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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.

VOL. XIII., NEW SERIES.

1891.



LONDON :

HOULSTON AND SONS, 7, PATERNOSTER BUILDINGS;
AND E. WILMSHURST, BOOKSELLER, BLACKHEATH, S.E.

LONDON

PRINTED BY W. H. AND L. COLLINGRIDGE,
148 AND 149, ALDERSGATE STREET, E.C.

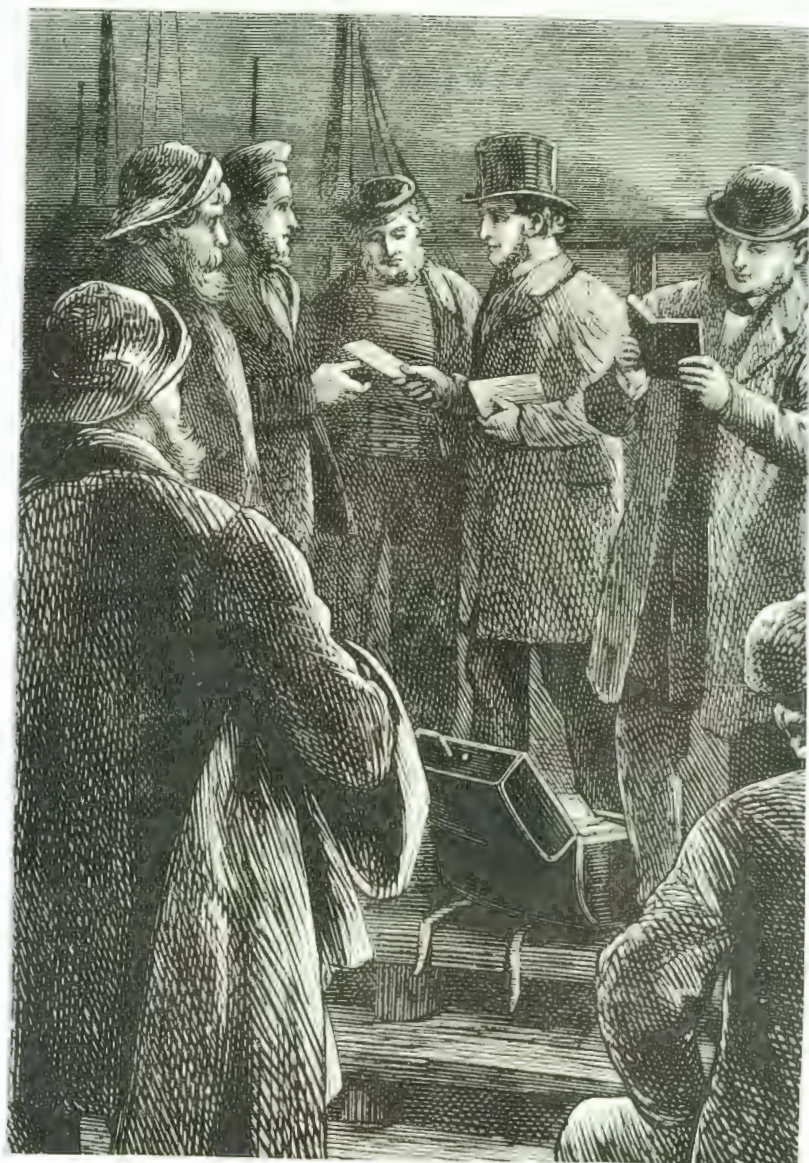
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"HE REGULARLY VISITED SOUTH WALES." (See page 11.)

THE EDITOR'S NEW YEAR'S ADDRESS.

DEARLY BELOVED FRIENDS,—We again offer our New Year's greetings to you in the name of Him who is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever," wishing you a Happy New Year in the truest sense of the word; and one thing alone can make it so, namely, a sweet experience of Divine mercy and love. If this is granted you it will give a happy tone to the commencement, and a good omen as to the future of the year, because a sense of the favour of the Lord is a pledge of good things to come, as well as a sweetening of the present portion. We pray that each of us, as we review the past, may be filled with gratitude for the goodness the Lord has made to pass before us, with repentance for our shortcomings, and with increased desire so to live by the faith of the Son of God, as to glorify Him whose disciples we profess and wish to be. Ere He was crucified, He set His disciples an example of humility by washing their feet, and He enjoined upon them, what is so essential to union, peace, and Church prosperity—love one to another (see John xiii. 34, 35).

In the present day this injunction seems to be but little heeded, and save a few cant phrases in limited party circles, but little is heard of it, except it be a lamentation by the mourners in Zion as to the sad lack of it among those who profess to be followers of Him who gave this "new commandment."

If we notice a few of the fruits arising from true charity, we may judge how far it is the prevailing principle among us or otherwise.

It is declared in Rom. xiii. 10, "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour;" and in 1 Cor. xiii. 5, "Thinketh no evil." Then all those unseemly manifestations of evil surmising, suspicion, evil speaking, misrepresentation, slander, and unkind conduct on the part of professed Christians towards others, tell a sad tale as to the spirit that actuates them. Love does not foster, nor own, such evil fruits, it is quite of a contrary nature to them. The unseemly behaviour of those who vaunt themselves, being puffed up with religious pride to the despising of others, and the fleshly prudence of those who merit the name of "Love-the-World," true charity repudiates, as being of another spirit. This want of humility shows the lack of the Spirit of Christ (John xiii. 13—17; Rom. viii. 9). And those who love the world are declared to be destitute of the love of the Father (1 John ii. 15). Charity rejoiceth in the truth, as also it does concerning those who walk in it (see 2 John, 4; 3 John, 3), and says unfeignedly, "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity" (Eph. vi. 24). That there are, and still will be, differences among such on points of Church

rule and order is certain ; but while each may claim, as to Church constitution and order, that which others ought to allow, namely, liberty of conscience to follow the course they view as Scriptural and right, none should expect others to sacrifice what they hold to be of Scriptural authority because some gracious persons differ from their views ; neither should they feel themselves to be aggrieved because those who do thus differ from them defend, in a proper spirit, what they feel called upon to profess and practise, as disciples of the Lord Jesus. Our rule, in such cases, should be the golden one laid down by the Captain of our salvation, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them" (Matt. vii. 12). Thus, when it is done "with meekness and fear," the giving "a reason of the hope that is in you" (1 Peter iii. 15) should not be esteemed an offence by those that are "of the contrary part" (Titus ii. 8). Neither, because they do not see our course to be the right one, ought they to expect us to affiliate ourselves with that which we believe to be not according to the rule given in the Word of God, since such conduct on our part would only be false charity, as esteeming the feelings of good men before the counsels of the Lord. Well would it be for the Church of Christ, if in these evil times true charity prevailed among her children, teaching us "whereto we have already attained, to walk by the same rule, and to mind the same thing" (Phil. iii. 16). Then, although minor differences might exist among the several sections of truth-loving Christians, there might be a walking together in spiritual union, without any sacrifice of principle or Church order being desired of any. This may be sneered at by some, but we ever wish to esteem the children of God as the objects of His love, let them be called by what name they may, yet we cannot, on that account, deny or trifle with things we have received of the Lord, neither can we teach that others may do so. We hold that charity and firmness are consistent companions in those who desire to honour God and love the brotherhood. Oh, that a true spirit may be found in us, so that our love to God may be shown in our loving all them that are begotten of Him (1 John v. 1). Infirmities, shortcomings, and failings may be urged as a reason for not showing the same warm love to those who are marked ones in this respect ; but may it not be well to ask, is there no beam in the eye which beholds the mote in a brother's ? Or is the judgment "without partiality" ? (James iii. 17.) Sin is not to be made light of, even though it be found in the conduct of saints. But we must remember the admonition, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness ; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Gal. vi. 1). This accords with what is said in

1 Cor. xiii., "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." Especially should this be so among Christians of one community, for—

"Birds in their little nests agree,
And 'tis a shameful sight,
When children of one family
Fall out, and chide, and fight."

James says (chap. iv. 1), "From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your own lusts, that war in your members?" What a faithful reproof of so prevalent an evil, and what a mercy if, when it is heard, it leads to the carrying out of the exhortation in Ephesians iv. 30—32: "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Brethren, let us earnestly and importunately cry unto God that this grace may abound in us and among the professed followers of the Lamb, that our conformity to His example may prove that we have "been with Jesus," and "have the mind of Christ," remembering those solemn words, "Now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His" (Rom. viii. 9). The Lord grant that we come honestly to the test, and that our "deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God" (Jno iii. 21).

Beloved friends, think not that we write either bitterly or reproachfully. We assure you, and "we speak before God in Christ," that we earnestly desire to keep quite clear. But the fear of being misrepresented must not cause us to refrain from insisting upon the practical nature of spiritual life, and the fruits of the Spirit, according to the Scriptures of truth. This is the unerring standard, and let each of us try ourselves by it. If the love of Christ is in our hearts, that will surely prevail against the old man and his deeds, and will constrain us to follow in the footsteps of Him who bought us with His own blood.

Reader, are you a stranger to the love of Christ? Have you never been drawn to Him, nor had a true desire to forsake all and follow Him? If not, we pray that God may have mercy upon you, open your eyes, change your heart, and bring you to the foot of the cross to look upon Him who was nailed there for the sins of His enemies, until you can say, by precious faith, He "loved me, and gave Himself for me." You who are seeking Him may take courage, for your desire to be found among the flock He leads and feeds, arises from that inward and heaven-wrought longing, "Tell me, O Thou whom my soul loveth, where Thou feedest," &c.

To you, we echo His own Word, "Go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock," &c. (Sol's. Song i. 7, 8). And though for a time you may have to complain, as did the Spouse, "I sought Him, but I found Him not," yet you, like her, shall be able ere long to say, "I found Him whom my soul loveth" (Sol's. Song ii.)

And now, in conclusion, we say to all those who are pilgrims and strangers upon earth, but who are looking for "a city which hath foundations," and who desire that "better country" of which the Lord Jesus said, "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom"—to all such we say, "Be of good cheer, for He is faithful who has promised, and He will never deceive one of those who hope in Him."

"Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above;
And he's an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love."

Dear friends, we once more thank you all for the kind help and sympathy we have received in our work, and we beg a continuance of the same favour, also that you will still pray for *us*, and for Zion's peace; and may the Lord preserve us each unto His heavenly kingdom, is the desire of

Yours in Him,

THE EDITOR.

ANECDOTE OF MR. GRIFFITHS.

MR. GRIFFITHS, of Carnarvon, on one occasion, being out to preach at night, was staying at a farm house, and had desired permission to retire to a private room before the service began. He remained there a considerable time. The congregation had assembled, and still he did not come; there was no sign of his making his appearance. The good man of the house sent the servant to request him to come, for the people had been for some time assembled and waiting. Approaching the room, she heard what seemed to her to be a conversation going on between two persons in a subdued tone of voice, and she caught from Mr. Griffiths the expression, "*I will not go unless you come with me.*" She went back to her master and said, "There is some one with Mr. Griffiths, and he is telling him that he will not go unless the other will come too, but I did not hear the other reply, so I think he will not come to-night." "Yes, yes," said the farmer, "*he will come, and I warrant the Other will come too, if matters are as you say between them; but we had better begin by singing and reading, until the two come.*" And the story goes on to say that Mr. G—— did come, and the *Other* with him, for they had a very extraordinary meeting that night; the whole neighbourhood was stirred by it, and numbers were converted.

REMARKABLE EXPERIENCE OF MR. TORIAL JOSS.

TORIAL JOSS was born September 29th, 1731, at Auck Medden, a small village on the sea coast, about twenty miles north of Aberdeen. By the death of his father, when very young, he sustained a considerable loss, nor was this in any measure repaired by the second marriage of his mother. Whatever expectations he might have formed from his new relationship, they were chiefly disappointed; nor was he likely to improve in his morals, either from the force of example or the advantages of religious instruction. He was always of a mild disposition and rather inclined to serious subjects; but, these being discouraged at home, he hid his Bible out of the house and embraced every opportunity of consulting it, as the guide of his youth.

As the family increased he became proportionably neglected, and as soon as his age would admit was placed out to a maritime employment. This was a habit of life not very favourable to religious improvement; but that God who "sitteth King upon the floods" "can," as Whitefield said of Him and Captain Scott, "bring a shark from the ocean and a lion from the forest," and "form them for Himself, to show forth His praise." The vessel he was in, being taken by the enemy, he was carried to a foreign prison, where he suffered extremely. On his return, 1746, a date rendered memorable in the British annals by the total suppression of the Scotch rebellion, he was led by curiosity to view the royal and rebel armies. Here he was impressed and sent on board a king's ship, stationed on that coast, to co-operate with the land forces. After some time he made his escape, and, travelling to Sunderland, bound himself in articles of apprenticeship to a captain of a coasting vessel belonging to Robin Hood's Bay, near Whitby, Yorkshire.

It does not appear that his morals were injured by the vicissitudes he had already witnessed, nor was it until after this period that he gave evident signs of conversion to God. He was, however, eager to obtain useful learning; so during the winter months, when the vessels were laid up, he regularly attended at school to acquire a scientific knowledge of his profession. At school he contracted an intimacy with Master Mcorsom, the brother of Mrs. Joss. This circumstance brought him to the house of his new acquaintance, where he met with maternal kindness in the mother of his young companion. This woman was an eminent saint and, what is very uncommon, was brought to the knowledge of God and all the Calvinistic doctrines without ever conversing with an individual Christian, or hearing a sermon, or reading any book but the Bible. Evangelical preaching was unknown in that town and neighbourhood; and not a creature could she find with whom

to communicate upon the dealings of God with her soul. At length a poor woman, who lived some miles distant, and who brought cakes to sell, happened to drop a word concerning God. This led into a protracted discourse; when, to her unspeakable pleasure, she found a great coincidence, both in their experience and views of the Scriptures. Their spirits became immediately united; and as often as they met their time was improved by religious conversation. It was in one of these interviews, when the house was clear, except young Joss, who affected to be asleep, that they entered largely into the manner of their conversion, spoke freely of the singularity of their experience and of the awful blindness of all around them. To his ears they brought strange things. He listened with a rivetted attention; he felt, and, as he felt, his nature was all rebellion against the truth, till that grace which can subdue millions to its sway constrained him. His subsequent conversation with Mrs. Moorsom, together with other enquiries, served to deepen his convictions and prepare him for a clearer display of the everlasting Gospel.

Soon after, the vessel putting into Lynn, in Norfolk, he hastened to a bookseller, and enquired if he ever heard of any books written upon experience. "The Pilgrim's Progress," "Come and Welcome to Jesus Christ," "Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners," "The Holy War," and "The Believer's Golden Chain," were put into his hands; all of which, together with the "Whole Duty of Man," he purchased. The former, not well understanding them, he presented to his kind matron, which proved a refreshing feast to her soul, and the latter he reserved for himself, thinking, by a strict adherence to its directions, to recommend himself to the favour of God. Alas! this was beating against the air. At length, finding he could make no head, and all hope that he should be saved by his own works now failing, he was led to commit himself to the mercy and grace of Jesus Christ, and was made willing to be saved by His righteousness.

He was now about eighteen years of age, and became exceedingly zealous. He carried the savour of his Master's name on board, where some heard and others mocked. Waxing strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, he sought every occasion to teach and preach in the several harbours where his vessel lay. His first public sermon was delivered at Boston, in Lincolnshire, where God was with him of a truth. Though his captain did not favour his religious principles, yet he had acquired so good a knowledge of his profession, and conducted himself with such propriety that, on the day his articles of apprenticeship expired, he was appointed first mate of the ship.

Having formed a most tender regard for Miss Moorsom and

having a flattering prospect of succeeding in life, he was married to her on Christmas Day, 1755, after a mutual and intimate attachment of ten years. By Mrs. Joss he had eleven children.

He endeavoured to disseminate the knowledge of the Gospel in the ports, &c., where his vessel anchored, subjecting himself to considerable odium, and in some places he was cruelly persecuted. At Shields, though first mate and reputed captain of the ship, a plan was formed to impress him, which scheme the regulating officer executed as soon as Mr. Joss came to an anchor, under circumstances of great barbarity. He was immediately brought through the town amidst shoutings and triumph, as if a signal victory had been obtained over some invading enemy. His persecutors having sported with him for some time, he was sent on board a tender, where he lay a close prisoner seven weeks, amidst filth and horrid blasphemies; and having but twenty minutes in forty-eight hours on deck he was nearly suffocated with heat. They even denied him the use of paper or the visits of his friends.

The afflictions of his mind now became extreme, and he was tempted to throw away his Bible, deny the Lord who bought him, and to speak no more in His name. So Jeremiah was once tried, but that Lord, who knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, was not unmindful of His suffering servant, and at last appeared to his joy. In the extremity of his distress the following Scripture, exceedingly adapted to his condition, was applied with peculiar energy (Jer. xv. 19—21): "Therefore thus saith the Lord, if thou return, then will I bring thee again, and thou shalt stand before Me; and if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as My mouth: let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them. And I will make thee unto this people a fenced brazen wall; and they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee: for I am with thee to save thee and to deliver thee, saith the Lord. And I will deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked, and I will redeem thee out of the hand of the terrible." This was as cold water to a thirsty soul. He began to sing his songs of deliverance, and the Lord turned his captivity, for of near three hundred who were sent to the Nore to be distributed in the ships of war he was the only person whom they left behind, and him they shortly after released. Mr. Joss, when released, returned to his company, and, relating what God had done for him, exhorted them to cleave to the Lord with full purpose of heart.

Shortly after this event he was appointed to the command of a ship, and immediately set up regular worship. As often as the weather would permit, he preached regularly to his crew; and before he left the seas he had, out of eighteen men, five who

could publicly pray and exhort. In so novel a regulation on board of a ship it required no small degree of prudence and address. He judged, if his designs were disclosed to the whole crew at once, he should increase his difficulties. He therefore resolved to begin with the officers individually, and, having been assured of their compliance, the subordinates were more easily gained. After some time, one of the sailors acquainted him that he must leave the ship, adding, "I should be glad to serve you, but I cannot stay, for you will pray me to death." Some years after he was settled in the ministry, he was walking in the street of a port town where he saw the same person entertaining a number of children with tricks. On espying Mr. Joss, the poor fellow ran up to him, saying, "God bless you, sir. You were the best master I ever had, and I could have sailed with you round the world; but you prayed me to death."* With this address he followed him through the street, which collecting a crowd of people, put Mr. Joss not a little to the blush. But he was not always to be occupied in great waters. His Master had designed him to fill a station on land, and took measures to prepare him for it by providences not very agreeable to flesh and blood.

He now became a joint proprietor of a ship and looked forward to a period when he should realize a genteel fortune for his growing family. But fortunes dependent upon the caprice of wind or weather, and especially when they stand in the way of ministerial duty, are of a precarious tenure. While he commanded the ships of other proprietors he never experienced the least disaster; but when he became a joint owner he witnessed nothing else. In his fourth voyage to London the vessel was lost at the Nore, and he and his crew were with difficulty saved. He then went down to Berwick, to superintend the building of one considerably larger. During his residence at this port he preached to crowds with great acceptance and success. When the ship was finished and laden the poor people began to regret the prospects of his departure. The wind was fair and the next tide he intended to sail. In their simplicity they told him they would pray to God to change the wind. Whether this was the case we cannot say; but the next morning it became foul, and, to their great pleasure, detained him among them five weeks longer than he intended. After he had sailed, a gentleman of Berwick, unknown to Mr. Joss, wrote to an acquaintance of Mr.

* Mr. Joss once engaged a footman in his service. On telling him that morning and evening prayers were observed in the family, he hoped that would not be any objection to him; he replied, "No, Sir, but I hope you will consider it in my wages."

Whitefield, in London, saying what a wonderful preacher they had been favoured with for nine months. He mentioned when he supposed the vessel would be in the river. Her name was the *Hartly Trader*; but the other coasting crews called her the *Pulpit*.

Mr. Whitefield, who had seen the above letter, and had heard that the ship had come to her moorings, published, without the knowledge of Mr. Joss, that a captain would preach on Saturday evening. Being found on board, he was apprised of the circumstance and refused to comply; but the messenger resolved not to go on shore till he consented. The services of this and the ensuing evening were so gratifying to Mr. Whitefield that he immediately requested him to leave the sea and labour in the Tabernacle connection. To those solicitations he turned a deaf ear; and nothing short of a speaking Providence would ever have prevailed. This was his first voyage, and in it he lost his main anchor. On his next return to town he preached frequently at the Tabernacle, and was greatly attended. Mr. Whitefield renewed his application. He declined. In this voyage he lost one of his crew, a promising youth, who was drowned.

On his third voyage to town his congregations were prodigiously increased; and Mr. Whitefield pressed on him the duty of leaving a maritime employment and being devoted wholly to the ministry. Mr. Joss had on board a younger brother, by the same father, a good man, who was very dear to him on many accounts, and thought, if ever he should change his views, it would be a good situation for him. He was so far prevailed upon as to send his brother, who was then mate, this trip, while he supplied the Tabernacle; but, lo! in going down the river, he fell over the side of the ship and was drowned. Mr. Whitefield then addressed him in a very solemn manner, saying, "Sir, let me tell you, if you hearken not to the call of God, both you and your ship will soon go to the bottom." Overcome by the voice of Providence, he yielded; and, on his fourth voyage, quitted the compass, the chart, and the ocean, for the service of the sanctuary. This was late in 1766.

Immediately he entered into close connection with Mr. Whitefield, who, to the day of his death, continued to him his affection and entrusted him with his confidence. In this change of situation he could not have been actuated by motives of a pecuniary nature; for his prospects in trade were by far more flattering than in the ministry. His sermons, in the former years of his residence in town, were not only attended by large auditories, but to the conversion of many souls; nor did God leave him without many witnesses to the close of his ministerial labours. He generally spent four or five months in the year out

of London, for the purpose of itinerating. In this period he regularly visited South Wales, Gloucestershire, Bristol Tabernacle, and occasionally other parts of the kingdom. In Pembrokeshire the Welsh followed him in multitudes; and on the Lord's Day would travel from one to twenty miles round Haverfordwest to hear him. To not a few of these he became a spiritual father; and, indeed, wherever he exercised his talents, though but for a few weeks, he left some seals of his apostleship behind.

Mr. Joss was always subject to an ulcerated sore throat; and for several winters past had been much afflicted with an asthma. Of the latter complaint he had been confined a whole month previous to his last illness. On the 2nd of April he was so far recovered as to assist at the administration of the Lord's supper. While at the table many were witnesses to the fervour with which he prayed to be at the marriage supper of the Lamb in heaven. On Tuesday, the 11th, he met the Society at the Tabernacle, and, after singing—

“Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah,
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but Thou art mighty,
Hold me with Thy powerful hand.
Bread of heaven,
Feed me now and evermore,”

he expatiated largely upon this couplet in the hymn,

“Songs of praises, songs of praises,
I will ever give to Thee.”

He mentioned that he knew the man who composed that hymn, and that he was lately gone to sing songs of praises before the throne. He then referred to several other well-known characters, who were joining in the same blessed employment; and, after relating somewhat of his own experience, said he should shortly unite his praises with their happy company. He closed the service of the evening with the following:—

“Musing on my habitation,
Musing on my heavenly home,
Fills my heart with holy longing!
Come, my Jesu, quickly come.
Vanity is all I see,
Lord, I long to be with thee.”

The people as well as himself found it good to be there; but how would their pleasures have been embittered had they thought this was the farewell address of their aged minister!

On Wednesday morning, at breakfast, he was uncommonly well and cheerful. This exciting the notice of Mrs. Joss, she said,

"My husband, I think you are remarkably well to-day; and, as it is a fine morning, I would have you take a walk and call on some of your friends." Not many minutes after, while shaving himself, he was suddenly seized with an unusual shivering. This fit continued about three hours, and was succeeded by a violent fever, first of the inflammatory and then of the putrid kind. On the first attack of the disorder an uncommon lassitude and debility immediately ensued. And so rapid was the progress of the disease as to baffle all the attempts of his medical friends; and on Monday, April 17th, 1797, about noon, he departed.

During his illness he was sometimes exceedingly comfortable; his confidence was never shaken; he enjoyed a solid peace; was remarkably resigned and patient; had much of the spirit of prayer, and would often, with a patriarchal majesty and devotion, bless the friends who waited on him. About an hour after his seizure the Lord Jesus indulged him with a peculiar manifestation of His gracious presence; which blessing he enjoyed most of the day. In the evening a friend, hearing of his indisposition, called to see him, to whose enquiries he answered, "I am very ill; but my Master has given me a sweet smile, such a one as I never recollect to have had before. I suppose I must go in the strength of this forty days." Here he was agreeably mistaken; for this was only a foretaste of immediate bliss, in the full vision of his Redeemer's face in glory everlasting. When he was carried to bed he said to a friend, "I did not expect my Master would lay me by this Easter; but He will do all His pleasure, and it is right He should." During the whole night he was restless and sometimes wandering. In the morning he said, "Mr. Newton is six years older than I am, and yet how strong is he to labour! But I will not complain."

About an hour before he died Mrs. Joss said, "You are going to heaven and leave me behind! What shall I do?" "Do! Do!" replied he; "you have nothing to do but be as clay in the hands of the Potter." After he had committed her to God, he said, "I can only give you a transient look; my pilgrimage is at an end." The last word he was heard to speak was, "Archangels." In a few minutes he lifted up both his hands, and smiled and died. The following Sunday he was interred at Tottenham Court Chapel.

A DEAD faith can no more cherish the soul than a dead corpse can perform the functions of life.

THE worldling's life is (of all other) most uncomfortable. For that which *is* his god doth not always favour him; that which should be, never.—*Bishop Hall.*

OBITUARY OF ROBERT BERRY,

LATE OF BLACKHEATH.

WE remember, in the earlier days of photography, people often took immense delight in showing their friends their albums. There was quite a rage for it. No doubt it gives pleasure to look on the likeness of one whom we have known and loved, but we have sometimes thought that the too frequent ranging through these miniature picture galleries, has been to the exclusion of more profitable converse. Besides which, the work of the artist has been in some cases detracting, and in others flattering, so that although it was a shadow it was not the very image of our friend. Doubtless the same difficulty presents itself to the writer of an obituary. It will be his aim to give a living portraiture, but from want of materials, or from lack of skill to work them up, he may fail.

But to proceed. Our old friend, Robert Berry, was born May 9th, 1806, at Wickham, Suffolk. He believed that both his parents must have been godly people. He was about five or six years old when his father died, who it would seem was a lover of Zion, for on his death-bed he said—

“ My soul shall pray for Zion still,
While life or breath remains ;
There my best friends, my kindred dwell,
There God my Saviour reigns.”

His parents were poor, since all the education Robert had was obtained at the Sunday School. It is difficult to say how far this instruction exercised a moral influence over him. He told us that he lived “according to the course of this world” (Eph. ii. 2), especially delighting in music and dancing. His cheerfulness of spirit and agility of footstep, even in his later years, showed his natural taste, although grace had long given a new bias to his joys. He loved the songs of Zion.

When he was eighteen years of age he had a long and serious illness, caused by fever. Herein he had some temporary awakenings of conscience respecting his state as a sinner, and he promised a reformation of life, but his vows being made in the flesh, as is too often the case, died out upon a restoration to health. He sometimes heard the truth preached at Stoke Ash.

When he was about twenty-one, he went to reside at Cambridge; there he heard the late Mr. John Forman, and much enjoyed listening to the letter of the Word, for the time for it to come with life and power to his soul had not yet arrived.

One good man, who afterwards became a closely-attached friend, used to pass through Cambridge, selling laces; he called

upon our friend in a way of business. They got into conversation, and the traveller, being taught of God, very pertinently spoke to his young friend upon divine things, and for the purpose of closer converse, invited the latter at different times to his lodgings. After having been there one evening, he returned home, and for the first time in his life, feeling himself a great sinner, he bent his knees before God in private prayer, seeking His mercy. Thus it would seem that, as Bunyan, when travelling with his tinker's brasier through Bedford, received instruction through listening to the spiritual talk of women at their door-steps, so, the terms reversed, our friend was indebted, under God, to the pedlar coming through Cambridge.

