrained to give a word of warning to others, lest they climb, as I did, to the heights of spiritual pride, and fall therefrom after the same manner. It is written, “God hath purified unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” Many have a great zeal for doctrine and a sound experience, as they call it, but here their zeal ends. A head filled with empty notions, without a holy principle of love in the soul, is a curse to those who have it; and alas! some of these are to be found in too many places where the Gospel is faithfully preached, and those who have the root of the matter in them are too often led away by them, through giving more heed to them than to God’s Word. Wherever faith, hope, and love are in operation, there is diligence in the use of all appointed means, according to the measure of these blessed gifts. “Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son” (Rom. viii. 29).

When the kings of the earth raise an army for war, the men are trained so that they may stand in the day of battle; when men are about to run a race, they exercise themselves so that they may run successfully; when people are about to become the attendants of kings and nobles, they study the manners and carriage necessary for such a position. How much more is it needful that the subjects of the King of kings, the citizens of heaven, should be duly prepared to dwell with Him for ever! Jesus said, “I have glorified Thee on earth.” Paul said, “I have fought a good fight.” The Master says, “Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with sur-

feiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares."

Let us look to it, then, whether the love of God has been shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, constraining us to follow Christ so closely as to become more and more like Him—yea, to abide in Him, and He in us—that, when nothing remains but the glories of heaven and the miseries of hell, we may appear with His name in our foreheads, our robes washed white in His blood, "without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing."

L. J.

THE SAINT'S VICTORY OVER DEATH.

BY A LORD MAYOR.

DEATH brings glad tidings both to body and soul. It tells the body, "Head, you shall ache no more ; stomach, you shall be sick no more ; heart, you shall tremble and be afraid no more ; flesh, you shall bleed and smart no more. I am come to put an end to all these fears and troubles. God will lock you up in the cabinet of the earth, that you may there sleep in peace till Christ raise you incorruptible, and carry you into glory." And to the soul death says, "You shall have no more time for sin and vanity. Perfect holiness to eternity shall now swallow you up. I come only to put an end to sinning days. You shall groan under sin no more. That body which held you, and was subject to temptations, shall now go to sleep in the dust till the tempter be chained up in eternal darkness. Instead of mourning under sin, you shall now and for ever glory over sin. Your fears shall end and so shall your faith ; for, instead of the 'evidence of things not seen,' you shall both see and enjoy the heights, breadths, depths, and lengths of the love, grace, kindness, faithfulness, and glory of that God you have believed in. Fear not me," says death. "I come from your Father, so you may be sure I have no commission to hurt you. Christ, your beloved Husband, Brother, Head, and Redeemer, took care that I should not be able to hurt you, for He took my sting from me before He sent me to you. I am come without a sting, to tell you God and Christ love you. But this is not all my errand. They love you so well that they can suffer you no longer to be out of the full enjoyment of Their love, and I am sent to break down the clay walls which imprison you, that you may flee home and be at rest, where no troubles can ever reach you, nor any power be able to hurt you."—*Sir R. Tichbourn*, 1675.

SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS is as dangerous as unrighteousness. It is only a more genteel way to hell.

APPLES OF GOLD IN BASKETS OF SILVER.

FROM MR. CHRISTOPHER LOVE TO HIS WIFE.

MY MOST GRACIOUS BELOVED,—I am now going from a prison to a palace. I have finished my work. I am going to heaven, where are two of my children, and leaving you on earth, where there are three of my babes. Those two above need not my care, but the three below need yours. It comforts me to think, two of my children are in the bosom of Abraham, and three of them will be in the arms and care of such a tender, godly mother. I know you are “a woman of a sorrowful spirit,” yet be comforted. Though your sorrows be great for your husband going out of the world, yet your pains shall be the less in bringing your child into the world. You shall be a joyful mother, though you be a sad widow. God hath many mercies in store for you. The prayer of a dying husband for you will not be lost. To my shame I speak it, I never prayed for you at liberty as I have done in prison.

I cannot write much, but I have a few practical counsels to leave with you:—

1. Keep under a sound, orthodox, soul-searching ministry. Oh, there are many deceivers gone out into the world, but “Christ’s sheep know His voice, and a stranger they will not follow.” Attend any minister that teacheth the way of God in truth, and follow Solomon’s advice in Proverbs xix. 27.

2. Bring up your children in “the knowledge and admonition of the Lord.” The mother ought to be a teacher in the father’s absence (Prov. xxxi. 1)—“The words that his mother taught him”—and Timothy was instructed by his grandmother (1 Tim. i. 5).

3. Pray in your family daily, that yours may be in the number of the families who call upon God.

4. Labour for “a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price” (1 Peter iii. 4).

5. Pore not on the comforts you want, but upon the mercies you have. Look rather at God’s end in afflicting, than to the measure and degree of your afflictions.

6. Labour to clear up your evidence for heaven when God takes from you the comforts of earth, so that, as your sufferings do abound, your consolation in Christ may abound much more (2 Cor. i. 5). Though it be good to maintain a holy jealousy of the deceitfulness of the heart, yet it is ill for you to cherish fears and doubts touching the truth of your graces. If ever I had confidence touching the grace of another, I have confidence of grace in you. As Peter said by Silvanus,

"I am persuaded that this is the grace of God wherein ye stand" (1 Peter v. 12).

7. Oh, my dear soul, wherefore dost thou doubt, whose heart has been upright, whose walking has been holy, &c. ? I could venture my soul this day in thy soul's stead, such a confidence have I in you.

8. When you find your heart secure, presumptuous, and proud, then pore upon corruption more than grace ; then look upon your graces without your infirmities.

9. Study the covenant of grace, and merits of Christ, and be troubled if you can. You are interested in such a covenant that accepts purposes for performances, desires for deeds, sincerity for perfection, the righteousness of Another, namely, that of Jesus Christ, as if it were our own alone. Oh, my love, rest thou in the love of God, in the bosom of Christ !

10. Swallow up your will in the will of God. It is a bitter cup we are to drink, but it is the cup our Father hath put into our hands. When Paul was to suffer at Jerusalem, the Christians would say, "The will of the Lord be done." Oh, say ye so when I go to Tower Hill—"The will of the Lord be done."

11. Rejoice in my joy. To mourn for me inordinately argues that you either envy or suspect my happiness. The joy of the Lord is my strength. Oh, let it be yours also, dear wife ! Farewell ! I will call thee "wife" no more. I shall see thy face no more, yet I am not much troubled, for now I am going to meet the Bridegroom, the Lord Jesus, to whom I shall be eternally married.

12. Refuse not to marry when God offers you a fair opportunity, but be sure you marry in the Lord, and one of a good disposition, that he may not grieve you, and of a comfortable livelihood in the world.

Farewell, dear love, and again I say farewell. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit, the Maker of heaven and earth be a Husband to you, and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ be a Father to your children. So prays your dying, yet most affectionate friend till death,

CHRISTOPHER LOVE.

*From the Tower of London, August 22nd, 1651,
the day of my glorification.*

THE most valuable part of a man's education is that which he receives from himself.

If a man will be righteous and equal, let him see with his neighbour's eyes in his own case, and with his own eyes in his neighbour's case.

A LYING DOGMA OF ROME.

IN the last century a monk, called Father Leonard, had a dream, in which he heard the Virgin Mary telling him that there would be an end to the wars of the nations, and to the heresies and schisms in the Church, only after a Pope should have obliged, by a decree, all the faithful to believe she was immaculate in her conception. That dream, under the name of "A Celestial Vision," had been extensively circulated in little tracts. Many believed it to be a genuine revelation from heaven, and the weak-minded Pious IX. was among the number. When he was an exile in Gaeta, he had a dream on the same subject, and when he awoke, he made a vow to promulgate this new dogma as soon as he got back to Rome. But, far from securing an eternal peace to his Church, it has done more to shake the faith of Roman Catholics than all the attacks of those he calls "heretics." The language of Rome, previous to the introduction of this dogma, has ever been, "There is no change, no innovation, no novelties, no new dogmas. We believe to-day just what our fathers believed. We belong to the Apostolical Church, which means, we believe only what the Apostles preached." They have to confess their pretensions to an unchangeable creed is a lie. They dare not any longer say to the disciples of the Gospel, "Where was your religion before the days of Luther and Calvin?" for the secret voice of conscience says to-day to the Roman Catholics, "Where was your religion before the 8th of December, 1854?"

I shall never forget the sadness which overcame me when I received orders from Bishop O'Regan to proclaim this new dogma to my people. My most cherished illusions about the immutability and infallibility of my Church were crumbling down, in spite of my efforts to keep them up. A few days after I had read to my congregation the decree of the Pope proclaiming this new dogma, and damning all those who would not believe it, one of my most respectable and intelligent farmers came to visit me, and put the following questions—"Mr. Chiniquy, please tell me, have I correctly understood the letter you read to us last Sunday? Does the Pope tell us in that letter that we can find this new dogma of the immaculate conception in the Holy Scriptures—that it has been taught by the Fathers and has constantly been believed by the Church from the days of the Apostles?" I answered, "Yes, my friend, the Pope tells us all this in his letter, which I read to you on Sunday." "But, sir, will you be so kind as to read me the verses of Holy Scripture which are in favour of this dogma?" "My dear friend," I answered, "I am sorry to say I never found in the Holy Scriptures a single word to tell me that Mary was immaculate, but I have found many words to the contrary. For

instance, the Apostle Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, tells us, 'By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation.' This little but inexorable *all* includes the Virgin Mary. And the same chapter says, 'There is none righteous, no, not one,' and the Lord has never repealed in the Holy Scriptures this awful word, *not one*." "Now, sir, please tell me the names of the Fathers who have declared that we must believe in the immaculate conception, or be damned for ever if we do not believe it?" I answered my parishioner, "I would have preferred, my dear friend, that you should never have come to put these questions to me; but as you ask me, I must tell you the truth. I have studied the Holy Fathers with good attention, but I have not found a single one of them who was of that opinion." "Any way, sir, I hope," said the farmer, "you will excuse me if I put another question to you. Perhaps you do not know it, but there is a great deal of talk and feeling about this new article of faith amongst us since last Sabbath. The Pope says in his letter, the Church of Rome has always believed and taught this dogma—is this correct?" "Yes, my friend, the Pope says so in his letter, but, these last nine hundred years, more than a hundred Popes have denied it." "Then, sir, if this be true of the new dogma, how can we know it is not so with other articles of our faith, such as confession, purgatory, &c.?" "My dear friend, we are living in bad days indeed. Let us pray God to enlighten us and save us; but I would have given much if you had never put to me these questions."

My honest parishioner had left me. I fell on my knees, but for a time I could not utter a word of prayer. Big tears were rolling on my cheeks; new light was coming before the eyes of my soul; a voice was speaking to me—it was the voice of my God telling me, "Come out from Babylon"—but I took that voice for the voice of Satan. I was trying to silence it, but God was to be stronger. In His infinite mercy, He was to overpower His unfaithful servant. He was to conquer me, and with me many others.—"*Fifty Years in the Church of Rome*," by Pastor Chiniquy.

PERSONAL peculiarities, amusing to strangers, are painful when we see them in those we love and esteem.

THINKING leads man to knowledge; he may see, and hear, and read, and learn whatever he pleases, and as much as he pleases: he will never know any of it except that which he has thought over, that which by thinking he has made the property of his mind. Is it, then, saying too much to say that man by thinking only becomes truly man? Take away this power from man's life, and what remains?

THE UNEQUAL MARRIAGE.

MANY a pastor's heart has been made to bleed again and again from the effects of what are commonly called *unequal marriages*. It is a popular saying that "*marriages are made in heaven.*" This is no doubt true in some cases, but not in all, for many unions are evidently concocted in a region infinitely below the celestial. In plain terms, we believe that *Satan has vastly more to do with some marriages than God.* Who can read the proceedings of our new court of law for the obtaining of divorces, as they are reported from time to time in the public newspapers, and doubt this? And, alas! even good people do not always marry happily and wisely, because it too frequently happens that they do not marry "IN THE LORD" (1 Cor. vii. 39).

Unequal marriages have often been a bane and a curse in our Churches. Such is the testimony which the writer must bear, from observation by no means limited. Is there not something fearful in the idea of a child of God making himself, by marriage, a *son-in-law to the devil*? Who would deliberately tie a dead weight to himself in running the race before him in the Gospel? In fighting with the powers of darkness, shall we take an ally of theirs into our most secret counsels? Is *this* coming out from the world, and being separate from it? (2 Cor. vi. 17). Is it not rather being "unequally yoked together with unbelievers?" (2 Cor. vi. 14—18). Is it not a bold defiance of the law which commands Christians to marry "ONLY in the Lord"? (1 Cor. vii. 39). How terrible the thought of taking as a partner one whose whole course of life will be a hindrance and a snare to our own souls!

As I cast my eye back upon my past voyage across the ocean of life, I see many a wreck which unequal marriages have caused. And my soul is grieved to hear the cant of sentimental professors upon this question. How they will justify a yielding to the impulses of a blind passion, rather than the guidings of God's holy Word, so that I must speak out and ask, "*Can two walk together except they be agreed?*" (Amos iii. 3). "What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" (2 Cor. vi. 14).

Such marriages consummated the corruption of the antediluvian world, and brought upon our earth the waters of the Deluge. Thus the old story runs—"The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose" (Gen. vi. 2). The holy seed was mingled with the seed of the evil one, and the result was the world's destruction, save one favoured household.

Ellen Herbert was among the first-fruits of my ministry. She

was a young lady of considerable personal beauty, of strong mental powers, and of great refinement. She had received a liberal education, and had made the best use of her opportunities. It was to me a joyful day when I first gave to her the "right hand of fellowship," and welcomed her into the communion of the Church. She became one of our most useful members, and was ever ready to every good word and work. In the Sunday School she took special delight, and being naturally of a cheerful, genial disposition, soon found her way to the hearts of the children of her class. Her talents and acquirements, too, gave her an influence and a weight. At my house she was ever a welcome visitor. Between her and the "wife of my youth" there sprang up a most cordial friendship. They became inseparable, and were, I believe, a source of great comfort and joy to each other.

Thus years passed away, and Ellen had reached the age of about five-and-twenty without having consented to wear the yoke of matrimony, though often wooed to do so. I began to think that she was so fastidious that she would die an old maid, and sometimes jocularly gave expression to such a fear. But such was not to be her lot.

At this crisis there came to settle in the town of M—a gentleman who proved the evil star of Ellen's destiny. He took a flourishing commercial business, from which the former proprietor was retiring with a fortune. The new comer was a man of handsome exterior, of good parts, had seen much—alas! *too much*—of the world, and had a wondrously easy, self-possessed air in all companies. There was a great charm in his conversation and deportment. He never seemed to be ignorant about any topic that was on the carpet; but I could see that there was much affectation and hollowness about this assumption of universal knowledge. Mr. Worldly and myself frequently met on public occasions, and sometimes at the house of a mutual friend; but from the first I never liked him. He always seemed to me a man who had drunk deeply of the cup of worldly pleasure, and had been initiated into the mysteries of some of the worst forms of vice. He indeed made no secret of his being essentially *a man of the world*. The theatre, the ball-room, the card-table, and the tavern dinner never came amiss. He was clearly as destitute of the first principles of religion as a man could be.

Ellen Herbert and the insinuating Mr. Worldly met, but I really forget where, for many years have elapsed since then. From that moment Mr. Worldly set himself to win poor Ellen's heart, and resorted to every stratagem to attain his end. But he proceeded very cautiously, well knowing that an instant avowal of his design would have secured his rejection. He was aware that Ellen was a thoroughly religious girl, while in his heart he

utterly despised everything that savoured of real godliness, looking upon it all as "Methodism and cant." Hence, like a skilful general, he masked his batteries until he had completed his plan of attack. His advances were at first very formal and restrained. His object evidently was to impress poor Ellen with a conviction of his profound esteem for her character. He showed her nothing more than marked respect. He did not obtrude himself into her society very frequently, always arranging matters so that the meeting should appear to be accidental; but whenever he met her, he invariably treated her with the most delicate attention. Then, too, he began about the same time to attend the sanctuary in which Ellen worshipped; and whenever present with us in the house of God, conducted himself with external propriety and decorum.

These indications at length seriously alarmed me, and I felt it to be my duty to caution our young friend against the advances of Mr. Worldly. She thanked me for my kindness, and with many blushes assured me that "she had no thought of Mr. Worldly for a husband, if he had ever thought of her for a wife." Still I was not satisfied.