How simple are the means God sometimes uses ! A little captive maid shall lead the way for a Naaman to worship the true God (2 Kings v. 17) ; a bitterly bereaved widow shall attract a young idolatress to cleave unto the people and God of Israel " (Ruth i. 16) ; and a renowned Gospel minister of our day expresses his eternal obligations to an old cook, who was despised as an Antinomian, but who in her kitchen taught him many of the deep things of God, and removed many a doubt from his youthful mind.

For a long time poor Berry had such sorrow of heart, which none know but those who have felt it ; he was bound by the law as a distressed and guilty prisoner ; and after a while a sermon preached from, " The conies are but a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks " (Prov. xxx. 26), was made instrumental in loosing his bonds. After this he could enter more fully into the mystery of covenant mercy, delighted in the joyful sound of a full, free and finished salvation, loved the company of humble saints, and longed for opportunities to meet with them.

When the Strict Baptist Church was formed at Hope Chapel, Cambridge (March 3rd, 1861), Robert Berry was one of thirteen that formed, so to speak, the original foundation, of whom only two or three are now living. There he heard many dear servants of God, whose ministry he much enjoyed, and there he mingled his prayers with his brethren at the prayer meeting. He was appointed by the Church to visit candidates for Church communion with them.

In January, 1868, the writer first visited Cambridge, and through being an occasional minister in Hope Chapel pulpit, he became acquainted with Robert Berry. Many a time has he listened with gushing eyes—not from sorrow but gladness—as one has been speaking the word of life. Especially we remember preaching there on June 28th, 1868, after deep and sore exercise of soul, from Psalm cvii. 20. This was to Berry a never-to-be-forgotten season, and he frequently, in after years, spoke of it.

Several years since, the providence of God directed our friend to Blackheath, where for a long time he lived with and worked for his son, and indeed in his house he found an asylum to the day of his death. After it became evident that he was not likely to return to Cambridge, he was proposed for membership to our Church, at Devonshire Road, Greenwich, and was most cordially received by the friends. He communed for the first time at the Lord's table with us May 2nd, 1880, and the last time, June 6th, 1886, when a special conveyance was hired for him, as he had previously suffered from a stroke of paralysis.

Being confined at home through illness and increasing infirmities, he was very thankful for friends to visit him and talk with him upon the things of God, which were ever uppermost in his mind and were near his heart. His Bible was his chief book; in it he found instruction, edification, and comfort. Not unfrequently did some of our friends think that they had visited him for the last time. We have a record which while we were at Hastings in September, 1888, one of our deacons noted down, as a probable last visit to his sick chamber, which we here insert:—

"A visit to Mr. Berry, September, 1888. Found him somewhat better in body, but the subject of great weakness. Expressed much pleasure at seeing me. Said he could bless and praise the Lord for all His goodness towards him, and that he had had a Bethel visit since I last saw him. Said it was all God's work from first to last; he felt he loved the truth of God and hated false doctrine. I quoted Mr. Hull's previous Sunday texts at Greenwich. 'Ah,' he said, he remembered the last time he heard him, the subject was love, and, he said, 'It is the same subject still.' Enquired after our pastor and said he *did* pray for him; and, referring to Mr. Whittome, said he hoped the Lord would open his mouth on the coming Lord's Day at our chapel.

"I told our old friend that he had meat to eat which the world knew not of, which drew forth remarks from him of the truth in connection therewith. I then quoted the following—

"Boast not, ye sons of earth,
Nor look with scornful eyes,
Above your highest mirth,
Our saddest hours we prize;
For though our cup seems filled with gall,
There's something secret sweetens all."

He took up the words as I spoke them and said, 'Ah! I can say that.'

"He said he had been thinking this morning about Simeon, how it was revealed to him by the Holy Ghost that he should not taste of death until he had seen the Lord's Christ, and when he did

behold Him, how he wanted to depart in peace. And so he himself felt that he was now desiring to depart, although he was quite willing to wait the Lord's time. He spoke of the Lord's long-suffering mercy towards him, notwithstanding his sinfulness and unworthiness. He asked me to spend a little time in prayer, which I felt some help in, closing with expressions of thankfulness for the Lord's goodness towards him, to which he responded with his hearty 'Amen.'

"I took him by the hand and bid him 'Good-by,' and said, 'If we do not see each other again, I hope we shall in an upper and better world.' He heartily replied, 'I have not a doubt of it; I have not a doubt of it.' I said—

" Yes, I shall soon be landed
On yonder shores of bliss ";

when he rejoined,

" And not a wave of trouble roll
Across my peaceful breast."

" S. B."

This was not the last visit by many. He again rallied. I was informed, some weeks before he died, that he was in dying circumstances, but when I saw him I did not think so, he had, in fact, revived again. He quoted to me Newton's beautiful hymn, "Begone, unbelief, my Saviour is near." Knowing it, I repeated the whole hymn, which he seemed to enjoy. I spoke of the everlasting mercy of God. "Ah," he said, "there is no end to that." Other visits by myself and others might be related, but the above given *in extenso* must serve as a type for many. The last few days of his life he suffered from mental weakness and unconsciousness; but even then, he was generally not beyond the recognition and appreciation of spiritual communications. He literally sunk from nature's exhaustion. The last ebbing out of life was on November 15th, 1890, when his redeemed spirit took its flight to the realms of eternal day. "He came to the grave in a full age, as a shock of corn cometh in in his season" (Job v. 26), at the advanced age of eighty-four.

He was a good and godly man, an humble walker, one who knew himself, and therefore one with whom any could feel free; he was a sincere friend; he earnestly desired and prayed for the welfare of God's people, when he was by reason of illness or infirmities separated from them; and, in talking to others, he showed a sobriety of spirit which preserved him from a levity of manner and silliness of expression which uncultured men sometimes exhibit, and which, like grit in machinery, is a barrier to Christian communion.

Zion here has lost a praying soul, but Mount Zion above has

added another to her praising host—one more to swell the chorus, “Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen” (Rev. i. 5, 6).

His mortal remains were consigned to the grave at Shooter’s Hill Cemetery, by Mr. Wilmshurst, on November 20th, 1890, in sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection to eternal life.

JAMES BOORNE.

A CHANGE OF HEART.

FROM OWEN ON THE HOLY SPIRIT.

THE heart, in the Scripture, is taken for the whole soul, and all the faculties of it, as they are one common principle of all moral operations, as I have proved before; whatever therefore is wrought in and upon the heart, under this consideration, is wrought upon the whole soul. Now, this is not only said to be affected with this work of sanctification, or to have holiness wrought in it, but the principal description that is given us of this work consists in this, that therein, and thereby, a new heart is given unto us, or created in us, as it is expressed in the promise of the covenant. This, therefore, can be nothing but the possessing of all the powers and faculties of our souls, with a new principle of holiness and obedience unto God.

It is necessary that the body should be interested in this work and privilege of sanctification and holiness. And so it is.

1st. By participation: for it is our persons that are sanctified and made holy (sanctify them throughout), and although our souls are the first proper subject of the infused principle of holiness, yet our bodies, as essential parts of our natures, are partakers thereof.

2nd. By a peculiar influence of the grace of God upon them also, as far as they have any influence into moral operations. For the apostle tells us, that our bodies are members of Christ (1 Cor. iii. 15), and so consequently have influences of grace from Him as our Head.

3rd. In the work of sanctification the Holy Ghost comes and dwells in us. And hereon our bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost and the temple of God is holy, which is our dedication unto God.—*Dr. Owen.*

THE world cannot exalt a proud man so high but God will bring him low; neither can all the world so debase an humble man but God will exalt him.—*Venning.*

A NEW YEAR'S PORTION.

"Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be."—DEUTERONOMY xxxiii. 25.

THE promises of God are such,
God's people cannot ask too much,
And when through rugged paths they pass,
The Lord will give them shoes of brass.

In all thy troubles and distress,
If Jesus is thy Righteousness,
Then every promise points to thee,
That as thy days thy strength shall be.

When plagued with unbelief and sin,
And all is wretchedness within,
How suitable these words must be,
That as thy days thy strength shall be.

So when thy heart feels hard as steel,
You mourn because you cannot feel,
This promise is for such as thee,
That as thy day thy strength shall be.

When troubles vex and bear you down,
When clouds look black and mortals frown,
And every comfort's hid from thee,
Yet as thy day thy strength shall be.

When all things seem to disappoint,
And all your hopes seem out of joint,
You feel your chains but can't get free,
Still as thy day thy strength shall be.

When nature seems to bear the sway,
And inward comforts all decay,
This very promise speaks to thee,
That as thy day thy strength shall be.

When unbelief and doubts creep in,
You feel a thousand foes within,
Sometimes can neither feel nor see,
Yet as thy day thy strength shall be.

Sometimes the mind is filled with sorrow,
With dreading what may be to-morrow;
But stay till then and you shall see,
That as thy day thy strength shall be.

Sometimes the day of death appears,
And fills the mind with anxious fears,
But 'tis God's promise and decree,
That as thy day thy strength shall be.

This is a promise from on high,
Made by a God who cannot lie;
Poor trembling, trusting souls shall see,
That as their days their strength shall be.

Southborough, 1890.

THE ANXIOUS INQUIRER'S PAGE.

TO A PERPLEXED ONE.

WE believe there are many, like yourself, anxious to have a right understanding as to what is the mind of the Spirit in those portions of the Word which speak of the bodies of the saints as being holy. Therefore, while averse to those unseemly contentions, where misrepresentations of the views of others too often prevail, instead of a candid inquiry into manifestly plain and honest statements, we place a few thoughts on the subject before you and our readers generally, hoping they may be made useful in clearing away some of the mistakes which many have been led into. And, in the first place, we feel bound to say that we are quite confident those writers to whom reference is made do not believe in, nor teach, "perfection in the flesh." We feel sure they resent such a dogma as much as their detractors do. But that the bodies of the saints are declared in the Scriptures to be holy, there can be no question. For instance, they are said to be "the members of Christ" (1 Cor. vi. 15), and therefore are not to be joined to a harlot, or be devoted to any unholy purpose or thing, because the body of each believer is the temple of the Holy Ghost (v. 19), and it having been bought, as much as the soul, with the precious blood of Christ, is God's; therefore the believer is exhorted and admonished to glorify God in his body as well as in his spirit, because both are the Lord's (v. 20). Now, can anyone dare to say that that which is "a member of Christ" and "the temple of the Holy Ghost" is not holy? Yet, no one taught by the Spirit will assume that they have no sin, or where were the need for the admonition: "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God" (Rom. vi. 12, 13). And yet, such as desire to, and really do, obey these injunctions, will often have to complain with the very Apostle who gave them, "But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members" (Rom. vii. 23). Therefore, for his and the saints' comfort, he could say, "Sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace" (Rom. vi. 14).

This proves that the persons of the saints are not intrinsically holy, yet as the Lord can, and does, love them, although they are sinners, so He can, in like manner, account them holy. This is

figured forth in Exodus xxviii. 38, where Aaron is said to "bear the iniquity of the holy things." Again, in Nehemiah xi. 1, and Matthew iv. 5, Jerusalem is called "the holy city." Yet from the fact of Aaron bearing "the iniquity of the holy things," and from what the Lord said concerning Jerusalem (Jeremiah xxxi. 40), neither could have been considered intrinsically, although denominated holy. Thus, when the Lord says of His saints "They shall call them, The holy people" (Isa. lxii. 12), and again, "An holy nation" (1 Peter ii. 9), He certainly does not mean that they, as individuals, were essentially holy; but they are holy unto Him as members of Christ, and vessels made and sanctified unto honour. Thus their bodies partake of this honour, because, by reason of His dwelling therein, they are the "temples of the Holy Ghost," and the "temple of God is holy" (1 Cor. iii. 17); and in this sense, therefore, they are called upon to present their bodies "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is their reasonable service" (Rom. xii. 1). Thus they are not only accounted holy, they are also "called unto holiness" (1 Thess. iv. 7), and that with a holy calling (2 Tim. i. 9; Heb. iii. 1). Hence the exhortation to "yield their members servants to righteousness unto holiness" (Rom. vi. 19). Their eyes, tongues, hands, feet, &c., which had formerly been used as servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity, are now to be differently employed. A change of masters having taken place, a change of service must necessarily follow, and by this their calling is known. "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey?" &c. And then comes the unfolding of the blessed secret of the change: "But God be thanked, that ye [who once] were the servants of sin, have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you," or, as the margin reads, "whereto ye were delivered" (ver. 16, 17). Thus they are now made free from the service of sin they once were held in, and they love righteousness and follow after holiness. The old man of sin no longer rules the members, though he is in the house, for he is bound by a stronger one, and his goods are spoiled. Hence the change which is seen, "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. v. 17). The man is now regenerate—a new creature; for although still the subject of sin, grace reigns in him as well as over him. In his spirit and life he is now a gracious character, for while sin still lives and strives in him, he does not allow it (see Romans vii. 15); it is not the governing principle, but the foul usurper in his breast, and he prays to have it kept under, that his members may be fully engaged in the service of his Lord, in which he now delights. Thus the body as well as the soul is under the influence of the

ruling power of grace. On this point we prefer to give, in conclusion, some excellent remarks by that godly and able divine, Dr. Owen, hoping they may be prayerfully considered and rightly understood.

(*To be continued.*)

THE SEEKERS' CORNER.

[We shall feel a pleasure in inserting such short and cheering Notes as the following in the SOWER, and we are willing to set apart the "Seekers' Corner" for that purpose.—ED.]

To the Editor of the Sower.

DEAR MR. HULL,—Thank you very much for the book which I hear from home has arrived for me. You will see by this letter that I am in London. I was at home for a holiday when I wrote the Essay. My brother and I are living with our uncle, and assisting in his business. We attend Mr. B——'s chapel. I consider it a great privilege to be so near to a place of truth, where the Gospel is so ably preached, considering the vast amount of error with which we are surrounded. I do hope, dear sir, that it may be the dear Lord's will to give you strength of body to support you through the cold and trying winter months which are now commencing, but afflictions are often made a blessing, in God's hands, by drawing His people nearer to Him, and making them feel more dependent upon Him. Last autumn I kept my bed for nine weeks, with typhoid fever, but I do hope that it was not without profit to my soul. The words in Isaiah, "Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; He will come and save you," were made a great blessing to me. There seemed a power with them that I had never experienced in reading the Bible before, and for a time I could not refrain from praising the Lord, feeling so sure that the Lord had spoken these words to me, and that He was my Saviour. This blessed state did not last long, but the dear Lord was graciously pleased to support me through many weeks of bodily weakness, and in His own time to restore me to health. Satan does try his utmost to fill my wicked heart with doubts and fears, but yet he cannot take away that little hope, which is fixed on nothing else but Jesus Christ. What a great blessing it is to have a little hope!

From your affectionate young friend,

London, November, 1890.

A.

To the Editor of the Sower.

DEAR SIR,—A few years ago I was speaking to a friend of ours from Portsmouth about my spiritual condition, and he advised me to read your valuable SOWER and LITTLE GLEANER. I know of no place in B—— where I can buy them, so I go to one of the principal stationers, and they order them for me. I attend a church and teach at a Sunday school; but there is no place here where the Calvinistic doctrines are faithfully preached, therefore I look forward to the SOWER and GLEANER with delight, and several people we lend them to tell us they are the means of blessing to them. We recommend them wherever we go. You will be pleased to know that the note in the SOWER, "To Our Inquiring Readers," is a direct answer to my earnest prayers, for I have often prayed and longed for this to appear in the SOWER. I must now tell you about my special blessings from God. About five years ago, the Lord said these words distinctly to me in a dream, "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." And a few hours afterwards a very unexpected trouble overtook me, and I have had severe troubles and conflicts ever since that day up to the present moment. At another time I was reading the first chapter of Revelation, when the words, "And every eye shall see Him," were greatly blessed to me. I knelt at once and thanked God that I should one day be able to see Him. In the same night the Lord spoke these words to me with such force as to make me wake immediately, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Many other blessings I have had, but I must not mention them now, as I am afraid my letter will be too long. My mother realizes that peace that passeth all understanding, and I have prayed to God from a child to let me realize that my sins are forgiven, but I cannot realize it at present. Yet I hope I can at times realize my interest in Christ. Our vicar tells me, if I ask the Lord to forgive my sins, I must believe that He has done it, whether I realize it or not; but this does not satisfy me. I believe what it says in a beautiful hymn I was reading the other day, "Something must be known and felt." I do long for a few words of comfort in this matter. Yours faithfully,

December, 1890.

K.

[We are very pleased to hear from our young friend, and we trust that we may have many such correspondents, who will help to fill up our "Seekers' Corner" in the SOWER. We also hope that such correspondence may prove to be helpful to others who are seeking an assurance of the forgiveness of their sins; and we would say to our young friend, press on, in prayer and the use of the means God has put within your reach. He will answer

them that call upon Him, and be found of them that seek Him. There are many of the Lord's little ones who have a good hope of their interest in Christ Jesus, who have not received the assurance of forgiveness ; but, like Simeon, they are "waiting for the consolation of Israel," and they shall not wait in vain. Blessed are all they who can truly say—

" My soul looks back to see
The burdens Thou didst bear,
When hanging on the accursed tree,
And hopes *her* guilt was there."—ED.]

RECOLLECTIONS OF PAST EXPERIENCES.

(Continued from page 325)

FURNACE-WORK.

ALL the children of grace live to prove that His "furnace is in Zion," and that it is the Lord's covenant purpose to "bring the third part through the fire." The *profane* part, and the merely *professing* part, may escape the furnace, but the *possessing* part must pass through it on their way to the "wealthy place." The effect of the furnace is, first, to make the dross manifest, and then to separate it from the gold, by which we learn how much dross there is, and how little gold we really possess. Secondly, the gold is purified by these fires, and when melted, it flows forth at the Refiner's feet—apt representation of the blessed effects of sanctified trial upon the humbled heart, flowing forth in prayer. Whilst the furnace proves to us the smallness of our religion, it makes the little we have exceedingly valuable and precious.

Some seem to need sharper and more prolonged discipline than others. It pleased the Lord to deal somewhat severely with me in the early days of my ministry. I was often terribly tried. On one occasion (it was the Sabbath), just as I had concluded the evening service, the words suddenly, in a most unlooked-for manner, dropped into my mind, "Lest that after having preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away." Oh, the terror and distress that overwhelmed my soul! For some two or three days the darkness and dismay were unbearable. It seemed like a sentence of condemnation, and cut me up root and branch. I felt given over to despair. My worst fears seemed realized. I did wish I had never made any profession of religion, never opened my mouth in the Lord's name. That curse seemed to be mine, "Reprobate silver shall men call them, saith the Lord." At the end of two or three days the light broke in.

A promise was applied that brought peace to my heart, expelled the darkness and despair, and raised me from the depths in which my poor soul had been sinking. At the time, I thought I should never forget the word which burst my bonds on that occasion ; but, strange to say, I have never been able to recall it since.

Another circumstance might be recorded here. One Sabbath morning, I was speaking in a large town far from home, and felt very shut up, delivering my testimony in much bondage ; at times hardly knowing what I said. I was dark, cold, hard, and miserable. After the service, I found much rebellion and impatience working in my mind. I was ready to say I would have no more of this, feeling, if *this* were to be the path, the sooner I got out of it the better. Indulging these thoughts brought me into greater darkness still. After dinner, I went into the bedroom I occupied—where, by the way, most of our oldest and best-known ministers had slept many times—flung myself on the bed, and groaned before the Lord, full of self-pity, rebellion, mortified pride, and bitterness of spirit. I longed to give up the ministry. It seemed I could not go on. What to do I knew not. I thought the anguish would cause my breast-bone to break. Presently, the question was very suddenly and very gently whispered, “Lovest thou Me?” I did not understand what it meant. It came again, with an explanation, “Lovest thou Me enough to bear these trials for My sake, that I may be glorified in your ministry, being by these things made more useful to My people?” I saw it all in a moment. My heart was sweetly melted down. Thoroughly humbled, I ventured to reply, “Yea, Lord ; Thou knowest that I love Thee.” With much liberty, I afterwards preached from these words. This took place many years ago, but the recollection is still sweet.

The following is an extract relating to another period, when I specially experienced the heat of the furnace, penned down at the time of deliverance :—

“Depression ! What a vast amount of real misery is couched in this word ! I awoke at an early hour this morning with a weight on the heart, an oppression on the mind, and a feeling of being overwhelmed with grief, for which, a few hours later, I could scarcely find fully sufficient cause. Nevertheless, a variety of sources of trouble presented themselves at the time, some connected with providential matters, and I felt full of fear lest there should be a drying up of any small grace or gift I might have previously sometimes hoped I possessed ; then my unfitness and shortcomings stared me in the face, and painful, searching questionings as to my state before God filled me with gloomy forebodings. To think of past interpositions afforded no relief

in present distress. When deserted by the Lord, left to ourselves, and given over as a prey to fears and fancies, what poor, weak creatures we are! When hope, which is an anchor to the soul, is withheld in its active exercise, the barque, as it were, gets loose from her moorings, and drifts helplessly towards the dark waters of dreadful despair; the sky being overcast with the heavy clouds of a sense of sin and guilt, through which prayer seems not to penetrate. Such was my experience this morning. Everything looked black and blank. Most unexpectedly the Lord broke in with one precious promise after another, each of which came with light and warmth. The darkness was dissipated, doubts dispersed, dejection diminished, and the hardness departed from the poor trembling, unbelieving heart. The first was a revival and renewal of an old promise, 'Thou shalt see greater things than these.' It came so gently, and raised up such a sweet hope in my heart, that I felt assured it would be as the Lord said. Then came, with that blessed power which always accompanies the Word applied, 'Thou wilt increase my greatness and comfort me on every side.' Faith was given to receive it and believe it. I found joy and peace in believing—that is, resting on and trusting to the blessed Word of God given."

During a long course of years all this has been sharply tried, but God's Word shall stand. He is ever faithful to His own promises. Not one thing fails. The five years of my sojourn in the place of my first pastorate drew to an end. Changes took place, which shall be recorded in our next paper, if the Lord will.

OUR PRAYERS.

LET your prayers be about the things that really interest you. The more minute and individualizing a prayer is, the more real it will be. You are coming to One to whom the little and great are all the same. Nothing is below His sympathy, nothing is above His power.

And take care when prayer has gone up, to look up, David-like, and watch for the arrow's fall. It will fall, feathered with blessing, though the descent and the spot may be very different from what you looked for.—*Vaughan*.

THE impossibility of coming to Christ, without the teachings of the Father, will appear from the power of sin, which hath so strong a holdfast upon the hearts and affections of all unregenerate men, that no human arguments or persuasions whatsoever can divorce or separate them.—*Flavel*

LETTER FOR THE YOUNG.

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER IN HIM WHO DOES ALL THINGS WELL,—A few years since I wrote to you, enclosing a copy of a hymn which I learned at the Sabbath School. I feel prompted to drop you another line, also copies of two more hymns, which you may find suitable for insertion in the *Little Gleaner*. They were published by the London Sunday School Union, when I was a lad, between fifty and sixty years ago.

Oh, how thankful it becomes me to be to the great Teacher for His distinguishing grace manifested to unworthy me when quite a child. I love the Sabbath School, for God blessed the instruction of my dear teacher to my never-dying soul.

“Many years have passed since then,
Many changes I have seen;
Yet have been upheld till now,
Who could hold me up but Thou?”

I would sympathize with you, dear brother, in your affliction. I am no stranger to the trials, temptations, afflictions, bereavements, &c., incident to all those whom our heavenly Father loveth. He says, “I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.” The flames may be hot, but the presence of “One like unto the Son of God” supports and comforts us even there, so that the bonds which bind us to earth are burned, and we, at times, feel that we are walking safely, having for our sweet and blessed companion the Lord Jesus Christ, who—

“Bore all Incarnate God could bear,
With strength enough, and none to spare.”

When favoured to see Him as He is, as we hope we shall—

“Then will we sing more sweet, more loud,
And Christ shall be our song.”

The Lord restore you to health, if it please Him, and bless your labours in His dear name and cause. I have never seen you in the flesh, but feel persuaded that God's blessing resteth upon you. I am, dear brother, yours sincerely,

Chatham, Kent, July 7th, 1889.

J. C., sen.

AS every lord giveth a certain livery to his servants, charity is the livery of Christ. Our Saviour, who is the Lord above all lords, would have His servants known by their badge, which is love.—*Latimer*.

THE ARCHBISHOP'S JUDGMENT.

THE Primate's judgment in the Bishop of Lincoln's case may be regarded as an endeavour to give a sort of sop to both High and Low Church parties. While on the one hand the mixing of water with wine in the Communion cup has been declared illegal, or rather, against the law of the Church, the Archbishop decides that "the ceremony of ablution," or drinking what remains in the chalice, permissible. Again, the Bishop of Lincoln, it seems, was within his rights in standing on the west side of the table during the Communion service; but it is interesting to learn that he offended against the law of the Church, and is deserving of censure for facing the east while reading the Prayer of Consecration! Yet again, he was wrong in making the sign of the cross while pronouncing the Absolution and Benediction, but is not condemned for singing the "Agnus Dei" and using lighted candles. So we have everything beautifully balanced! At first sight it is confessedly a little difficult to decide which party has the best of this see-saw pronouncement, and there is a feeling of dissatisfaction creeping o'er the Church at the result for which it has waited for so many weary and anxious months. We cannot, however, but feel that the solemn mockery of Ritualism will contrive to gather much strength from several of the points given in its favour. At any rate, it will henceforth be able to continue many of its practices without that fear of Episcopal denunciation which hitherto has represented a restraining factor.—*Baptist*.

[Viewing the above in connection with the decisions respecting retaining the Reredos in St. Paul's Cathedral, we cannot but conclude that the "Image" is determined to give its power to the "Beast" (Rev. xiii. 15-17).—ED.]

At a largely attended meeting of the Council of the Church Association, held on Thursday, November 27th, it was unanimously resolved to appeal to the Privy Council in the case of *Read v. the Bishop of Lincoln*.—*English Churchman*.

THE *Weekly Register*, the organ of Cardinal Manning, and of the English Catholic Home Rulers, says: "To Catholics it is more difficult than it can ever be to Protestants to tolerate as a public leader a man whose life has for nine years exhibited a laxity of morals now become a public scandal. The offender himself is probably unaware of the strength of this Catholic sentiment of a Catholic population, and of those priests and bishops

who put aside many a prejudice to extend to a Protestant a confidence he has held so cheap. Sooner or later he will have to face these facts."

[Oh, what luscious words! what a gush of professed morality! We do not wish to condone the guilt of this wretched man, but we do say, are not the Papists aware of the conduct of some of their popes? Have they forgotten the scandal connected with a late Cardinal even, at the Vatican? And what about the doings of their licentious priests? Surely, if they have a grain of conscientious modesty, as they look at their own nest, they may cover their faces and hold their tongues, until they have cleansed that.—ED.]

A MESSAGE FROM JESUS CHRIST.

ONE Christian brother was some time ago remonstrating with another on having, as he thought, gone too far in assisting a poor disciple, somewhat farther than, considering his circumstances, prudence dictated. His friend's reply was to this effect: "I do not know in what light you view it; but I will tell you how it strikes my mind. When I see a poor Christian destitute of some of the necessities of life, which it is at all in my power to supply, I feel as if I distinctly received a message from the Lord Jesus Christ, saying, 'There is a poor disciple of Mine, I commit him to your charge, look well after him for My sake.'"

Had He sent such a message to any of His faithful followers while on earth, can we suppose they would have neglected it? Is not this His message, now that He has gone to glory: "Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me" (Matt. xxv. 40.)