As Mr. Worldly had now become an occasional hearer of mine, I ventured to call upon him and inquire after his spiritual welfare. All I heard from him, and all that I gathered about him, convinced me that he was a thorough man of the world still—"a lover of pleasure more than a lover of God."

But why should I lengthen out the painful narrative of the way in which he succeeded at last in getting poor Ellen to consent to become his wife—how his attentions gradually increased, his visits became more frequent, his conversation more interesting, and his society more fascinating? Suffice it to say that, after he had solemnly promised never to hinder Ellen in her attention to the duties of her religious profession, and had engaged to accompany her twice every Lord's Day to the house of God, she permitted him to regard her as his betrothed. Need I say that I sought one more interview with our young friend before matters had reached this climax? Never can I forget that meeting. It took place in my study. I pleaded and implored, but to no avail. Many tears were shed by both of us, but Ellen was inexorable. In her esteem Mr. Worldly was a better man than in mine, and she *hoped* still further to improve him, *forgetting her own danger of apostasy*. I pointed her to the Scriptural testimony against such unions, but she endeavoured to reason it away. She admitted that Mr. Worldly was without anything at all like religion, but talked about "the unbelieving husband being sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife by the husband" (1 Cor. vii. 14), forgetting, as I told her, that the reference in that passage is to a

union contracted when *both* the parties were in unbelief, one of them having been called by *grace after marriage*. I showed her how different her case was, seeing that of her own free will she was about, *after conversion*, to marry *out* of the Lord. But all my tears and expostulations were of no avail.

The excitement of the interview quite unmanned me. Two things I begged of Ellen—the first, that she would still let us enjoy her friendship; and the second, that she would never reveal to her intended husband my strong opposition to their marriage, as this might prevent my doing him the good which I earnestly wished to do. Both promises were made, and the latter at least was, I believe, faithfully kept.

Not long after this, Ellen Herbert became Mrs. William Worldly. At the time of the wedding I was purposely away from home.

The marriage had not taken place long, before my worst fears began to be realized. Mr. Worldly did indeed keep his promise to his wife. He never *prevented* her by *compulsion* from attending to the duties of religion, but from the day of their marriage he commenced a course of conduct systematically arranged to undermine her religious principles, and to make her like-minded with himself. It was a slow process, but before long it began to tell. Throughout he never even thwarted his wife, but treated her with unvarying kindness. He wrought her up to an idolatry of himself, and then made use of this tremendous influence to alienate her heart from her Saviour and her God.

Ellen's first overt act of apostasy was turning her back upon the Sunday School and all other active efforts for the spiritual good of others. For this she had no valid excuse, as she never had any children, and her physical health was of the best. *But her husband wanted her society*, and to please him she gave up all labour in the cause of her Lord.

After this, the process of deterioration proceeded rapidly; and at length Ellen's only connection with the people of God consisted in an occasional attendance upon the services of the sanctuary on the Lord's Day. She resigned her nominal connection with us as a Church of Christ, for conscience would not let her retain her membership, living as she then did with her heart divided between her Lord and the world. This was the finishing stroke to poor Ellen's downward career. She felt that she had now got rid of all external restraint, and could do as she pleased. She became, in short, as worldly as her husband, and appeared as much at home as he at the theatre, or card-table, or ball-room.

But was she *happy* during this career of declension? Assuredly not. I learned, after her restoration, that during her apostasy

she had often been wretched beyond measure. Her conflicts were sometimes tremendous. Often did she wish that she had never been born. Death she dared not desire, for she knew too well that she was utterly unfit to die. I afterwards learned, too, that during this winter in her soul she never altogether gave up the form of secret prayer, nor the occasional reading of the Scriptures in private. In the house of God she only appeared once in the week, and that was generally on the Lord's Day morning. We seldom met, and then she contrived not to be alone with me, evidently fearing lest I should renew my expostulations. But I more than once wrote to her, and poured out my soul in affectionate pleadings with her. These letters, however, produced no visible impression.

Affairs were in this state when we began to observe a great change in our beloved friend. Her attendance at the house of God became more frequent. She listened with apparent interest to the reconciling Word, and often wept under its sound. Her countenance assumed a more serious expression, and her whole demeanour underwent a thorough change. But at the same time there were indications of failing health. I began to hope that the Good Shepherd was reclaiming this wandering sheep to his fold. The sequel proved that I was right in my conjecture; but oh, how terrible was the means by which the blessed end was realized!

While my mind was vacillating between despair and hope about our beloved friend, I was surprised one morning by a visit from her. She wished to see me alone. I took her into that study where, years before, we had had interviews of a very different character. Her errand now was to tell me that she feared she had not long to live, and to inform me how she had met with what she suspected would prove her death. The particulars of that interview I would not reveal, were not both Ellen and her husband now in the eternal world. It was indeed an affecting story. Poor Mr. Worldly had most innocently been the means of his wife's present alarm. It appeared that one morning, when Mr. Worldly had a business engagement of a very urgent and important character, as he and his wife lay sleeping side by side, he dreamed that he had overslept himself, had consequently failed to keep his appointment, and had thus lost several hundred pounds. With a terrific start he threw out his arms, and sprang up in bed. Alas! alas! with the sharp angle of his elbow he struck his wife a tremendous blow in the breast; and now she feared that a cancer was forming and rapidly spreading its deadly fangs, as the result of that involuntary injury. Mr. Worldly was aware of the infliction of the blow at the instant of awaking, but his poor patient wife had, in mercy to him, foolishly kept her

fears to herself, and concealed from him the extent of the mischief produced. And now my beloved friend came to me to tell me all the facts, and to ask for my advice. Well may a true pastor say, "Who is sufficient for these things?" Ellen's mind was in a state of terrible distress. Conscience was doing its work; the Spirit of God was moving within her. She feared that there was no hope for her—that God had said concerning her, "She is joined to idols; let her alone." I did my best to direct her aright, and pointed her to the blood which "cleanseth from all sin." But I told her that her duty was to tell her husband all her fears, and immediately submit the case to the judgment of two of our ablest physicians. This she promised to do, on one condition—that my wife should be present during the examination, and that I should be the medium of communicating the medical verdict to the sufferer and her husband. This promise was instantly made.

The examination was made a few days after, in my wife's presence, and when it was over I received a visit from the two doctors. They did not need to tell me what their report was. Their countenances announced that they had no hope. It was a decided case of cancer of the worst type, and had been so long neglected as to make it extremely uncertain whether the removal of the entire breast would eradicate the malady; while, supposing so extreme an operation were performed, there was fear of the patient's sinking under it, and so I had to be the bearer of this sad, sad news!

Poor Ellen received the tidings with deep emotion. Her husband appeared to be stunned—utterly stunned—by the intelligence. But He who

"Plants His footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm,"

was with us, to bring good out of this great calamity. I pointed out to poor Mr. Worldly that no blame could attach to him for the *involuntary* blow which he had inflicted upon his wife's *body*; but I did venture gently to remonstrate with him on the guilt which he had contracted by *deliberately* ensnaring her precious *soul*. God blessed "the faithful wounds of a friend," and Mr. Worldly assented to the justice of the charge, and burst into an agony of weeping. I reminded Ellen that her Lord had suffered the idol which she had set up in His temple to become an involuntary rod for her chastisement, and begged her to recognize the mercy which was mingled with the judgment. It was altogether an interview never to be forgotten. The callous, indifferent husband was suddenly awakened to a consciousness of his grievous sin, and the backsliding wife was aroused to an earnest desire to return to Him from whom she had so grievously departed. The

means used to accomplish both these ends were certainly to us very mysterious, but God blessed them. Perhaps nothing *less terrible* would have done the work.

Poor Ellen sank slowly, but surely. The disease never faltered in its progress until it had done its deadly work upon its lovely victim. She was brought to the house of God as long as she could bear to sit in her pew, and then she became a prisoner to her room, and finally to her bed. I visited her to the last, and had great hope in her death. But her mind was long covered with a thick darkness, in which not a ray of light was to be seen. Her sin in having lived for so many years at such a fearful distance from her Saviour was like a millstone round her neck. But she found peace at length in the infinite merits of the great Propitiation, and died in the exercise of a humble hope of salvation. Her sufferings she bore with unfaltering meekness and submission, often blessing God for "the thorn in the flesh" by which she was brought to restoration, and her husband to repentance.

Poor Mr. Worldly was thoroughly humbled and truly converted. His grievous trial was the means of leading him to Jesus. He expressed a wish to be received by baptism into the communion of the faithful. His wife, too, desired to be restored to her former standing in the Church, though there was no possibility of her ever meeting with us until we joined the blessed in heaven. Both requests were complied with. Mr. Worldly became a devout communicant with us, and, I believe, a thoroughly changed man; and poor Ellen's name was entered in the Church book under his, as restored to our fellowship.

The day of release came at length, and Ellen died, calmly and peacefully looking to Jesus, cheered with the thought that the man who had led her astray was now himself a pilgrim to glory! At her funeral I could not but think of the suggestive words, "*Saved, yet so as by fire!*"—*From a Tract.*

HE that hath slight thoughts of sin never had great thoughts of God.

MY MOTHER.—Who can be compared to a mother? The Bible gives the first place to a mother's joy and to a mother's grief; and the Bible is as true in this as in everything. "I don't see how any one can live without a mother," says a young daughter who, while herself a mother, has a daughter's sense of dependence on a mother. And life is always darker, and this world is always lonelier, when one's mother is dead. If your mother is still living, love her, and show your love for her as for one whom you never saw the like of, and never will find equalled in her place.

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.

DEAR FRIEND,—As the Lord may be pleased to help me, I will try and write a few lines in answer to your unexpected letter. I gather from the tone of it that you are a seeker, with your face heavenward ; and this is in accordance with an ancient promise, namely, “They shall ask their way to Zion, with their faces thitherward” ; and this proves that the world, with all its pleasures, can no longer satisfy or content your soul. What a mercy ! What ! has the Spirit of God shown you the spirituality of His holy law, and convinced you that you are a law-breaker, and turned your former supposed goodness and comeliness into corruption, so that you are made to cry out of necessity, “Unclean ! Unclean !” and made you to mourn and loathe yourself in your own sight ? This is the Spirit’s work. But what mean those springings up of desires in your soul after the Lord Jesus, your love to the people of God, your love to His precious Word, if there is no life in your soul ? Do the dead feel ? Certainly not. It is the living soul that wants to suck at the breasts of Zion’s consolations, and feed upon the truth of God. But you may say, “How is it that I have been seeking and going to the house of God so long, and yet have not obtained that which my soul longs for, even to know Jesus as my Saviour, to feel Him precious to my soul, to realize the application of His precious blood, purging all my sins away, and giving me sweet, heartfelt peace with God, so that I could feelingly rejoice in His finished salvation ?” Well, the Word says, “The vision is for an appointed time, therefore wait for it.” All these things are according to the good pleasure of Him who appeared to Moses in the bush. As there is a set time to favour Zion, so there is a set time in God’s purpose to deliver every Zionite, for the promise runs, “The redeemed of the Lord shall come to Zion,” &c. Therefore, though the vision tarry, wait for it, for it will surely come, and will not tarry beyond the time appointed.

“Some long repent and late believe,
But when their sin’s forgiven,
A clearer passport they receive,
And walk with joy to heaven.”

I would not advise you to pray for trouble, for, depend upon it, you will find quite enough of it. “The world, the flesh, and the devil,” are three deadly enemies to the child of God, and are constantly at work seeking his overthrow ; and were it not that the Captain of salvation has overcome them all, and come off victorious, and promised that His people shall overcome through Him, and He fights for them, and delivers them time after time from the mouth of the lion and the paw of the bear, they would be

finally overcome. But what a mercy He loves to the end, and has engaged to see all His people safely home to glory, though the way may be rough, beset with snares, dangers, temptations, many fears, many sinkings, much darkness and depression, and many other things. But the Apostle could say, "In all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that hath loved us," and we trust it will prove the same with us at the end of our race.

My prayer for you is, that the Lord will bless you, shine upon you, and shed abroad His love in your heart, that you may realize Christ to be All in all. So prays,

Your unworthy friend,

Birmingham, June 7th, 1885.

T. HARRIS.

"IT IS WELL."

Yes, it is well, although with bleeding heart,
And briny tears which from the eye will start,
And bitter grief which doth the bosom swell,
These quivering lips would own, "Lord, it is well."

Yes, it is well ; mistake Thou canst not make ;
But oh, from me this bitter cup now take,
Or with the draught the needed strength impart,
To comfort and support this anguished heart !

Yes, it is well, although in sore dismay
Weak nature shrinks, but grace would rather say,
"Fruit let me bear, e'en though I be denied
That which I long have sought for—long have sighed."

Yes, it is well, my God, shouldst Thou see fit
This bitter cup seven times to embitter yet ;
For with increasing bitterness Thou'lt give
The increased strength I need for Thee to live.

Yes, it is well that Thou shouldst choose my way ;
Then let me not repine, but day by day
Most freely yield myself, my all, to Thee,
Since Thou no needed good wilt hold from me.

'Tis well, though from one hand Thou bidst me take
This bitter cup, and drink for Thy dear sake ;
The other doth embrace my sinking soul,
And bid me on Thee all my burden roll.

P.

IN deciding questions of truth and duty, remember that the wrong side has a crafty and powerful advocate in your own heart.

The Sower, November, 1880.



POOR MARY'S RETURN HOME.

POOR MARY.

IT was a dismal November evening—the rain fell fast ; the wind blew cold and keen. Mr. Manley had tried again and again, as he walked along the street, to procure a hackney coach, but there was not one to be found. Finding at length that the violence of the rain rather increased than abated, he was induced to take shelter in one of those numerous alleys with which the Strand abounds. He had not been there long before he was accosted by two women of the lowest order. Desirous of quitting such society, Mr. Manley was on the point of leaving the alley, and had already taken a few steps into the street with this intention—“And yet,” thought he, “Christ did not do so. Christ died for the vilest of sinners.” The reflection at once stayed his footsteps, and raised his heart in prayer to God for their souls. He instantly returned. They were laughing as before, and assailed his ears with their former language.

“Pardon me,” said Mr. Manley, addressing himself to them, “if I request you, as a favour, to cease from this language. It cannot profit you, and to me it is most painful.”

This request of his was received with a burst of laughter, and they proceeded as before. Mr. Manley, however, was not easily to be daunted ; and, in a pause in their conversation, he ventured to ask his companions whether they would answer him one question.

“What question ?” they replied.

“A very simple one. Are you happy ?”

“Come, come, Mary,” said one to the other, “let us leave the parson to himself ; for if we stay here, we shall have a precious sermon, and be too late for the play !”

The rain, however, still fell in torrents, and the other seemed unwilling to venture out of the alley.

“I am no parson,” replied Mr. Manley, “if that prevents you from answering the question.”

“Who, then, are you ?” rejoined the girl.

“A poor sinner, like yourself, whose sole hope is from this one truth, that ‘Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners’—sinners such as you and I are—the vile, the guilty, the ungodly.”

“Well, Mary,” said the one who had spoken before, “if you are silly enough to lose your time here, I am not ; for I have promised to be at the play, and to the play I will go, rain as hard as it will.” With these words she ran hastily away.

Mary, however, stayed behind. “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,” thought she. “To save sinners ! Great God, is this true ? Oh, no ; it can never be true—it is too good to be true ! Christ must hate sinners, and not save them.”

Mr. Manley observed that his once noisy companion was silent and thoughtful.

"Sir," said the poor girl, timidly, "this is not true which you have told me?"

"Indeed," said he, "it is."

"Who told you so, sir?"

"The Bible," rejoined Mr. Manley.

"And is it in the Bible, sir?"

"See, here it is," replied he, as he led her to the lamp in the passage. "See, here is the text—1 Timothy i. 15—and observe, he who wrote it calls himself 'the chief of sinners.'"