We are not informed of the circumstances in which this reply was made; but the spirit of it deserves the attention of all who bear the Christian name. Were this spirit more felt, we should not see one class of Christians living in splendour and indulging in all manner of luxury, if they knew of any of the friends of Jesus living in destitution, without supplying them. In many cases this may not be known, such a case of destitution may not come under our notice; but when it does, there is a sad want of the spirit of Christian sympathy when such cases are overlooked. What an honour should we all have felt it to administer to our Lord's personal comfort while He laboured among men; and with what divine condescension does He permit us to enjoy somewhat of the same privilege now, when He places His poor disciples in the position of His representatives, telling us that what is done to them, He will consider as done to Himself.—*W. Innes.*



"THE TROOPERS WERE COMING DOWN UPON US." (See page 31.)

UNDER THE SHADOW OF HIS WINGS.

I AM going to tell you about the Covenanter, John Paterson, of Penyenie, a godly man, who counted not his life dear to him for the cause of his God—who was willing to suffer bonds and imprisonments, or even death itself, rather than do that which his Father in heaven had forbidden him to do. I will tell you how he was driven from his home, from his wife and children, hunted like a wild beast by the troopers of the king, and forced to find for himself a hiding-place, on the hill-side, in the glen, in the forest, or whithersoever the Lord led him. And once, when fleeing from the face of his enemies, when he was almost in their hands, God so directed his steps that he fell through a crevice in the rocks down into a large cavern, where he was for the time as safe as if the earth had opened her mouth and swallowed him up, and where he found for the future a far more secure and comfortable abiding place than he had before been able to devise. The cave was so large, dry, and airy, that he was able to make it quite a comfortable home, and the entrance to it was so small and so completely hidden among the confused blocks of granite that lay scattered around, that none of the inhabitants of the place had ever discovered its existence, not even those who had spent all their lives near the spot, and had supposed that no part of that crag of Benbeach was unknown to them.

Mrs. Paterson was a woman of the same spirit as her husband. Dearly as she loved him, she would rather, as she told him, see him beheaded on the scaffold—rather follow his bloody corpse to the grave—than know that he had in anything acted against his conscience; and sorely as she missed him from his hearth and his home, faint and sick as her heart often was with longing for his dear presence, yet rather would she have borne to know that they were never again to enjoy each other's company upon earth, than that he should buy a safe return to his family by denying, even in the smallest thing, the Lord who had bought him with His own most precious blood.

After that the Lord had shown them that sure hiding-place of which I told you, the husband and wife, the father and children, were able to enjoy much more of each other's company. With the help of a little furniture brought from the farm house, the cave was made quite comfortable.

Mrs. Paterson and the children could visit the poor wanderer there without much danger of discovery; and sometimes, when the pursuit after him was less hot than at others, the whole family spent days together in this new home, as happy as ever they had been in the farm house of Penyenie, and far happier—for did not God reward their fidelity to His cause by shining

upon them with the light of His countenance, blessing them with His presence, and with many sure and precious tokens of His love and favour? Then, besides being a happy home for themselves, this cave proved often a haven of refuge for many of their brethren persecuted like themselves for their faithfulness to their God. Many a happy meeting of God's saints took place under its wide roof; many hours were there spent in sweet communion with God, and in joyful converse together, telling each other of God's wonderful dealings towards them, of the marvellous deliverances He had wrought for them from the hands of their enemies.

There was one deliverance of this kind that John Paterson was particularly fond of relating to his children or his friends, as they sat round a fire kindled on the floor of the cave. He said that the recollection of it was so sweet and precious to himself, as reminding him of the Lord's tender, loving care of His people, and was always a strengthener of his faith to trust that same loving God for the future; and therefore he was glad to give all whom He loved the pleasure of knowing it also. "I had gone," he used to say, "to a preaching in the old black glen; while we were in the full enjoyment of the meeting, and our souls were being feed 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 this cave; 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 ridge 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 good hand upon me, hide myself from the face of mine 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 baying 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. 'O 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 thus to cast oneself upon the Lord in the hour of danger; how near He then seems to us; how calmly and peacefully the soul lies still in His everlasting arms! I heard the bark of the dogs come nearer and nearer. I 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 Covenantanter 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 this 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.'"

John Paterson and his wife lived through all the years of persecution, and when liberty of conscience was once again allowed to God's children in this land, they returned to their farm, and lived many years in peace and happiness, and in favour with God and man.

THE CALL TO THE MINISTRY.

[We have long thought and felt that the Church of Christ, in general, has become careless respecting the call of God to the ministry. Certainly there is no set rule to be laid down, except that we believe every one who engages in the work should be able to say, as before God, that they are moved by the Holy Ghost thereto; and if He has moved them to the work, He will certainly prove to be consistent with the Word, in bringing forth those who will be manifested as ambassadors for Christ, men whose spirit, life and work will show that they seek not their own, but the things that are Jesus Christ's. Therefore, not being the servants of men, they will study to show themselves approved unto Him, and He will work with them, confirming the Word, and making them a blessing to His Church. Having met with the following paper in an old magazine, we thought it might be well to give it in the SOWER, and we hope to supplement it by some extracts from an ordination charge delivered many years ago.]

It has always appeared a most singular thing to us that any one should doubt the fact of a special call of God to the ministry of the Gospel. Paul evidently lays great stress upon his being called of God, "an Apostle (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father)." This allowed him to speak with authority and confidence, nor could he have done so without a divine call; nor can any man say he is an ambassador of God unless sent of God. The Creator is the fountain of all authority, and it is His prerogative to control all men; how certainly will He guard the interests of His Zion by appointing to their work those who watch upon her walls! Men may unwarrantably take this office upon themselves, and have evidently often done so, some purchasing it with money, from those who arrogate the Lord's place, "Sitting in the temple of God, and showing himself that he is God." Those called of God have oftener been persecuted by the self-styled successors than by any other men; and in Europe to this day, though the Church of Christ has witnessed such glorious triumphs, and been blessed with such noble confessors and martyrs, man-made and state-paid priests are proceeding to incarcerate and to intimidate those who are persuaded of a divine call to the work of preaching the Gospel.

We have no doubt that the ambition, arrogance and intolerance of monopolizing national establishments have gone far to create and foster scepticism in regard to the calling and position of the Christian ministry; but nothing is more unfair than to judge this question at issue by the conduct and disposition of men who are not only not doing the Lord's work, but who show

that they have no fellowship with it, and no communion with Him who appointed it.

The fact that some men are not called certainly cannot prove that God does not call any. If He does call any, it will doubtless be suitable ones. All His arrangements and appointments are conducted with infinite wisdom. They will be men after His own heart, who will make it their meat and drink to do the will of their heavenly Father; men who rejoice when the disciples walk in the truth; who affectionately and earnestly labour to persuade men to be reconciled unto God. (See 2 Cor. v. 11 and 20).

If such men were the only representatives of the class, and the genuine fruits of their labours were witnessed in a community, we think the mouths of our gainsayers would be stopped, and they would confess that God was with them of a truth.

These are the men to interpret and understand a call. It may perhaps be easy to enumerate appropriate qualifications, and also such moral, mental or physical defects as would warrant a conclusion that those possessing them would not be called; but to say what is a call is a more difficult, if not an impossible thing. If a person thinks he is called, he may assign his reasons for thinking so; but to conclude that all others will be called in the same way is limiting the Holy One, whose methods of communication are His own, and who is not likely to work after our pattern. As every man must stand or fall to his own Master, we must conclude, notwithstanding our liability to strange and irregular impressions, that an humble and godly man must in the premises be the best judge whether the Lord calls him. If this be the case, we cannot doubt but its proof will without great delay be confirmed to the Churches, and his mistake also will doubtless soon become apparent if he is deluded.—*Christian Visitor*.

As the infirmities of God's children do not cause the Lord to despise them, no more should the infirmities we discern in them that fear God cause us to despise them, or diminish that reverence and love that we owe to them. Despise not one of Christ's little ones.—*Hildersam*.

PLUTARCH, in the life of Phocion, tells us of a certain gentlewoman of Ionia, who showed the wife of Phocion all the rich jewels and precious stones she had; she answered her again, "All my riches and jewels are my husband Phocion." So may a saint say of his blessed Saviour, "Christ is all my jewels, my riches, my treasure, my pleasures, &c. His sufficiency is all these, and more than these, to me."—*Thomas Brooks*.

NOTES OF A SERMON BY SAMUEL MEDLEY.

FAREWELL SERMON PREACHED AT THE TABERNACLE,
MOORFIELDS, APRIL 1ST, 1787.

“And exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.”—ACTS xi. 23.

It is needful, in order to observe the scope of our text, that we read it in its connection, from the 19th verse of the chapter, and particularly the preceding clause of the verse which contains our text. “They sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch. Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted,” &c.—that is, the Gentile converts in the city of Corinth. And oh, how truly kind, affectionate, suitable, and seasonable must this his exhortation have been to them ! God, in mercy, make it so at this time to us all, especially to those who have so lately made a solemn public and personal profession of the Lord Jesus Christ in this place.

[Several persons had been baptized in the morning of the day, and were now about to be received into Church fellowship at the Lord’s table. In this view, the sermon is of great weight and importance.]

Surely the practice here exhorted to, even that of cleaving to the Lord, in so doing consists much—yea, the whole—of the believer’s comfort, peace, honour, and the enjoyment of present happiness. May the Lord the Spirit own the attempt, while in speaking I attend to the following particulars :—

1. Show what cleaving to the Lord is expressive of, and who are the persons that are here exhorted so to do.
2. Consider the object which they are exhorted to cleave unto, viz., “the Lord,” and show what is included in it.
3. Consider the manner in which they are exhorted so to do.
4. Mention some reasons to prove the propriety and necessity for the exhortation, and of our attention to and practice of it.
5. Make some improvement.

1. Cleaving to the Lord is frequently spoken of in the sacred Scriptures. “That thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest obey His voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto Him: for He is thy life,” &c. (Deut. xxx. 20). “For as the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto Me the whole house of Israel, saith the Lord,” &c. (Jer. xiii. 11). “Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good” (Rom. xii. 9). But I will show what it is expressive of. Cleaving to the Lord is expressive of love and affection to Him. It is expressive of pursuit or following after Him. “Where thou goest, I will go” (Ruth i. 16). It is expressive of

adherence to Him, even the closest attachment of the soul. It is expressive of abiding by Him at all times—not forsaking or departing from Him. It is expressive of that pleasure and delight which the soul takes in Him. It is expressive of resting in Him, and of full satisfaction with Him. See the whole of this beautifully exemplified in the case of Ruth towards Naomi. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law and went back, but Ruth clave unto her. “And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go,” &c.

Then, who those are that are exhorted to cleave to the Lord. “Them all,” says the text. Those on whom the hand of the Lord was (see ver. 21), the “much people” that was added to the Lord. Now, it is very plain, from the account here given, that they were most of them young Christians—persons newly called by sovereign grace, and who had lately made a public profession of their faith—who had been recently baptized and had joined the Church—or, rather, were the first members who formed the Church at Antioch, and who were gathered together through the Holy Ghost’s blessing upon the labours of the men of Cyprus and Cyrene in preaching the Lord Jesus. The hand of the Lord was with these Gospel preachers, so that a great number believed and turned to the Lord. Nevertheless, “them all” may well apply to *us all* who have believed in the Name of the Son of God—the elder of us, as well, and as much as the younger. I will now—

2. Consider the object which they are exhorted to cleave unto, “The Lord,” and show what is included in it. Cleaving to the Lord includes in it a cleaving to the Name of the Lord, that is, the Lord Jesus Christ. It includes a cleaving to the grace and love of the Lord. It includes a cleaving to the Holy Word and glorious Gospel of the Lord. It includes a cleaving to the sacred worship and the instituted ordinances of the Lord. It includes a cleaving to the society and fellowship of the people of God, who are the followers of the Lord. It includes a cleaving to a holy life, walk, and conversation, becoming their profession of the Name of the Lord. It includes a cleaving to the faith, hope, and expectation of the promised and prepared kingdom, glory, and full salvation of the Lord.

3. Consider the manner in which they are exhorted in the text to cleave to the Lord, “With purpose of heart:” that is, sincerely and uprightly—not hypocritically—but firmly and fixedly, with a holy courage and fixed resolution; seriously and solemnly as before Him and under His eye, who is the Searcher of the heart; humbly and self-diffidently, not proudly; willingly and cheerfully, not forcedly; entirely and universally, with the

whole heart; lovingly and affectionately, as to a Father; constantly and closely, as Ruth to Naomi; increasingly and perseveringly, more and more; thankfully, joyfully, and assuredly; everlastingly, for and with a view to eternity.

4. Mention and assign some reasons to prove the necessity and propriety of the exhortation, and of our attention to and practice of it. Because the glory of God is closely and inseparably connected herewith; because the truth and honour of our Christian profession is discovered thereby; because the peace and comfort of all our fellow-saints is much concerned therein; because of the solemn public and personal profession we have made; because there are many who backslide, and fall away from their profession; because there are many enemies who watch for our halting and long for our stumbling in the ways of God; because it is only in so doing that we either shall or can be saved at last. "He that endureth to the end shall be saved" (Matt. x. 22).

5. Make some improvement. How suitable, solemn, and seasonable a word is this to us all, and especially to you all, my dear young friends, who have this day made a solemn profession of our Lord Jesus Christ in His own instituted ordinance of believers' baptism. The Lord graciously enable you to meditate and plead and pray over these words daily and increasingly as long as you live. May the falls and backslidings of others around us be our humbling and warning before the Lord. Thus, then, I conclude, and in the name, the love, the bonds, and the bowels of the Lord Jesus Christ, I exhort you all to cleave to the Lord with purpose of heart. Even so, Amen, and Amen.

ROMAINE, preaching on these words—"Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ," said, there was no such word as triumph in the Greek, till the Apostle made it; he coined and put it there. A Roman general returning from conquest, had a triumph decreed him by the senate, and six months were employed in preparing for it. When the day came for the procession, it was a very fine one, and being pleased with the prospect before him, the general, as he was going to mount the triumphal car, said to a grave philosopher present, "What is to be added, or can be wanting to complete happiness?" To which the philosopher replied, "Continuance." Intimating, this would soon be over. Now this being well known in the literary world, was moralized by some, but spiritualized by Paul. "Thanks be unto God," says he, not for a conquest which made way for six months' preparation for one day's exhibition of triumph, but "Thanks be unto God which always causeth us to triumph in Christ."

THE CRY OF THE NEEDY SOUL.

LINES COMPOSED ON HEARING A SERMON OF MR. PHILPOT'S
READ, ON PSALM XL. 17.

A POOR and needy worm I lie,
At Thy dear feet, O Lord, and cry ;
Oh, grant me Thy salvation free,
And turn and cast a look on me.

Though poor and needy, sick and sore,
Still would I lie at mercy's door,
And would implore a look from Thee—
In blessing others, think on me.

I'm poor and needy, well I know,
My heart is full of sin and woe ;
But all I need is found in Thee,
Then, Jesus, kindly think on me.

So poor and needy, may I dare
To try and call on Thee in prayer ?
Though helpless, dumb, and weak I be,
Yet hear my groans, and think on me.

A poor and needy, helpless worm
Will sink beneath the heavy storm,
Unless Thou wilt my Refuge be,
And hide me safe, and think on me.

I poor and needy am indeed,
Oft weaker than a bruised reed,
But I would fain look up to Thee,
And beg a blessing—think on me.

I'm poor and needy, oft beguiled,
Oh, can I be a living child ?
Shall such as I salvation see ?
O Jesus, canst Thou think on me ?

I'm poor and needy, grant Thy grace
To help in every trying case ;
In fiery trials let me see
That still the Saviour thinks on me.

While poor and needy I resort
Where the Redeemer holds His court ;
Let fall some handfuls rich and free,
That I may know Thou think'st on me.

So poor and needy, void of good,
Yet would I plead Thy precious blood,
Think on Thy work on Calvary,
And then in mercy think on me.

I'm poor and needy, grant Thy grace,
For only that can reach my case ;
And while I plead my poverty,
Bestow Thine alms, and think on me.

DUTIES OF CHURCH MEMBERS TOWARDS EACH OTHER.

THERE are many duties that Church members owe to each other. One of the principal duties is *love*. Love is the great law of Christ in His Church. "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another"; and that there may be no mistake in the exercise of this Christian grace, He presents Himself as an example, "As I have loved you."

The Apostle Peter urges the members of the Churches to "love as brethren." This love of members one to another ought to be *fervent, unfeigned*, and universal to all the saints—the weak as well as strong, the poor as well as rich. It is love which makes communion and fellowship in a Church state delightful and profitable, as well as honourable. "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." Care should be exercised on the part of Church members to promote and preserve unity of *affection*, unity of faith, and unity in worship; and all this should be in the bond of peace. "Keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

Another duty of Church members is to pray for one another. The true Christian considers this a privilege as well as a duty, and they take great delight in praying for the brethren. Where members are often found at a throne of grace praying for each other, true brotherly love will not be in word only, but in very deed.

Church members should also sympathize with each other. True Christian sympathy will cause them to meet together frequently, and to pour out their hearts to each other. True Christian sympathy keeps the members from that pernicious evil of surmising and fault-finding. It is incumbent on members to aid and comfort the feeble-minded and support the weak, and bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

Another duty of Church members is to bear with one another, and to forbear with each other. The strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak.

Still another duty is, that they should be constant in assembling together for religious worship. It is said of the first Christian Church to their honour, that "they continued steadfast in the Apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayer." Many forsake the assembling of themselves together, but from the language of the Apostle it is certainly not a good custom. "Let us consider one another, to provoke unto love, and to good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is." It is not only setting a bad

example, but it is certainly dishonouring to the Master to forsake divine worship.

A still further duty is, when assembled in divine worship, to have no respect of persons, whether rich or poor, old or young; and the only strife that should be known or practised should be in honour to prefer one another, and to see who should love the Saviour most.

One more important duty, especially in this day, when the fundamentals of true religion are lost sight of by so many, is to strive together for the faith of the Gospel, and to earnestly contend for it, and never to suffer any human inventions and unwarranted practices to be imposed upon them.

Finally, it becomes Christian brethren to be examples to each other in a holy conversation, and in the observance of all the duties of religion.

* * * * *

“Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another” (1 John iv. 11); and “by this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep His commandments” (1 John v. 2). And why do we love God? “Because He first loved us” (1 John iv. 19).

True religion is built upon the foundation of God’s eternal and unchangeable love. It was Love that assumed human nature, and became the great Prophet and Teacher of it; and the grace of love in our hearts is its vital spring within us. It is Divine Love dwelling in flesh, hanging upon the cross, bleeding and dying for enemies and rebels, that hath brought all the promised blessings of our religion; and it is the same Love arising from the grave, and reigning in glory, that distributes those blessings to man, and in all the melting language of compassion and tenderness invites us near to receive them. It was this Love, dwelling personally among men, called Himself our Brother, and He charges us to love all His children as brethren. The Lord Jesus Christ makes this the distinguishing character of all His followers: “By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another” (John xiii. 35). God Himself is infinite and unseen Love. Christ is Love incarnate and visible. Oh, reader, may we have this precious grace of love in our hearts, then all shall be well.—*The Banner of Truth.*

If any man sin more freely because of forgiveness of sins, that man may suspect his forgiveness; for in all Scriptures and Scripture examples, the more forgiveness the more holiness. Mary loved much, because much was forgiven her.—*Saltmarsh.*

A MONUMENT OF SOVEREIGN GRACE.

GOD is a Sovereign ; His dealings are various, and He can as easily strike a sinner dead in a moment, and by a revelation of Christ raise that sinner to a confident hope in Him in that moment, as in a thousand years. We speak the truth ; and, for the encouragement of such poor doubting souls we would say, the Lord not only can, but sometimes does make very short work of it.

We knew an individual that was brought into deep soul trouble and set at liberty under the same sermon, a sermon preached by the late Mr. Bailey, of Great Alie Street. The reality of her call and her after walk may be questioned ; but we stood by her death-bed, and a most blessed testimony she left.

After the preaching of the discourse to which we have alluded, she walked in the sweet liberty of the truth ; but at length, ensnared by creature affection,* she fell into a state of spiritual coldness, and remained so for years, sitting under a dead ministry. At length the Lord smote one of her children with disease, still she remained as before. Then her sucking babe was removed by death, still she clung to her heart's idol. Anon her father, to whom she was devotedly attached, died ; this was a keen stroke, still her heart was wrapped up in her husband, and she sat under an apparently blinder guide than before. Presently the husband was smitten—the rupture of a blood-vessel brought on consumption, peevishness occupied the seat of amiability, and a fretful deportment that of excessive tenderness and care. He died. Another child was taken, *and the heart was broken*. But, oh what a precious testimony was thenceforth hers ! Consumption, too, laid its hold of her, and she died triumphing in Christ. The scene was one we shall never forget. We stood weeping at her side, and, under the prospect of a dark future, said, “Oh, what would I give to be in your place.” But she admonished, and in that firmness of tone, that precious confidence of faith, bade us be looking unto Jesus—relying on Jesus—casting all our care upon Jesus. “As for me,” she said, “it is a weight, an *eternal weight of glory*, that awaits me. The moment I am gone, bow the knee around the bed and praise Him.”

By the mighty power of Jehovah is the lofty look, the froward heart, the untoward spirit brought down in a moment, Christ and His great salvation becoming at once the object and subject. And such, we doubt not, was the case with this dear woman.

* Dear young readers, we pray that you may listen to and profit by this as a word of warning. Christians should not be unequally yoked with unconverted persons ; they are only to choose such as are manifestly partakers of grace, and are enjoined to marry *only* in the Lord (1 Cor. vii. 39).

She never could sin as before. She stood, instantaneously stood, a monument of rich, free, and sovereign grace, and, we verily believe, is now casting her crown at Jesus' feet in glory. "Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." Precious, precious testimony of a thrice precious Christ!

May the same Lord, in the same tenderness and mercy, speak the same truth home to the hearts of many of His precious bondaged ones, for His own great Name's sake. Amen. D.

PROVIDENCE

PROVIDENCE, or God's superintendence over all created beings may be divided into two classes: (1) *General*, or that exercised over all creatures. (2) *Particular*, as shown in God's special care of His own elect and chosen people. We read that God "maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." How many mercies which we daily receive may be classed under the term "general providence"—the raiment we wear, the food we eat, and the very air we breathe. Many mercies which it is impossible to do without, we are continually receiving, and yet how often do we forget to thank our God for them. Yet there are those who are being supported in life and kept in existence by the mercy of God who dare to deny His being. We sometimes wonder at this, but let us examine our own hearts, and remember how often we murmur and complain, although receiving so many bounties from God's hand; and oh that we may be stirred up to thankfulness and exclaim, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits"! Not only does God care for human beings, but He also provides for the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air, and clothes the lilies of the field, and He says to His people, "Therefore, take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." We must not infer from this that we are to sit down and idly fold our arms, for God always meant that we should use proper means, but let us ever remember that He alone can bless those means, and never let us ascribe any praise to ourselves, for all our talents are but lent to us for a time. What is meant by "take no thought" is, no over-anxious thought. We are not to put temporal before spiritual concerns.

In Psalm civ. there is a beautiful account of God's providence as shown in nature, and in the book of Job, chapters xxxviii. and

xxxix., the Lord convinced Job of his ignorance by speaking of His mighty works in creation.

But when we turn to God's particular providence, all these things, although so great and marvellous, are thrown into the shade, and we say with the poet—

" 'Twas great to speak a world from naught,
'Twas greater to redeem."

Who but God could have worked out the plan of salvation ? and who but His co-equal Son could have bled and died for the elect ? In all the pathway of God's chosen ones, His providence may be seen. It is often a rough and thorny road, and they exclaim with Jacob, "All these things are against me"; yet in the end they will have to acknowledge that "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." How little Jacob thought, when his sons caused him to think that Joseph was dead, that his beloved son was on his way to become next in position to the king, and to be the means, in God's hand, of saving Jacob's household from dying of famine. Yet so it was ; and in many cases God's people are brought through sorrows as great, and they exclaim—

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

But ere long the clouds "break in blessings on their heads," and they see that—

" God is His own interpreter,
And He will make it plain."

Many have had their lives saved through the wonderful interposition of God's providence. No doubt most of you have heard how Peter du Moulin escaped death by creeping into an oven, when his pursuers were following him, and how God caused a spider to spin its web over the oven's mouth, so that his enemies said no one could have been there for some days. It is a great mercy to be saved from temporal death, and many of us have probably had many deliverances which we have not clearly known, but oh, how much more important it is to be saved from spiritual death. We are all born in sin by nature, and, unless God in His mercy prevent, we shall die in that state, and perish eternally.¹

May God, in His mercy, awaken each of our readers who are in this sleep of death, and give them to feel their need of a Saviour, for we know that all who feel this need will have it fully satisfied ; and of all those who come to Jesus for pardon (being drawn by the Father), He says, He "will in no wise cast out."

Wellingborough.

HELEN.

GOD'S SILENCE.

GOD frequently gives us the answer to our prayer for guidance, not by speaking, but by continued silence. "Silence is an answer too," is said even of human silence, and that is far more applicable to the Divine silence; indeed, in some cases silence is the most impressive answer. If you have really sought to discover the Lord's will, and have not yet attained to certainty of heart, do not make a decision. When God keeps silence, He would let you understand that, in the meantime, you must undertake nothing new.

But if the matter is of a kind in which some decision must be made between two courses, then, because God keeps silence, choose the old way and hold on as before, or choose the simplest course which lies nearest to you.

In most cases God indicates to us by His silence that we must still wait, be quiet, and delay till He speaks.

When we think it high time for Him to speak, His hour of sacred silence has often scarcely begun. But we perceive afterwards that He was not too slow, but that we were too fast and premature, and that the best answer He could have given us was this very silence.

When the Apostle Paul prayed three times to be delivered from his thorn in the flesh, he got no direct answer the first and second time; his prayer was answered the third time; but how? By the same answer implied in the Lord's silence. The suffering must continue; Paul must be resigned to bear it while he lived on earth; he must satisfy himself with the grace of God's compassion. It pleased God that His servant should glorify Him just by this.

We hear our Saviour also praying in Gethsemane, "Father! if it be possible, let this cup pass"; but He did not receive an answer that it was possible; and, some time after the first prayer, we hear Him speak thus, "O My Father! if this cup may not pass from Me except I drink it, Thy will be done."

From such examples it is manifest how God can often speak to us quite as distinctly through His silence as by words and deeds. This kind of answer and voice of God must be observed, lest it should happen that we are asking, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" after God has signified that we must be still and wait.

God is marvellous, not only in His doings, but also in His speakings and keeping silence; marvellous for the way in which He answers His questioning children; but this is certain, that He doth answer, and that He answereth those clearly who have the enlightened eyes of His children.

P. F.

THE ANXIOUS INQUIRER'S PAGE.

(Continued from page 21.)

ALL believers, and only believers, being sanctified and made holy, what is it that is sanctified in them, or what is the proper seat and subject of this work, is, in the next place, to be declared ; for it is not a mere external denomination, as things were called holy under the Old Testament, nor any transient act, nor any series or course of actions that we plead about, but that which hath, as a real being and existence, so a constant abiding or residence in us. Hence, he that is holy is always so, whether he be in the actual exercise of the duties of holiness or no ; though an omission of any of them, in their proper season, is contrary unto, and an impeachment of holiness, as to its degrees.

Now this subject of sanctification is the entire nature, or whole person of a believer. It is not any one faculty of the soul, or affection of the mind, or part of the body that is sanctified, but the whole soul and body, or the entire nature of every believing person. And hereby is the work of sanctification really distinguished from any other mere common work which may represent it, or pretend unto it. For all such works are partial ; either they are in the mind only by light and notions of truth, or on the affections in zeal and devotion only, or on the mind and conscience in the convictions of sin and duty, but further they proceed not. But true holiness consists in the renovation of our whole persons, which must be demonstrated.