Mr. Manley had pointed with his finger to the verse, and as she leaned forward to read it, he fancied that he felt a tear drop on his hand. Be this as it may, he spake to her of the love of God to sinners, in sending His Son into the world, "that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16). He spoke of the love of Jesus, the Son of God, in dying for sinners upon the cross, "the Just for the unjust" (1 Peter iii. 18), to bring them to God. He told her that "by Him all that believe are justified from all things" (Acts xiii. 39)—that "through His name, whosoever believeth on Him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts x. 43). He unfolded to her the nature of the Gospel—showed that the very word "Gospel" signifies "glad tidings"; that it proclaims in alleys and in streets, in brothels and in palaces, *salvation*—salvation to sinners as guilty, to sinners as unworthy, to sinners as sinners. He set forth the meaning of the word "grace"—free favour; unmerited, undeserved favour; that it stands directly opposite to all worthiness in the object—nay, that, if there were worthiness in the object, there could not be, in that particular, grace in the Giver (Rom. xi. 6). He endeavoured to set forth the nature of Gospel salvation by referring to the harlot Magdalene (Luke vii. 37); to the woman taken in adultery (John viii. 11); to the thief upon the cross (Luke xxiii. 43); to the history of the Good Samaritan (Luke x. 33—35); to the Corinthians (1 Cor. vi. 10, 11).

Reader, shall I tell thee the effect which this simple statement had upon the mind of poor Mary? It was as "good news from a far country." It was like the soft shower upon the new-mown grass. Often had she been told by her friends that God hated her because she was such a sinner. She feared so herself. To hear, therefore, that "God commendeth His love towards sinners"; to hear that Christ died for sinners, as sinners; to hear that the Gospel is glad tidings for sinners—that grace has respect only to sinners—these were good tidings of great joy. She heard it; she believed it. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the

Word of God " (Rom. x. 17). " And by Him all that believe are justified from all things " (Acts xiii. 39).

Reader, dost thou ask the cause of all this, and why it was that one ran to the play, and despised the truth, and the other stayed behind, and received the truth ? " Every man that hath heard, and learned of the Father, cometh unto Me " (John vi. 45), saith our Lord. " No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him " (John vi. 44). Here was the Father's gracious drawing upon the mind—the secret influence of the Holy Spirit of God upon the soul. The Lord opened her heart to " attend to the things that were spoken " (Acts xvi. 14).

Reader, dost thou inquire into the consequences which resulted from all this ? They were unspeakably blessed. I need scarcely say that poor Mary left her former habits, and returned to the bosom of her family. That truth which came to Mary from God, led her to God. That cross which proved to her a hiding-place from the storm was the place for secret abasement and heartfelt gratitude ; and she ever found that, in proportion as she lived beneath it day by day, she had peace with God in her conscience, and the love of God in her heart. " We love Him because He first loved us " (1 John iv. 19). That grace of God which brought salvation to her soul, taught her to " deny ungodliness and worldly lusts," and to " live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world " (Titus ii. 11).

Shall I proceed in my tale ? Her former habits had destroyed her health. It was little more than two years from the period when Mr. Manley first saw her—and he frequently saw her afterwards—when she passed into that bourne whence the traveller returns not. Mr. Manley was with her at the last, and had the unspeakable happiness of beholding her die in the peace and rest of the Gospel.

" Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire ? " (Zech. iii. 2.)

DOTH the Son of God assume our nature and become man that He may be a fit Bridegroom for our souls, to make us near unto Him ? This will be matter of our admiration to all eternity.
—*B. Keach.*

WHEN a man begins to reason concerning a Trinity in Unity, it is an evident sign that he has not been taught of God. Our wisest philosophers can go no further than tell us that gold is gold, and water is water ; but if you ask them how it is so, they must go to the First Cause, which is God. Now, if we cannot comprehend the things which are natural, how shall we discover the things which are spiritual, and which are of God ?

OUTLINE OF A SERMON BY JOHN BERRIDGE.

"Oh, woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt."—
MATTHEW xv. 28.

CHRIST'S journey to the coast of Tyre on the single account of this woman. He goes to meet her; then she is drawn to Him. She cries after Him at a distance, being afraid of approaching too near Him. Her petition is for mercy, which all the children want, and is followed with a declaration of her misery. "My daughter is vexed with a devil." And who is not? He answered her not; though He came hither on purpose to heal her daughter, yet makes no answer. Jesus sometimes tries our faith in like manner, which is designed to bring us nearer and make us cry the louder.

The disciples now interceded for her. "Send her away, for she crieth after us." Christ's silence puts no stop to the woman's cries, but makes her more importunate. Disciples should take no denial from Jesus, but follow Him up close, till an answer of peace comes. Weak believers often question whether they belong to the House of Israel. Such should imitate the conduct of this woman; continue instant in prayer for mercy, and lie at the feet of Christ, and their interest in Him will clear up itself by degrees. And from the words of Christ no one could have more cause to doubt of their interest in Him than she had. Then she came and worshipped Him, saying, "Lord, help me." This conduct of Christ brings the woman humbly to His feet with adoration and prayer, crying, "Lord, help me." At first she came only concerned for her daughter; now she seems concerned for herself, and cries, "Lord, help me." A short prayer, but effectual.

To try, and humble her yet more, Christ seems not only to reject, but also to reproach her. "It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to dogs." Now, she might have cause to conclude herself a reprobate, for Jesus had called her a dog, and such we are all by nature; snarling, snapping, greedy creatures. The woman's heart was truly humbled and broken down, else she would have resented this reproachful language; but she owns it suited her well. "Truth, Lord; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." And after having prayed importunately for mercy, now pleads ingeniously for it. "Lord, I ask not for whole bread, but for crumbs. I am a dog, 'tis true, but a dog at the Master's feet, where he ought to be; a dog under His table, expecting only crumbs—a dog's fare; and since I do not ask for whole bread, I hope the Master will not deny a poor dog His crumbs." See the

use of pleading in prayer. Let dogs keep under the Master's table, expecting crumbs. The woman being humbled and brought to Christ's feet, is sent home, not with crumbs, but two whole loaves, one for herself, and another for her daughter. The daughter cured, the mother converted.

Hence take encouragement to bring your own devils to Christ, and the devils in your children, to be cast out. Let no silence of Jesus, nor any discouragement from the word of Jesus, nor any doubts about your being relieved discourage you, but pray and plead on till the devil is cast out. Take no denial from Christ, but whilst He tries faith and patience, to bring you humbly to His feet, keep praying and expecting till He meet and surprise you with a blessing and commendation.

"BE DILIGENT."

THESE are words of comfort to you who desire to be taught of God, and who are seeking of Him the knowledge of divine things. "Seek," as He has directed you, "and you shall find." He will teach you, because He has made you teachable. He has already taught you one lesson, which is perhaps the hardest you have to learn. He has convinced you of your entire ignorance of divine things. You no longer take up your rest in the fancied abilities of nature, but are consulting the Word of God, and praying for the teaching of the Spirit of God. This is the appointed way to receive instruction; and if you wait in this way, He who directed you to the way will meet you and instruct you in it. Only remember that His glory, being the motive and end of all His dealings with men, must be your motive and end in learning divine things. You must have a single eye to His glory in asking knowledge of Him; and what He gives, you must use to His glory. His glory must be promoted by all that He teaches you, and therefore you must come to learn of Him—humble under a continual sense of your ignorance and worthlessness; and meek, disposed, like a new-born babe, to "receive the sincere milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby." And you must be a diligent scholar. You must read much and pray more. You must watch in prayer with all perseverance, and then the promise which Wisdom itself has made shall be fulfilled in you (Prov. viii. 34)—"Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors." He that watches and waits thus is blessed, for "God, who commanded light to shine out of darkness, will shine into his heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, more and more unto the perfect day."—*Romaine*.

GLIMPSES OF THE PAST.

THE CONDER.

(Concluded from page 260.)

IN 1732, through the kindness of Richard Pain, pastor of the Church in Petticoat Lane, London, Mr. Conder was recommended as a candidate for the King's Head Society; and before entering, it was necessary that he should send a written account of his experience. This put him upon close thought and examination. He had, however, to write that he made conscience of secret prayer, and hearing the Word that some time before Robert Wright had preached at Hitchin, from Luke xiii. 5—"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish"—which came home to his heart with a convincing power; and that, when he came over to Royston, Mr. Pain preached from the same words, which he judged to be a particular voice of God to him, as the message was thus repeated. Some texts of Scripture which gave him relief under his convictions were added, as Isaiah i. 18—"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool"; John vi. 37—"All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." The letter was sent, and he was received by the committee.

He began his ministry in 1738, and preached his first sermon in Mr. Hill's Meeting House, from Romans i. 16—"For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," &c.

Soon after, being invited occasionally to preach at Cambridge, he received a call from the people there to be their pastor, which he accepted on September 27th, 1739. Here he continued about sixteen years, with acceptance and usefulness. In particular, one elderly woman, who had unprofitably attended on the preaching of Mr. Joseph Hussey, was by his means awakened, and afterwards expressed her admiration that she, who so long remained unmoved under the discourses of such an experienced and able old man, should be at last roused from her stupidity by such a stripling. The following will furnish an additional instance of the success attending his labours in early life:—

During his residence at Cambridge, having taken a ride to Peterborough, for the benefit of the air, on his return he saw a gentleman in a private lane at some distance, standing by his horse. As he approached, the supposed gentleman mounted, and coming up to him, demanded his money. Mr. Conder immediately recognized him as a former inhabitant of Cambridge, but

thought it prudent to conceal his knowledge. Not satisfied with receiving all his cash, to the amount of several guineas, the highwayman asked him for his watch. This being a family piece, he pleaded hard to retain it; but the man persisting in a menacing tone in his demand, he surrendered it. Mr. Conder was a man of tender sympathy, which led him to commiserate an unhappy man, whose evil practices were leading him in hasty strides to the chambers of death. He immediately addressed him with great civility, inquired what way he was going, and proposed, if agreeable, to ride in company, assuring him at the same time that he need not entertain the least fearful apprehension upon his account. His manner won upon the robber, and opened the way for a conversation.

During the robbery itself, the man, with all his assumed courage, could not conceal the agitation of his mind. Mr. Conder suggested that his present mode of life was dangerous. The robber urged the common plea of necessity. Mr. Conder represented that it was an unpleasant, and commonly a fatal necessity, as it was not only a trespass upon the rights of society and the authority of God, but would subject him to a dreadful penalty in the life that now is, as well as in that which is to come. Here he entreated him to desist from these pernicious habits—urged him to repentance, assuring him that there was forgiveness, through Jesus Christ, for the most atrocious offenders, and that he had no doubt, if he implored direction from above, but Providence would so direct his way as to enable him to provide things honestly in the sight of all men.

This conversation appeared to make a deep impression, the immediate effect of which was, the robber took the watch, and returned it to him, saying he could not think of retaining it. As they continued their discourse, he took the money out of his pocket, and tendered that also, saying that his conscience would not permit him to keep it; but Mr. Conder declined to receive it, begging him not to consider it as forced from him, but as the gift of benevolence to a necessitous man. At this instance of generosity, he appeared greatly affected. Coming nearer to Cambridge, the robber told him he was under a necessity of leaving him, and, on parting, wept considerably, saying he hoped he should attend to his advice. He then took a cross-road on the skirts of the town; but, having previously committed other robberies in the neighbourhood, was almost immediately apprehended. Mr. Conder continued his ride leisurely, and, on his arrival at Cambridge, was greatly surprised to meet him in the street, in the custody of the persons who took him. On his committal to the castle, he sent for his spiritual monitor, who found him in very great distress. During his confinement, both before

and after trial, he made him repeated visits, which were rendered useful ; and at his execution, he had every reason to believe he died a real convert.

On the 8th of March, 1744, Mr. Conder married the daughter of John Flindell, of Ipswich. He continued at Cambridge about ten years after his marriage, being appointed in 1754 to the tutorship of Mile End Academy. In October, 1759, he was chosen one of the preachers at Pinners' Hall, and a year or two afterwards the University of Aberdeen, without his knowledge, conferred upon him the degree of D.D.

In January, 1769, it pleased God to visit him with a severe trial, by the sudden death of his son William, in the twentieth year of his age, which so much affected him as to give a shock to his constitution from which he never recovered.

It was the constant object of his ministrations to exalt Christ in His Person, offices, and grace, as the only hope of poor sinners. Though he did not enjoy those raptures which some have experienced in dying circumstances, yet he possessed a tranquillity of mind, a resignation to the divine will, and a comfortable hope of a blessed immortality.

To a friend, after having recovered from an illness, he said, "Hitherto the Lord hath helped ; and blessed be my Rock. He seems to be sending a poor unprofitable weak worm to take another little turn in the wilderness—for what farther service in the family or Church of God I desire to leave to His all-wise disposal ; and I bless His name He has favoured me with a calm, resigned frame through this visitation. Nature's enemy seems to work by slow and secret efforts, and not by apparent violence. But I would be dumb, and not open my mouth. God's time and ways are best. I submissively wait till my change come, and believe that all will be well."

About six weeks before his dissolution, it pleased the Lord to afflict him with a paralytic stroke, which entirely disabled him from public service. Mr. Bennett going to see him soon after, and being much affected at his situation, he said to him, "Well, my brother, it is now over with me for this life. How long I may have to suffer in this way, ere I get my dismissal, I cannot say. I desire to leave it. But I bless God I can say, with Dr. Grosvenor, that I have no doubt but that all things are rightly settled between me and my Master, and all that I am now concerned about is, to take a decent farewell of the world."

At another time he said, with his usual cheerfulness, that had he his life to spend over again, he would preach the same Gospel, for it was the truth of God, and that he would neither change Gospel nor state with any one. He frequently exhorted his children to think of those words, "God is our refuge and strength ;

a very present help in trouble," saying, "I have found Him so"; to which he added, "Those who eye Providence shall never want a Providence to eye."

On the morning of the day on which he was seized with the immediate stroke of death, hearing the bells of Hackney ringing, he asked why they rang so, and being answered that it was the Restoration Day, he said, "Who knows but it may be my restoration day?" About an hour afterwards he had another stroke. After this he never spoke again, but continued motionless till a few minutes after one in the morning of the 30th of May, 1781, when he fell asleep in Jesus, aged sixty-seven years. He was interred on the following Tuesday, in Bunhill Fields. Mr. Bennett delivered the address at the interment, and on the following Sabbath, Mr. James Webb preached a funeral sermon to a crowded auditory, from 1 Thessalonians v. 24—"Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it."

R. F. R.

A BEGGAR'S PLEA.

A BEGGAR, Lord, knocks at Thy gate—
A beggar known to Thee;
As shameless, as importunate,
As beggar well can be.

Lord, hear the begging voice of Faith!
Regard her looks and cries!
For she will beg while she has breath;
Look up while she hath eyes.

Thou, Lord, to all art good and kind;
Stretch forth Thine hand and say—
"In Me the poor a Friend shall find;
Take this, and go thy way."

But, Lord, when this I've got, I want
Straight a new alms from Thee;
And, like the beggar, I must haunt
The door that's kind to me.

Beg on, my faith; the good Lord hears;
He won't offended be;
Thy cries plead powerful in His ears;
His bowels move for thee.

P. F.

HE that does not know those things which are of use and necessity for him to know, is but an ignorant man, whatever he may know besides.—*Tillotson*.

EXTRACTS FROM TWO FRIENDLY EPISTLES.

MY DEAR FRIEND AND BELOVED BROTHER IN THE LORD,—
Your very kind note came just at the right time. I had been feeling weary, poorly, and found myself mentally praying the Lord for a crumb of mercy—a small crumb. A quarter of a crumb, I said, would be so acceptable, for even a quarter of a crumb is a genuine part of the loaf. And then I read your kind note. It softened my heart, and wetted my eyes for a few moments; and the “hope against hope” fresh courage took for a short season, and the Lord seemed more precious and gracious in taking notice of such as I, who oftentimes feel that mercy for such as me, settled before the world began, seems too good to be true. How it shows the need of faith of God’s own giving to “compel me to come in”!

A dear friend, eighty-six years of age, wrote to me a few days since, to say she had lately felt comforted and encouraged by those two verses by Erskine—

“Canst thou, whate’er becomes of thee,
Still wish His Zion well,
And joy in her prosperity?
Thy Husband loves thy zeal.

“Dost thou admire His grace to some,
Though thou shouldst never share?
Mercy to thee shall also come—
Thy Husband has to spare.”

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I am feeling very poorly at present. I thank you very much for your kind words of encouragement from time to time. I hope you are stronger and better than you have been of late.