First. That our entire nature was originally created in the image of God I have proved before, and it is by all acknowledged. Our whole souls, in the rectitude of all their faculties and powers, in order unto the life of God and His enjoyment, did bear this image. Nor was it confined unto the soul only. The body also, not as to its shape, figure, or natural use, but as an essential part of our nature was interested in the image of God by a participation of original righteousness.

* * * * *

Secondly. By the entrance of sin, this image of God, so far as it was our righteousness and holiness before Him, was utterly defaced and lost. This also I have sufficiently evidenced before. It did not depart from any one power, part, or faculty of our souls, but from our whole nature. Accordingly, the Scripture describes : (1) The depravation of our nature distinctly in all the powers of it. In particular, the corruption that ensued on our minds, wills, and affections, upon the loss of the image of God, I have before declared and vindicated. And (2) in reference unto the first actings of all these faculties, in things moral and

spiritual, the Scripture adds that all the "thoughts and imaginations of our hearts are evil, and that continually" (Gen. vi. 5). All the original first actings of the powers of our souls, in or about things rational and moral, are always evil. "For an evil tree cannot bring forth good fruit." That which is lame and distorted can act nothing that is straight and regular. Hence (3) All the outward actions of persons in this state and condition are evil, unfruitful works of darkness. And not only so, but the Scripture, in the description of the effects of this depravation of our nature, calls in the body and the members of it unto a partnership in all this obliquity and sin. The members of the body are "servants to uncleanness and iniquity" (Rom. vi. 19). And the engagements of them all in the course and actings of depraved nature is particularly declared by our Apostle out of the Psalmist: "They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood" in all ways of evil (Rom. iii. 12—15).

This being the state of our whole nature, in its depravation, our sanctification, wherein alone its reparation in this life doth consist, must equally respect the whole. Some suppose that it is our affections only, in their deliverance from corrupt lusts and prejudices, with their direction unto heavenly objects, that are the subject of this work. For the mind, or rational intellectual power of the soul, is in itself (they say) noble, untainted, and needs no other aid but to be delivered from the prejudices and obstructions of its operations, which are cast upon it by the engagements and inclinations of corrupt affections, and a vicious course of conversation in the world, received from uninterrupted traditions from our fathers; from whence it is not able to extricate or deliver itself, without the aid of grace. But they have placed their instance very unhappily. For among all things that belong to our nature, there is not any one which the Scripture so chargeth this depravation of it upon as the mind. This, in particular, is said to be fleshly, to be enmity against God, to be filled with vanity, folly, and blindness, as we have at large before evinced. Nor is there anything concerning which the work of sanctification and renovation is so expressly affirmed, as it is concerning the mind. It is declared by the renovation of our minds (Rom. xii. 2), as being renewed in the spirit of our minds (Eph. iv. 23), that we put on the new man that is renewed in knowledge (Col. iii. 10), with other expressions of the like nature.

It is therefore our entire nature that is the subject of evangelical holiness. For, to manifest in particulars:

1. Hence it is called the new man (Eph. iv. 24), "Put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true-holiness." As the principle of sin and corrupted nature in us is called "the old man," for no other reason, but that it possesseth all the active powers of the whole man, so that he neither doth nor can do anything but what is influenced thereby; so this principle of holiness in us, the renovation of our natures, is called the new man, because it possesseth the whole person with respect unto its proper operations and ends. And it extends itself as large as the old man, or the depravation of our natures, which takes in the whole person, soul and body, with all their faculties and powers.

2. The heart, in the Scripture, is taken for the whole soul, and all the faculties of it, as they are one common principle of all moral operations, as I have proved before. Whatever, therefore, is wrought in and upon the heart, under this consideration, is wrought upon the whole soul. Now, this is not only said to be affected with this work of sanctification, or to have holiness wrought in it, but the principal description that is given us of this work consists in this, that therein, and thereby, a "new heart" is given unto us, or created in us, as it is expressed in the promise of the covenant. This, therefore, can be nothing but the possessing of all the powers and faculties of our souls with a new principle of holiness and obedience unto God.

3. There is an especial mention made of the effecting of this work on our souls and bodies, with their powers and faculties distinctly. This I have already proved in the declaration of the work of regeneration or conversion to God, which is only preserved, cherished, improved, and carried on to its proper end in our sanctification. The nature also of that spiritual light which is communicated unto our minds, of life unto our wills, of love unto our affections, hath been declared. Therefore doth it follow thence, unavoidably, that the whole person is the subject of this work, and that holiness hath its residence in the whole soul entirely.

4. We need go no further for the proof hereof than unto the prayer of the Apostle for the Thessalonians, which we insisted on at the beginning of this discourse, "The God of peace Himself sanctify you throughout" (1 Thess. v. 23); that is, in your whole natures or persons, in all that you are and do, that you may not in this or that part, but be every whit clean and holy throughout. And to make this the more evident, that we may know what it is which he prays may be sanctified, and thereby preserved "blameless to the coming of Christ," he distributes our whole natures into the two essential parts of soul and body. And, in the former, he considereth two things: (1)

the spirit; (2) the soul peculiarly so-called. And this distinction frequently occurs in Scripture, wherein that, by the "spirit," the mind or intellectual faculty is understood, and by the "soul," the affections, are generally acknowledged, and may evidently be proved. These, therefore, the Apostle prays may be sanctified, and preserved holy throughout and entirely, and that by the infusion of an habit of holiness into them, with its preservation and improvement, whereof more afterwards. But this is not all. Our bodies are an essential part of our natures, and by their union with our souls we are constituted individual persons.

Now, we are the principles of all our operations, as we are persons; every moral act we do is the act of the whole person. The body, therefore, is concerned in the good and evil of it. It became a subject of the depravation of our nature by concomitancy and participation, and is considered as one entire principle with the soul of communicating original defilement from parents unto children. Besides, it is now subject in that corruption of its constitution which it is fallen under as a punishment of sin unto many disorderly motions that are incentives and provocations unto sin. Hence, sin is said to "reign in your mortal bodies," and our "members to be servants unto uncleanness" (Rom. vi. 12, 19). Moreover, by its participation in the defilement and punishment of sin, the body is disposed, and made obnoxious unto corruption and destruction. For death entered by sin, and no otherwise. On all these accounts, therefore, it is necessary, on the other hand, that the body should be interested in this work and privilege of sanctification and holiness.

And so it is, (1) By participation: for it is our persons that are sanctified and made holy (sanctify them throughout); and although our souls are the first proper subject of the infused habit or principle of holiness, yet our bodies, as essential parts of our natures, are partakers thereof. (2) By a peculiar influence of the grace of God upon them also, as far as they have any influence into moral operations. For the Apostle tells us, that "our bodies are members of Christ" (1 Cor. vi. 15), and so consequently have influences of grace from Him as our Head. (3) In the work of sanctification, the Holy Ghost comes and dwells in us. And hereon our bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost, which is in us (1 Cor. iii. 17), and the temple of God is holy; although, I confess, this rather belongs unto the holiness of peculiar dedication unto God, whereof we shall treat afterwards. And (1) hereby are the parts and members of the body made instruments and "servants of righteousness unto holiness" (Rom. vi. 19)—do become meet and fit for to be used in the acts and duties of holiness, as being made clean and sanctified unto God. (2) Hereby are they disposed and prepared unto a

blessed resurrection at the last day, which shall be wrought by the Spirit of Christ, which dwelt in them, and sanctified them in this life (Rom. viii. 10, 11 ; Phil. iii. 20, 21 ; 2 Cor. iv. 14, 16, 17). Our whole persons, therefore, and in them our whole natures are the subject of this work, and true holiness invests the whole of it.—*Dr. Owen on the Holy Spirit.*

[We trust that "A Perplexed One" may be led into these truths by the Spirit of God, and that many who have been bewildered by darkening words may realize the beauty and simplicity of the doctrine, as set forth in the Scriptures of divine truth.—THE EDITOR.]

THE SEEKER'S CORNER.

To the Editor of the Sower.

DEAR SIR,—It is often a great relief to me to put my thoughts and feelings on paper, for I cannot seem to speak of what I feel ; though, after writing, I always fear lest I should have written too much, and ask myself, "Do I really feel like that ? and am I right in telling others my feelings, when perhaps it is only fancy ?" I do so dread being deceived. "Am I right or am I wrong ?" is often a question which arises in my mind. I want to have a real, vital religion, not head knowledge only. I want the Lord to speak to me and say unto my soul, "I am thy salvation," and to be able to say myself with assurance, "My Beloved is mine, and I am His." It is not enough to know that others feel all this, but I want to feel it with power in my own soul. Sometimes, when in chapel, a little warmth and love seems to spring up, and that does not satisfy, but rather creates more hunger and thirst, and makes one say, "Oh, that I knew where I might find Him" ; and then comes the verse, "Seek and ye shall find," and so I am still encouraged to hold on, and hope and wait for God to satisfy my longing heart. I believe all this is to wean my affections from the world. But there are times when I feel so hard and dead, sin seems to come above everything, and truly I feel, "Can ever God dwell here ?" I would like to live so differently to what I do. Hasty words and actions, so soon spoken and done, often cause deep regret, and I almost despair, and feel, "If I had true grace in my heart, would it be thus ?" But then I think, "If I had no grace, it would not be a trouble to me, would it ?" The hymn, "'Tis a point I long to know," and the answer to it, has often helped me. Going into chapel, I say, "Lord, do let there be a word for me, just a crumb that I may take away. Wilt Thou come unto me and tell me I am one for whom Christ died. Give me more love to Thee, and—

"If I have not loved before,
Help me to begin to-day."

For I feel doubtful sometimes whether the work of grace is begun ; but I know I love God's people and His ways more than anything else ; but, oh, I would like to

"read my title clear
To mansions in the skies."

I like to think of that promise, "Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty : they shall behold the land that is very far off." I want patience to wait God's time ; I know it will come, only sometimes it seems so long to wait.

"The time of love will come
When thou shalt clearly see,
Not only that the Saviour died,
But that He died for thee."

Brighton.

[We have on record an exhortation from the lips of Him who spake as never man spake, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate," &c. This implies labour and conflict, trial and opposition. But the words our friend quotes, "Seek and ye shall find," are written in golden letters, and Christ has said of every coming sinner, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." Knowing that He is faithful, we say to our friend, and to others in like case, "Trust Him, He will not deceive you." Fight your way, run the race, "Looking unto Jesus." Oh, never forget that. Press on, like the poor woman who longed to touch Him. She had a crowd in her way, so have you. But she gained the blessing, and so shall you. "Struggle hard, and cry aloud on the Good Physician." Urge your way, "Looking unto Jesus."—ED.]

DEAR MR. HULL,—After many thoughts revolving in my mind whether I should write to you or not, I have at last decided to do so. It is a feeling sense of unfitness that would keep me back, fearing I should presume ; it is my desire to be kept from "presumption and unbelief" too.

I have no great deliverances to speak of, but can testify to having received little helps and encouragements by the way, which cause me to humbly hope the Lord has done great things for me. I trust He has given me a tender conscience, for sin has been and is such a burden ; but, thanks to His holy Name ! the guilt of sin has been removed, and a peace enjoyed which the world cannot give nor take away. I have, of late, felt my heart more drawn out in love to God and His people, so that I could join in with the poet, "Do not I love Thee, dearest Lord ?" But these feelings don't last long ; unbelief creeps in again and

spoils the enjoyment; but still hope continues. Those lines we sometimes sing are so comforting often—

“Those feeble desires,
Those wishes so weak,
’Tis Jesus inspires,
And bids us still seek.”

Also this verse has been very cheering to me many times—

“Each warm desire that inly burns,
And for the Saviour’s presence yearns,
Each heaving sigh, each breath of prayer,
Bespeaks His gracious presence there.”

I often feel as much helped in reading hymns as in reading God’s Word, which is sometimes a grief to me, as I want to love my Bible above every book,* and prove it indeed to be, as David expresses it, “A lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” I feel it is such a solemn thing to be deceived in these matters. I do desire to have a right religion, one that will stand the test of God’s Word, a religion that has for its foundation and object, Christ Jesus. I can say—

“Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee.”

But I do want to be persuaded more entirely, and have the Holy Spirit’s witness within, that I am one for whom Christ died, though I feel so unworthy, yet to have that assurance is my chief desire. I sometimes wonder if I ever shall be thus blessed. I hear of other dear ones enjoying this precious privilege, and it makes me long and pray for it more earnestly, but still it tarries, and therefore, like Gideon, I am oftentimes “faint yet pursuing,” and kept in a waiting, hoping, and expecting position. I remember some time back what a relief those lines were that were mentioned in the SOWER, in the piece entitled, “The Anxious Enquirer’s Page,”

“O could I but believe,
Then all would easy be;
I would but cannot, Lord, relieve,
My help must come from Thee.”

And, indeed, the whole piece was very helpful, seeing that others had walked in very much the same steps, so as to be able to pen them thus.

* When a hymn or any other writing of godly men is blessed by the Spirit to the cheering, reviving, and helping of a believer, the spirit of the Word will always be found in it; and while, as our friend says, the Bible should not be neglected for any other book, yet we may be thankful for anything that raises our heart to God.—ED.

I do hope, dear sir, that you will be spared to resume your work and labour of love for a good while to come, if it is the Lord's will, and may He grant you much of His presence in your very trying afflictions ; and at the last, may you hear the Master's " Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," is the sincere wish of

Essex.

Yours very truly,
E. B.

P.S.—I have so enjoyed reading the " Seekers' Corner," that I am induced to send my mite if you think it is worth inserting.

[We feel much encouraged by such testimonies, and we hope our seeking readers will make good use of the " Corner " set apart for their communications.—ED.]

NEW YEAR'S DESIRES.

LORD JESUS, J, Thy sinful worm,
Am weak, and very slow to learn
The way Thy love has planned ;
Mysterious are Thy leadings, Lord,
Yet I would trust Thy faithful Word,
For that must ever stand.

Another year has passed away,
And I am spared ; oh, that I may
Live ever to Thy praise !
Thou know'st my fears and unbelief ;
Forgive, dear Lord, and send relief ;
Oh, guide me in Thy ways !

Suffer me not to come to shame,
Nor bring reproach on Thy dear Name,
By my polluted heart.
Dear Jesus, Thou dost sympathize,
And when Thou mak'st this thought to rise,
Thy love doth peace impart.

Oh, may I sweetly comprehend
That Thou art still the sinner's Friend,
Though seated on Thy throne ;
The grief and sorrow Thou didst know,
While in this wilderness below,
Was borne for us alone.

I would not doubt Thee, dearest Lord,
But always trust Thy gracious word,
But oh, Thou know'st my frame ;
When Thou dost hide Thy smiling face,
I often fear I have no place
'Mongst those that fear Thy name.

Oh, send Thy mercy from above—
 The sweet assurance of Thy love—
 To me, Thy sinful child;
 To view Thee suffer, bleed, and die,
 And bear God's penal wrath, that I
 Might now be reconciled.

Through this new year, oh, may I know
 That Thou art with me where I go,
 Or wheresoe'er I stay;
 Oh, let my feeble hand be placed
 Within Thy mighty hand, by grace!
 Oh, keep me lest I stray!

For I would ever cleave to Thee,
 Though bleak and lone the way may be
 Which leads me on to God.
 Oh, precious Saviour, deign to bless,
 And clothe me in Thy righteousness,
 And wash me in Thy blood.

Thus through the year, dear Saviour, still
 Thy grace make known, Thy love reveal,
 Enabling me to say,
 "Though earthly comforts all be gone,
 Still, Saviour, I would follow on;
 Oh, be my Strength and Stay!"

And when the hour of death shall come,
 And Thou shalt call me to my home,
 To praise Thee evermore,
 "A sinner saved by sovereign grace!"
 Shall echo through the heavenly place,
 When time shall be no more.

Brighton, January, 1891.

R. E.

THE believer is satisfied with the object, not with the enjoyment, that is in heaven.—*Romaine*.

THE best of God's children are most suspicious of themselves, and afraid of their own deceitful hearts; and their great request is, that God would deliver them from mistakes in matters of everlasting consequence.—*Janeway*.

A CONTRAST.—The fear of death could not deter the first Adam from pleasing himself, *i.e.*, from sin. The fear of death could not deter the second Adam from pleasing God, *i.e.*, from obedience. A trifling pleasure seduced the first Adam. A "deadly anguish" could not move the second Adam. Adam's guilt was great, the temptation being so slight. Our Lord's merit great, the temptation to give way being so strong.

LETTER FOR THE YOUNG.

DEAR MOTHER,—We received your letter this morning, and were truly glad to hear from you, for we had been looking to hear from you before. We are glad that you are a little better, and hope this may find you still better, but great things here we are not to expect; nevertheless, if we have the promise of the life which now is and of that which is to come, what can be greater? Spiritual life is the greatest of all blessings that can ever be bestowed upon mortal man, and that is the reason Satan and his agents are more enraged against those that possess that than against others. This life is known and made manifest by these things. First, by a hatred to sin and every false way, and in bringing the sinner to the light to confess his guilt and sin. Secondly, by a longing desire to be led right, so as not to be deceived at last. Thirdly, by a fear and reverence of God and His ways. This fear is the beginning of wisdom, and by this fear men depart from evil. This fear is, as Hart says—

“An unctuous light to all that’s right,
A bar to all that’s wrong.”

Fourthly, by intense hungerings and thirstings after a revelation of Christ to the soul, and a desire to be found in Him and to be filled with His divine presence, and to have the love of God shed abroad in the heart, and Jesus speaking peace and pardon to the soul, saying, “Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.” Nothing will enable a living soul to rest satisfied but this, and this the Lord has promised, for He has said, “Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.” Fifthly, this life is known by a love to the brethren, and a cleaving to the ambassadors of peace—those that publish good tidings to Zion, and by this it is known that “we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.” “He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.” This love surpasses the love of women, and, like its Divine Author, will always be seeking the welfare of the household of faith. This love is stronger than death, firmer than earth, stronger than hell, and abideth for ever. Sixthly, this life is known by feeding upon the bread that came down from heaven, for Jesus said, “Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life” abiding in them. Seventhly, this life is known by union to Christ and oneness with Him. Eighthly, by communion with a Three-One God. May the Lord grant that “when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we may also appear with Him in glory.”—Affectionately yours,

Rotherfield, November 6th, 1856.

THOS. RUSSELL.

INDIAN AND COLONIAL PROTESTANT MISSION.

SIR,—Your readers will be glad to learn that a lady (a Roman Catholic) applied to me a few days ago on behalf of her sister, who is immured in a convent at Agra, North West Provinces, and who is anxious to leave at the first opportunity. I may state that several persons escaped from this and other convents recently. Not long ago the [so called] mother superior of a convent at Bombay, who won golden opinions from the daughters of Government officials and others, was found on leaving for her native land *to be a gentleman*. This startling revelation produced, for the time being, uneasiness in the minds of many; but this soon died out. I am still, by God's grace, doing all I can for the propagation of Protestant Reformation principles among the people, in the holding of religious services and in the distribution of tracts, for which I ask the prayers and help of all true Christians in Great Britain. All donations on behalf of this Mission will be thankfully received by J. Kensit, Esq., 18, Paternoster Row, London, E.C.

JAMES N. FOLEY,
*Secretary Indian and Colonial Protestant
 Mission, Mhow, Central India.*

—*English Churchman*, Dec. 11th, 1890.

A GREAT CATHOLIC BANK.

AN international Catholic bank, controlled by and under the direct supervision of the Vatican, has long been the pet idea of the Pope. But for some reason or other it has never appeared to have any chance of realization, owing to the many and formidable difficulties it presents. Now, however, says a London correspondent, his Holiness is thoroughly determined to work the project through to a successful issue. In this he is warmly supported by the College of Cardinals, and especially by the Jesuits, who rightly recognize in such a powerful organization a lever which will materially benefit the position of the Church. The Pope has placed the work of organization in the hands of M. Fremy, who is conducting negotiations with prelates of the Church in different parts of the world. The proposal is to establish branches of this great bank in every capital, the whole being controlled from Rome.

CATHOLIC INVESTMENTS IN ENGLAND.

ALL the available property in France of some of the more important Roman Catholic Orders was, a few weeks ago, transferred to English banks, and letters of administration were duly taken out here. This is the result of the recent legislation in France on

the property of religious orders, and among the bodies who have thus evaded the new enactments are the Sisters of Nazareth, Carthusians, the Marists, Lazarists, Christian Brothers, and Sisters of Charity. It is a singular fact (remarks the London correspondent of the *Birmingham Post*), that with this transfer nearly all the funds of the Roman Catholic Church are invested in England, even including those of the Pope himself.

THE POPE AS ARBITRATOR.

ACCORDING to the London correspondent of the *Scottish Leader*, Cardinal Manning is strongly in favour of the Pope being chosen as arbitrator in international disputes. A necessary precedent to such a selection would be the guaranteeing of temporal power to his Holiness. That, according to the Cardinal, would put the Pope in an extra-national position, and thus more eminently fit him for the position of adjudicator. The Cardinal's sympathy with the principle of arbitration does not, however, depend in any way on the selection of the Pope as arbitrator.

[Who will be the tool to help this artful dodge—Salisbury or Gladstone?—ED.]

PAPISTS AND RELIGIOUS DISABILITIES.

RELATIVE to the Religious Disabilities Removal Bill, introduced into Parliament by Mr. Gladstone, supported by Mr. John Morley and others, we would say, that while making every allowance for the professions of loyalty made by leading Roman Catholics in this country, is it not wise to recall the assertion made by Lord Denbigh, that he and his co-religionists are "Catholics first and Englishmen afterwards" ? and is not this the key-note of the whole question ? Mr. Gladstone, in the past, then expressed himself, "No more cunning plot was ever devised against the freedom, the happiness, and the virtue of mankind than Romanism." His opinions are further strongly reiterated in his pamphlet "Vaticanism." The historian Macaulay adds his testimony thus : "Among the contrivances for deceiving and oppressing mankind, the Church of Rome occupies the highest place." Let us realize that the passing of this Bill must, in due course, necessitate the repeal of the Act of Settlement, which secures the Protestant Succession to the Throne. England, the land of freedom, has allowed the Roman Church to advance steadily to political power, till only one single Act of Parliament now stands between us and a Popish reign. We are not called upon to allow others the liberty of destroying our own. This the papists claim the right to do. May the Lord help us to resist their claim.

The Sower, March, 1891.



"WE MET AS REGULARLY AS WE COULD, FOR PRAYER AND PRAISE." (See page 58.)

THE PRAYING SOLDIERS.

BY A MINISTER.

THE winter of 1825 was fast approaching, when meeting a godly soldier of the 3rd regiment of the Foot Guards in London, he enquired if I should like to attend a soldiers' prayer meeting; and having answered in the affirmative, I was led to a large upper room, where I found about thirty soldiers, and some of their wives, with one or two godly sailors, assembled. I was most kindly received into this company of good soldiers of Jesus Christ, and, being instantly recognized by many, I was asked to conduct the meeting; but, anxious as I was to observe what method a body of godly soldiers brought together had been led to adopt, I declined doing so. Three of the soldiers in turn gave out a hymn, and after each had done this, all fell upon their knees, while he who had announced his hymn, proceeded most solemnly and appropriately to implore the Divine blessing.

I rejoiced that I was in a corner where I could secretly enjoy my own feelings, and silently pour out my soul to God. Never was I more devoutly affected. The scene, the singing, the persons, the locality, and the indistinctly-smothered sighs of so many broken hearts, was really altogether overwhelming. At the conclusion of the last soldier's prayer, a humble soldier gave out another hymn. He then said,—“Comrades, please to sit down, and I will furnish you with some particulars that may be profitable to us all, respecting the last two lines we have just been singing. Some of you have heard me say, that during the last war I belonged to a foot regiment, in which there were a few Christian soldiers. William, my beloved friend, was one of that number. We met as regularly as we could, for prayer and praise; and as William generally conducted the meetings, he would often close the services with holy joy and rapture, singing—

“Then we'll march up the heavenly street,
And ground our arms at Jesus' feet.”

“When Lord Wellington took the command of the British army in the Peninsula, our regiment was ordered to embark for Lisbon. We had many blessed meetings on board, notwithstanding all the scoffs and sneers of the sailors; but after a few storms in running over the Atlantic, we disembarked, and were ordered to Belem Tower. Other regiments arrived also, and as we had a prospect of marching up the country, if we could force the enemy out of Portugal, we were the more earnest in our prayers that God would have mercy upon all the officers and soldiers in the British army, and graciously prepare every man for the events of His providence through which we might be called to

pass. We have often stolen away to a retired spot, near Belem Tower, and William would cheer us all up by saying, 'Fear not, comrades; whether we live or die, in camps or hospitals, or on the field of blood itself, we'll sing with joy,' and here he repeated his favourite lines.

"But not to detain you too long, I should say that we marched through Portugal and Spain, over the very bodies of our comrades, driving the enemy before us; and, notwithstanding all the drunkenness, blasphemy, and licentiousness, so common in the army, we were successful in almost every battle. Many a day, after a long march, when we halted in the evenings, fainting with hunger, have we hastily prepared for refreshment with the camp kettle, and then withdrawn to the banks of some river, and by the light of the moon, held our prayer meetings. William would often address us at the close of the meeting, saying, 'Ah! comrades, we shall soon have done with marching and counter-marching, with fatigue parties and trenches, with fields and camps, and blood and slaughter, and then, oh, then, to depart and be with Christ! Oh, what glory—washed in His precious blood—justified by His glorious righteousness, and accepted in the Beloved! Oh, comrades, look up, for your redemption draweth nigh!

"At length we were hurried pell mell into the battle of Barossa. It was a day of blood, indeed, that will long be remembered by every survivor. At the close of the sanguinary conflict, our company had advanced at some short distance from the field of battle, and when the word was given to halt, a soldier ran up to inform me my comrade William was dying. I instantly hastened thither, and found him lying on his back, with his right hand upon his left breast, and the paleness of death spread over all his features.

"I eagerly grasped his left hand, and called out, 'William! William!' He opened his dying eyes, and exclaimed, 'Ah, comrade, is that you? How could you have found me out in this slaughterhouse of groans and blood? you have only just come in time.' I grasped his hand with affection, as a pious friend and brother in the Lord, and as the tears rolled copiously down my cheeks, I said, 'Where are you wounded William?' He rolled his eyes in anguish, and replied, 'Oh, I've a musket ball through my left breast, and I feel it will not be long before my soul will leave this agonized frame; life is ebbing fast, and stingless death, through Christ my Lord, is coming upon me.' 'Are you in much pain, William?' He pressed his hand to his breast, and cried out with bitter anguish, 'Oh, comrade, the pains of my body are greater than I can possibly express. I paused and wept over him, and, waiting a moment until he could

recover, as his breath became shorter, while the blood was oozing out of his wound, I said, 'William, how is it with your soul? Are you happy in the Lord? Is Christ now precious to you? We have fought in many battles—we have marched over many a waste howling wilderness—we have encountered many enemies—we have held many blessed meetings in Spain—you have often told us the Lord was with you, in camps, in trenches, on guard, or on the march. Is Christ with you now, William? Is your soul comfortable in the enjoyment of His love, and the foretaste of heaven?' To my great surprise, he made a mighty effort, and sprang up, so as to occupy a sitting posture, while he lifted up his hand to heaven, and cried out, 'Ah, comrade, the joys of my soul are greater than all the pains of my body; yes, indeed, He is precious, and I now prove, that having loved His own, He loveth them to the end. Adieu, comrade, I am now indeed going to be with Jesus;' and then waving his hand, and gazing around him, he cried out with a peculiar tone of voice that I shall never forget, while I held my hand to his wound, 'Farewell marches and trenches. Farewell fatigue-parties, and midnight revellings of drunken comrades. Farewell fields of battle, and blood and slaughter, and farewell sun, and moon, and stars, and'—he paused, almost exhausted with his feelings; but turning to me, he cried, 'Yes, farewell, beloved comrade in Christ Jesus; meet me in glory, for oh, in a few minutes more, my soul must depart, and then, yes—

"Then I'll march up the heavenly street,
And ground my arms at Jesus' feet."