I think, if the Lord is so particular as to number the hairs of the head, how much more would He prevent weakness and sickness coming upon His people, if He did not see they were good for them, and a “needs-be” for it so to be! So dear Berridge says—

“If sick, or lame, or poor,
Or by the world abhorred,
Whatever cross lays at thy door,
It cometh from the Lord,”

and all to “work together” for their good and the glory of God. Peter “toiled all the night, and caught nothing,” but it was working together for his good, and to make a way for the display of divine power in catching a multitude of fishes. When Jesus gave the word to let down the net, then they wanted help to bring

them ashore ; and don't you want help to bring (instrumentally) some Gospel fish ashore, which the Lord hath sent into the Gospel net ? Yes, I'm sure you do ; and by-and-by Jesus will say, in effect, to you, "Come away ! Come away ! Leave the fish alone. Come and dine. Come away from toiling, hauling, and pulling and mending your nets, and come and dine with Jesus, 'which is far better,' where the inhabitants shall 'no more say, they are sick.'" "Sorrow and sighing are fled away," and Jesus leads to fountains of living waters, and wipes tears away from all faces.

Forgive all amiss. My pen has run on further than I thought to write. With love,
D. F.

SOME OF THE LAST WORDS OF MISS COODE.

[The following sentences were gathered as they fell from the lips of Miss Coode during her last few days upon earth. Had her mind been more clear, much more might no doubt have been collected together. We knew her for some years, and enjoyed much spiritual intercourse with her. She was a gracious person—one who knew much of the Word and truth of God—but always expressed herself as a seeker after clear spiritual work in her soul and an assurance of her interest in Christ. This she was no doubt favoured with in her last days, to the joy of her heart.—Ed.]

FROM February 18th, the following sentences were, among many, uttered by her during her illness :—

At one time she was heard to say, "My Beloved is mine." "Thou art all fair, my Love." Then, as if answering to the voice, she said, "Is it Thee, dear Lord ? Is it Thy voice ? Oh, how wonderful !"

February 21st.—She called, "Eliza." I replied, "I am here." She looked up with a sweet smile, and said, "He is my God"; and shortly after she was heard to whisper, "He went down into the pit." The sentence was taken up—"to bring up His prisoners." She smiled and said, "Yes, that was it—that is it." She often spoke of the Lord's goodness to her, and said, "He is merciful."

February 28th.—She said, "Praise the Lord for me." On the same day, speaking of heaven, she said, "We cannot comprehend it, but Christ will be All."

March 2nd.—She was very restless all night, but seemed very happy, and was heard to say, "Glory ! glory ! Is it for one so vile as me ? Yes. Oh, exalt Him ! He hung upon the tree. Come, dear Lord, and take me to Thyself ! I want to praise Thee—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. My God ! My Father ! He is a Fountain, a Sea ! How purifying ! Lord, my hope is in Thee. What I have

now, and what I hope to have ! What riches ! Lord, here I am ! Come, Lord, I beseech Thee ! Come and show me Thy glory, and Thy name shall have all the glory, now and for ever. Let Thy arm bless me and uphold me, and Thy name shall have all the praise." This she repeated many times over, and her sweet smile plainly told she was holding sweet communion with her God. When asked if she felt Christ to be precious, she took my hand, and said, "Yes, Christ is very precious to me"; and she further remarked, "You seem to see it in me. Yes, He is King of kings, and Lord of lords; and yet He looks down upon me and blesses me, and I believe He will."

March 3rd.—She was lying in a sweet frame of mind, in sweet communion with the Lord.

March 4th.—She was very ill, but laid blessing and praising the Lord for His goodness to her, and begging Him to take her to Himself; and to all appearance she seemed near her end.

March 6th.—Still weaker, but her soul rejoicing in God her Saviour. She said to me, "I long to go." After a little time, she said, "I see Him ! I see Him !" With a sweet smile and glancing upwards, she said, "He is my God. I have longed to say so, but I can now"; then added, "It is said, 'All Thy children shall be taught upwards,'" pointing with her finger upwards; and afterwards said, "Oh, I long to see Him ! I shall want nothing more." Then she whispered, "But there is death, death ! Oh, death !" When reminded that her Lord had laid in the grave, and had perfumed it, and, having taken away the sting, had passed on before His people, as their Forerunner, she smiled, and said, "Yes."

March 27th.—She said, "I have often feared it was not for me, but I know now it is mine. The words came to me this morning, 'It is thine,' and I asked how it could be made mine ? It is so wonderful, and it was told me how it is mine in a few words." When asked what the words were, she replied, "The merits of Christ; nothing of mine." After a time, while lying as if her soul was full of joy, she said, "He will do His own work in the soul. I am certain of it. And to think it is mine—it is so wonderful ! He is Wisdom, and tells me He will lead me up to Himself, and I believe it."

The foregoing sentences are given in the words used by her, and will be perceived to differ a little from what might have been expected had her mind been clear. After this, for a week or two, there seemed an improvement in her health; but she was taken worse on the 12th of April, and sank rapidly. After that time her speech was very difficult to understand; but we feel assured she had some seasons of sweet fellowship with the Lord, and on April 27th she quietly passed away, to be for ever with Him she loved.

“WHERE IS THY GOD?”

(PSALM xlii. 3.)

OF all the questions that are put to the child of God, none seem to be more perplexing than this—“Where is thy God?” for it strikes right home to the tenderest part of the soul’s feelings, harrowing them to the greatest extreme. It is the more distressing because of the position of the soul at the time, and it is distressing on account of its continuous application.

In the first place, let us consider the state the soul is in when the question is put. But we will not stay to consider whether the Psalmist was in a literal wilderness, driven there by a rebellious son, or otherwise; or whether he was literally separated from the literal tabernacle, “for the king’s business requires haste”; and it is quite possible for the soul to be as distressed in the tabernacle as out of it. Suffice it for the present to say that the mind of the Psalmist was in a most disturbed state, and this was the result of the Lord hiding His face from him. Oh, how true is that saying, “Thou hidest Thy face, and I am troubled”! And oh, what an evidence of love to the Lord that, when He withdraws His smiling face, he has nothing but sorrow in his heart until the Lord returns, and looks in mercy upon him again! And when the Lord withholds the light of His countenance, how apt the poor thing is to come to wrong conclusions respecting the Lord’s dealings with him, and say, with dear Jacob, “Everything is going against me, and even the Lord refuses to hear my cry. I seem to be shut out from all communion with Him—yea, I seem to be alone, and my tears are my only meat day and night; and by reason of my roaring, my bones cleave to my skin. ‘When shall I come and appear before God?’ for my enemies reproach me daily, saying, ‘Where is thy God?’”

Let us look at the question, in the next place, as a taunt from the enemy who “goes about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.” “And now,” says this enemy, “you say, ‘When shall I come and appear before God?’ Now, *where* do you think of finding Him? You seek Him on your knees, but is He there? And if not there, where do you expect to find Him? You seek Him at the mercy-seat—is He there? You seek Him among His people—is He there? You seek Him in your past experience—is He there? You boast of Him in His Word—is He there? You boast of Him in your circumstances—is He there? You boast of Him in spreading your complaints before Him—is He there?”

In the next place, the enemy asks him what relation the Lord ever bore to him, saying, “‘Where is thy God?’ Have you any reason to believe that the Lord has ever done anything for you

as a God of grace? If this God has a favour to you, where is He now, when you need Him so much? To His own people the Lord says, 'Call upon Me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee'; but in all thy callings, 'where is thy God?'

Hence, in the next place, the question comes as a temptation, first, to doubt the goodness of God—"If the Lord be with us, why then is all this evil befallen us? . . . The Lord has forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites'; and where is the goodness of God in allowing this confusion and dismay to seize thee?" And, in the second place, it comes as a temptation to doubt His faithfulness, "for," says he, "the Lord has promised to be thy Guide even unto death; but 'where is now thy God?'" And, in the third place, it comes as a temptation to doubt the truthfulness of God, "for has He not said, 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee'?" but 'where is now thy God?'" And, in the last place, it comes as a temptation to doubt the existence of a God at all, "for wherein," says the enemy, "is the difference between thy God and Baal, whose worshippers called from morning till evening, but there was no voice nor answer? But you say your God is the God of the whole earth, as a God of providence; and you believe it is true of some of old that 'they fell down, and there was none to help: then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and He saved them out of their distresses.' But you are down, and you cry, but are not helped—yea, you cry long and loud, but 'where is thy God?'" Here the poor tempted one seems completely overcome, and bursts forth with, "Why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy? As with a sword in my bones mine enemies reproach me, while they say daily unto me, Where is thy God?" But at last the Lord breaks in upon him with light and encouragement, reviving his hope, and enabling him to say—

"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."

"Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise Him who is the health of my countenance and my God."

Northampton.

W. C.

WELLS.—In Eastern countries wells are very generally covered over with a large slab, having a round hole in it large enough to let down the leathern bucket or earthen jar. Into this hole a heavy stone is thrust, often such as to require the united strength of two or three shepherds to remove. We read of Moses thus helping Jethro's daughters.

UNPARALLELED LOVE.

WHO can declare the love of Jesus? By what standard shall it be estimated? In what language can it be expressed? There is nothing with which it can be compared; the boldest imagination cannot grasp it. It is a depth into which angelic spirits look adoringly down, but cannot fathom; an height to which the thoughts of seraphim cannot attain. As He Himself has been loved by the Father from all eternity, in the same measure and degree does He love all who are the objects of His regard. No mind can comprehend, no imagination conceive the love of Christ; it surpasses all knowledge and all thought. And His power, like His love, is boundless, unsearchable, incomprehensible.

Obedient to His will, the waves of the Red Sea mounted into a heap, like a wall of crystal; at His command the solid rock became a fountain of waters; the impregnable walls of Jericho fell down at the sound of a trumpet, and the sun stood still in the firmament; with a word He restored life to corruption, and called the dead out of their graves: and this was but a small display of His power, a trifle for His gigantic arm. Did He not call a world into existence out of nothing, and command that to be which was not, and it stood forth? Did not His arm plant Orion in the heavens, and group the Pleiades? And yet we have seen but a shadow of His power. He can create and do His pleasure; as the Scriptures declare: "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth" (Matt. xxviii. 18). Oh! who can measure the power of His arm? His arm is like His heart, His power like His love. We have attempted a faint description of them; but the thunder of His power who can understand?

And who are the recipients of this love, and for whom is this mighty power revealed? In general, it is similarity of taste or disposition that attracts men to each other, and forms the bond of union between them. But the love of Jesus is guided by other rules. It was not the angels and cherubim who were the exclusive objects of His love. "He took not on Him the nature of angels," says St. Paul. It was not the just, the virtuous, the noble, the wise, the mighty, and the great after the flesh, that He sought, to bear them on His heart, for His love is to sinners, and His arm is stretched forth to the miserable. It was for us, the children of death, that the bowels of His mercy yearned from all eternity, and for whom His heart burned with infinite tenderness. How wondrous that love which could impel the Sovereign of the universe to lay aside His glory, and in the form of sinful flesh to descend into this dark valley of tears. A love which prompted Him to assume our griefs, the whole weight and curse of our iniquities. A love which moved Him to become the most despised

amongst the children of men, to humble Himself even unto death, and to shed His blood upon the cross. What an amazing love ! And yet it was a love for sinners, and for sinners only. It was not for angels, but for thee and me, my dear brethren, that He submitted to be thus straitened. The poor sinner is the object of His love, the curse-stricken earth the theatre of its display, and the deadened heart the subject on which it operates. And wherever He has revealed Himself in the world, He has revealed Himself as One compassionating the miserable, reclaiming the wanderer, and as the sinner's Friend. Such is the heart of Jesus ; and His arm, His power, is wielded by this heart, by this love of sinners. He has ever acted and governed in the world, as if He possessed His power solely for the deliverance, the salvation of sinners. For them He vanquished hell, and trampled Satan under His feet. For them He conquered death, and burst the bonds of the grave ; and all that He has done, or is daily performing, is designed to accomplish the salvation of sinners. What do we need more ? His heart is for us ; His power is for us. He lives not for Himself ; He lives for sinners. In this we rejoice.

But there is one peculiarity in His love, at the thought of which we should humble ourselves in the dust, and devoutly adore. In what manner, under what conditions, and at what period do you imagine it to be, that He receives the sinner to His love ? Some of you, perhaps, may be ready to reply, "When the sinner begins to think about a reformation, then Jesus also begins to love." But I say, No ; He loves him before. "But perhaps it commences when the sinner sincerely begins to enquire after, and seek the way of life." No ! long before these sincere desires arise in the sinner, he has been loved by Him who both imparts the will, and perfects the good within him. Behold, the Lord sets the sinner as a seal upon His heart—and this is something unspeakably great ! What is a seal ? It is the clear, perfect impression of a figure engraven upon a seal or signet ring. When, therefore, it is said that the Lord Jesus sets the sinner as a seal upon His heart, it can only mean that He takes a true and perfect impression of the sinner. He takes his true figure as a ruined, lost creature, with all the marks of sin broadly and clearly impressed upon him ; and when it is further said, He sets him as a seal upon His arm, it means that, before any good is in the sinner, the arm of the Lord is promised, and extended for his relief ; that for his salvation, the power and love of Jesus are united. And thus it really is ! Yes, believe it : before a spark of the new life had been kindled within you, before the smallest change had taken place, you were already received to the love of Jesus ; for how had you otherwise become converted and believing, had not the sustaining love of Him who is the Author and Finisher of faith

been previously imparted to you? For that you have not converted yourself you are perfectly convinced. Every one who has undergone this change confesses, with deep humiliation, "I have not chosen Thee, but Thou hast chosen me." When you were still in your iniquities, and entertained not the most distant thought of submitting your heart to God, even then the Saviour's love had sought you out. He had placed you as a seal upon His heart—that is, you had become the object of His merciful love; your image, with all the stains of sin upon it, was impressed upon His heart; and when you really were converted to the Lord, then His arm executed in you the eternal counsels of His love. Yes, on every one who is born again, the words of the Lord are fulfilled, "I have loved thee"—not from the moment of thy conversion—but, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." In thine iniquities have I loved thee; as a sinner wert thou engraven on My heart. I set thee as a seal upon my heart, as a seal upon My arm! Before thou calledst, I heard and answered thee. Behold, this is the great, the free love of our Surety!

F. W. KRUMMACHER, D.D.

PLEADING FOR FORGIVENESS.

WILT Thou forgive that sin where I begun,
Which was my sin, though it were done before?
WILT Thou forgive that sin through which I run,
And doe run still, though still I doe implore?
When Thou hast done, Thou hast not done,
For I have more.

WILT Thou forgive that sin which I have won
Others to sin, and made my sin their dore?
WILT Thou forgive that sin which I did shun
A year or two, but wallowed in a score?
When Thou hast done, Thou hast not done,
For I have more.

I have a sin of fear that, when I've spun
My last thread, I shall perish on the shore;
But sweare by Thyselfe that, at my death, Thy Sonne
Shall shine as He shines now and heretofore:
And, having done that, Thou hast done;
I fear no more.

JOHN DONNE.*

* This quaint but beautiful and expressive hymn was composed by John Donne. He was Dean of St. Paul's ten years. He died on March 31st, 1631.

THE ANXIOUS INQUIRER'S PAGE.

CHILDREN OF LIGHT.—A WORD TO THE "LITTLE ONES" OF THE FAMILY.

"*Ye are all the children of light.*"—1 THESSALONIANS v. 5.

THE Lord Jesus bade Peter feed the lambs as well as the sheep. In the storehouse of the Gospel, there is not only "strong meat for those of full age," but also "milk for babes," and crumbs for children. The "babes" in grace are usually well looked after, and so are the "young men" and the "fathers" in Israel; but those in an intermediate state, who, being weaned from the breasts, are no longer "dandled on the knees," but are commencing in the school of "much tribulation" that discipline of experience by which (under the teaching of the Holy Spirit) they shall be fitted for after service in the Lord's household—these are, for some reason not very apparent, apt to be neglected. We would fain, at this time, bring the bread-basket to the *children*, and, if the Lord will be pleased to bestow a few crumbs, He shall have the glory.

By His gracious assistance, we will first consider the children—their place in the family; secondly, the peculiar description of the text—they are "children of light."

1. *The Children.*—By nature the "children of wrath, even as others," "children of the night," "children of disobedience," a change has taken place in their state, and they have become manifestly (what they were in the covenant from all eternity) the "*children of God.*" The process by which this change is effected is by the new birth—a transition from death to life, called "regeneration." The soul, "born again of incorruptible seed," possesses a "newness of life." To him, "old things are passed away; all things have become new." Breathing after Jesus, desiring to be clothed with His righteousness, seeking the kingdom of God, crying for mercy, feeling the importance of eternal realities, longing for pardon and peace, are new things indeed. Ere long, there is a tasting the joys of hope, a sweet glimpse of the love and mercy of Jesus, and a blessed reaching forth of the hand of faith, to lay hold of His righteousness. Jesus is revealed in His ability and willingness to save. His blood is applied, and the dear soul rejoices in the love of a reconciled God and Father.

The child now thinks he knows everything, expects his joys to last for ever, and supposes he will never know a lower or more uncomfortable place than his Father's knee, rejoicing in the consolations of the Gospel. Presently the weaning-time comes. Joys abate; consolations are withheld; living by feeling in the light is exchanged for living by faith in the dark. By these

changes the soul is brought down into the dust of self-abasement before God, and here he learns his littleness, according to the testimony of the Lord Jesus, "Except ye become as *little children*, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (John xviii. 3).

These children of the King, then, are little in *stature*, and are made to find they cannot reach very high. If saints at all, they each confess to be "less than the least." The object of the Lord's dealings with them is, to teach them how little they are; and when this is learnt, they have grown from babes to be little children. To them John addressed no small part of his Epistles. They have also but little strength, and so cannot do much—indeed, they daily find they have no strength and no might of their own, and, from sheer weakness and helplessness, they can do little more than cling unto Him. Unable to progress as they would, the word is verified in their experience—"He that believeth shall not make haste." They are not able to go as fast as Arminians, nor as far as Antinomians, and so are despised by both for their littleness.

Moreover, their *gifts* are but small. They have, it is true, a little life and a little light, but so insignificant (at least in their own eyes), and so much hidden, that at times they are unable to discern any at all. They are not always sure that their faith is right, their hope genuine, or their love real. These doubts arise from the smallness of their graces. To this must be added their weakness, for not only are they so little as to be frequently unseen, but also so weak as to be sometimes scarcely felt.

The little ones are terribly tried over these puzzling lessons; but, after all, the size or extent of the graces of the Spirit is not of so much importance as their reality. A little that is real is infinitely more valuable than much that is counterfeit. It is written—"A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked" (Psa. xxxvii. 16). It is the same with their knowledge of divine things. That knowledge of self, sin, Christ, and grace, which is acquired by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, makes the heart "wise unto salvation," whilst that which is obtained otherwise results merely in

"Notions resting in the head,
Which only feed the flesh."

An ounce of the former is worth a ton of the latter. Thus these small children of the family of grace are little in stature, strength, gifts, and knowledge.

They have, however, *great needs*. On one occasion, Jesus took a little child and set him in the midst of the disciples, for a pattern and example. Look at him! That little child

possesses nothing at all but what is given him by his father or his friends. So destitute by nature, but so enriched by grace with all needful blessings, is every child of light—dependent for everything upon the love of his heavenly Father, the grace of his Elder Brother, and the communications of his best and ever-present Friend, the Holy and ever-blessed Spirit.

Let us notice again that the children of God bear a remarkable likeness to their Father. They love what He loves, and hate what He hates. God loves His Son; so do they. He loves His Word, and has "magnified it above all His name"; so do they. The Lord loves His own people; so do they. He loves righteousness; so do they. And, as Jehovah hates sin and error, they do likewise.

The dear children of God depend upon a Father's hand to support them when they faint, by reason of their little strength. They need a Father's rod to correct them when they err, a Father's love to comfort them in all their distresses, a Father's eye to guide them, and a Father's counsel to instruct them. Their needs are all supplied; and, preserved by their Father's tender care, the little children hold on their way till they grow to the stature of perfect men in Christ Jesus.

(To be continued.)

DEATH OF MARTIN LUTHER'S DAUGHTER.

WHEN Luther's little daughter, Madeleine, died, aged fourteen years, his wife wept and lamented much. "Consider, however, dear Catherine," said Luther, "whither she is gone. She has surely made a happy journey."

When his daughter was very sick, he said, "I love her much but oh, my God, if it is Thy will to take her hence, I wish without regret to yield her up to Thee." And when she was confined to her bed, he said to her, "My dear little daughter, my little Madeleine, you would be willing to stay here with your father, and yet you would be willing to go to your other Father." She replied, "Yes, my dear father, as God will." "Dear little girl," he added, "'the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.' If the flesh is so strong, what will become of the spirit?"

He said, among other things, "God has not given to any bishop for a thousand years so great blessings as to me. We must glorify God for His gifts. Ah! I am vexed with myself that I cannot, as I should, rejoice in heart, and give thanks. I sing now and then a little song to my Redeemer, and praise Him a little."

The night which preceded the death of Madeleine, Luther's wife had a dream. She thought she saw two beautiful youths,

splendidly apparelled, who came to take her daughter and conduct her to marriage. When Philip Melancthon came in the morning to the cloister, and asked the lady, "How is your daughter?" she told him her dream. He was much alarmed, and said to the rest, "The two youths are holy angels, who are coming to lead the virgin to the true marriage of the heavenly kingdom," and, in fact, she died the same day.

When she was in agony, and about to die, her father fell on his knees beside the bed, wept bitterly, and prayed to God that He would be pleased to save her. She fell asleep, and expired in the arms of her father. The mother was in the same room, but further from the bed, because of her great affliction. The doctor often repeated the words, "The will of God be done. Thy daughter has still a Father in heaven." Then Philip Melancthon said, "The love of parents is an image of the Divinity imprinted on the hearts of men. God loves the human race no less than parents do their children."

When she was laid on the bier, the father said, "Poor dear little Madeleine! There thou art now!" He looked at her thus stretched out, and said, "Oh, dear child, thou shalt rise again! Thou shalt shine as a star—yes, as the sun! I am very joyful in spirit, but in the flesh I am sorrowful. It is a wondrous thing to know that she is certainly in peace—that she is happy, and yet we are so sorrowful."

When the people came to assist in bearing out the body, and, according to the common custom, told him that they shared his affliction, he said to them, "Be not troubled. I have sent a saint to heaven. Oh, could we have such a death! Such a death I would accept at this hour!"

IN conversion, God, by His grace, works upon the will and affections of the sinner. It is not a mere change from one set of opinions to another. A man might turn from Judaism and profess Christianity, and yet be unconverted. Another might abjure Dissent, and enter within the pale of the Church of England, and yet be unconverted; or a member of the Church of England might, *vice versâ*, go over to the Nonconformists without any change of heart. Conversion consists in throwing off the yoke of sin, in walking by faith and not by sense, and in serving the Lord Jesus Christ instead of Satan. If a man can say from the depths of his heart, "The commandments of God are not grievous, but joyous unto me," he hath a sure test of his conversion. When he lives for holiness, he hath an infallible sign of the Spirit's work within him.

APPLES OF GOLD IN BASKETS OF SILVER.

MR. CHRISTOPHER LOVE'S LAST WORDS ON THE SCAFFOLD.

ALTHOUGH [said he] there be but little between me and death, yet this bears up my heart—there is little between me and heaven. It comforted Dr. Taylor, the martyr, when he was going to execution, that there were but two stiles between him and his Father's house. There is a lesser way between me and my Father's house—but two steps between me and glory. It is but lying down upon that block, and I shall ascend upon a throne. I am this day sailing towards the ocean of eternity through a rough passage to my haven of rest—through a red sea to the promised land. Methinks I hear God say to me, as He did to Moses, "Go up to the mount Nebo, and die there"; so to me, "Go up to Tower Hill, and die there."

Isaac said to himself that he was old, and yet he knew not the day of his death; but I cannot say so. I am young, and yet I know the day of my death, and I know the kind of my death, and the place of my death also.

I am put to death as two famous preachers of the Gospel were put to death before me—John the Baptist, and Paul the Apostle—they were both beheaded. I read also in Revelation xx. 4, the saints were beheaded for the Word of God and testimony of Jesus.

But herein is the disadvantage which I lie under in the thoughts of many. They judge that I suffer not for the Word of God, or for conscience, but for meddling with State matters. To this I shall briefly say, that it is an old trick of Satan's, to impute the cause of God's people's sufferings to be contrivements against the State, when, in truth, it is their religion and conscience they are persecuted for.

The rulers of Israel would have put Jeremiah to death upon a civil account, though indeed it was only the truth of his prophecy that made the rulers angry with him; and yet upon a civil account they pretend he must die, because he fell away to the Chaldeans, and would have brought in foreign forces to invade them. The same thing is laid to my charge, of which I am as innocent as Jeremiah was. So Paul, though he did not preach Jesus Christ, yet his enemies would have had him put to death, under the pretence that he was "a mover of sedition."

Upon a civil account my life is pretended to be taken away; whereas it is because I pursue my covenant, and will not prostitute my principles and conscience to the ambition and lusts of men. I had rather die a covenant-keeper than live a covenant-breaker.

Beloved, I am this day making a double exchange—I am changing a pulpit for a scaffold, and a scaffold for a throne. And I might add a third—I am changing the presence of this numerous multitude on Tower Hill for the innumerable company of saints and angels in heaven, the holy hill of Zion ; and I am changing a guard of soldiers for a guard of angels, which will receive me, and carry me to Abraham's bosom. This scaffold is the best pulpit that ever I preached in. In my church pulpit, God, through His grace, made me an instrument to bring others to heaven ; but in this pulpit He will bring me to heaven.

Afterwards, he said, " Though my blood be not the blood of nobles, yet it is Christian blood—minister's blood—yea, more, it is innocent blood. I magnify the riches of God's mercy and grace toward me, that I, who was born in Wales, an obscure country, and of obscure parents, should be singled out for an honourable suffering. For the first fourteen years of my life I never heard a sermon preached ; yet in the fifteenth year of my life, it pleased God to convert me. Blessed be God, who not only made me a Christian, but also a minister, judging me faithful, and putting me into the ministry, which is my glory. I had rather be a preacher in a pulpit, than a prince upon a throne. I had rather be an instrument to bring souls to heaven, than that all nations should bring tribute to me.

" Formerly," said he, " I have been under a spirit of bondage—yea, sometimes I have had more fear in drawing a tooth than now I have for cutting off my head. When fear was upon me, death was not near ; now, when death is near to me, my fear is vanished. I am comforted in this—though men kill me, they cannot damn me ; though they thrust me out of the world, yet they cannot shut me out of heaven. When I have shed my blood, I expect the full declaration of the remission of sins through the blood of Jesus Christ. I am going to my long home, and ye to your short homes ; but I shall be at my home before ye be at yours."

He prayed that, seeing he was called to do the work which he never did, he might have the strength which he never had.

IN all false religions the worshipper is taught to " apprehend " God, to make the first move towards Him, and to perform certain rites whereby to appease the wrath of His supposed Deity. Now, Christianity teaches us that it is God who " apprehends " the sinner—takes hold of him—gives him life and power to draw nigh to, and serve Him. It was a favourite saying with the Puritans, " We work not *for* life, but *from* life."

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.

Coventry, November 23rd, 1885.

DEAR FRIEND,—I hope you will excuse the liberty I take of writing to you. I feel constrained to do so, to tell you what a sweet time I had last night, whilst hearing you proclaim those precious Gospel truths. I love them, dear friend, and, as I cannot help telling our pastor (Mr. C——) when I get on well, I thought I would tell you, for your encouragement. I did feel it “good to be there”; and I hope I can say that I have felt something of what you were speaking about. I feel that there is none teacheth like Him. No; and that He is, as you said, my only stay. He is the “Chiefest among ten thousand, the altogether lovely,” to me. I trust I know something of the Holy Ghost’s teaching, and that He has given me to see what a sinner I am in His sight, and that Jesus is my precious Saviour—that He has pardoned my sins, and redeemed me by His blood, so that I can say, “My Beloved is mine, and I am His.” Yes, dear friend, I feel I can say it, and that I can also say, my feelings are set forth in the 801st hymn in Gadsby’s Selection, which came sweetly to my mind while you were speaking. I felt the last verse sweet indeed—

“O my Jesus, Thou art mine,
With all Thy grace and power!
I am now, and shall be Thine
When time shall be no more.”

Moreover, I felt I could join in with you, and “crown Him Lord of all.”

Oh, when my dear Lord is pleased to shed abroad His love in my heart, how it makes me long to obey His commands! I have again lately felt I could say, “Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul.” It is a great trial to me that I cannot follow my dear Lord in His ordinance. I do not tell you what hinders me, for I believe you know already. It is not because I have not the will, nor because I am not exercised about it, for I have been, and am still, very much concerned over it, and have been, more or less, for two years.

When you preached from the words, “The eternal God is thy Refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms,” I felt it a good time to my soul at the night service. I did realize that His everlasting arms were underneath me, to uphold, support, and help. It was sweet while contemplating the matter. I have often felt, like poor “Yeddie,” that I did not want to be disturbed; that I should have liked to have gone straight to bed when I got home,

so that I might have a little talk with my dear Jesus, and tell Him that I hoped I should live with Him for ever in glory.

I must now close, hoping you will pardon what is amiss. I have not written on purpose to tell you about myself, but to testify to the Lord's honour and glory of what He has done for my soul.

Yours unworthily,

To Mr. Burton.

E. R. C.

ANSWER TO THE FOREGOING LETTER.

Foleshill, near Coventry, December 15th, 1885.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,—I received your letter, and was pleased to hear from you. What an unspeakable mercy it is for you to have been taught by the Lord not only your sinnership, but that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners"! I am well satisfied of the truth of the words of my text upon the occasion you first refer to—"Behold, God exalteth by His power: who teacheth like Him?" He exalts sovereignly by His power the objects of His everlasting love. But before He exalts, He brings down into the dust. He strips before He clothes. He empties before He fills. He kills before He makes alive. This is His own appointed order of things. This has been the way I have learnt my lessons in divine matters. And oh, how necessary I see it to be that we should know our destitution as poor, guilty sinners in God's sight, that we may properly appreciate His mercy, and set a high value upon it!

The Holy Ghost's teaching in the soul is two-fold—that is to say, there are two inseparable branches of that teaching which all the spiritually-quickenened ones of the Most High know something of. First, there is the stripping, emptying, killing, flesh-mortifying, humbling teaching; the discovery of our sinfulness, worthlessness, insufficiency, poverty, weakness, and entire alienation from God by nature, practice, and pursuit. This line of teaching all, in some measure, are acquainted with (I set up no standard here) who are "called out of darkness into God's marvellous light." Every soul, by the Holy Ghost's teaching, is brought, sooner or later, to cry out substantially as follows—

"A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,
On Thy kind arms I fall;
Be Thou my strength and righteousness,
My Jesus, and my All."

The other branch of the Spirit's work is, to comfort, to cheer, to revive, to raise up, to feed, to lead, to strengthen, the poor timid, weak, and helpless ones. He it is who reveals the Saviour's fulness and fitness—who makes known His preciousness and beauties—who brings near the glorious robe of Christ's righteousness, and puts it, so to speak, upon the sinner's naked back.

How blessedly the one fits the other ! And as the soul realizes its eternal interest in it, the heart, and tongue too sometimes, praise the Provider and Bestower of it, feeling the language of the Church of old very suitable and deeply expressive—"I will greatly rejoice in the Lord ; my soul shall be joyful in my God ; for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation ; He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness."

My dear young friend, all divine teaching in the heart tends to lay the sinner low and to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ. That which is contrary to this cannot be of the Lord, I am quite sure. I am glad you found it good to be in the Lord's house on the Sunday evening. How mysteriously the Lord sometimes works through the ministry of His Word ! His servant, the preacher, perhaps may feel little or no sweetness resting upon his own soul whilst speaking, but some poor soul or souls are being favoured to realize most preciousely the truth of the words—"He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass, and as showers that water the earth." Sometimes the Gospel rain rests upon the preacher's soul, and whilst he feels his heart warmed with heavenly love, he testifies with all his powers of divine mercy and goodness ; but his hearers may feel, for the most part, dry and barren. By these contrary workings the Lord mortifies the flesh, hides pride from the eyes, and secures to Himself all the glory of His own work.

Upon the occasion you speak of, I felt but little dew resting upon my spirit. I had my turn in the morning. For the most part, I fare better, as to comfort, at the morning than what I do at the evening services. Still, it is not always so with me, nor do I think it is with others, whether speakers or listeners. We are sometimes profited, dear friend, are we not, when we are not comforted ? I believe the Lord looks more after the former than the latter ; but His poor short-sighted children often look more after comfort than profit.