His head sank upon my shoulder; and suddenly the bugles sounded to call in stragglers from the field on some special duty. I was compelled hastily to run to our company, and fall in for duty; but in a little while, a soldier from the field came up to me, saying, "Briery, I dug a small pit, and have just put your comrade William into it. He was a good fellow; I could not bear to see him lying without a grave." Ah, comrades, I was immediately like David when he lost his friend and brother in the war, and I cried out in his mournful language of deep sorrow, 'How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high places. I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women.'

The soldier finished his simple and heart-affecting tale, and we all knelt down, while he poured out his soul before God for the Army and the Navy in particular, that sailors and soldiers might know William's God, and enjoy William's triumphs, as they were infinitely greater on the field of death than those the Duke of

Wellington enjoyed in quitting that field for all the glory that could be conferred on him by his country. I never remember anything told with more simplicity, ease, and pathos in my life, and I solemnly declare it left such an impression upon my soul, that at that moment, and indeed for many weeks afterwards, I occasionally felt a sort of ardent momentary desire to die like William, taking leave of all sublunary objects, and proclaiming the language of triumph to friends and foes, to family and kindred, in the prospect of full redemption by the blood of the Lamb.

Reader, this narrative exhibits in a striking view, the horrors and miseries of war. Oh, how painful it is to contemplate man, originally made in the image of his beneficent Creator, thus transformed into the murderer, the butcher of his race! As if the ravages of natural death were too limited and slow, war, with its attendant evils, has in all ages extensively prevailed, numbering its victims by thousands and millions. Still, war, with all its dreadful horrors, is only the direful effect of that more direful cause, which dwells deep in the desperately wicked heart of every unrenowned man. "The carnal mind is enmity against God;" its desire is to hurl Jehovah from His throne, and to set up the idol of self in His place; and thus maintaining a warfare with God, and living in a state of continued rebellion against Him, need we wonder that the envy and malice which cannot successfully oppose our Almighty Creator, should seek its gratification in the misery and death of those who are His rational and intelligent offspring?

But this narrative shows, above all, the unspeakable value of the Gospel. Possessions and honours may sustain and gratify us in the day of health and prosperity, but what do they avail in the day when God taketh away the soul? We have reason to fear, that on the fatal field of Barossa, many a soldier yielded up his spirit amid the most embittered reflections as to the past, and the most hopeless anticipations as to the future; having lived without the faith of the Gospel, they died without its hope. But how different was it with William; he, in believing penitence, had been brought to the feet of Jesus; in the hour of his extremity, he enjoyed the tokens of His everlasting love; and, leaning on His arm, he triumphantly entered through the gate of death into the heavenly city. Oh, reader, may you be found a follower of the Captain of salvation, and following Him, endure "hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." He is the Resurrection and the Life. He leads all His followers to victory and triumph; and if you are taught by the Spirit to depend on His atonement and intercession, He will carry you safe through the Jordan of death, and present you faultless before the throne of His glory with exceeding joy.

BRIEF NOTES OF A SERMON

PREACHED BY THE EDITOR, ON WEDNESDAY EVENING,
APRIL 23RD, 1890.

"Blessed is the man whom Thou choosest, and causest to approach unto Thee, that He may dwell in Thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of Thy house, even of Thy holy temple."—PSALM lxxv. 4.

THAT man is blessed indeed whom God blesses. The blessings spoken of are various, and yet they concern only one people—God's own people. "I will be their God, and they shall be my people." He loves them with an everlasting love. There is the coming of this love from heaven into their hearts, and the returning of this love to heaven in communion with the Lord, and trouble often drives us to Him. Has God looked upon you to-day in trouble about your sin? Notice the third verse, "Iniquities prevail against me; as for our transgressions, Thou shalt purge them away." Do your iniquities lead you to cry unto God? and do you know the truth of what is said about the blood of Christ? "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." "The blood of Jesus speaketh better things than that of Abel." By His blood we are favoured to draw nigh unto God, and plead with Him as a man pleadeth with his friend. If the Blessed Spirit does not put your heart right, my friend, and mine too, it will be wrong, and it will go wrong. John Newton says—

"Thou didst once a wretch behold,
In rebellion blindly bold,
Scorn Thy grace, Thy power defy,
That poor rebel, Lord, was I.

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

Oh, that religion is worth a thousand worlds. If you can say that, everlasting life is yours. Have you enjoyed what David speaks of in the first and second verses of the 32nd Psalm, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile"? And in the fifth verse the Psalmist tells how he came to know this, "I acknowledged my sin unto Thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin." Christ Jesus had the iniquity of His people imputed unto Him, that they might have His

righteousness imputed unto them. "All that the Father giveth Me [says Christ] shall come to Me."

What a mercy if He keeps you going, as a guilty, polluted, and troubled one, to Him daily. There is "a fountain opened for sin and uncleanness." Peter says, "To whom coming." *They* were not of the coming people who left the Lord and walked no more with Him. They were like Orpah—not like Ruth. If I might not carry all my perplexities, fears, and distresses to Him, what should I do? But He long ago said to my grief-stricken heart, "Call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me." Whatever temptation or trouble may be our lot sent to us, God has said, "Blessed is that man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him."

Thus the Lord will cause His chosen ones to come. From every place, clime, and people, they *shall* come. The drawing of Christ is irresistible. I believe that when God calls, the sinner comes; yea, is glad to come, and says, "Lord, wilt Thou have such a heart as mine? Take it Lord, oh, take it, and make it clean."

"O come, Thou much expected Guest!

Lord Jesus, quickly come!

Enter the chamber of my breast,

Thyself prepare the room.

"For shouldst Thou stay till Thou shouldst meet

Reception worthy Thee,

With sinners Thou wouldst never sit—

At least I'm sure with me.

"When, when will that blest time arrive,

When Thou wilt kindly deign

With me to sit, to lodge, to live,

And never part again?"

As many as were chosen in Christ are caused to come to Him, for mercy, pardon, peace, help, and every good thing promised to seeking souls. These needy ones are the chosen ones—chosen to be children of the Lord, plants of His right-hand planting, and they choose Him in return. To them He "gives in His house, and within His walls, a name and a place better than of sons and of daughters, even an everlasting name, which shall not be cut off." Here they find rest under His shadow, and are satisfied with His goodness. Christ is their all, their eternal portion, and in His favour they realize the blessedness spoken of in the text.

THE righteous man makes godliness his gain; the wicked man makes gain his godliness.—*Venning*.

EXTRACT FROM GURNALL.

PERHAPS, Christian, thou prayest for a mercy thou wantest, or for deliverance out of some great affliction, and in the duty thou findest not more assistance than ordinary, yea, many distractions of spirit in it: well, notwithstanding those defects in thy duty, God hears thy prayer, and sends in the mercy on purpose that He may enhance His love in thine eye, and make it more luscious and sweet to thy taste, from His accepting thy weak services, and passing by the distempers of thy spirit. Here is less strength for the duty, that thou mayest have more love in the mercy; nothing will affect a gracious soul more than such a consolation. See it in David, Psa. cxvi. 11, 12, "I said in my haste, All men are liars. What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits toward me?" As if David had said, "Notwithstanding all the comfortable messages I had from God by His prophets concerning this matter, my own prayers, and those remarkable providences, which carried in them a partial answer, and performances of what was promised; yet I betrayed much unbelief, questioning the truth of the one, and the return of the other; and hath God, notwithstanding all infirmities, fulfilled my desire and performed His promise? Oh, what shall I render unto the Lord?" Thus David reads God's mercy through the spectacles of his own weakness and infirmity, and it appears great; whereas if a mercy should come in as an answer to a duty managed with such strength of faith, and might of other graces, as might free him and his duty from usual infirmities, it might prove a snare and occasion some self-applauding, rather than mercy-admiring thoughts in the creature. God may communicate the less of His assisting strength, that He may show the more of His supporting strength, in upholding weak grace. We do not wonder to see a man of strong constitution that eats his bread heartily, and sleeps soundly, live; but for a crazy body, full of ails and infirmities, to be so patched up by the physician's art, that he stands to old age, this begets some wonder in the beholders. It may be thou art a poor trembling soul, thy faith is weak, and thy assaults from Satan strong, thy corruptions stirring and active, and thy mortifying strength little, so that in thy opinion they rather gain ground on thy grace, than give ground to it; ever and anon thou art ready to think, thou shalt be cast as a wreck on the devil's shore: and yet to this day thy grace lives, though full of leaks; now is it not worth the stepping aside to see this strange sight? A broken ship with masts and hull rent and torn, thus towed along by Almighty power through an angry sea, and armadas of sins and devils, safely into His harbour. To see a rush candle in the face of the boisterous wind,

not blown out ; in a word, to see a weak stripling in grace held up in God's arms till he defeats the devil ; this God is doing in upholding thee. Thou art one of those babes out of whose mouth God is perfecting His praise, by ordaining such strength for thee, that thou a babe in grace shall yet foil a giant in wrath and power.

GATHERING HOME ONE BY ONE.

To the Editor of the Sower.

DEAR FRIEND,—I was interested in the nice account of Robert Berry, in January SOWER. I knew him as a gracious, well-taught man of God, whose ears were circumcised to know, and his heart to love the truth as it is in Jesus. It may also be interesting to some to know that the dear old lace-seller mentioned in the account is still with us at Cambridge, in his ninety-second year, happy in the Lord, and waiting for the summons to call him home.

I have now to record the departure of another aged friend, Mary Ainsley, of Sunderland. She was born in 1802. Her mother was a godly woman, and attended the chapel where Mr. Clegg preached ; her father was a seafaring man, and while Mary was very young he was taken prisoner by the French, who detained him from his wife and family seven years. This was a sore trial to them all, the mother having to get a living for the family ; but she has told me of the great joy there was in their home when her father was released and he returned to them. I think it was during his imprisonment that Mr. Samuel Turner, in 1809, was ordained minister to succeed Mr. Clegg. Mary was present with her mother on this occasion, and obtained a vivid recollection of the proceedings, and would often, to the close of her life, speak of it, her face beaming with joy, remembering how her mother pointed out, amongst the other ministers present, Mr. Turner, who was in after years to be made the means of so much spiritual benefit to her.

Once, when a very little girl, her uncle was expected home from sea, and she learned the twelfth chapter of Isaiah, and the hymn beginning—

“Thou dear Redeemer, dying Lamb,
We love to hear of Thee ;
No music's like Thy charming name,
Nor balm so sweet can be,”

to repeat to him, and they were never erased from her memory. How good it is for the mind of the young to be well stored with Scripture truth and the good old-fashioned hymns. Who can tell

what a blessing they may prove to them as they grow up into life? She passed through many severe trials, one particularly in the loss of her only brother, in 1827. She would often speak of those gone before, as if she was anticipating the time to join them again. Mr. Turner's ministry was made a blessing to her, and she was brought out to manifest herself on the Lord's side. She loved to talk over various times of help and blessing she had received, and it was the practice of Mr. Turner's members to talk over what they had heard on the Sabbath; thus they often got a double blessing in sweet communion one with another.

It was not until past middle life that she was married to Joseph Ainsley, and removed to Hartlepool. Here she had the opportunity of sometimes hearing the Gospel, and would often mention going to Helmsley with her husband, in 1862, to hear Mr. John Grace. She very much revered Mr. Grace's memory for his work's sake.

She was left a widow in 1878, and soon after returned again to Sunderland. One or two communications will show the state of her mind from this time until the end.

"Oh, may my heart be filled with gratitude to the Lord for His manifold mercies towards me, sinful me. I am at times very low, and full of doubts whether I am in the right way or not. I feel more and more the loss of not hearing the Word as I used to. That is a sweet hymn in Gadsby's, 623, and also 173, on Christ a Sanctuary.

"I thought you would like to know how I am going on. I am nearing home. I had a sweet foretaste of death on the morning of January 19th. I was lying in such sweet peace as I cannot describe, hearing such sweet music at a distance. I thought, 'I will not get up this morning, when those words were spoken with power, 'What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter,' the Saviour's own words to His disciples. How very sweet to such a poor timid creature as I am. I have thought it must be 'that peace that passeth all understanding,' and love together. My hymn that morning was—

"Soon the joyful news will come,
Child, thy Father calls, 'Come home!'"

It was very suitable. I have now no fear of death. I think it is the latter rain. I was reading one of Mr. Turner's letters. He says, though he had not the success he could have wished, yet he had some seals to his ministry [now above]; some living epistles below will be folded up and sent home by-and-by. I hope I shall soon be one of them. What a mercy to have a good hope! I have kept pondering these things over, and I think it better that you should know them. The Lord has been very good to

me this winter, in my warm, comfortable room, in giving me sweet portions from His Word. The hymn—

“As pants the hart for cooling stream,
When heated in the chase,” &c.,

was so precious, one Sabbath morning; and the fortieth Psalm, ‘I waited patiently for the Lord,’ &c. I was directed to Mr. West’s sermons, and opened the book at a sermon from the same text. Is not that the Spirit’s teaching—not man’s?

“I have felt very lonely at times, not having anyone to speak to on spiritual things, but I now see the hand of the Lord in it all; it was for the best in the end. A friend has lent me a book, ‘The Fountain of Life Opened,’ by Flavel. It has been a great help to me in the state I have been through Satan’s temptations. It says—

“Christ knows what sore temptations mean,
For He has felt the same,” &c.

Bless His name! He has delivered me. I can now lay me down in peace. I was reading Mr. Turner’s ‘Call to the Ministry,’ where the lady is speaking of her temptations, and the thought that I had not been alone cheered me. I am feeling very weak. Am thinking of them who have gone before. How the Lord suits His blessing to our need and case, so that as we grow in years we may grow in grace, and triumph over the infirmities of old age, and still bring forth fruit—the rich fruit of humility, the ripe fruit of thankfulness, fruit that endureth to everlasting life. Oh, do help me to praise the Lord for His goodness to me; though I do not get handfuls like Ruth, yet I gather some corn. I often read the seventy-first Psalm; the 9th and 18th verses are my prayers, ‘Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth,’ &c.

“Watts Wilkinson’s letters have been precious to me, they are the desires of my heart. I was speaking to one friend of them that feared the Lord, and a book of remembrance being written before Him for them that thought upon His name; he said he hoped he was on one of the leaves, and I hope you and I are too, and many others that have met with us. I do bless the Lord for all His goodness to me.”

Excepting being a little palsied, she enjoyed good health, and most of her faculties were very good, especially her sight, almost to the last. But to the longest life there comes a close; hers took place January 22nd, 1891, at the age of eighty nine years.

R. F. R.

I AM a stranger even at home. Therefore, if the dogs of the world bark at me, I neither care nor wonder.—*Bishop Hall.*

SIN AND ITS RESULTS.

"But he that sinneth against Me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate Me love death."—PROVERBS viii. 36.

SIN is the prolific source of all misery and woe. This wants no proving, daily and hourly we feel it, and there is no exemption from its entire influence but in the glory. How extensive the produce from this root, and what bitter reaping from the seed. How extensive its range in earth and hell; what an inlet with it of darkness, ignorance, alienation, and death. All the powers are depraved by it—the conscience is morbid, the will vitiated, the understanding darkened, and reason depraved. Can the light within the natural man lead back to the fount of life and bliss? No. Man embraces close to his bosom the venomous reptile which will destroy him; he treads upon the brink of ruin and sees no danger. "Sin is a transgression of the law," "for where there is no law there is no transgression." Look at the malignity of sin in connection with the object. Take the Lord Jesus Christ: He went about doing good, but it was all ascribed to the worst of motives, and when He shed heavenly light by His instructions upon those poor degraded creatures, how Envy raged, and that black, foul-mouthed monster poured forth its spleen, "This Man is a Friend of sinners, the scum of the earth." Oh, Envy, thou child of hell! rather than vacate thy seat, thou wouldst drown a world in blood, and the filling-up of their measure of iniquity was the crucifying of the Lord of life and glory. When men forsake the way of truth—begin in the Spirit and end in the flesh—these give proof that they never felt the power of the truth they professed, or they are very greatly bewitched by the devil. "Ye are fallen from grace," forsaking the ways of truth for those of Balaam.

There are those that "hold the truth in unrighteousness," in whose heart the truth has no influence, and whose conduct forms no counterpart to them. They are well satisfied in the ancient settlements of Heaven, and are in a state of carnal security, but a good conscience is out of the question; they do not like his croaking below deck, and would be glad to throw him overboard.

In speaking against the godly, remember, the Lord takes that as done to Himself; it is a solemn thing to speak against God's work and God's people. We live in a day when it is done in secret by backbiting and slander. This is not honesty and straightforward dealing in the truth, but the Lord sees it all, and will call to account for all this.

What is the voice of inspiration as to the result of this course? "Wrongeth his own soul." This is a certain result of sin. You cannot swallow poison without sad effects; you cannot take a

serpent into your bosom without great danger. Sin is of a hardening nature, its tendency is downwards ; see its effects upon those who encourage it in this particular. The seat of the scornful is close to the door of hell. It heaps up "wrath against the day of wrath." Its termination is destruction. Oh, man, stop and pause on the brink of this precipice. Sin's sad effects are seen even in believers—darkness, carnality, deathlike feeling, and distance from God, are sure to follow where it is allowed.

Who ever poured contempt upon God's truth and prospered ? You may seem to ride victorious now, and God's poor people may be under your feet, yet truth will prove a stubborn thing, very unbending, and hard to grapple with in the end, and will eventually prove a swift witness against you. The injury you have sought to do to others will return with ten-fold power upon your own head.

"All they that hate me love death." All sin does not flow from hatred ; there is sin in hatred to Christ and His cause, as is manifested in the world lying in the wicked one ; but there are also some professors who would discard the idea of hating God's truth, yet they do hate it secretly ; and consequently, as being in love with that which brings death. You may depend upon this one thing, so sure as you are in love with sin, death will follow, as certain as life will follow love to Christ. "What think you of Christ ? is the test." There are some who would unrobe Him of His dignity and majesty and tread it under foot ; as to possessing any value, think lightly of His precious blood. How will such stand when the Judge ascends His throne, and the rays of His Godhead strike terror all around ? Those who now despise Him will then seek, but in vain, a shelter from His all-piercing eye.

Look at the contempt poured upon the Gospel, in open hostility, and in the volumes launched forth against its Author ; and how many are there who sit beneath its sound, and yet trifle with the light with a simper upon the face. Sinner, the next moment may launch thee into another world. "And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment." There is an awful reality in these things. May God give you to pause upon the brink of ruin ; and may the Eternal Spirit light up in your soul the light of life, never to be extinguished.

When we attempt to add to or take from God's testimony, when man opposes the doctrines of grace, ignorantly or wilfully, I do not hesitate to say that that man has never known what it was to bow to God's sovereignty in salvation's plan. God's plan cannot be improved ; it is perfect. God and man do not reign together in the work of salvation. God reigns alone, and He shall have all the glory. Amen.

C. NORRIS.

THE ANXIOUS INQUIRER'S PAGE.

"THEY SHALL ASK THE WAY TO ZION."

To the Editor of the Sower.

DEAR MR. HULL,—I have scarcely ever before been so miserable and unhappy as I have been during the greater part of last week, and thought I would like to write and ask you if this is the way the Lord does usually teach His children, and whether they are ever brought into places like this. I have the GLEANER and SOWER Almanack hanging in my bedroom, and I find it very profitable to read the text for the day while dressing in the morning; it is something to think of during the day. The text for a week last Sunday was, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord." I thought a great deal upon this text, feeling what a great blessing it was to have a God to take our troubles to, whatever they might be—soul troubles, family troubles, or business troubles; feeling we had nothing to do but lay them before the Lord, and leave them in His hand, who is "too wise to err, too good to be unkind." I also felt a great sympathy for those around me who had not a God to take their troubles to—those who knew not God, and those whose sins were no burden to them, so that they did not want God. I felt a great sympathy for these, and thanked the Lord that He had, in some measure, revealed Himself to me as my Burden Bearer. But when I got up last Sunday morning, I read the text as usual, which was, "Oh that I knew where I might find Him!" I did not think much about it at the time, as I was not yet brought into a position to use those words; but during the day I was very worried, because my brother was unwell, and I thought, when I retired to my room at night, what a great relief it would be to cast my burden upon the Lord, so I fell on my knees; but I could not pray; I felt that the Lord had hid His face from me; all I could do was to sigh and cry. I remained on my knees for some time, but I could not utter a word of prayer.

At length I got into bed; then I began to think what was the text for the day. At last I thought of the words which, in the morning, seemed to have nothing in them for me. A little hope began to revive, and the fact that a child of God had been brought into a similar state seemed very comforting to me; so I got out of bed again, and searched until I found the place where Job was brought very low, and used these words, "Oh that I knew where I might find Him!" But for days I had to mourn an absent God. Night after night did I read Lamentations iii., feeling I could say with Jeremiah, "Also when I cry and shout, He shutteth out my prayer." All earthly things appeared in my

eyes as vanity, and I could not take any interest in my daily work.

But as days went on I gradually felt a little more access to the throne of grace, a little more dependence on the Lord and resignation to His will, feeling that He knew best, and that He did not afflict willingly. This verse seemed very sweet and comforting—

“If Christ do not appear
When His disciples cry,
He marketh every tear,
And counteth every sigh;
In all their sorrows bears a part,
Beholds their grief, and feels their smart.”

I do hope to-day that the Lord's hand has been in this and similar trials; if it is so, they will all work together for good, for—

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

Hoping, dear sir, that you may be strengthened and supported by the Lord during your long and trying affliction, and, if it be the Lord's will, restored to health, so that you may be able to continue your very useful labours for many years to come.

From your affectionate young friend,

February 8th, 1890.

A. W.

[Dear young friend, it gladdens our heart to hear of the gracious things the Lord has done for you thus early in life (oh, that we may hear of many more such cases), and to know that He is still teaching you, and leading you forth by the footsteps of the flock, which path He Himself has trod and consecrated, although it be through much tribulation. Such exercises as you speak of make us to feel our need of Christ through all the way, and keep us “looking unto Jesus,” and calling upon Him for His promised help, which though it be delayed, will not be denied us. “The Lord trieth the righteous,” and whom He loves He chastens; but those who are thus exercised will find that these trials will, in the end, yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness. This is how He answers His people's prayers for growth in grace and in the knowledge of Christ, by giving them to prove His sufficiency and suitability for their every time of trouble and need. Thus, dear young friend, you will find it your great mercy if the Lord so leads you as to keep up in your soul a constant feeling of your need of Jesus, for our daily business should be, “To whom coming.” May He richly bless you, is the prayer of

THE EDITOR.]

THE SEEKER'S CORNER.

To the Editor of the Sower.

DEAR SIR,—I have ventured to send you a few lines, hoping that they will not intrude on your valuable time. I am a constant reader of the SOWER, and I now submit a few remarks concerning my state, hoping you will, in charity, reply to me by letter, or in the SOWER.

My eyes were first opened to see the truth ten years ago, but I am sure the truth did not open my eyes as regards my sinful state. I heard it with joy for some time, but I am sorry to state that it did not change me, for I still continued my course of life. It is true, there were certain checks at different times, and when I had fallen into sin, I promised amendment of life, and so I have continued more or less till quite recently. I dared not, after these falls, go to God in prayer, for I thought it would be but hypocrisy. I may say that I always felt that nothing but Omnipotence could meet my case, but it is only just recently that I have felt more keenly on the subject. It has led me to cry to the Lord that He would deepen my sense of guilt, and give me an interest in His Son's blood. At times I could say nothing but, "Lord, help me." I remember going to work one day, thinking of these things, and these words dropped into my mind—

"Those feeble desires, those wishes so weak,
'Tis Jesus inspires, and bids you still seek."

I was melted down in spirit, but it was not for long. I keep going to the Lord in prayer about these things, and sometimes it seems nothing but a delusion, for I feel so hard, that I think it cannot be real.

Oh, sir, do you think that there is anything of the Spirit's work about it? You know there are natural convictions, and the path to heaven is so narrow, that for any one to be deceived in so vital a case is terrible. I cannot draw back, nor do I feel at rest where I am.

Dear sir, I have been a great sinner; I think no one more so. I do hope the Lord will, in His own time and way, make it known whether I have an interest in the covenant of grace to the saving of my soul.

I have written this letter, having been encouraged by what appeared in the "Seeker's Corner." That you may prosper in the building up of God's people, and administering comfort to such an unworthy one as myself, is the prayer of my heart.

I must draw to a close, having, I am sure, wearied you with this long letter. Do let me know what you think, at your

earliest convenience. I do not suppose this is fit to put in the SOWER, but you can answer me there if it suits you best.

I am, yours truly,

January 15th, 1891.

B—.

[Dear friend, you wish us to say if we think there are any evidences of the Spirit's work in what you here relate. We sincerely hope the result may prove it to be so. It is by its fruit the tree is known to be good or evil, and, as you say, "there are natural convictions," which end without true repentance, and a coming to and receiving Christ by faith; and you also say that you know the truth may be heard, approved, followed, and that with joy, while the heart is unchanged, and the person thus rejoicing in it destitute of the life of God, and a stranger to the pardoning blood of Christ, as you confess yourself to have been. We are glad you appear to have been at least made sensible of this, and to feel deeply concerned about your state, with strong desires to be rightly taught of God, and brought to feel your interest in Christ's atoning blood. We earnestly pray that your present exercises may issue in eternal life. We hope you will be helped by reading other communications in the "Seeker's Corner" this month. For your profit we also subjoin an extract from a sermon by the late Mr. Philpot, showing the difference between natural and spiritual profession of love to the truth, and of following Christ. We trust that you may find in the clear testimony of this good man some evidence of your own state, and that you may come forth, like Peter, to tell of Christ's mighty power to keep His own, even in the most dreadful temptations, instead of being left, like Judas, to sink where hope and mercy are unknown. May the Lord in mercy work in you both to will and to do, and bring you forth in due time to exclaim—

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

The following is the extract from Mr. Philpot's sermon referred to.—ED.]

"Contrast for a moment the case of Judas with that of Peter. There we see this matter brought out in its true colouring. The flesh of Judas was weak, and he fell under the power of temptation, which took full possession of his heart when he received the sop. He fell through the power of covetousness and of enmity against the Lord Jesus. He neither watched nor prayed, for he possessed neither watchfulness nor prayer; he fell,

therefore, finally and everlastingly. Peter's flesh was weak ; he was sifted like corn in a sieve, riddled to and fro, unable to withstand the temptation presented to him ; yet he had a willing spirit, loved the Lord, and believed in His holy Name. His heart was sound and right, and his spirit willing, but his flesh was weak. He could not stand against the power of temptation ; he quailed at the question of a servant girl. But how different the ends of Judas and Peter ! The one fell, not being upheld, for he was the son of perdition, and fell to rise no more ; the other fell through weakness, yet was possessed of a willing spirit, that struggled in his bosom labouring for the mastery, and through the power of grace gained the day. The Lord Jesus prayed for him that his faith might not fail ; and thus, though he fell in the hour of temptation, he fell not finally.

"But Peter learned some great and profitable lessons from his temptation. It winnowed pharisaism out of his heart ; it cut to pieces all his creature strength ; it laid the great man, the prince of the Apostles, low. Peter entered into the temptation a giant, and came out of the trial a little child. We shall do the same if we know anything of the power of temptation. Nothing brings down the heart like it ; nothing lays the soul so low in the dust before God as to know the power of sin through the power of temptation. Nothing so effectually roots out self-righteousness ; nothing makes the grace of God so precious ; nothing so much enhances in value the atoning blood of the Lamb ; nothing makes the poor soul cleave with firmer grasp to Christ on Calvary than a deep acquaintance with the power of temptation.

"And yet the Lord says, 'Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.'"

DEAR SIR,—Having enjoyed reading the SOWER, and especially the "Seeker's Corner," just lately, I feel constrained to respond to your request, and to communicate to you (and others, if you think fit) a little of the Lord's leadings and dealings with me. When young in years, I became very anxious about the future, and, I believe, was taught to know myself as a sinner before God at the age of seventeen.

One Sunday morning the 938th hymn (Gadsby's) was given out at chapel, "When Thou my righteous Judge shalt come," &c. I shall not soon forget the solemn impression the last part of the second verse made upon me. At another time the 737th was sung—

"Gracious God, incline Thine ear,
My request vouchsafe to hear ;
Hear my never-ceasing cry,
Give me Christ, or else I die."

Oh, how I sang that hymn ! It was just the language of my soul, and I felt as though there was none but God and myself in the place.

It has been a comfort to me at times to think that I have felt something of the same desires and longings as those godly men, the hymn writers, have experienced. Many a time a verse of a hymn has helped me to cast my burden on the Lord. Once (not long since) I became very anxious about the future in this life (being delicate in health), when this verse dropped into my mind so sweetly and so timely, that I was enabled to leave all that concerned me in His hand, "Who is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind"—

"He that has made my heaven secure
Will here all good provide;
While Christ is rich, I can't be poor—
What can I want beside?"

I was often encouraged and helped when at chapel, but it seemed to me that I was a *seeker* a long time before I became a *finder*. I had prayed many times to have a word from the Lord for myself, when, one Friday morning, it was just as though a still small voice spoke these words to me, "Your life is hid with Christ in God." Not knowing then whether they were in the Bible, I began to search for them, as I never remembered hearing or seeing them before; but I felt sure they were from the Lord. I soon found them in Col. iii. 3. The next day I began to doubt whether they were really for me, or whether I had ever heard them before, and they had just come into my mind again. So this led me to pray earnestly, and I asked the Lord to let them remain on my mind, and to let the minister repeat them in his sermon the next morning if they were for me. How anxiously I listened to that sermon, when, to my joy, just as he was finishing, he repeated them. I felt then that I could claim them as mine, and that I could praise the Lord for His goodness to me, in not only hearing but answering my prayers.

Another time of rejoicing was once, when very ill, I had such a sense of the love of God to my soul that I could not describe it to any one. I could scarcely keep from singing (though all were asleep in the house)—

"On such love, my soul, still ponder,
Love so great, so rich, so free;
Say, whilst lost in holy wonder,
'Why, O Lord, such love to me?'
Hallelujah!
Grace shall reign eternally."

This was a time never to be forgotten. Although surrounded with

earthly comforts and kind friends, I longed to be gone, to be with Jesus, for truly my affections were weaned from this world and its pleasures ; but He saw fit to restore me again, and to let me live to experience many doubts and fears, and, I trust, some times of refreshing from His presence, some of which have been under Mr. E. Carr's ministry ; for often, whilst hearing him explain the Scriptures and preach the Gospel, my thoughts and affections have been drawn above time and sense, and fixed upon Christ, so that I could say with the poet—

“Thou art my precious Saviour,
The Anchor of my soul;
Thou art my Burden Bearer,
On Thee my cares I roll.
Thou art Jehovah-Jireh,
Thou dost for me provide ;
My Righteousness, my Banner,
My Shield on every side.”

Hoping, now the severe weather has gone, you may be restored, in a measure, to health and strength again,

Yours very sincerely,

Leicester, February 2nd, 1891.

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DEAR SIR,—I am sending a few lines to you, as I am very much interested in the “Seeker's Corner.” May the Lord abundantly bless it to many of His dear seeking ones, and thereby give them much encouragement to still seek on, is my sincere desire. Though I have no great things to testify of, yet I hope I know, in a great measure, what it is to seek and thirst after Christ, and when none but Christ would do ; day after day my cry has been, “Thou must save, and Thou alone.” I knew I could not do one thing to gain salvation, and if the Lord did not show mercy, I must perish ; and then when He has been pleased to shine into my heart, and shed abroad His love there, and has given me a sweet hope that one day I shall go to be with Him for ever, this has filled my heart so full of love to Him, and has created more desires and warmer thoughts of Him, so that I have felt, “Oh that I had wings like a dove ! for then would I fly unto Him, and be at rest.”

“Jesus, the very thought of Thee
With sweetness fills my breast,
But sweeter far Thy face to see,
And in Thy presence rest.”

I feel I want to know more and more of Him, and I would love and serve Him better if I could, but I find sin is mixed

with all I do, so that I cannot do the things that I would ; and when the Lord is pleased to hide His face for a season, then all seems dark, and I wonder, "If after all, I am not right! Have I been deceiving my own soul, having a name to live, and yet dead?" What a solemn matter to think of! O Lord, make me right, if I am not right, and give me fresh tokens of Thy love.

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

No;

"His past loving-kindness forbids me to think
He'll leave me at last in trouble to sink."

I felt very much encouraged the other Lord's Day, after hearing a sermon from Galatians iii. 27, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." I had felt very downcast for some days, and I really thought that all my religion was gone, and that I should prove a castaway; but as it drew towards the end of the week, I began to pant for the Sabbath, and to beg that the Lord would show me a token for good. When the morning came, I felt, "Oh, that it might be shown me this day, whether I am right or wrong!" If I was right I wanted to know, and if wrong I wanted to know, for I did not want to be deceived; and as soon as our dear pastor gave those words out for a text, I felt to tremble, and was afraid every word he spoke would cut me off, and yet I hung upon every word that was said; but nothing seemed to touch me, and I thought I should go away as I came, until he said, "Perhaps there is one here this morning that has been sighing for a token for good, and wants to know whether they are right or not." These words he was led to speak seemed to go right through me, and I felt that was a mark for me. Then a sweet hope arose in my soul, that I should be found right in Christ at last. So I am encouraged to still seek on, and I am sure, "My seeking His face was all of His grace."

But I must close now, or I shall weary you. May the Lord bless you, and each reader of the "Seeker's Corner," is the desire of,

Yours very truly,

Sussex, February, 1891.

A. V. S.

DEAR SIR,—Since I read "The Seeker's Corner" in the January Number, I have felt an inclination to write a few lines to you, as I hope I am a seeker. And first I would say that I felt a little encouraged with your remarks at the end of the letters, where you say, "There are many of the Lord's little ones who have a good hope of their interest in Christ Jesus, who have not received the assurance of forgiveness; but, like Simeon, they are

waiting for the consolation of Israel." I felt encouraged a few Lord's Days ago, when a minister spoke of the same circumstance, pointing out that, although Simeon was in that position until he saw the Holy Child Jesus and took Him into his arms, he was, "just and devout, and the Holy Ghost was upon him."

I fear to presume, and therefore cannot positively say, I have a hope in the mercy of God; at the same time, I could not say that I have none, as I hope I have had little helps by the way, particularly under the preached word, and am looking forward to deliverance in the Lord's own time. I am often tried by the thought that I have begun my religion myself, and feel sorry I have ever spoken of soul matters to anyone, fearing that I am deceived myself, and therefore have deceived others, and that when I come to the end of my journey, I shall be a dying spectacle to all around of the wrath of God. At other times I feel a little hope that, when I come to die, the Lord will appear and dispel all my fears.

Unless I am deceived, I heard you well when you preached at our chapel some years ago. You spoke something like this, "That perhaps there were some who thought if they only had so-and-so's experience, how much better off they would be;" and I had thought that many a time; but, you said, "You are better with your own." You also asked the question, "Has God made you to stand alone?" Well, I think I can say that there have been times when I have felt so concerned about the things of eternity, that there might not have been anyone else to consider. But I know this, my dying day is often my companion (I might say my daily companion), but when I am tried like this, am I exercised rightly about it? I know and feel many a time that I am a sinner, and a great sinner, and many conflicts go on within about hasty words spoken, and my sins generally, and yet I cannot speak of the deep law work that some do; but I believe the first ray of hope I ever felt was in reading the preliminary remarks of the piece, "Victory through the blood of Jesus," in the *LITTLE GLEANER* for July, 1887. Prior to that time I don't remember to have heard or read of anything but deep law work and great terrors of conscience; but perhaps I had got wrong impressions, and since then I have frequently heard ministers refer to the matter in a variety of ways. But I hope I can say, the language of my heart is expressed in the hymns commencing, "'Tis a point I long to know," "Assure my conscience of her part," and "My God, my Father, blissful name." Oh that the time may come when I shall be able to feel that all such hymns, and the promises of God to His people, are for me!

I have hesitated about writing to you, and even now I have written, I seem half inclined not to send it; but the desire to

write has come again and again, and therefore I venture to let it go, especially as I have enjoyed "The Seeker's Corner" in both the January and February numbers.

May the Lord restore you to health and strength again, and spare you for many years to come, to preach and write for His people's good and His glory.

Wishing you the best of blessings, I remain,

February 7th, 1891.

Yours sincerely, A.

[Dear friend, we feel delighted to have been favoured with your communication, for we love the language of little children in grace. Do not be surprised that Satan tries to stagger you about a law work, and any other such knotty points. Remember how he cast down the poor young man they were bringing to Jesus; and he is always trying to do the same now, by posing poor coming sinners with hard questions, in order to distract and discourage them. "By the law is the knowledge of sin;" and we believe you have that knowledge. Dear Daniel Herbert puts it in very simple language; listen to it—

"I ask my soul this question then,
For here I would begin,
'Oh, do I feel my need of Christ
To save me from my sin?'"

These are the characters that hear and learn of the Father, and come to His dear Son for mercy, pardon, and eternal salvation; and He says, "Him that cometh to Me, I will in *no wise* cast out."—ED.]

DEAR SIR,—I felt greatly encouraged by reading the two letters in this month's (February) SOWER, and felt a union of spirit to the writers. I trust the Lord has given me a desire after Him which nothing earthly can ever satisfy; but I am longing for the time when I can say, "My Beloved is mine, and I am His"; and can sometimes say—

"Compared with Christ, in all beside
No comeliness I see;
The one thing needful, dearest Lord,
Is to be one with Thee."

Forgive me, dear Sir, for my freedom in writing thus, as I am a perfect stranger to you. May the Lord abundantly bless and strengthen you in body and mind, is the earnest wish and prayer of

Yours, very sincerely,

February 7th, 1891.

L. D.

LETTER FOR THE YOUNG.

MY DEAR FRIENDS, MR. AND MRS. MORGAN,—I fear you will think me long before I answer your very kind and welcome letter. It rejoiced my heart to hear from you, and also to hear that dear Mr. Yeomans meets with you again at Salem. I hope and pray that it may be a blessing to your souls. I have been much cast down at times this winter, through the temptations of Satan and the evils of my corrupt nature. I feel more and more the warfare between the flesh and Spirit—the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, so that I cannot do the things that I would. I find true by experience the words of our blessed Saviour, “Without Me ye can do nothing.” I do feel at times such darkness, and at such a distance from God. Then again I feel my hope revived, and my faith increased, and have a little access unto His ever-blessed self. We have been again favoured with hearing dear Mr. Grace at Grantham. I felt much strengthened, and I thought what a favour it was to those who sit under his ministry regularly. But we should be, and I hope we are, thankful to hear the Gospel sometimes. Mr. Grace preached from these words in Genesis xxxii. 12, “And Thou saidst, I will surely do thee good”; and Philippians i. 6, “Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ”; and on the Wednesday evening from 1 Kings, xiv. 13, “Because in him there is found some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam.”

Mr. Grace was very ill on Sunday morning; he thought he should have fainted, but the Lord supported him; and at the close of the sermon, he blessed and thanked God, and said, he felt quite as well, or better than if he had stayed in the house.

I have been with Mr. L——, and he said he had seen you lately; was glad to hear you were well. My dear mother and I have had bad colds, but we are now better, through mercy. Father and sister are pretty well. They all unite with me in kind regards to you. I thank you for the book you sent us (we think you sent it, it being posted at Leicester). We had not heard of dear Mr. Sears' accident before we received your letter. We saw what it was when we received the *LITTLE GLEANER*.

May the Lord bless you and keep you, and give you peace, is the prayer of
Yours affectionately,

Thoroton, March 20th, 1857.

THOMAS HARDY.

It is the duty of a Christian to wait God's leisure. There is no mercy worth praying for, but it is worth waiting for.—*Venning*.

PERSECUTING A PROTESTANT CURATE.

WE have heard much of late about what is called "Home Reunion," that is, a reunion of Nonconformists and the Episcopalian Churches. There may be some honest Episcopalians who desire it, but the Ritualists have no idea of such a thing, as the following incident proves:—

5, Bedford Square, Brighton, November 25th, 1890.

DEAR MR. ADAMS,—Now I am obliged to write to you a letter which will, I am sorry to say, trouble you, concerning your *locum tenens*, Mr. Griffith. I have received from a very influential quarter in your parish, writing on behalf of others, complaints of his ministry, *e.g.*:—

1. That he preached the other day against baptism.
2. That he introduces long extempore prayers before and after his sermons.
3. That just as the residents are doing what they can, by building a Church Institute, to endeavour to infuse a Church of England feeling among the men of the place, Mr. Griffith, in sympathy with certain non-parishioners who attend the church, is doing all he can in the direction of dissent, holding meetings of this complexion in the village school-room, which belongs to the church.

I am sincerely sorry to trouble you while away, but I am bound, on behalf of the bishop, to inquire into these complaints, and to see that you are acquainted with them.

With kindest regards, yours sincerely,

ROBERT SUTTON,
Archdeacon and Rural Dean.

The following is part of the reply by Mr. Griffith:—

It is quite true that with the knowledge and sanction of Mr. Adams I was holding, and have since held, a weekly prayer meeting in the school-room (I may mention that with the same permission I have held a weekly service in the church, which, as far as I know, neither the complainant, nor any one of those on whose behalf the complainant wrote, has attended). It is also true that some three or four, or four or five, Nonconformists have been accustomed to offer prayer; and excellent and spiritual were their prayers. I did not specially request them to pray, but asked any brother present to lead us in prayer (as is being done in Eastbourne and throughout England this week under the auspices of the Evangelical Alliance), and they responded to the invitation. I maintain that there was nothing in these matters to injure the influence of the Church of England; but that there was much in them to help forward that "quietness, peace, and love among all

Christian people," which you and I at our ordination solemnly promised to "maintain and set forwards."

Allow me to remind you that the Bishop of Lichfield lately invited a large body of Nonconformist ministers to his house, where they not only enjoyed his hospitality, but where he and they, as fellow Christians and fellow ministers of God, mingled their prayers before the throne of grace.

[The notorious Romanising Bishop of Chichester has withdrawn Mr. Griffith's licence on account of the meetings above mentioned. Thus much for Ritualistic predominance. Let every Protestant be on the alert against such intolerance.—ED.]

A TRAVESTY OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

IN venturing upon any protest against the views of the great Liberal leader, we are, of course, liable to be reminded of old-fashioned prejudices; while dissent from sentiments in accord with "the spirit of the age" naturally exposes us to the charge of being "not up to date." All the same, silence is no part of our duty when a serious innovation is threatened. Mr. Gladstone's "Religious Disabilities Removal Bill" was introduced to and emphatically rejected by Parliament. But as it will doubtless continue to be agitated, we may well review its provisions and meaning. It proposes to throw open the two important offices of Lord Chancellor and Lord Lieutenant of Ireland to Roman Catholics. Sir. J. Pope Hennessy, the latest member elected, a Roman Catholic and a supporter of Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule policy, to wit, gave notice at the outset, promptly following Mr. Gladstone, "to move an instruction to the committee on the Bill, giving them power to insert in the measure a clause relieving the Sovereign and members of the Royal Family from all religious disabilities." This was only logical, as the Romish Press, the *Tablet* in particular, made haste to emphasize. But Sir John was quietly told of his error in tactics in showing his hand so quickly, and *pro. tem.* he hastened to beat a retreat. His eager action, however, threw a lurid light on Mr. Gladstone's Bill as "the little rift within the lute."

The present disabilities of Roman Catholics we hold to be *political*, and not religious at all. A Roman Catholic has the same right to worship God (and all the saints and angels, too) according to the dictates of conscience, as any Baptist can have to serve God according to his spiritual instincts. But if it is part of his "religion" to copy, as nearly as modern conditions will admit, the persecutions of the Vaudois, the slaughter of the Albigenes, the massacre of the Huguenots, and the martyrdoms

of Smithfield—and he can only deny it by repudiating the fundamental principle of his church—whatever may be said of the Emancipation Act of 1829, it is surely no part of an English Protestant's duty to assist him in gaining that power, by helping to provide him with the last two steps to the throne of England.
—*Baptist.*

MR. GLADSTONE'S RELIGIOUS DISABILITIES REMOVAL BILL.

THE House divided on the Bill; the numbers were—

For the second reading	223
Against	256
Majority	—33

The result was received with loud Ministerial cheers.

"I SHALL," says Dr. M'Pherson, the Baptist minister of Liverpool, "gladly support Mr. Gladstone's Bill when the Pope has framed a *similar* Bill in favour of Protestants."

"BECAUSE I am a thorough Liberal," writes Charles Garrett, the well-known Wesleyan minister, "I am strongly opposed to Mr. Gladstone's Religious Disabilities Removal Bill. Popery is in its very nature a determined enemy to civil and religious liberty. To give it increased political power is to that extent to surrender our own freedom."

THE POWER OF PRIESTCRAFT.

WHATEVER may be thought of other portions of his speech, few people will be likely to disagree with Lord Salisbury's remarks at Cambridge last week, concerning the rule of the priests in Ireland, and on priestism in general. Although he saw serious reasons for refusing Home Rule to Ireland, on the ground of the bitter anti-English hate which actuated both sections into which the Irish party has been broken up, there was, he said, another phenomenon which seemed to him more formidable still. This was the influence brought to bear on the electors at the recent Kilkenny election by the priests. "We have always declared," added the marquis, "that one of the great dangers of our brethren in the North of Ireland is that they would be subject to priestly rule."

"Priestly rule is the greatest vice of the religious organization. It is the worst corruption which, we are told by the proverb, belongs to all the best things; it is the attempt to use the influence gained by the teachers of religion by virtue of their holy

mission in the furtherance of secular ends. When the teachers of religion, basing themselves upon the influence which they have acquired by the holy truths of which they are the appointed expounders, try to use that for secular, earthly, personal ends, they then corrupt that which is best by the worst degeneracy ; they bend down the things of heaven to those of earth ; and, in denouncing them, we are not denouncing any religion or any form of religion ; we are denouncing that disease which is menacing and fatal to all religions alike."

This sounds quite Nonconformist-like, and few Baptists will deny that, whether in Ireland or elsewhere, it remains the duty of every opponent of religious intolerance to resist, tooth and nail, the handing over of Protestants to an unscrupulous priestcraft.—*Baptist*.

EXTRACT.

OH, do not flatter yourselves with a portion among the sons unless you live like sons. When we see a king's son play with a beggar, this is unbecoming ; so, if you be the King's children, live like the King's children ; "If ye be risen with Christ, set your affections on things above, and not on things below." When you come together, talk of what your Father promised you. You should all love your Father's will, and be content and pleased with the exercise you meet with in the world. If you are children of God, live together lovingly ; if the world quarrel with you, it is no matter ; but it is sad if you quarrel together. If this be amongst you, it is a sign of ill-breeding ; it is not according to rules you have in the Word of God. Dost thou see a soul that has the image of God in him ? love him, love him ; say, "This man and I must go to heaven one day." Serve one another, do good for one another ; and if any wrong you, pray to God to right you ; and love the brotherhood. If you be the children of God, learn that lesson, "Gird up the loins of your mind as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to your former conversation," but be ye holy in all manner of conversation. Consider that the holy God is your Father, and let this oblige you to live like the children of God, that you may look your Father in the face with comfort another day.—*Bunyan's last Sermon*.

O GLORIOUS day ! when we shall be like Him. The Church, in the Song, might well rejoice and say, "I am my Beloved's," in life and at death ; for death can't separate us from the love of God, "and His desire is toward me."—*Bentley*.



"THE DOCTOR SAYS I SHALL NOT RECOVER." (See page 86.)

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT.

IN the neighbourhood of Hampstead, where I lived, there was a middle-aged man, a regular plodding, money-getting man. Sundays and week-days were all one with him. This man, exposed to the weather, took cold; and, fearing expense, neglected it, and took cold upon cold. The result was, it settled upon his lungs, and eventually the doctor was sent for. His testimony was that he had been called in too late. "The doctor says the cold has fixed upon my lungs, and that I shall not recover," said the man, addressing me; "and as I have heard that you are a very good hand at visiting people that are sick, or going to die, I have sent for you to read to me, and to pray with me, and whatever your charge is I will pay." This speech came like death to me. I scarcely knew how to reply. However, I did make some kind of answer, adding that money in such matters was out of the question. "No, indeed," said the dying man; "no, every man is paid for his labour, and so ought you to be, and if you will not consent to be paid for it, I will not let you come at all."

Slavish fear and a dread of dying were apparently in operation, and nothing more; the too frequent concomitant of a death-bed! Well, I thought it best to let the sick man appear to have his own way, so I read and went to prayer; but, if any of my readers know what it is to attempt to pray by the side of such a case, they will not envy my feelings, nor be very likely to fall under our Lord's admonition about making long prayers. When the heavens are like brass, and the earth iron—when one feels himself to be beside an utter stranger to the life and power of godliness, prayer—if it be worthy the name of prayer—is a task indeed. Unless, in these peculiar circumstances, there be a special power from on high, an inward, divine, unctuous pleading, every word seems to rebound; there is no laying hold of, no enlargement, no sweet utterance, but a burden, increasing with each expression to which the lips give utterance. Oh, beloved, this is hard work.

But to return. I went again and again, until at length, tracing the ravages of disease, and wishing to ascertain the state of the dying man's mind, I said, "You are gradually getting weaker, and I have visited you so long a time now, what is the state of your mind in the prospect of death?" "Well," replied the man promptly, "I listen to all you read and say when you are here, and when you are gone, I read the chapter over again, and repeat as much of the prayer as I can remember; so that, altogether, I think I am a much better man than when you first came

to me." Here was a speech! I stood amazed, perfectly confounded. But the Lord overruled the expression for good. Its ignorance—the total want of light which the dying man betrayed, excited my concern, and I had liberty given me to point out man's lost estate, the nature of a broken law, the enmity of the human heart against God and the things of God. The man listened and wondered, and when I went again the next day he betrayed great restlessness and concern. His goodness was going, his badness began to appear to his own view. The work deepened. His anxiety increased, until it really and truly burst forth in the jailor's cry, "What shall I do to be saved?" As I was enabled by the help of the Holy Ghost, I began to preach Christ; and He that had opened the blind eyes, spoke pardon and peace to the dying man's soul, so that for many days he lay rejoicing in the Lord. Towards the close, however, within the last day or two of his life, darkness came on, the enemy was permitted to set in like a flood, and the poor man called all in question, fearing that he should perish after all. But I believed the Lord, who had done so much for him, would assuredly again appear and set his soul at liberty. Going into the room, I beheld the poor man lying with a terror-stricken countenance like one in despair—his eyes closed, his hands clasped, himself evidently in much mental suffering. The doctor was present, and said, "In less than an hour he will be gone." I felt it much; I wanted the Lord to confirm the work and give further testimony that it was of Himself. I begged Him to break in. At length he said, "Oh, what shall I do? I am dying—I shall presently be in eternity. What shall I do?" "You can do nothing," I replied. "May God help you to look to Christ." He again closed his eyes, and I saw from the movement of his lips that he was in earnest prayer. Presently a sweet smile came over his countenance, it brightened wonderfully, and opening his eyes, raising and clasping his hands, he looked upwards and exclaimed, "Oh, the blessings from above!" Louder, "Oh, the blessings from above!" Louder still, "Oh, the blessings from above!" With the last words he seemed to breath out his very soul, his hands dropped, his eyes closed, his head fell on one side of the pillow, and all was over.

There, readers, if the afore-mentioned case be not one of encouragement to some of you praying sick visitors, I know not what is. Where could there be a more heartless beginning, and where a more blessed close? Cheer up if you seem to have a secret impelling forward, but be it your concern to wrestle more with the Lord than to reason with the party himself. You can do more with the Lord than with the man. So pray on.

J. F.

RECOLLECTIONS OF PAST EXPERIENCES.

(Continued from page 25.)

A GREAT CHANGE.

THROUGH deaths and changes the cause began to get low. There was not really room for two places of Truth in the little town where my lot had been cast for five years. I was attached to the people, and could not bear the thought of leaving; but it gradually became more and more evident that, unless the Lord interposed in some marked way, we should, ere long, be compelled to go elsewhere. For many months the door appeared to be gradually closing. Many were my fears. When I looked at the places at which I occasionally supplied, I could not see one that I could feel would be my future home. Truly, I had to walk in the dark for a long time. However, there were some cheering rays of light. Several came forward and joined the Church. One baptizing service in particular is deeply impressed on my memory as a specially favoured season.

At length the time came for me to fulfil an engagement I had entered into to supply a Church in a large manufacturing town in the Midlands, which I had visited before, though not the same people or chapel. My first text was—"Lord, help me." At the conclusion of a fortnight's visit, the deacons gave me some hints that they were looking for a pastor, and expressed their thoughts respecting my settling among them. Not much was said. The weeks after my return home were very full of anxiety and worry. The suspense was exceedingly trying. One day—it was May 18th, 1882—I received a communication from one of my deacons, couched in the kindest terms, containing information which, in connection with circumstances well known to me, amounted to a distinct and definite shutting of the door there. The next letter I opened was an invitation from the Church above mentioned, to supply for them three months, with a view to the pastorate, to commence at the end of that same year. Thus the shutting of one door was remarkably accompanied by the opening of another. It seemed a singular ordering of Providence that the two letters should have come by the *same post*. After much prayer and some consideration, I replied, and will subjoin some extracts from my letter:—

"TO THE CHURCH OF CHRIST, ETC."

"MY DEAR FRIENDS,—For various reasons—some connected with the exercises of my own mind, some with the singular leadings of Providence—I cannot but believe it is the Lord's will that I should accept your invitation to supply for you the three months named. In thus acceding to your request, I must

freely confess that I am deeply sensible of my lack of the grace and gifts requisite to fill the important position you hope to be able to call me to at the end of the three months' probation. If, however, it is the Lord's will I should labour among you, He *can* supply His poor servant with all needful wisdom and ability. The passage recorded in 1 Corinthians i. 27, 28, is a great support to my mind at the present time. Therefore, in dependence upon the Lord, trusting it is in accordance with His will, *I accept your invitation*. . . . Let me here say that I do now, and shall continue to need your *prayers*, and earnestly beg an interest therein. I trust we have taken the first step—you in inviting, myself in accepting your invitation—in the fear of the Lord, with our eyes and our hearts up unto Him for direction. Leaving the future in His hands, I am," &c.

"P.S.—Since writing the above, the following Scripture has (I trust) been applied to my heart in a very *confirming* way and manner, 'When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble.'"

Between this, and the time of our departure from the place where we had passed through so many trials, and experienced so many mercies, we witnessed several interpositions of the Lord's hand. Two more friends were baptized. Frequent visits to my future sphere of labour confirmed me still more in the steps taken. At length the time came for us to leave our old friends, which they did not permit us to do without giving us a very handsome proof of their kindness and goodwill.

On November 4th I left them. Our removal to our new home was accomplished comfortably; and when, two months afterwards, the decision of the Church was taken (by ballot), there was an overwhelming majority in my favour—there being only eight "Noes." The matter being subsequently placed before the seat-holders, the action of the Church was unanimously confirmed. I could do no otherwise than accept such a satisfactory call to the pastorate. On February 18th, 1883, I gave a public account of my call by grace, call to the ministry, and the leadings of Providence in respect to my settlement there—particularly referring to Proverbs iv. 12, mentioned above, which had been all the while much on my mind—and I was led to promise that, *if in five years it proved to be of the Lord, I would preach from that text*. As soon as we were settled trials began. The stated salary was altogether inadequate. However, some of the friends united in subscribing to a fund to supplement it, which relieved my mind from over much anxiety on that score for some years.