I am glad, dear Edith, to find that your mind is sometimes exercised about publicly professing your love to the Lord Jesus. That which now hinders may be unexpectedly, and perhaps suddenly, taken out of the way, or it may be otherwise. From what I have been told, I expect what it is that prevents you. Well, my advice is, "Wait on the Lord : be of good courage." Try to make it a matter of prayer. Cowper, in that sweet hymn of his on prayer, says—

" Prayer makes the darkened cloud withdraw ;
Prayer climbs the ladder Jacob saw ;
Gives exercise to faith and love ;
Brings every blessing from above."

Many besides yourself have had difficulties in their way at times over the self-same step, but eventually a way has been made by Him who says, "Them that honour Me I will honour, while those that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed." He knows your heart in connection with the matter, and so sure as your desire arises from love to His dear name, so sure will He, in His own time and gracious way, ratify His word, "Delight thyself also in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart."

That He may make the way straight, constrain you to come into the gates of Zion, to "declare what He hath done for your soul," and that I may be there to hear, is my earnest desire.

Yours in Him,

J. BURTON.

FAITH, HOPE, LOVE, DESIRE, AND PATIENCE.

FAITH says, "Look yonder ; see the crown
Laid up in heaven above ;"
HOPE says, "Anon it shall be mine ;"
" 'Tis my request," says LOVE.

DESIRE saith, "What ! is there my crown ?
Then to that place I'll flee ;
I cannot bear a longer stay ;
My rest I fain would see."

"But stay," says PATIENCE ; "wait awhile ;
The crown 's for those that fight ;
The prize for those that run the race
By faith, and not by sight."

Thus FAITH doth take a pleasing view ;
HOPE waits ; LOVE sits and sings ;
DESIRE, she flutters to be gone,
But PATIENCE clips her wings.

MARY.

It has been remarked that moralists as little think of putting all their maxims into practice as shoemakers think of wearing all the boots and shoes they make.

THE DEAD SEA.—The water is perfectly clear and transparent ; the taste is bitter and salt, far beyond that of the ocean. It acts upon the tongue and mouth like alum ; smarts in the eye like camphor, producing a burning, pricking sensation ; and it stiffens the hair of the head much like pomatum. Although there may be a breeze, the water lays perfectly calm and motionless. No fish lives in the water, but birds fly over it unharmed.
—*The Land and the Book.*

The Sower, December, 1896.



WILLIAM TYNDALL.

THE LIFE OF WILLIAM TYNDALL.

WILLIAM TYNDALL, a faithful minister and martyr of Christ, memorable for having made the first translation of the Bible that was printed in English, was born on the borders of Wales, some time before the year 1500. He was brought up from a child in the University of Oxford, where, as he advanced in years, he increased in the knowledge of the learned languages. He applied himself especially to the study of the Holy Scriptures, which he read with a meek and humble spirit, and with prayer for heavenly wisdom to direct him. Nor was he satisfied to hide under a bushel the light which he received from them; for, while he was living in Magdalen Hall, he read private lectures in divinity to some of the students and Fellows of Magdalen College, and instructed them in the knowledge and truth of the blessed Word of God. Being likewise a man of virtuous and godly living, he was greatly esteemed by those who knew him.

Having taken his degrees at Oxford, he removed to Cambridge, where he abode some time, during which he acquired more learning, and was further ripened in the knowledge of the Bible. From thence he went to reside with Sir J. Welch, a knight in Gloucestershire, as tutor to his children. This gentleman kept open house in a very hospitable manner, and frequently had at his table some of the beneficed and dignified clergy of his neighbourhood, with whom Tyndall often discoursed about the learned men of the day, as Luther and Erasmus, the controversies in religion, and the doctrines of the Holy Scriptures. In these conversations, Tyndall was accustomed to open his mind very freely, and, when they differed from him, he would point out the texts of Scripture which confirmed his assertions and confuted their errors.

At length the priests of the country began to take offence at his talking so much about the Bible, and called him a "heretic," railing against him in the ale-houses and other places to which they resorted. They, moreover, accused him to the Chancellor of the Bishop's court, who cited Tyndall to appear before him, and answer the charges which had been brought against him. When he appeared, the Chancellor threatened him grievously, bitterly reviling him, and laying many things to his charge which no accuser appeared to make good. After several examinations, Tyndall was set at liberty, and returned to the house of his patron.

Here he employed himself in translating a book written by Erasmus, entitled, "The Christian Soldier's Manual," which, when finished, he gave to Sir J. and Lady Welch, who carefully read it, and were so far convinced of the truth, in opposition to the

Popish doctrines, that the abbots and priests, afterwards meeting with a cooler reception at their house than they had been accustomed to receive, soon declined their visits.

There lived in the neighbourhood an aged doctor (who had formerly been a Bishop's Chancellor), to whom Mr. Tyndall often went to open his mind on the doctrines of the Holy Scriptures, being an old acquaintance of his. One day, this doctor said to him, "Do not you know that the Pope is the very Antichrist of whom the Scriptures speak? But beware what you say, for if you shall be perceived to be of that opinion, it will cost you your life." He added, "I have been an officer of his; but I have given it up, and defy him and all his works." This old clergyman seems to have been Tyndall's only intimate friend, for he was so much molested by the other neighbouring priests that he was obliged to leave that part of the country.

One day, falling into the company of a learned divine, Tyndall refuted his arguments so forcibly from the Bible that the priest blasphemously exclaimed, "We had better be without God's laws than the Pope's." Tyndall, filled with zeal for the honour of God, replied, "I defy the Pope and all his laws!" and added that, if God spared his life, ere many years, he would cause a boy that drove the plough to know more of the Scriptures than the priest did, which, blessed be God, has actually come to pass in our days, by the dispersion of the Holy Bible throughout our happy country. Poor people may now know more of the Word and will of God, than the priests did in those days of Popish darkness and ignorance. By means of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and the British and Foreign Bible Society, Bibles and Testaments may be bought at very low prices. How important must these institutions be, which have supplied the sacred volume in this way to numbers who otherwise would never have possessed it! How would the blessed martyrs and reformers have rejoiced, could they have witnessed the time when several millions of copies of the Holy Scriptures should, in the course of a few years, be dispersed by means of societies established in England!

Mr. Tyndall went to London, and there preached for some time as he had done in the country. But, being desirous to translate the New Testament into English, as the most effectual means, in his opinion, of removing the great darkness and ignorance of the people, he thought that he might obtain the patronage of Cuthbert Tonstal, Bishop of London, who had been extolled for his learning by Erasmus, and be admitted into his family for the purpose. He therefore wrote a Latin epistle to the Bishop, but he did not receive a favourable answer. He remained in London nearly a year, and at length, finding that he should not be able

to make a translation of the New Testament with safety in England, or to get it printed in this realm, he went into Germany, where he had the assistance of John Frith, and published it about the year 1527.

At the end of this translation he addressed a letter to the learned, requesting them to amend anything which they found amiss, that the next edition might be more correct ; and writing a letter to Frith respecting it, he says, "I call God to record, against the day we shall appear before our Lord Jesus, to give a reckoning of our doings, that I never altered one syllable of God's Word against my conscience, nor would this day, if all that is in the earth, whether it be pleasure, honour, or riches, might be given me." This being published, he began to translate likewise the Old Testament.

He wrote also several treatises, among which that called, "The Obedience of a Christian Man," was the most remarkable, being frequently spoken of as the pocket companion (together with the New Testament) of many of the martyrs.

While he was in Germany, he went to see Luther and others of the learned Reformers in those quarters, after which, to be nearer his native land, he went into the Netherlands, and took up his abode at Antwerp. Having translated the five books of Moses, he determined to sail with them to Hamburg, and print them there ; but he was shipwrecked on the coast of Holland, and lost all his books and writings, so that he was compelled to begin all again. Having sustained this great loss, he went in another ship to Hamburg, where, by his appointment, Miles Coverdale, afterwards Bishop of Exeter, was waiting for him, who assisted him in his second translation.

The Popish bishops were much enraged that any part of this blessed Book should be translated into the English language, saying that it was neither lawful nor expedient for the common people to have the Scriptures in their mother tongue ; and they never rested until they had persuaded the king, Henry VIII., to issue a proclamation, forbidding the people to buy or read it, under pain of imprisonment and other punishments. This only served, however, to increase the people's curiosity, leading them to read more carefully a Book which occasioned such alarm to the Popish clergy.

The Bishop of London thought the best way to prevent the Book getting into circulation would be, to buy up all the copies that could be met with, and burn them at Paul's Cross. He, therefore, employed a person at Antwerp to procure them from Tyndall, who sold them to him, and immediately set about publishing a new and more correct edition. The Bishop was afterwards exceedingly mortified at having done this, for one Constantine,

being apprehended by Sir Thomas Moore, and questioned how Tyndall and others subsisted abroad, replied that the Bishop of London had been their chief supporter, by buying up the first edition of the New Testament to burn it, and they lived upon this money until they received the amount of the sale of the second edition.

In this circumstance, we may admire the overruling providence of God, which makes the wrath of man to turn to His praise. The Bishop little thought that he was really furthering the cause which he endeavoured to destroy.

But, in order to put a stop to the business more effectually, a man of the name of Phillips was sent to Antwerp, to form an acquaintance with Tyndall, and, by pretending to have a very great regard for him, to bring about his ruin. Tyndall, being simple and inexperienced in the wily subtleness of this world, was easily caught in the trap laid for him.

Having returned to Antwerp some time before, this hypocrite was introduced into his company. A plan was laid for his being seized in the name of the emperor, and he was carried to the castle of Filford, about eighteen miles from Antwerp. Here he remained a prisoner more than a year and a half, during which time it pleased God to bless his conversation to the conversion of the gaoler, his daughter, and others of his household.

At length, after many disputations and examinations, notwithstanding the English merchants at Antwerp did what they could to procure his release, and letters in his favour were sent from England by Lord Cromwell and others, he was condemned by a decree of the emperor at Augsburg to die as a heretic. Being brought forth to the place of execution, while he was being fastened to the stake, he cried out with fervent zeal and a loud voice, "Lord, open the King of England's eyes!" He was then strangled with a halter, and his corpse was burnt in the fire.

Thus he departed, in the year 1536, to that blessed abode "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest." He left behind him the most valuable legacy which a pure patriot could ever make to his country—the Holy Bible in his mother tongue. It was afterwards revised and corrected by the excellent Archbishop Cranmer, and being published by the king's authority, was, from the size of it, commonly called "The Great Bible," a part of which translation, namely, the Psalms, is continued in use in the Church of England to this day, that being the version which is contained in the Book of Common Prayer.

Through his great zeal and disinterestedness, Tyndall declared, before he went to Germany, that he should be content to live in any county in England on an allowance of ten pounds a year, and would bind himself to receive no more, if he might only have

authority to instruct children and preach the Gospel; and in a letter to Frith he wrote, "I take God to record in my conscience that I desire of God for myself in this world no more than that without which I cannot keep His laws, namely, to owe no man anything."

Thus, reader, you have a brief account of how the Bible was first translated and printed in the English language, and the treatment which this man of God met with for doing it, although his only desire was, to promote the eternal welfare of his fellow-countrymen. In the Bible, God has shown the way to heaven. The Lord Jesus Christ has said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me" (John xiv. 6). This plain truth the Popish priests ignored, and taught the people to pray to the Virgin Mary, and the apostles and saints in heaven, and even to wicked men, whom, although dying in their sins, they had called "saints," instead of praying to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The people were also taught to worship images and crucifixes, in direct violation of the second commandment, instead of worshipping that God who is a Spirit, and who alone is everywhere present to hear and answer prayer, and who must be worshipped "in spirit and in truth." Now that the Bible is known, by being in the English language, people may see for themselves that they are not imposed upon by such artifices as were practised in those days to enrich a profligate and corrupt priesthood, who did all they could to frighten the sick and dying out of their money, that they might put it into their own pockets.

You can now read the Bible, blessed be God, without danger, none daring to disturb you or make you afraid. The first Christians met together in the dark, "in dens and caves of the earth," to sing hymns of praise to the Lord Jesus Christ, and were put to death if they were discovered. The first Protestants in England were imprisoned and put to death, if they were found worshipping God, or reading His Word, or even if they had it in their houses. But we live in happier times. "The lines have fallen to us in pleasant places," in this respect. May we have grace given us rightly to use our great privileges, and never dishonour God by favouring men who pander to those who would gladly bring us again into bondage, had they the power and opportunity to deprive us of the liberty of conscience we now enjoy.

THE death of the flesh is the life of the spirit.

To see the Lord's hand in Providence is part of the secret with those that fear Him.

THE OLD MINISTER.

Yea, wife, we think that he had better go ;
 The Church is calling for a younger man ;
 I found it very hard to tell him so,
 And give him all our reasons for this plan—
 To tell him that his sermons are too long ;
 To tell him that his doctrines are too strong,
 And tell him that the young folks
 Seem to want a younger man.

It real'y seemed to pain him, what we said,
 And yet he took it kindly, with a smile ;
 And only once I thought he shook his head
 When I was speaking of this " essay style "
 'That younger men are using now-a-days—
 A sort of scientific paraphrase
 That makes the Bible writers
 Seem so weak and puerile.

And now, wife, since the cruel deed is done,
 I'll own to you I am dissatisfied :
 My mind runs back to when he first begun—
 Our church, the school-house on the bleak hill side.
 How things have changed ! The school-house moved away,
 A Church grown up, the pastor he grown grey :
 And now the strong young members
 Throw the worn-out man aside.

The old man spoke the service when we wed—
 Why, wife, he's been among us many years !
 How often he has prayed above our dead—
 How oft bedewed our dying with his tears !
 Why, wife, our trouble gave that look of care ;
 Our sorrows helped to blanch his snowy hair,
 As he has mingled in our griefs,
 And helped allay our fears !

The parsonage must seem to him like home ;
 Its roof has covered all he had in life :
 At his age it is hard to learn to roam,
 And seek a living in the world's mad strife.
 The village precincts mark his world below ;
 He only waits the Master's call to go
 To join the other, greater Church,
 And enter into life.

What will he do ? I'm sure I do not know ;
 He never got much pay for preaching here ;
 And what he got he used to squander so
 Among the poor—he was no financier.
 Now, aged and poor, his worn eyes nearly blind,
 The rush of progress leaves him far behind.
 Set wide the doors—the coming man
 Must find the way all clear.

ANON.

PASTOR CHINIQUY AND HIS WORK.

St. Anne, Kankakee Co., Illinois, October 13th, 1886.

VERY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST,—Please accept the renewed expression of my gratitude for your very kind and Christian letter, with the £1 from Mr. W——.

Surely my merciful God has heard my humble supplications, He has seen my tears, when He selects such instruments of His mercies, even in dear old England, to come to the rescue of His old, unprofitable servant.

Please present my respectful salutations to your lady, and both pray for

Your for ever grateful brother in Christ,
Mr. Alfred Brandon. C. CHINIQUY.

*Converted Priests' Home, St. Anne, Kankakee Co., Ills.,
 June 1st, 1886.*

TO HIS EMINENCE MONSIEUR GIBBONS,
 CARDINAL OF NEW YORK:

As you are the representative of the Pope in the United States, it is to your Eminence that I must address the solemn document of my recantation from the Church of Rome.

Born in Kentucky, of wealthy and influential Protestant parents, I was persuaded to become a Roman Catholic by a deceitful Roman Catholic governess, who, though pledged never to interfere with my religion, perfidiously spent the greater part of her time and mine in filling my young intelligence with the doctrines of Popery.

When my dear father and loving mother began to suspect that they had kept and nursed a viper in their house, who had inoculated the poison of Romanism in the veins of their darling child, they tried to show me my errors, but it was too late. I respectfully, but firmly, told them that I was a Roman Catholic—that I had been secretly baptized by a priest of Rome—and that I would live and die a Roman Catholic. More than that, I told them that I intended to be a nun.

No words can express the distress of my aged and loving parents. They died soon after, broken-hearted, after having disinherited me from that portion of the fortune which should have been mine.

But I so sincerely believed that I was to have a throne in heaven and an eternal crown of glory after my death, if I were a faithful child of the Church of Rome, that I did not care in the least for the loss of my earthly fortune.

I entered the nunnery of the Sisters of Providence, Terre Haute, to prepare myself to become a nun. But it was there that my merciful God had prepared the antidote to prevent me perishing at the feet of the idols of Rome, far away from the region of light, truth, and life, inhabited by the followers of the Lamb.