For some long time after accepting the pastorate, I passed through a very singular trial in respect to the ministry. I felt

as if the Lord had left me ; and had to preach in dreadful darkness and bondage for months. This produced a hardness of statement, and harshness of manner, of which I was painfully conscious, but utterly unable to overcome. I felt much distress in consequence of this, and often feared the Lord had forsaken me altogether. It was a most painful burden. In looking back, I think this was almost the most severe discipline in respect to the ministry I was ever under. The darkness and bondage on the one hand, and its effect on my testimony on the other, distressed me exceedingly. However, other difficulties soon arose. To briefly sketch those I must refer to the peculiar position of affairs in connection with the chapel and congregation, which (D.V.) shall be the subject of the next paper.

(To be continued.)

A SONG OF DELIVERANCE.

" Sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously."

OH for a heart of praise,
 Dear Lord, Thy Name to bless ;
 We living thanks would raise
 For help in our distress :
 Thy hand did turn aside the blow
 That threatened England's overthrow.

All hearts are in Thy hand ;
 Have we not proved Thy power,
 Delivering our land
 In a most solemn hour ?
 Our feeble cries went up to Thee,
 And now we Thy salvation see.

Like Israel at the sea,
 While Pharaoh's hosts pursue,
 Our eyes were up to Thee,
 That Thou wouldst bring us through.
 We were shut up to God alone,
 And Thou didst make Thy goodness known.

While sore dismayed we stood,
 With mountains on each side,
 Before us, like a flood,
 We viewed the rolling tide.
 From out the gloom a voice was heard,
 " Go forward ! "—'twas a Kingly word.

" Forward ! yes, turn not back ;
 The way to victory
 Lies through the watery track,
 'Tis there My help you'll see.
 Go forward to a throne of grace,
 And spread before Me all your case."

Thou, Lord, didst cause to blow
 A mighty wind, 'tis true ;
 It did the power o'erthrow
 That sought such harm to do.
 Blest wind !—'twas by Thy Spirit given ;
 It shook the earth, and reached to heaven.

It was the living cry,
 The feeble breath of prayer,
 Ascending up on high,
 That wrought deliverance there ;
 That mighty wind, in one dread hour,
 Prevailed, and wrought with wondrous power.

The counsel of the wise
 Was quickly overthrown ;
 It filled them with surprise,
 Nor was the secret known :
 The Lord of hosts with us was found ;
 We gained the victory on that ground.

Now, Lord, accept our praise,
 Though it is poor and weak ;
 Our feeble voice we raise,
 And still Thy aid would seek.
 Protect our land, defend this Isle,
 And still on guilty Britain smile.

Lord, may we watchful stand,
 And never, never sleep ;
 Proud foes invade our land,
 Do Thou Thy children keep :
 Help us the Spirit's sword to wield,
 To watch and pray, nor quit the field.

Brighton.

LYDIA.

RELIGIOUS DISABILITIES REMOVAL BILL.

MR. E. FROMOW, 7, Westbourne Terrace, Chiswick, writes :—
 "In answer to your article on the above subject, which appeared in your issue of the 14th, allow me to state that the Baptist petition against the above Bill came through the efforts of the Strict and Particular Baptists, a section perhaps many who bear the name of Baptists do not know much about, seeing the Bible doctrine of free and sovereign grace is not accepted by them. The petition numbered 30,084 names, and was presented through the agency of the Protestant Alliance, 9, Strand, W.C., by Colonel Sandys, M.P., with another large one from the same society, which numbered 23,666 signatures. Many other petitions were also presented by other Members."—*Daily Chronicle*.

THE MOURNFUL BELIEVER.

"I FEAR that I have only a name to live while I am dead before God ! It is not possible, surely, that such a state as mine can consist with a life of grace in the soul. If the love of Christ has been shed abroad in my heart, could I live as I do so far from Him ? My mind is at times as lifeless and unconcerned towards Christ as theirs can be who never loved His name. It is true I feel at certain seasons great desires after the Lord ; and I know that a change has taken place in my mind—for the world and its pursuits, which my heart was once running after with the greatest eagerness, now have lost their influence, and the society of the people of God, who were once my song of reproach, I now above all things value. Yet still so much sin is mixed with all I do, so little do I live to Christ, and to the remembrance of His dear name, and the throne of grace is so often neglected by me from day to day, that I very much fear my hope is all a delusion."

Your case, my friend, is by no means singular ; it is the uniform complaint of the faithful in all ages. What one ancient servant of the Lord groaned under, all have found, that when we would do good evil is present with us ; and the reason is obvious. It ariseth from the workings within of the two different principles, grace and corruption. There are in every regenerate person two principles ; a body of sin and a Spirit of grace : "The flesh lusting against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh : and these are contrary the one to the other : so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."

Let me desire you to examine your own complaints again ; and to see whether, in the very moment of receiving the strongest proofs of them, even in the midst of your groaning under the apprehension, that there is no grace in your heart, whether great grace is not then in exercise. You say that if the love of Christ were shed abroad in your heart, you could not live so far from Him as you do ; that if you were really under grace, you would not stay away from a throne of mercy as you do. But say, could you complain of the want of love to Christ if you had never tasted what that love is ? If you visit not a mercy seat so often as you wish, say, are not these things your continual burden ? Do you not groan under such marks of a dead and lifeless heart ? And are not these sorrows of the soul, for the unhallowed sins of the body, very plain evidences of the spiritual warfare ? They never groan at *sin* (though they may in the prospect of the *punishment* of it) who have no renewed nature.—*Extract from Hawker.*

THE progress of human nature, when left to itself, is always from bad to worse.

RIGHTLY LED AND SAFELY LANDED.

"When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language; Judah was His sanctuary, and Israel His dominion. The sea saw it, and fled: Jordan was driven back."—PSALM cxiv. 1—3.

THE writer is calling to mind God's gracious deliverance of His people of old from Egyptian bondage, His bringing them out "with an high hand, and an outstretched arm, even by the way of the Red Sea." The same is exemplified by Asaph and others. See Psalm lxxvii. 11, "I will remember the works of the Lord: surely I will remember Thy wonders of old." In the seventh verse he is brought into distress, doubt, fear, and bondage: "Will the Lord cast off for ever? And will He be favourable no more?" &c. He feels it to be his infirmity, but comes out of it all by remembering the years of the right hand of the Most High—the deliverance from Egypt. See also Psalm lxvi. 6: "He turned the sea into dry land: they went through the flood on foot: there did we rejoice in Him."

And do we not know something in our soul's experience of the Lord's covenant mercy in bringing us out of spiritual Egypt, that darkness that might be felt, into the glorious liberty of the Gospel, the spiritual Canaan, the spiritual land of promise? Our call from the darkness of this world into the light of Christ's Gospel, was like unto Abraham being called from his native place into the land of Canaan. "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee. And they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came" (Gen. xii. 1 and 5).

Verse 2. "Judah was His sanctuary." The service of God, praise and prayer. The message of God by Moses to Pharaoh was, "Let My people go, that they may serve Me." (Exodus v. and viii.) What was the first thing Abraham did? He built an altar unto the Lord who appeared unto him. He pitched his tent near to Bethel, "And there he builded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the Name of the Lord." Thus should it be with us when choosing a new residence; let it be where we can erect an altar unto the Lord. God's purpose in bringing His people from Egypt was that they might live unto Him and serve Him. And is not this our God's design in bringing His people out of spiritual Egypt? that they may serve Him, live unto Him a peculiar people, zealous of good works; not to serve Satan and self, but to show forth the praises of Him who hath called them out. God reigns in Israel. Zion is His dwelling place. He reigns in the hearts of His people; they are separated unto Him,

as the people were separated from Pharaoh's dominion by a divine power. Nothing short of the power of God can bring a soul from death to life, from darkness to light, from Egypt's bondage to the promised land.

"There is a period, known to God,
When all His sheep, redeemed by blood,
Shall leave the hateful ways of sin,
Turn to the fold and enter in."

Verse 3. "The sea saw it, and fled." The great barrier that kept the soul from entering the promised land (the rest of faith) is broken down by the Divine hand. Pharaoh said, "I will pursue! I will overtake!" He did pursue, but he did not overtake. The Lord "took off the chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily." Satan "worries those he can't devour," pursues the poor soul, and says he will overtake and overthrow, but he is a chained enemy. "Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther." What grace began, grace completes—deliverance to the Israelites, but destruction to the Egyptians. So with regard to you, tried one—

"The work His goodness undertakes,
Eternal mercy ne'er forsakes."

Even the enemy has to confess, "Let us flee, for the Lord fighteth for Israel." "Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared." "Jordan was driven back." Notice the two circumstances, how closely they are put together, yet the interim of the forty years, all their life and journey in the wilderness, is omitted as if forgotten like a dream; so will it be to us. All the wilderness life will be passed over like a dream, as a tale that is told; all the trials, afflictions and sorrows will be forgotten when the Jordan of death is driven back—

"All our sorrows left below,
And earth exchanged for heaven."

Abraham soon meets with a famine, after his coming out of Egypt. And how often do the people of God, soon after their setting out for the promised land, find a wilderness and famine. But as with God's ancient people, so now. Wilderness miseries, then wilderness mercies; wilderness barrenness, then wilderness supplies; the day of prosperity set over against the day of adversity. The Marah of bitterness, then the Elim of palm trees and wells of water; the cloud by day, the pillar of fire by night; the barren desert watered by the fountains from the flinty rock; the blind led by a way they know not, darkness is made

light before them, crooked things are made straight. These things will God do for His people and not forsake them. All this chequered experience, from Exodus xiv. to Joshua iii., is summed up in the short sentence, "The sea saw it, and fled : Jordan [was driven back." The sea *fled* before the arm of Jehovah, but Jordan, the king of terrors, must be *driven* back ; and this is done by Him who was "Death of deaths, and hell's destruction." He has robbed death of its sting, Jordan of its terrors, and He will "Land us safe on Canaan's side." Then—

"Songs of praises
We will ever give to Him."

Saffron Walden, February 23rd, 1891.

THE EXCEEDING MERCY OF GOD IN CHRIST TO JOHN BUNYAN.

IN this relation of the merciful work of God upon my soul, I have not as some others, to boast of noble blood, or of high-born state, according to the flesh ; my father's house being of that rank that is meanest and most despised in the land ; but I would magnify the heavenly Majesty that by this door He brought me into the world, to partake of the grace and life that is in Christ by the Gospel.

As for my own life, during the time I was without God in the world, it was indeed according to the course of this world, according to the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. It was my delight to be taken captive by the devil at his will, being filled with all unrighteousness ; the which did so strongly work, both in my heart and life, that I had but few equals for cursing, swearing, lying, and blaspheming the holy Name of God. Yea, so settled and rooted was I in these things, that they became as a second nature to me. In these days the thoughts of religion were very grievous to me ; I could neither endure it myself, nor bear to see any other regard it. But God did not leave me, but followed me still with judgments mixed with mercy ; yet none of them did awaken my soul to righteousness ; wherefore I sinned on, and grew more and more rebellious against God, and careless of my own salvation.

Early in life I entered into the married state, and my mercy was to light upon a wife whose father and mother were accounted godly : and though we came together as poor as poor might be, yet she had for her part, "The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven," and "The Practice of Piety ;" which her father had left when he died. In these two books I sometimes read, wherein I found

some things that were somewhat pleasant to me ; but all this while I had no true conviction. Wherefore these books, though they did not reach my heart, to awaken it about my sad and sinful state, did beget within me some desires to reform my vicious life, and fall in very eagerly with the religion of the times ; to wit, to go to church twice a-day, and there very devoutly both say and sing as others did, yet retaining my wicked life.

All this while I was not sensible of the danger and evil of sin ; I was kept from considering that sin would damn me, what religion soever I followed, unless I was found in Christ. Nay, I never thought whether there was such a one or no. But one day our minister's subject was to treat of the Sabbath Day, and of the evil of breaking it, either with labour, sports, or otherwise ; wherefore I fell in my conscience under his sermon, thinking and believing that he made that sermon on purpose to show me my evil doing. And at that time I felt what guilt was, though never before, that I can remember of ; and then I was for the time greatly loaded therewith, and so went home, when the sermon was ended, with a great burden upon my spirit. This did embitter my former pleasures to me ; but it lasted not, for before I had well dined the trouble began to go off my mind, and my heart returned to its old course. Wherefore, when I had satisfied nature, I shook the sermon out of my mind, and returned to my old custom of sports and gaming with delight.

But the same day, as I was in the midst of a game of cat, a voice did suddenly dart from heaven into my soul, which said, "Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to heaven, or have thy sins and go to hell ?" Wherefore leaving my cap upon the ground, I looked up to heaven, and it was as if I saw, with the eyes of my understanding, the Lord Jesus looking down upon me, as being very hotly displeased with me for my ungodly practices. Then I fell to musing on my sin, and felt my heart sink in despair, and so resolved to go on in sin ; for, thought I, my state is surely miserable—miserable if I leave my sins, and miserable if I follow them, and if I must be damned, I had as good be damned for many sins as for few.

Now, therefore, I went on in sin with greediness, but one day standing at a neighbour's shop window, and there cursing and swearing after my wonted manner, there sat within the woman of the house and heard me, who, although she was an ungodly wretch, yet she protested that it made her tremble to hear me, and that I was able to spoil all the youth in the town. At this reproof I was silenced and put to shame, and how it came to pass I know not, but I did from this time forth leave my swearing. I also fell to some outward reformation, and did strive to keep the commandments, and thought I pleased God as well as

any man in England. I was proud of my godliness, and indeed I did all I could to be well spoken of by men.

But upon a day, the good providence of God called me to Bedford, to work at my calling. In one of the streets, I came where three or four poor women were sitting at a door in the sun, talking about the things of God. I drew near to hear what they said, their talk was about a new birth, the work of God in their hearts, how God had visited their souls with His love in the Lord Jesus, and with what promises they had been refreshed and comforted, and did condemn their own righteousness as insufficient to do them any good. At this, my own heart began to shake and mistrust my condition, and as I followed my employment their words did follow me, and they brought about a great softness and tenderness of heart, which caused me to fall under the conviction of what by Scripture they asserted. Now I began to look into the Bible with new eyes, crying out to God that I might know the truth and the way to heaven.

The happiness of these poor women at Bedford was presented in a kind of vision. I saw them on the sunny side of a high mountain, while I was shivering and shrinking in the cold. Methought betwixt me and them a wall did compass the mountain. Now through this wall my soul did greatly desire to pass, but for a time no passage could I find, at last I saw a little doorway straight and narrow, through which I made many efforts to pass, in which after great striving I succeeded, and sat down in the midst of them, comforted by the light and heat of the sun. After much soul trouble, Bunyan says, he heard a sermon from Sol. Song iv. 1, and, said he, as I was going home, these words began to kindle in my spirit, "Thou art my love, thou art my love," twenty times together; but being between hope and fear, I cried in my heart, "Is it true? is it true?" at which that sentence fell upon me, "He wist not that it was true which was done unto him of the angel." My heart was filled with comfort and hope, now I could believe that my sins could be forgiven me. I felt I must talk of His love to the very crows on the ploughed land before me, could they have understood me. Wherefore I said to my soul, "Would I had a pen and ink here, I would write this down before I go any farther; surely I will not forget this forty years hence."

THE conversion of an old man who has from his childhood heard the Gospel, is almost the rarest thing in the world.

If thou risest from a low estate to a great one, it is but like stepping from a boat or barge into a ship; thy dangers continue. for thou art still upon the sea.—*Calamy*.

THE ANXIOUS INQUIRER'S PAGE.

1. WHEN religion exposes us to imminent hazard of our deepest and dearest interests in this world; such are our liberties, estates, and lives; then it is a fierce and fiery trial indeed. Sometimes it exposes the liberties of its professors, Rev. ii. 10, "The devil shall cast some of you into prison." Sometimes their estates, Heb. x. 34, "Ye took joyfully the spoiling of your goods;" and sometimes their lives, Heb. xi. 37, "They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were slain with the sword." Whilst it goes no higher than some small inconveniences of life, reputation and sense of honour will hold a false heart; but when it comes to this, few will be found able to endure it, but those that expect to save no more by religion but their souls, and account themselves in good case, if they can but save them with the loss of all that is dear to them in this world.

Here the false heart boggles; here it usually jades and falters.

2. The fiery trial is then high, when there remains no visible hopes of deliverance, or outward encouragement to sense, that the scene will alter. When "we see not our signs, there is no more any prophet, nor any that can tell us how long," as the case with the Church was, Psalm lxxiv. 9. Then their hands hang down, and their hearts faint. Nor is it to be wondered at, when the length of troubles proves so sore a temptation even to the upright, to put forth their hands to iniquity: as it is, Psalm cxxv. 3. If such a temptation shake such men as build on the rock, it must quite overturn those whose foundation is but sand.

3. When a false professor is engaged alone in sufferings, and is singled out from the herd, as a deer, to be run down, now it is a thousand to one but he quits religion to save himself. Good company will encourage a faint-hearted traveller to jog on a great way; but if he be forsaken by all, as Paul was, no man to stand by him; if left alone, as Elijah was, what can encourage him to hold out?

Indeed, if they had the same invisible supports those good men had, that the Lord was with them, that would keep them steady; but wanting that encouragement from within, and all shrinking away from without, they quickly tire downright.

4. When near relations and intimates oppose and tempt us. The prophet speaks of a time "when a man's enemies shall be the men of his own house;" it may be the wife of his bosom; Micah vii. 5, 6. Oh, what a trial is that which Christ mentions in Luke xvi. 26, when we must hate father and mother, wife and children, or quit claim to Christ and heaven! This is hard work indeed.

How hard did that truly noble and renowned Galeacius

Carracciolus find this! Oh, what a conflict found he in his bowels! Now Christ and our dearest interest come to meet like two men upon a narrow bridge; if one go forward, the other must go back; and now the predominant interest can no longer be concealed.

5. When powerful temptations are mixed with cruel sufferings; when we are strongly tempted, as well as cruelly persecuted; this blows up the fire to a vehement height. This was the trial of those precious primitive believers, Heb. xi. 35, 37, "They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were tempted." Here was life, liberty, and preferment, set upon one hand, and death in the most formidable shape upon the other. This cannot but be a great trial to many, but especially when a cruel death and tender temper meet, then the trial goes high indeed.

And that such sufferings as these will discover the falseness and rottenness of men's heart, cannot be doubted, if you consider that this is the fire designed by God, for the very use and purpose to separate the gold from the dross. So you will find it, 1 Pet. iv. 12. "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you;" that is, the very design and aim of Providence in permitting and ordering them, is to try you. The design of Satan is to destroy you; but God's design is to try you. Upon this account you find the hour of persecution (in a suitable notion) called "the hour of temptation," or probation, Rev. iii. 10; for then professors are sifted to the very bran; searched to the very bottom principles. "This is the day that burns as an oven, in which all the proud, and all that do wickedly, shall be as stubble" (Mal. iv. 1). For,

1. In that day the predominant interest must appear, and be discovered. It can be concealed no longer; "No man can serve two masters," saith Christ (Luke xvi. 13). A man may serve many masters, if they all command the same things, or things subordinate to each other; but he cannot serve two masters, if their commands clash and interfere with each other: and such are the commands of Christ and the flesh in a suffering hour. Christ saith, "Be thou faithful to the death;" the flesh saith, Spare thyself, and secure the comforts of life. Christ saith, "He that loveth father or mother, wife or children, lands or inheritance, more than Me, is not worthy of Me." Flesh saith, He that will grieve and break the heart of such dear relations, and forsake, when he might keep, such earthly accommodations, is not worthy of them.

Thus the two interests come in full opposition; and now have but patience to wait a little, and you shall discern which is predominant. A dog follows two men, while they both walk one way, and you know not which of the two is his master; stay but

a little till their path part, and then you shall quickly see who is his master. So is it in this case.

2. In that day, sensible supports fail, and all a man's relief comes in by the pure and immediate actings of faith; and were it not for those reliefs, his heart would soon faint and die away under discouragements: 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18, "We faint not—while we look not at the things which are seen, for they are temporal, but at the things which are not seen, for they are eternal"; that is, if we keep not our eye intently fixed upon the invisible and eternal things in the coming world, we shall feel ourselves fainting and dying away under the many troubles and afflictions of this world. "I had fainted," saith holy David, "if I had not believed." How then, suppose ye, shall the hypocrite live at such a time, who hath no faith to support him,—no relief but what comes in through the senses?

3. In that day, all mere notions and speculations about religion vanish; and nothing relieves and satisfies the suffering soul but what it really believes, and what it hath satisfying proof and experience of in himself. There are a great many pretty and pleasing notions which our minds are entertained with; some delights in time of peace, which can do us no service at all in the day of trouble; and for your speculative, unpracticable knowledge of the greatest truths in religion, as little service is to be expected from them; except we have better evidence and security about them, we shall be loth to venture all upon the credit of them.

That is a very considerable passage to this purpose, in Heb. x. 34, "Ye took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and more enduring substance." This *knowing in yourselves*, is by inward and sensible experience, taste, and feeling, which is abundantly satisfying to the soul, and stands opposed to all that traditional knowledge we receive from others; which, as it leaves the mind fluctuating, so the heart also dead and comfortless.

1. In that day the root and foundation of a man's faith and hope is tried, and then they that have built upon the sand must needs fail; for every thing is as its foundation. Principles are to us what a root is to a tree, or a foundation to a house; a flaw or grand defect there most assuredly ruins all. This we find to be the very scope of those two famous parables, Luke xiv. 25, and Matt. xiii. 21. Lesser troubles shake but the branches, but these try the very root: if nothing be found there but self-ends, the force of education, and the influence of examples, surely when the winds rise high, and beat upon it, they will quickly lay the loftiest professor even with the ground.*

And thus you see what a crisis an hour of temptation, the

suffering hour, is, and what discoveries of hypocrisy it must needs make; for, now the hypocrite, like Orpah, will forsake religion; but sincerity will make the soul cleave to it, as Ruth did to Naomi.—*Flavel*.

THE ONLY WAY.

(JOHN xiv. 6.)

THERE are many ways in which some things may be done, or by which some places may be reached, but in other cases only one way will lead us to the desired end. When Jacob, in his wondrous vision, saw a ladder, or rather a sort of stairway cut in a rocky mountain pile, reaching from the ground to the skies above, he beheld the only way by which a human being could ascend from earth to heaven. Angels might fly, but men must climb by God's own appointed and mysterious way.

The way to heaven is an upward, ascending road, like a mountainous path leading higher and higher to the lofty summit, and the end of the believer's journey will be the heights of the Mount Zion, which is above—

“Where everlasting spring abides,
And never withering flowers.”

May we with the Psalmist pray, “Lead me, O Lord, in the way everlasting.” “Show me Thy ways, O Lord; teach me Thy paths.”

But the ladder or stairway of Jacob's vision gives us another and rather a different thought. It represents a quick and easily traversed way from earth to heaven, and from heaven to earth: “Behold the angels of God ascending and descending upon it” (Gen. xxviii. 12); and by this same “ladder” we by prayer and praise ascend to God, and He in grace and love comes down to us. The way to God—whether we call it a path stretching through all life's journey, or a ladder leading straight up to heaven—is but one, it is “the path of life,” the way everlasting. And Jesus said, “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh unto the Father but by Me.” In other words, which exactly express the meaning of the Saviour's declaration, He is the true and living Way to God.

The True Way. True, in the Bible, does not always mean the opposite to false, often it signifies the real and substantial, as contrasted with that which is only a picture or a shadow. For instance, Jesus is called “Minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man” (Heb. viii. 2). And again, “Christ is not entered into the holy places

made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Heb. ix. 24). There was nothing false about the tabernacle or its forms of worship. God gave all the directions, and as the Lord commanded Moses, so did he prepare and conduct everything; yet all that wonderful ritual, those splendid garments, that golden furniture, and all the complicated ceremonies of the Levitical law, were nothing more than a "shadow of good things to come," a dim picture of Jesus and His salvation, finger posts pointing to "Him that was to come." The lambs of the daily, weekly, and yearly sacrifices, said, "Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away sin." Aaron and his successors pointed to the Great High Priest of our profession, Jesus the Son of God. The day of atonement declared how the Lord would in "one day remove His people's iniquities," and the year of jubilee, when Jewish slaves were liberated, debts forgiven, and lands restored to their former possessors, "proclaimed the acceptable year of the Lord," "the day of salvation," of which we sing—

"Jesus, the Great High Priest,
Hath full atonement made;
And weary spirits rest,
And mournful souls are glad."

These olden rites, like John the Baptist, were not the light, "but were sent to bear witness of the light," until the True Light Himself appeared in the world. How wrong and foolish, now that the True Light has come, to go back to that shadowy twilight. How dishonouring to God, to put human priests beside His Great High Priest, and human intercessors between sinners and their one appointed Mediator, the Man Christ Jesus. They are useless, for God will not accept them; and quite needless, for Jesus is so near to all who want Him, so condescending and so gracious, that now, as when here on earth, even little children are not afraid of Him, and whoever comes to Him shall in no wise be cast out.

And He is the Living Way to God. The priests of old were living men, it is true, but they could only come into the holy places of God's tabernacle with the blood of slain sacrifices in their hands, and the sprinkled blood was the means of the people's acceptance with their God; but Jesus, the true Sacrifice for sin, having poured out His own life, lives again for evermore, and by Him sinners draw near to the heavenly mercy-seat.

Jesus is not only like a path, a ladder, and a door, but He is a living Friend, who takes us by the hand and leads us into the presence of His Father and our Father, His God and our God. Yes, we may say *us* and *our* if we are seeking Him, for those

who seek the Lord have first been sought and found of Him, and those who seek are therefore sure to find His love and mercy.

This great truth, that Jesus is the *only* Saviour of lost souls, was very clearly set forth by the Apostles of the Lord, and two words were often used by them to make it known His was the only Name by which salvation could be received, and Himself the only Way.

And so, when their first sufferings were endured for preaching the Gospel, they departed, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His, or (as R.V. still more strikingly renders it) for *the Name*!—"the Name that is above every name."

And while Saul of Tarsus still pursued his persecuting course, he asked for letters of authority from the high priest to enable him to seize any of *this way*, rather of *the Way*, whom he might find, and bring them prisoners to Jerusalem.

Before the disciples were called Christians, at Antioch, they were known as those who honoured the "Name" which men had renounced but God had glorified; as the people who followed the "Way" which priests and rulers scorned, but God's own true pilgrims had ever walked in—"Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

"No other Name will heaven approve,
Thou art the true, the living Way
(Ordained by everlasting love)
To the bright realms of endless day.

"Safe lead us through this world of night,
And bring us to the blissful plains,
The regions of unclouded light,
Where perfect joy for ever reigns."

Amen.

H. S. L.

A TREE is not evil because it bears evil fruit, but because it is naturally an evil tree; so such are wicked men in the Scriptures' account, who are wicked by nature, not from any particular action.—*Saltmarsh.*

LET every affliction carry us much to God in prayer. "Is any man afflicted? let him pray" (James v. 13). It is a similitude of Chrysostom's, "As clouds darken the heavens, and cause lowering weather; but being distilled into drops, then sweet sunshine and fair weather follows: so sorrow and cares in the soul cloud the soul, till they be distilled in prayer into tears, and poured forth before the Lord; but then the sweet beams of God's grace come in, and much blessing follows.—*Ambrose.*

THE SEEKER'S CORNER.

To the Editor of the Sower.

DEAR SIR,—I do feel thankful, I trust, that you have been led to open a corner in the SOWER for "Seekers." It is often so helpful and encouraging to notice how God the Holy Spirit leads one and another from darkness into His marvellous light. Sometimes we ask ourselves, Do others ever feel the same coldness and lack of earnestness as we so often do, in seeking for the best of all gifts, a knowledge of pardon through the blood of the Lord Jesus? But oh, what encouragement is often given us still to seek, when we read, or hear them relate, how they have been led in very similar paths, yet at last have been enabled to sing with a sweet assurance, "My Beloved is mine and I am His." I cannot but hope oft-times, when I look back and see how I have been led, that it is indeed the leadings of God the Holy Spirit; and when I am enabled to realize this in some measure, it brings such hope that according to His word it shall even be done unto me.