I was not long under the training of the sisters of that nunnery before I began to suspect that there was nothing but lies and deception behind the highly-coloured and so well white-washed walls of those monacal institutions. It became more evident to me every day that their vow of poverty was only a mask to become rich—that their vow of celibacy was a snare to entice accomplished young ladies into a life which my pen refuses to write—that the people would not leave a stone standing on a stone of all these nunneries, could they but know what I learned of the mysteries of iniquities concealed behind those high and thick walls.

Thinking at first that I was mistaken in the new views I was taking of the life of the nuns, and that what was going on under my eyes in that nunnery was an exceptional case, I thought I would never tell it. I gave up the Church of Rome, and went to my Protestant friends. A few months later, through failing health and persuasion, I went into the convent of the Poor Franciscans, hoping to regain my "lost faith," but this was a dream never to be realized.

Then and there I became convinced that my first impressions of the nuns were correct. Full of an unspeakable disgust and indignation, I for ever left them, to throw myself into the arms of an Evangelical Protestant Church.

However, though I was fully sure that Roman Catholicism could not be the Church of Christ, my poor heart had received so many shocks—my mind had passed through so many terrible trials—that, though sincerely desirous of being a good Protestant Christian, there were still many dark and threatening clouds on my religious horizon.

It was then, by the good providence of God, that I was permitted to read the two volumes published by Father Chiniquy—"Fifty Years in the Church of Rome," and "The Priest, the Woman, and the Confessional," and also to know him personally.

These admirable books, which your Eminence ought to read, and which ought to be in the hands of every Catholic and Protestant family, so perfectly coincided with my personal experience of Romanism—they gave such a clear knowledge of its deep though well-concealed hatred for the doctrines of the Gospel and the Word of God—that all my doubts were for ever removed.

By the kindness of a friend, I was permitted to enter the

Chicago Training School for Christian Women. There, by the earnest study of the blessed Word of God, and by the encouragement of those from whom God had removed the iron chains of Rome, I realized the unanswerable proofs of the errors of your Church. I saw clearly what is so completely ignored in the Church of Rome—that salvation—eternal life—is a gift; that forgiveness of sins is a gift; that Jesus Himself, the Lamb of God, is a Gift. My mind was brought clearly to understand the glorious Gospel truth that, if Jesus has saved me, I am saved. Yes; saved by Him, and Him alone—that I have nothing to do but to accept that great salvation—that “unspeakable gift”—*eternal life*. And, thanks be to God, I looked to the gift, and saw its beauty. I opened the lids of my Bible, and my soul accepted its promises.

Now, rich and happy in the full possession of that gift, like the Samaritan woman, I want to go back to my people, and say to them, “Come, and see the *One* who told me all my sins, and took them away. Come! He is the Saviour of the lost! Come! He is the Way, the Light, the Life of the poor sinner who receives and loves Him as the Gift of God.”

The short limits of a letter will not allow me to give you more details of the reason why I have left the Church of Rome. But in a short time (D.V.) it will be my privilege to give utterance, through the public platform, to the good news of salvation through Christ Jesus; and my experiences will shortly be published. The book I will have the honour to present to your Eminence, to show you more clearly that I did right to give up the heavy and ignominious yoke of the Pope, to follow Christ alone.

Yours very respectfully,
ELIZABETH HEADY.

MOURNING FOR THE DEAD.

WE read in Genesis xxiii. 2, “Sarah died in Kirjath-arba; the same is Hebron, in the land of Canaan; and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her.”

There is something formal in this remark, but it is in perfect accordance with present customs. Should *such* a person die in that country to-morrow, there would be a solemn public mourning and weeping, not as indicating the grief of the family so much as in honour of the dead.

The customs of the people demand that there should be loud, boisterous, uncontrollable weeping, mourning, beating of the breast, and every other external manifestation of great sorrow. Such was the funeral mourning of the great Abraham; but, besides this public tribute to the memory of Sarah, he, no doubt, sincerely lamented her death in the privacy of his own tent.

A QUESTION FOR ALL—"WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?"

BY THE LATE WILLIAM PARKS, RECTOR OF OPENSHAW.

WHAT more appropriate question than this for Christmas Day? for it is on this day we profess to commemorate the incarnation of Christ, the Son of God. But, alas! how little is known of Christ, notwithstanding the continual mention of Him! What melancholy ignorance is there spread abroad concerning Him, notwithstanding the fuss and noise there is made about Christmas! An educated heathen might well stare in amazement, if he could but see the conduct of the generality of people calling themselves Christians during Christmas time. Just fancy such an one being told all about the design of Christ coming into the world—that poor man was ruined and sentenced to eternal death for his sin, but Christ came into the world to rescue man from sin and death, and on this account men got drunk for very joy, and gormandized for delight, and took their children to church, to pray and sing in gratitude to Christ, and afterwards took them to the theatre to laugh and giggle at tomfoolery, and all for joy at Christ's birth! I ask, What would an educated heathen think of these things? Would he not be reminded of many of the Pagan services of his own country, and candidly state that there was but little difference between Christians, who boasted of the heavenly origin of their religion, and Mohammedans, or the followers of Confucius, whom they profess to despise? Doubtless, he would.

"But all Christians do not celebrate Christmas as those you condemn." Well, granted. But let me ask, Is not the general impression on Christians' minds that of carnal merriment of some sort? Is not the season called "a merry Christmas"? And are we not, as a nation, more hilarious at Christmas than at other seasons of the year? And let me ask again, What warrant have we to be hilarious, if we cannot Scripturally answer the question of our text? And if we can, how is it possible to celebrate the incarnation of Christ with carnal merriment? Oh, my hearers, it is impossible! I am no ascetic. I am not one who would forbid parents having the gratification of seeing their families around them at this season of the year. This is a social and to be admired practice. But let it not be supposed by either old or young, that they who cannot answer Scripturally the question of our text are honouring Christ by any merriment, and more especially by merriment that will not bear reflection.

Before I go into my text, suffer me to read for you a quotation

from a book called "The Two Babylons," written by a clergyman :—

"That Christmas was originally a Pagan festival is beyond all doubt. The time of the year, and the ceremonies with which it is celebrated, prove its origin. 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 ourselves—'Yule-day'—proves at once its Pagan and Babylonian origin. 'Yule' is the Chaldean name for 'infant,' a 'little child'; and, as the 25th of December was called by our Anglo-Saxon ancestors 'Yule-day,' or the 'child's-day,' *long before they came in contact with Christianity*, that sufficiently proves its real character.

"The wassail-bowl of Christmas had its precise counterpart in the 'drunken festival' of Babylon; and many of the other observances still kept up among ourselves at Christmas came from the very same quarter. The candles lighted on Christmas Eve, and used so long as the festive season lasts, were also lighted by the Pagans on the eve of the festival of the Babylonian god, to do honour to him, for it was the distinguishing peculiarity 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—in Egypt the palm, in Rome the fir. . . . Yea, the 'Christmas goose' and the 'Yule cakes' were essential articles in the worship of the Babylonish Messiah, as practised both at Egypt and at Rome."

Does not this extract throw light upon the follies, the mummeries, the midnight services, the debasing superstitions, of both Romanists and Anglicans?

My dear hearers, it is awful to reflect upon the wretched Ritualisms of many of our own clergy; and I have no hesitation in asserting that, if the laity could answer the question of our text, the clergy I speak of, and their altars and candles, would be all hustled into the street.

But now to our text, "What think ye of Christ?"

IF Jesus had not said, "Blessed are those who hunger," I know not what could keep weak Christians from despair. Many times all I can do is to find, and complain that I want Jesus. I wish to enjoy Him. Now, this is my stay. He in mercy esteems us, not by having, but desiring also. There never was a soul miscarried with longing after grace. Oh, blessed hunger, that always ends in fulness! I am sorry I can but hunger, yet would not be full, for the blessing is promised to the hungry.—*Bishop Hall.*

THE ANXIOUS INQUIRER'S PAGE.

CHILDREN OF LIGHT.—A WORD TO THE “LITTLE ONES” OF THE FAMILY.

“*Ye are all the children of light.*”—1 THESSALONIANS v. 5.

(Concluded from page 301.)

LET the little ones now try to follow us whilst we proceed to consider—

2. *The peculiar description*—“children of light.” This designation is applied to them, perhaps, for three reasons—first, because a light shines *in* them; secondly, because a light shines *on* them; thirdly, because a light shines *from* them.

First, a light shines *in* them. The fear of the Lord, which is

“An unctuous light to all that's right,
A bar to all that's wrong,”

is kindled in their hearts, and kept alive by the Spirit that gave it. This fear works by love, and is, therefore, very different to that servile fear which springs from terror. Godly fear is that holy principle within which leads its possessor to dread offending, or going contrary to a gracious God, because love to Him is the prevailing motive within. The fear of the Lord is a light which shines far more brightly than the light of natural conscience, because the latter can only discern moral evil, whilst the former discovers and makes manifest spiritual evils. It shows its happy partakers when there is the least departure in heart from the Lord's ways or the Lord's word.

Another light shining more or less brightly in the children of God is *faith*, which is humble trust in the Lord. Sometimes it burns with so dim a flame that it appears more dark than light, as smoking flax; but the Lord promises He will not quench “the smoking flax,” so faith, “though damped, yet never dies.” There is, amidst all, a clinging and cleaving to Jesus.

We see, further, the light of *love*—a sacred fire, which is produced from the application of a live coal from off the altar of God's eternal love to His elect—“We love Him because He first loved us.” Love may only exist in the form of a desire to love, but a desire to love is love; and once the flame ascends from the altar of the heart, it burns perpetually there. “Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it.” The Lord gave it, and He maintains it, although the feeble, flickering light of love ascends upwards sometimes only in what seem to be occasional flashes of desire, longings and breathings after the Lord. However, we do not desire the presence of, neither do we long for

nor sigh after, a person we do not love. These things prove the existence of the light within.

Secondly, they are called "the children of light," because a light shines *upon* them. "Unto those who fear His name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise, with healing in His wings." "Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness." This is Christ, the glorious Sun of the Gospel heavens. When, now and then, the darkness of our minds gives way, and a sweet ray of heavenly light proclaims the dawn of day after the long night of sorrow, during which the Sun was wholly hid by the earth (mark *that*), it is Jesus who arises, bringing warmth in place of coldness, quickening our souls into renewed life, making fruitful our barren hearts by the healing beams of His own sweet light and love.

Again, often the Word sheds a light upon the before darkened case and path, for it is written, "Thy Word is a light unto my path." It shows us, when it shines, where we are, which way we are going, and also reveals to us what we are. The Word is thus a light which shines upon the children of God most instructively and blessedly. The brighter this light shines, the more we see of the blackness and darkness of self, and of the beauty and perfection of Jesus. The children of grace would walk all the day long in the light of the Word, that self may be humbled and Christ exalted.

Thirdly, a light shines *from* "the children of light." I think it is the light of separation from the world (both in its profane and professing aspects), in spirit, in walk, and in conversation, which makes most manifest the distinction and difference between the children of light and the children of darkness. Yet this separation is not on the ground of any claim to superior holiness on the part of those who maintain it. Oh, no! The light of humility shines from all of them so brightly that each is willing to take the lowest place, and each feels he is "less than the least of all saints," and "chief of all sinners."

These are "the children of light."

Leicester.

E. C.

THE world knows ungodliness, but not godliness.

To be a godly man is to have the Holy Ghost for our Teacher.

WERE it possible for you to have all the righteousness of the patriarchs, apostles, and martyrs—could you perform all the good works that ever were in the world (the righteousness of Christ excepted)—it would only be fuel for the devil to puff you up with pride, without the grace of Christ.—*Romaine.*

APPLES OF GOLD IN BASKETS OF SILVER.

Certaine Questions and Answeres Touching the Doctrine of Predestination, the Use of God's Word, and Sacraments.

[These questions and answers, setting forth the views and teaching of godly men many years ago, have been copied by a friend from what is called a "Breeches Bible," printed in 1608, and sent to us for insertion in the SOWER. We believe they will be interesting to many of our readers, especially amongst the young; and hoping that they may also prove profitable to some, we are pleased to give them a place in our pages.—ED.]

Question.

Why doe men so much varie in matters of religion?

Answer.

Because all haue not the like measure of knowledge, neither do all beleue the Gospel of Christ.

Question.

What is the reason thereof?

Answer.

Because they onely beleue the Gospel and doctrine of Christ, which are ordeined unto eternall life.

Question.

Are not all ordeined unto eternall life?

Answer.

Some are vessels of wrath ordeined unto destruction, as others are vessels of mercie prepared to glorie.

Question.

How standeth it with God's iustice, that some are appointed unto damnation?

Answer.

Uery well: because all men haue in themselues sinne, which deserueth no lesse, and therefore the mercie of God is wonderfull in that Hee vouchsafeth to saue some of that sinfull race, and to bring them to the knowledge of the trueth.*

Question.

If God's ordinance and determination must of necessitie take effect, then what need any man to care? for hee that liueth well must

* God's decree is, "The soul that sinneth it shall die," and the transgressors of His law are dealt with by Him as meriting His wrath, for He neither made man a sinner nor influenced him to sin. Therefore, when He deals with transgressors, on law grounds, He does as He has appointed, because they have merited His wrath. But when He deals in mercy with those He has appointed to obtain salvation, through our Lord Jesus Christ, He does so in a way of sovereign, free, and unmerited grace, and not according to their deserts. This is what is here expressed.—ED.

needs bee damned, if hee be thereunto ordeined: and hee that liueth ill must needs be faued, if he be thereunto appointed.

Answer.

Not so: it is not possible that either the elect should alwayes be without care to doe well, or that the reprobate should haue any will thereunto. For to haue either goodwill or good worke, is a testimonie of the Spirit of God which is giuen to the Elect onely, whereby faith is so wrought in them, that, being graft in Christ, they grow in holinesse to that glory whereunto they are appointed. Neither are they so uaine as once to thinke that they may doe as they list themselves, because they are predestinate unto saluation: but rather they endeouour to walke in such good workes as God in Christ Jesus hath ordeined them unto, and prepared for them to be occupied in, to their owne comfort, stay, and assurance, and to His glorie.

Question.

But how shall I know my selfe to be one of those whom God hath ordeined to life eternall?

Answer.

By the motions of spirituall life, which belongeth onely to the children of God: by the which that life is perceiued, even as the life of this body is discerned by the sense and motions thereof.

Question.

What meane you by the motions of spirituall life?

Answer.

I meane remorse of conscience, ioyned with the lothing of sinne, and love of righteousness: the hand of faith reaching unto life eternall in Christ, the conscience comforted in distresse, and raysed up to confidence in God by the worke of His Spirit: a thankfull remembrance of God's benefits receiued, and the using of all aduersities as occasion of amendment sent from God.

Question.

Cannot such perish as at some time or other feele these motions within themselves?

Answer.

It is not possible that they should: for as God's purpose is not changeable, so Hee repenteth not of the gifts and graces of His adoption: neither doeth Hee cast off those whom Hee hath once receiued.

Question.

Why then should wee pray, by the example of Dauid, that Hee cast us not from His face, and that Hee take not His Holy Spirit from us?

Answer.

In so praying we make protestation of the weakenesse of flesh, which mooueth us to doubt: yet should not wee haue courage to aske if

wee were not assured that God will giue, according to His purpose and promise, that which wee require.

Question.

Doe the children of God fee the motions aforesaid alwayes alike ?

Answer.

No, truly : for God sometime to prooue His, seemeth to leaue them in such sort, that the flesh ouermatcheth the spirit, whereof ariseth trouble of conscience for the time : yet the Spirit of adoption is neuer taken from them that haue once receiued it, else might they perish. But as in many diseases of the body, the powers of bodily life are letted ; so in some assaults these motions of spirituall life are not perceiued, because they lie hidden in our manifold infirmities, as the fire couered with ashes. Yet, as after sicknesse commeth health, after cloudes the sunne shineth cleare : so the powers of spirituall life will more or lesse be felt and perceiued in the children of God.

Question.

What if I neuer fee these motions in myselfe, shall I despaire and thinke myselfe a castaway ?

Answer.

God forbid : for God calleth His at what time Hee seeth good : and the instruments whereby He usually calleth haue not the like effect at all times, yet it is not good to neglect the meanes whereby God hath determined to worke the saluation of His. For as ware is not melted without heate, nor clay hardened but by meanes thereof : so God useth meanes both to draw those unto Himselfe whom Hee hath appointed unto saluation, and also to bewray the wickednesse of them whom Hee iustly condemneth.

Question.

By what meanes useth God to draw men to Himselfe that they may be saued ?

Answer.

By the preaching of His Word, and the ministring of His Sacraments thereunto annexed.*

Question.

What meane you by the Word of God ?

Answer.

I meane the doctrine of the Prophets and Apostles which they receiued of the Spirit of God, and haue left written in that Booke which we commonly call the Old and New Testament.

* These are spoken of as means used by the Spirit of God, not as being sufficient of themselves in diuine teaching.—ED.

Question.

How may I be assured that it is the word of God, which that Booke containeth?

Answer.

By the maiesty of God appearing in that plaine and simple doctrine: by the purenesse, uprightnesse and holinesse thereof: by the certaintie of every thing therein affirmed: by the successe of all things according to it: by perpetuall consent which is to be seene in every part thereof: by the excellency of the matters uttered: but especially by the testimony of God's Spirit, whereby it was written, who moueth the hearts of those in whom it resteth to consent unto the Word, and reuerently to embrace it.

Question.

How doth this Word of God serue to draw men unto Him?

Answer.

When it is so preached and heard, that men may understand and learne what God teacheth: accept and receiue thankfully that which is thereby giuen, promised, and assured: and be moued with desire and dilligence to do that which it commandeth.

Question.

Doe the Sacraments * also serue to this end?

Answer.

Yea, verily: that by sight, taste, and feeling, as well as by hearing, we might be instructed, assured, and brought to obedience.

Question.

How doth our Baptisme serue hereunto?

Answer.

It teacheth us to put on Christ, that with His righteousness our sinfulness may be hidden: it assureth us that we are so graft into Christ that all our sinnes by Him are washed away: it chargeth us to die to sinne, to continue in the profession of Christ, and to loue each other.

Question.

Hath the Lord's Supper also this use?

Answer.

Yea, doubtlesse: for it teacheth that the bodie and blood of Christ crucified is the only food of the new-born children of God: it assureth that Christ is wholly theirs to giue and to continue life spirituall and heauenly to body and soule, to nourish, strengthen, refresh, and to make cheerefull the hearts of the elect: it requireth thankfull remembrance of the death of Christ, and unitie among those that doe professe Him, with a free confession of His truth.

Question.

Why is not this use of the Sacraments commonly known?

* Baptism and the Lord's Supper are here intended.—Ed.

Answer.

Because they are abused for forme, for fashion, for custome and company, without regard unto the Word, whereunto they are so annexed, that they ought not upon any necessity by any person be seuered from it, which teacheth the right use of euery thing.

Question.

I perceiue that nothing is more necessarie than the Word of God; therefore I pray you shew mee how I may attaine to some knowledge and profite thereby.

Answer.

By dilligent hearing of such as preach it, by continual and orderly exercise of reading and praying.*

Question.

What orderly exercise thinke you most convenient to be used herein?

Answer.

That as euery day, twice at the least, wee most commonly receiue foode to the nourishment of this corporall life, so no day bee let passe without some reading, in such sort that occasion thereby may bee taken to speake againe unto God by prayer, as Hee in His Word speaketh unto us: so that at the least two chapters would bee orderly and aduisedly read euery day, all other businesse, impediments, and lets set apart.

Question.

This seemeth very easie to be done: what thinke you else requisite?

Answer.

That some especiall places of Scripture be committed to memorie, that the minde may euer bee furnished with some good matter against all temptations. To which end I note these Scriptures unto you, whereunto you may ioine other at your own choice: Psalmes 139, 37, 50; Esa. 53; John 17; Rom. 8; 1 Tim. 4.

Question.

But the Scriptures are hard and not easie to understand?

Answer.

Discourage not your selfe herewith: for God maketh them easie to such as in humilitie seeke Him: and that hardnesse that you finde serueth to moue you to the more dilligence, and to make enquirie of such as haue knowledge when any doubt ariseth. That which you perceiue not at one time, God shall reueale at another; so that you shall haue your growing in grace, knowledge, and godlines, to God's glory and your owne comfort in Christ, whose Name for euer bee praised. Amen.

* These are only to be understood as means used by the Spirit of God to the end designed, not as being sufficient of themselves.—Ed.

LETTERS FOR THE YOUNG.

MY DEAR D——,—I was very pleased to hear from you once more, but did not at all expect to hear from A. B—— also. I am glad to hear you have been away, and enjoyed yourself, and hope you feel all the better for the change.

I am sorry you have been in such a low state lately, but am afraid I cannot say much to cheer you up. You have had a long experience; I have not. Perhaps I can remind you of a few things, and will try to do so. I do not think you would feel so confident in spiritual things if you always felt alike. We expect to change about. It is our nature; and, although we do not like to feel the clouds above us, yet we can scarcely expect to have the shining of God's face always. The path to heaven is full of thorns and briars; and if we did not meet with these, it would scarcely seem to be the right road. It is the trials and troubles of the present that help to sweeten the hope of a rest beyond, and we should not look forward to it so much if it was all smooth down here. God knows what is best for us, and, if He hides His face for a time, it is because He sees we need it, and He will reveal Himself again in His own time. You would not be satisfied with a false joy and a false peace, so is it not better to be downcast because of the absence of the light of the Holy Spirit for a time, and to hope for His appearing again? If you had not any desire for His presence, you would not feel His absence; so it is a mercy that you are in this slough sometimes, perhaps.

When you have tasted the happiness, and know what it is to feel His love and presence, you mourn over it when it goes from you; but ought we not rather to thank God for having given us past blessings, and pray for more, than to be so disturbed, and begin almost to doubt their reality in the past? When God sees fit, He will reveal Himself to His children, and will give them the strength to endure all the trials and temptations of a thorny path.

But I ought not to preach to you. I would rather hear what you have to say. I cannot speak from experience as you can, but I should be glad if I could; and I wish I could realize something of the peace and joy you have found in spiritual things. It is a sea full of dangers, and storms make us feel that we must be shipwrecked, unless He is at the helm. But what a mercy for us to know that He will guide us safely through, and we have His promise to do this! I feel more and more what there is to stand against, and often feel as though I must give up; but yet there is something which makes me feel I cannot, and I am very glad of it, for what is this life without a hope for the future? And yet the surrounding circumstances do make us almost feel we would rather not live—at least, I know I have often felt so.

But now I think I have said quite enough. I am almost afraid to write a letter of this kind, and sometimes wish I had never said a word on the subject. But I cannot recall what I have said, so can only hope that what I have written is right.

I must draw this to a close, or you will tire before you have read it through.

With much love to yourself and others, from

Yours ever affectionately,
L.

TIREB.

"In weariness and painfulness."—2 CORINTHIANS xi. 27.

TIREB, oh, so tired, so weary, oft am I !

Then sweetly comes the thought, " There'll be resting by-and-bye—
Rest for the weary limbs, rest for the aching head,
Rest from all toil and labour, among the quiet dead."

Tired, oh, so tired ! Oh, how I long for rest !

When shall I find it, Saviour, upon Thy loving breast ?
When wilt Thou give me wings that I may fly away
To that blest place prepared, where I shall rest for aye ?

Tired, oh, so tired ! Ah ! when will cease this pain ?

Will ease, and health, and strength be ever mine again ?

Cease, cease, my soul, to question ; it is thy Father's will
That thou shouldst bear this languor, therefore be still—be still.

Tired, oh, so tired, of the weary strife with sin ;

Of trials from without and temptations from within :

When shall the fight be finished, and all the strife be done ?
When shall the race be over, and the crown of victory won ?

Tired, oh, so tired, and Satan whispers in my breast,

" Cease for awhile this struggle, and take a little rest ;

Thou canst not ever be on guard, nor always watch and pray " ;
O God, my God, " hold Thou me up," or I shall fall away !

Let me feel that underneath is Thine everlasting arm ;

Shield me in every conflict ; protect my soul from harm ;

Help me with meek submission to rest upon Thy love ;

To bear the cross while here below, then rest with Thee above.

Soon, soon will come the glory of the long-expected day.

When the gladsome morn shall break, and the shadows flee away ;

When the Saviour in His glory, with all His saints, shall come

To gather in His people to their everlasting home.

There we shall no more hunger, shall never thirst again ;

There we shall no more weary, and never feel a pain ;

But day and night, unwearied, we shall for ever raise

To Him who loved and bought us eternal songs of praise.

ANON.

NOTICES OF BOOKS, ETC.

Letters to a Mother. With a Brief Sketch of Earlier Experiences.
By G. HAZLERIGG. Cloth, gilt-lettered, 275 pages, 2s. 6d.
Wileman, 34, Bouverie Street, London, E.C.

WE heartily commend this volume to our readers, as being full of excellent and savoury spiritual things, such as will be found helpful and encouraging to seeking, exercised souls, to whom we would say, Get it, and read a portion of it daily. The letters contain manifestations of deep-felt filial affection, with the substance of many of Mr. Hazlerigg's discourses, sent to his mother when he was from home. We believe it to be one of the best volumes of sound, experimental, and instructive spiritual matter sent forth of late years. We wish it a wide and ready sale, and hope the Lord may attend the reading of it with His divine blessing, far and near, to young and old.

Christianized Infidelity. A Review of a Book called "Cautions for Doubters." Published by the Religious Tract Society.
Price 3d. Houlston and Sons, Paternoster Buildings, London, E.C.

MR. H. B. FINCH has done good service in calling attention to the mischievous teaching to be met with in this and other books of the same kind, where Rationalism is met with nothing better than Rationalism, and the truth of God in the Scriptures is treated as a doubtful subject.

We give an extract from the preface to the review, and while recommending the review by Mr. Finch, we warn our readers against such books as the one reviewed, namely, "Cautions to Doubters":—

"These 'cautions' have been written with the laudable object of helping those who have doubts on religious subjects. It is, however, felt by the present writer to be his solemn duty to point out many remarks contained therein which appear to have a mischievous tendency. While endeavouring sincerely to reason away sceptical misgivings, the author uses arguments which may readily be turned against revealed truth, and thus become 'weapons forged for the enemy's use.' Almost all that is advanced by modern infidel writers against the truth of God is admitted to be probable. Ground is in this way yielded to the enemy, and the author, as it were, makes a wilderness, and then proclaims a reign of peace. Throughout the book is to be observed an unfortunate preference for the ignorant speculations of recent sceptical writers above the infallible authority of the Word of God. . . . I feel it to be my duty to protest against it."

THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR.

DEAR FRIENDS,—We are again closing the labours of another year ; and, in doing so, we desire to thank all who have, by pen and otherwise, so kindly and acceptably helped us. The Lord grant that their desire and ours may be richly accomplished, namely, the good of souls and the glory of God ! For these ends we labour in hope, and pray continually, believing that He who has bidden us cast the bread upon the waters, will not suffer us to labour in vain.

Oh, that all our readers who pray to God may unite with us in daily seeking His blessing upon our work ! We may be looked upon by some with an eye of contempt, and by others with evil jealousy ; but we envy them not, and desire to leave our work with the Lord, from whom their judgment and ours will surely come.

Beloved friends, may it ever be your and our concern to stand well with Him, “accepted in the Beloved,” and approved in spirit as followers and disciples of Christ. Then, assured of this, we may labour on, leaving the issue with Him who has bidden us not to be “weary in well doing,” as the reaping season will surely come round in His time.

Thanking the Lord for His mercies to us through the year, and for the many encouragements and growing success He has granted us, we likewise beg an increased interest in your prayers and sympathies, and beg of you to do what you can to spread abroad both SOWER and GLEANER still more widely among the masses, as we feel assured they are well calculated, with the Lord’s blessing, to oppose the tide of evil and error now so freely flowing from both professing and profane pens.

Brethren, help us, pray for us ; and may the Lord bless His own work, and your souls, is the prayer of

Yours in Him,

THE EDITOR.

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Printed by W. H. and L. COLLINGRIDGE, 148 and 149, Aldersgate Street, London, E

off with such violence as occasioned a large contusion over his eye, and gave such a shock to his whole frame as broke a blood-vessel within him. A neighbour that was with him recovered his horse, and setting him upon it, conducted him in this wretched condition to Mrs. Liukern's, perfectly sensible, but so weak, that he expired within a quarter of an hour. Thus, as the MS. says, the Lord having smitten the shepherd, the sheep were scattered, and though they kept up their Church state for a time, yet many increasing trials and much opposition at Croydon caused them to think of giving it up, and uniting with some of their brethren at Great Gransden, as Mr. Benjamin Dutton, a Strict Baptist minister, had come among them. Some were willing to follow the Lord fully in the ordinances of His house, and some were not; but the majority being willing, we renewed our covenant with our brethren at Gransden June 2nd, 1732, as follows: "We do, in the presence of the Lord Jesus, the awful crowned King of Sion, and in the presence of His holy angels, and people, and all besides here present, solemnly give up ourselves to the Lord, and to one another by the will of God, solemnly promising and engaging, in the aforesaid presence, to walk with the Lord and with one another in the observation of all Gospel ordinances and the discharge of all relative duties in this Church of God, and all others as the Lord shall enlighten and enable us."

But to return to the "Conders." Mr. Jabez Conder left an only child, John, afterwards Dr. Conder. The event of his father's death happening when he was between thirteen and fourteen years old made a very deep impression on his mind, and he was wont to say in after years, "Then he first knew that lesser sorrows produce tears, but greater ones stun and stupefy." After a few years, his mother married again to Mr. George Hawkes, a farmer of Clavering, Essex, but was soon after taken with a painful knot in her breast, which proved to be a stone cancer, and from which she never recovered. The celebrated Mrs. Stevens dressed her breast a long time, and noticing her son John, tried to persuade him to go to St. Omers (a Papist college) for education, but by the wisdom of God, he was enabled to choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. He removed from Mr. Hicks, of Potton, to the Grammar School at Hitchin, called the Biggin, under the care of Mr. J. Newman. Whilst here, he was taken with the small-pox, but the Lord dealt mercifully with him, and he soon recovered.

(To be continued.)

A MISER grows rich by seeming poor: an extravagant man grows poor by seeming rich.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF MR. W. H. LEE.

IN a little tract, written by Mr. Lee himself, entitled, "How a Rebel was Brought Down," we have the following interesting narrative of his conversion :—

Up to the year 1857 I was living a worldly life, without hope and without God, quite ignorant of my state before my holy and just Maker. In that year my dear wife was removed by death, leaving me with four young children, one boy and three girls, the babe half-an-hour old.

A few days after her death, grieving over my bereavement, I took the two eldest girls into a field for a walk, and being so full of trouble, I fell on my knees, which I had never done before, and entreated the Lord to provide for me and my dear children, when these words came with power to me—"The Lord will provide." I rose up, and repeated over and over, "The Lord will provide"; and He graciously provided, and raised one up to attend to their wants, and thus temporal things went on well for a time, but I still enjoying the pleasures of this world—still dead in sin. I attended the Church on the Sunday, paid all men their due, which I thought sufficed for what was required of me.

In the year 1873 I was laid on a bed of affliction with diabetes and paralysis, not being able to help myself in the least. Death now seemed to stare me in the face. I foolishly (in my heart-blindness) promised the Lord that, if He would raise me up and let me attend to my farm once more, how good I would be, as I then occupied nearly three hundred acres of land in Norfolk. But instead of the Lord raising me up at that time, my soul-trouble began. Then I cried out, "Oh, that I had never been born—that I had been as the beast that had no soul!" I then sank into great despair, fearing that I was eternally lost. My distress was so great that, had I been near a pit, I think I should have plunged into it, to rid myself of my misery, and end, as I thought, my wretched feelings. How utterly ignorant, dark, and wild is man in his fallen state!

The doctor, at this time, advised me to retire from business, as he said I should never be able to bear the fatigue and anxiety again. I then gave up, and removed to Kirkley; but being so afflicted, and scarcely able to walk, I was very troubled, not being able to hear anything for the relief of my troubled soul, and begged of the Lord to open some way for me, when, to my surprise, one day I saw some men, nearly opposite my house, preparing to build, and, upon inquiry, found it was to be a place of truth—a Strict Baptist Chapel. I then hoped the Lord was answering my desires, and bringing His Gospel nearly to my door; but I had never heard of these despised people before. My health