"Hearken unto Me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord. For the Lord shall comfort Zion. Joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody." Oh, how full of encouraging promises to the seeking soul is the precious Word of God. I did find the remarks you inserted in answer to one in February to be sweetly encouraging. Oh, that I may indeed be enabled to diligently press on—

"Press on, nor fear to win the day,
Though earth and hell oppose the way."

I do, I trust, feel somewhat of that which the Psalmist expresses, "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth I desire beside Thee"; which causes me to pray, "Remember me, O Lord, with the favour which Thou bearest unto Thy people. O visit me with Thy salvation; that [even] I may see the good of Thy chosen." Oh, what an unspeakable mercy to be enabled to realize any sign of life—to have any desire toward the Lord Jesus—to be able to see a little of the beauty contained in a knowledge of Himself. I would say—

"Thanks to Thy Name for what I know
By sitting at Thy feet;
Go on to teach me till I go
Where knowledge is complete."

Do come quickly, Lord Jesus.
Brighton, February 13th, 1891.

[“It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord” (Lam. iii. 26).—ED.]

DEAR SIR,—I have had many thoughts as to whether I should write to you or not, but feeling much encouraged by the letters in the Seeker's Corner this month (Feb.), I have decided to do so. I felt I could go with every line in the first letter. I long to have the Spirit's witness within that Christ died for me. Our dear pastor once said, "It is not enough for a hungry man to see a well-filled table, he will want to partake of it." It is not enough for me to know there is plenty of fulness in Christ, I want to partake of it myself. But I cannot always feel this as I would. Sometimes I feel so hard, and cold, and dead, that I am afraid I have not got any real religion, but that it is only in the flesh. I do want to be led and taught aright. And again, as regards prayer, I hope I have felt a little sweetness at times, a little help in pouring out my heart's desire at the throne of grace; at other times I have felt my mind hurried away with earthly things, that I could not pray as I would, but it is a grief to me when it is so. Dear sir, I hope I have been enabled to bear you before Him who is able to help and succour you to the end. May you be spared many years, if it is God's will, to carry on your work of love, for I know the SOWER is an encouragement to many. May the Lord bless and encourage you in your own soul, is the prayer of

Yours truly,
A.

Tunbridge Wells.

["The Lord fulfil all thy petitions" (Ps. xx. 5).—ED.]

DEAR SIR,—My mind has been exercised upon sending you a few lines to put in the "Seeker's Corner," ever since you offered to let such as desired to have a place in that dear and much-esteemed little Magazine the SOWER. Well, sir, it would be very difficult indeed for me to say when I first had convictions for sin; I cannot remember the time when I had none; but I can remember the first sermon I truly heard, which I have never forgotten, as it had such a lasting effect on my mind and my heart too. It was the 12th of August, 1883, these being the words of the text, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance." I felt I knew nothing of the joyfulness, but how I longed to, and the desire has not left me since, neither do I wish it to, only I want to enjoy still more. Oh, sir, since that time my way and life have known many changes, sorrows, sickness, and bereavements; but, more than outward trials, I have had to pass through much darkness, many fears and doubts, and my unbelieving heart yielding to them at times. I have been raised to a hope that God has given me a new birth, or else I could not discern light from darkness, and sometimes God's dear ministers

have so spoken my very inward feelings and pantings that my heart has been broken, and I have felt that surely I must be in the way; but I soon return to my old place, feeling I am out of the secret of true religion, and my desire is to have a real spiritual religion. I am so afraid I should wrongly take some things which belong to God's children as promises, and the question arises, Am I one of His family, one whom He redeemed by His precious blood? Oh, sir, if only I could just realize Him to be *my* Saviour! I seem to see Him as such to others, but this cannot satisfy me. I want to know Him for myself—to know that His blood has washed all my sins away, and that He died for me that I might be made alive. I seem different from any one I know, for, sir, it is eight years next August since I heard that sermon, but I cannot now say Jesus is mine and I am His. Yet I feel assured at times that I shall know it, for doth He not say, "If the vision tarry, wait for it"? I desire to wait the Lord's time, but sometimes it seems so long that I fear I never shall know it. Then I think how wrong I am, for I have no claim whatever upon the dear Lord. I know it is all of His mercy and free gift to me if I ever have been led to seek Him, and I hope I have been made to cry to Him mightily, feeling so cast down and oppressed that I knew not what to do, and could only sigh and weep. Words I could not utter, but then the poet says, "He marks a sigh divine." How sweet have those lines been to me many times—

"Those feeble desires, those wishes so weak,
 'Tis Jesus inspires, and bids you still seek."

Also once, when very low spirited, my dear mother being ill in bed and myself unwell, with everything to look after, and being obliged to stay at home from God's house on the Sabbath (which is always a cause of grief to me, for I love to meet amongst the dear people of God, and long to be one with them), I had these lines come so sweetly to my mind over and over again—

"His way was much rougher and darker than mine,
 Did Jesus thus suffer, and shall I repine?"

But I am afraid I shall make this too long. If you think I am in the right path, dear sir, and can see anything by which you think these few lines might be helpful to any other traveller in the same perplexed state, please make what use you choose of them. I feel as if I must send them to you, but the enemy tells me I am deceived, and trying to deceive God's dear children; that I am only a tare trying to grow with the wheat. Oh, that I may know I am one kernel of that precious grain which Christ shall gather into His heavenly garner.

Wishing you God's presence, blessing, and strengthening hand

still to support you and enable you to continue your work and labour of love. I can say I love that little SOWER Magazine dearly, and may God bless it to many others, as I hope He has to me, to encourage me still to wait for and hope in the Lord.

Yours in much weakness,

Wardy Hill.

AN ANXIOUS AND PERPLEXED ONE.

[“Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord” (Psa. xxvii. 14.—ED.)]

DEAR MR. HULL,—I can, with others of your correspondents, say that I am glad of your new departure in opening a portion of your columns as a Seeker's Corner, and hope it may be a means for good. Having felt able to travel with some of your previous correspondents, I am induced to send you a few lines, although as a rule feeling that I hardly dare class myself as a seeker, but am more inclined to brand myself as having merely head knowledge, which alone, I am sure, is worthless; but that may be the result of having such a giant enemy as unbelief. I feel that if I know anything aright, unbelief is really my greatest foe, and it is my constant desire and prayer that I may not be left to be satisfied with anything short of a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, and that He may be made known to me as my Saviour. Having been brought up under the sound of the pure Gospel, and, I may say, having never heard anything else, I cannot point to any particular change, as many can. Oft-times those who are, I feel sure, God's own sent servants, trace out my very feelings and desires, and say that those who experience such things declare plainly that they seek a country, and are those for whom Christ died; yet though such ministers are dearly loved and highly esteemed, unbelief rises up and says, there are such defects in me which there should not be, if I am one of the elect. Oh that God might manifestly shed abroad His love within my heart! which I feel assured would kindle more love to Him in return, and to His truth, people, and ways. If there is the least thing aright within me, I pray that He who must have begun it may carry it on and perfect it, for “vain is the help of man.” This is a poor scrawl, and you will not be considered wrong in destroying it. In conclusion, I hope that the most kind Physician may be graciously pleased to favour you with a return of health and strength, and that you may be spared for many years to publish through pulpit and press the unsearchable riches of Christ, which can alone save such a hell-deserving wretch as

Yours sincerely,

March 6th, 1891.

E—.

[Dear friend, the Lord's ministers are right in pointing out

various operations and marks of the Spirit as encouragements to seeking souls to still press forward in pursuit of the prize, and you are right in not being satisfied with anything short of "Christ in you the hope of glory." Mr. Hart says, "We first after Jesus reach, and richly grasp the whole." May the blessed Spirit lead you to, and teach you how to believe on, the Son of God, so that you may receive the end of your faith, the salvation of your soul; then you will see how that settles all other points, and find it dissolves all perplexing doubts, to the satisfying of the soul. "Struggle hard, and call aloud on the good Physician."—ED.]

MY VERY DEAR SIR,—I feel constrained to tell you how very much I have enjoyed the reading of the "Seeker's Corner." A writer's feelings described there are just my experience, word for word. If I had written, I do not think I could have given it plainer. I have often feared to tell my feelings, lest they should not be right, for as that friend said, it is not enough to know what others feel, I want to have the right feeling myself. I can truly say there is nothing in this world gives me as much pleasure as to enjoy Christ's presence, and to feel my heart going up to Him in prayer. But I often feel so very different from that, such a wicked heart, so hard and dry, just like a stone, and I say, "Can ever God dwell here?" Should I be like this if I was right? But sometimes I do have such blessed feelings, as though I really felt His presence in my heart, and this is more to me than thousands of gold and silver, or anything the world calls good or great. But oh, how soon it seems to be gone, and I feel to be left alone! Then I fear that I am of them of whom the Scripture says, "Many are called, but few are chosen." Perhaps I am called, but not chosen. And what a fearful thing it will be if I am deceived at last. But the Word says, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness," and "those that hope in His mercy," and I feel at times I do hope in Him, if I am not dreadfully deceived. Dear sir, the little piece you put in to encourage one friend greatly encouraged me, for I do hope I am trying to seek the Lord, and I feel thus—

"Can there, tell me, can there be,
Among Thy children room for me?"

And another thing you greatly encouraged me respecting was, I often feel my spirit cheered by a verse of a sweet hymn, or by reading about godly people, for which I feel thankful; and at times I feel a great love to the Lord's dear ministers,

especially those I have ever got a little help by, even though I have never spoken to them.

Now, dear sir, do you think I could be the subject of all this and not have known a Saviour's love? If so, how dreadful the thought! I am sure I want Him in life, and what can be compared to His sweet smiles on a dying bed? which I hope you and I may have when we come there.

Yours in the bonds of love,

Croydon.

E. L.

["If in your heart you need the Lord,
And none but Christ will do,
We freely tell you from His Word,
He'll be a Friend to you."—ED.]

MY DEAR MR. HULL,—I have been delighted in reading the "Seeker's Corner" in the SOWER. The other evening I was reading therein, when my soul became fired with love to those dear babes in grace, and to yourself for seeking to nurse and cheer them in the heavenly road. Although now fifty years ago, I cannot forget the leadings and teachings of the Holy Spirit, and the precious promises applied to my heart—the sweet times in searching God's Word and in secret prayer—the many answers thereto, and the longings to know that I was one of the Lord's dear children—the delight I felt in going up to God's house—the refreshing seasons often granted, and the sweet communings with my Lord and King returning home; never-to-be-forgotten times were these. How precious was the Word of God then. I used to take it into secret and was blessed with many a feast. Two seasons especially come to mind now. I was reading in Proverbs, "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil." I felt I did hate evil, and I was much strengthened in the Lord. Again, I was reading the 37th Psalm, "Delight thyself also in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart." I could say with dear Hart—

"When Jesus with His mighty love
Visits my troubled breast,
My doubts subside, my fears remove,
And I'm completely blest."

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

"And every thing that's dear to Him,
To me is also dear."

Oh, what a mercy to be called by grace in the days of our youth, to cleave to the Lord with purpose of heart. I was

thus favoured when seventeen years of age. Mine has been a tribulated path, but God has been faithful, and having obtained help of Him, I continue even until now, kept and supplied with fresh supplies of grace; and at times I have a longing desire to depart and be with Jesus. I have felt for you in your afflictions, and have rejoiced in God's good hand over and towards you. May He still bless you much, and make you a blessing, is the desire of

Yours in Him,

Polegate, March 6th, 1891.

JOHN KNIGHT.

LETTER FOR THE YOUNG.

"For Thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek Thee."

"Seek, and ye shall find."

"Blessed are they that keep His testimonies, and that seek Him with the whole heart."

MY DEAREST CHILD,—What a great and blessed thing it is to be a seeker after God! And especially when we are told in His own Book of Truth, that He never says to the seed of Jacob, "Seek ye Me in vain." Jesus Christ "came into the world to seek and to save that which was lost." And those whom He saves, He sets upon this business of seeking Him. Some may say, "Oh, I have sought Him and found Him, and now I am happy, and the work is done." Well, I have not found it so. I find a daily need of seeking Him, and I do not expect to have done seeking Him as long as I live. Oh, that He would enable me to seek Him more earnestly and more constantly; for I am a poor foolish thing without Him, and I want Him to teach me in all things. I'm a poor helpless thing without Him, and I want His help in all things. In a word, I am a poor sinful thing, and should soon fit myself for eternal burnings without Him. Oh, how much I need His blood to purge my soul from sin!

Do you feel to need this, dear child? It is a mercy if you do, because, "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." May the Lord teach you your need of Him, and make you a sincere seeker after Him and His salvation.

I hope you will do all in your power for Miss W—— and Mr. W——. His days are fast hasting to a close, and I hope, though he has a good home, that a better still awaits him beyond.

I was very glad to hear from you. The Lord bless you!

Your affectionate father,

H. HAMMOND.

THE CALVINISTIC PROTESTANT UNION.

PROTESTANTS, arouse! arouse! and praise the Lord for His goodness, in not allowing the Disabilities Removal Bill to be passed in Parliament, and let constant prayer be put up to Him for help in future. Raise your voices against Popery. Seeing the danger we are in, we must be united to succeed. The Calvinistic Protestant Union has branches in many towns; lend it help to fight the foe for liberty. There are men who are willing to spend their time and strength in giving lectures, and the work is being owned by the Lord. Come and help us. A. J.

[We are thankful that the Calvinistic Protestant Union has exerted a telling influence among Protestants, and that there are many who are determined to put Protestantism before politics, and who are willing to stand shoulder to shoulder with any who love the doctrines of free grace, in this good cause, although they are treated with suspicion by some, who object to their associating with those who are not strict Baptists. We have long had dear friends whom we love in the Lord, who have never seen eye to eye with us on baptism and strict communion, and we are happy to say that we do not esteem each other any the less on that account, neither do we sacrifice any part of truth for the sake of friendship. We hope to live together in heaven, with other good men who did the same while they faithfully served the Church of Christ below, and we desire to walk together in spirit, while we are spared, upon earth. May the Lord ever help us to live and act in accordance with that word, "Grace be with all them that love our lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen."—ED.]

GOVERNMENT PERSECUTION OF PROTESTANTS IN IRELAND.

MR. BALFOUR takes a strange view of the duty of a Protestant minister in Ireland. The rector of Arklow (Mr. Hallowes) and others have lately held open-air services on Sundays. The Romanist clergy bitterly resented this, and mobs collected of so threatening a character that police and military have been drafted into the town to keep order. The Romanists applied to the resident magistrates for an information against the preachers for causing an obstruction, disturbance, and a nuisance. The magistrates refused an information, but intimated that if Mr. Hallowes had been brought before them on a summary charge as a road nuisance, they would have dealt with it. Mr. Hallowes wrote to the Chief Secretary, protesting against the law officers of the Crown stirring up against him "the avowed enemies of law

and order." To this Mr. Balfour replied in a letter severely scolding the Protestants for putting the Crown and country to expense in providing police and soldiers, and depriving the men of their Sunday's rest. They ought, he says, to consider the difference between England and Ireland, which makes what may be praiseworthy in one country "morally, if not legally, indefensible in the other." If this means that Irish Catholic priests ought to be allowed to put down by mob force all open-air preaching that they disagree with, English Protestants will certainly not coincide with Mr. Balfour. If they do not like Protestant preaching, let them preach against it; but if they get up riots, let them be prosecuted.

Mr. Hallowes and his curate were again interfered with by a large ruffianly mob of Romanists, and were afterwards summoned before the magistrates, who sent them to prison for obstructing the roadway, which of course was the work of their persecutors.

The magistrates, however, gave the clergymen leave, prior to going to gaol, to make arrangements for their parish services. They were in the evening conducted to the railway station by a large crowd of Protestants, who sang hymns all the way, and who held an open-air prayer meeting at the railway station. The gentlemen declared that they would continue the services as usual when they came out of Wexford gaol.

And now comes the remarkable sequel. The services last Sunday were held in Arklow as usual. Some 130 police and 108 soldiers had been drafted into the town to keep the peace. But the Roman Catholic priests now intervened. The Roman Catholic congregations were directed at the several celebrations of Mass to keep themselves quiet, and to restrain themselves from all demonstrations of hostility. Therefore, although last Sunday some 400 Protestants marched through the town of Arklow singing hymns, and an open-air service was held at Timahask, no disturbance whatever took place. The doors of the Roman Catholic houses were closed as the Protestant procession passed along. No clearer proof could be given of the fact that from first to last the priests were responsible for all the indecency, horn-blowing, rioting, &c., which has disgraced the town of Arklow. We earnestly trust, therefore, that the imprisonment of the Protestant clergymen, scandalous as we believe it to have been, may be over-ruled to the furtherance of the Gospel in Ireland.—*English Churchman*.

WHATEVER excellency we behold in the creature that argues perfection according to its manner and measure by derivation, we conclude to be in God originally, transcendently, and immensely, after a divine manner.—*Isaac Chauncy*.

The Sower, May, 1891.



"HE LOVED TO MEDITATE ON THE WORK OF CHRIST." (See page 111.)

ANDREW RUGG.

ANDREW RUGG, Keiss, was a fatherly Christian, and one whose spiritual affections were deep and tender. He loved to meditate upon the work of Christ, and could scarcely hear or speak of His love without being melted into tears. His sympathies flowed out to all who loved the image of Christ. He used to give the following account of the way in which his denominational prejudices were broken down.

"For a time after I came to the knowledge of the Lord," he would say, "I did not feel inclined to hold intercourse with Christians who did not belong to our own (the Baptist) communion; but one night I dreamed that I saw an angel come down from heaven, of whom I asked, 'Were there any Church of Scotland people in heaven?' 'No,' was the reply. 'Were there any Seceders?' 'No.' 'But certainly there are Baptists?' 'No.' 'Alas! then, where are they with whom I held sweet fellowship on earth?' 'None in heaven,' said the angel, 'are known by such names as you have mentioned, but all those there from earth are sinners saved by one salvation, and filled by one Spirit.'" "From that day," Andrew would add, "it was the measure of grace that I saw in one that endeared him to me, not his particular denomination."*

Two of his acquaintances, who lived at some distance, once sent word to Andrew that they were coming to visit him. "To visit me!" he said; "what will they find in me—a poor empty sinner?" But, as he afterwards told a friend, when he got the message, the passage occurred to him regarding the man of whom the Lord spake in the parable, as going out at midnight to seek three loaves for a friend who had come to him in his journey, and he began to think, what were the three loaves? Into the mystery of the electing love of the Father, the redeeming love of the Son, and the sanctifying love of the Holy Ghost, his

* This is as it should be. We have no right to expect Christians of other denominations to sacrifice principles and forms of Church order because we differ from them, neither should they expect it of us. But it becomes every disciple of Christ to walk in the spirit of love toward all who love Him in sincerity and truth. In this way, many who are now in glory walked in blessed union below, holding sweet fellowship one with another, as being of one spirit (the result of union with the Lord) although of very different views as to ordinances and Church order. Surely it is better to have this blessed spiritual bond among us than all mere outward forms and rules without it. The latter (as far as they are Scriptural) are quite right in their proper place, but they are only a very sorry *substitute* for the former. Oh, for more of that union of hearts among us which is the fruit and result of union with the Lord Christ!—Ed.

soul was so led, that for a fortnight he had a feast of communion with the Lord on these "three loaves."

When on his death-bed, he had great bodily pain. It being said to him one day, "You are in great pain, Andrew," he replied, "Yes; but I know not which is greatest—my bodily pain or my soul consolation."—*Ministers and Men in the Far North.*

RECOLLECTIONS OF PAST EXPERIENCES.

(Concluded from page 90.)

DIFFICULTIES.

MIND and heart were wholly engrossed in the work God had given me to do. My time and thoughts were so fully occupied, day by day, that it was a long while before I discovered *all* the difficulties which beset my path. Gradually, however, the peculiar state of affairs, in relation to the cause of which I was now in charge as pastor, came to my knowledge. There were four things especially which subsequently made my position exceedingly perplexing. First, the chapel, and buildings connected with it, did not belong to the friends; they were at that time in the hands of one who had long discontinued to attend the place. Secondly, until a short time before my settlement, the whole of the expenses had been defrayed by the family to whom the property belonged. For upwards of forty years, the worshippers there had not been called upon to contribute in any degree to the support of the cause. All was free. Everything was provided. As the result of deaths and changes in the family, this had just been discontinued. The congregation was thrown upon its own resources, the owner, however, allowing them the use of the premises at a merely nominal rental. Thirdly, my friends had been accustomed to "supplies," for a long series of years, who had been invited, paid, and entertained by the proprietors. Fourthly, a considerable proportion of the congregation were not Baptists, either in principle or practice, having originally come from the Huntingtonian cause. They were sincere lovers of the truth, and many were true possessors of the grace of God; but they could not be in Church-fellowship, not holding strict communion, which we, as a Church, did firmly. Amongst them were some of my best and most spiritual hearers and warmest personal friends. These facts constituted the initial difficulties of my position; and, under the pressure of circumstances which afterwards occurred, they barred up every way out of the fresh difficulties by which I found myself surrounded.

For the first few months, however, my chief trial was in respect to the ministry, as related in the preceding paper. After I had

been in some measure delivered from that furnace, the Lord was pleased to give me, from time to time, many tokens of His presence and blessing in my own soul, especially while employing tongue or pen in His service.

So I went on, until, between two or three years afterwards, a great loss befell me. One of the deacons, who was a real friend, in whom I could confide, was taken away very suddenly. This blow staggered me not a little. One of our oldest ministers, who had known the place for nearly forty years, wrote me most sympathizingly. He remarked, "You have indeed lost your right-hand man. . . . A minister without a confidential deacon is like a man without his right hand." A few days afterwards, as I was awaking from sleep very early in the morning, my old friend's remark came into my mind, and produced a feeling of inexpressible sadness and desolation, when, all in a moment, the words dropped into my very heart, "The Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand." It was as if Jesus assured me that henceforth *He* would be my "right-hand man."

"Many days have passed since then,
And many changes have I seen,"

but—blessed be His Name!—*He* has been such, up to the very moment of writing.

For long after this loss, the waves were very rough, and the storms, from which I had been greatly shielded during the lifetime of my departed friend, beat with remorseless fury on my head. Still, the Lord was good. I was helped along. Every year saw some added to the Church. At length, at the expiration of the fifth year from my first commencement, the words that were given me then, were again brought with power to my mind (Prov. iv. 12), and I had a sweet and humbling view of the manner in which *He* had fulfilled the promise *in part*, although it had been in a way very contrary to my anticipations. Under the sweet anointing of the renewed application, I was enabled to fulfil *my* promise to the people, and in speaking from the first part of the text, namely, "When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened," I felt a solemn pleasure in being able to call them all to witness to the Lord's faithfulness to His own word: not but what I had often been straitened in myself, and had many times been at my wit's end; still the Lord had never suffered me to be put to confusion. On the contrary, *He* had upheld and strengthened me so far, that I had been enabled to keep pressing forwards. In short, my steps had *not* been straitened.

Suddenly a most unlooked-for change happened. The owner of the place died. We had notice to give up possession. For

some time we were in suspense. At length another chapel was offered us, and it was ultimately decided to remove there. This was done. The old place was left, and to this day remains unoccupied and unused.

We were no sooner settled down at the other chapel, than fresh contentions arose. For two years and more I passed through seas of trouble. At the very commencement of these new trials I had relinquished my stated salary, for peace sake ; also, for the same reason, the Pastor's Fund was discontinued, other arrangements being made. But what marvellous interpositions of Providence were experienced ; what helps by the way we received ; how wonderfully I was sustained during two years and six months of bitterest trial, when I had to do business in great waters, in which I saw the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep ; how the gracious hand of God led and fed, guided and guarded, supplied every need, and made all His goodness to pass before me in the way ; and how, finally, in simple dependence upon Himself, feeling it was the only course possible, I resigned the pastorate, not knowing what would befall, nor whither to go ;—the narration of these things must be left to some future time, if the Lord will.

The particulars of the Lord's merciful leadings and dealings, and the all-wise and kind operations of His hand during the trial, instructing, supporting, humbling, proving, showing me the needs-be, bringing good out of evil, many times making darkness light, turning the curse into some degree of spiritual blessing, weaning me from creatures, drawing me (I trust) nearer to Himself ; and, finally, after I had left the scene of confusion, directing my steps in most unexpected paths, and so fulfilling in measure the latter part of the old promise, "When thou runnest thou shalt not stumble," the former part of which He had so fully previously proved His faithfulness in performing ;—all this would require a volume.

Meanwhile, may the Lord bless the purposely slight and fragmentary sketch of a chequered path, contained in this humble attempt to show forth His praise. If these "Recollections of Past Experiences" have proved helpful to any of His tried people and servants, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give glory, for Thy mercy and for Thy truth's sake."

ONLY gracious connections can be dear connections, or lasting, because they only can be founded in love.

IF we received only those blessings which we have asked in faith, how very low would be our supplies.

UNDERNEATH.

(Thoughts arising after a very transient fear, which caused the writer's heart to lift up in prayer to God for protection, followed by a deep sense of safety in the arms of Everlasting Love.—Deut. xxxiii. 27.)

OH, why, poor soul, desponding?
What makes thee tremble so,
With Jesus' arms enfolding?
He will not let thee go.

His love is still abounding,
Much more than sin abounds;
His robe is still surrounding
The soul which caused His wounds.

In Him thou liv'st and movest;
In Him hast being too;
And this thou daily provest
With blessings ever new.

The worlds could stand no longer,
Were once His power withdrawn;
But there's a union stronger
Holds him who is new born.

It is God's love—an ocean
That washes thee from sin;
And 'tis a crystal potion
That gives new life within.

He lets thee share His glory,
His kingdom and His throne;
And these thou'lt share more fully
When life's hard battle's done.

And since thou art partaker
With Him of life divine,
Thou must rise to Thy Maker,
And in His likeness shine.

This trial, which thou fearest,
Is but the Father's love,
Just saying to His dearest,
"Arise, my love, my dove."

Thou wilt get safely o'er it,
'Twill soon be in the past;
In memory keep and store it,
'Twill prove a rich repast.

An Ebenezer 'twill be,
If, while the trial run,
Meek grace enough shall fill thee,
To say, "Thy will be done."

BLESSED DYING.

JACHIM CURÆUS, a German physician of eminent talents, was one of the burning and shining lights of the Reformation; and never were the following lines of the poet more strikingly illustrated than in the death of that genuine believer:—

“The chamber where the good man meets his fate
Is privileged beyond the common walk
Of virtuous life, quite on the verge of heaven.”

This excellent man died of a burning fever, in which he evidenced, as in life, the subjection of his soul to the Divine will, attended with fervent breathing after Christ, in the exercise of divine love. The state of his soul at this solemn season, will best appear from some of those divine and weighty sentences which he then uttered: “Lord, I am oppressed; but it is enough for me that Thy hand hath done it. My body now suffers because of sin, but my soul is raised and comforted with the assurance of eternal life. I will wrestle with Jacob till the brightness of Thy sight shall appear. Come, Lord Jesus, and let all that love thee say, Come; and as for him that loves Thee not, let him be *Anathema Muranatha*. Thou knowest, who searchest the heart, that I love Thee. With Thee I shall be at the beginning of the new year; and shall be satisfied with Thy sight, and drink of that wine of everlasting joy, that is in Thy Father’s house, where there are many mansions, one of which is reserved for me.” He then cried, “My heart glows at the prospect of life eternal, the beginning of which I now actually feel within me. I have learned to know Thee, and my aim hath been that others should know Thee aright. Son of God, acknowledge me also, and take me to Thine embraces! To come to Thee, my soul with desire leaps for joy; and is weary because it is yet withheld! Oh dissolve me, that I may be with Thee! I am overwearied by continuing here! I groan for that dwelling above, which Thou hast revealed to me! As the traveller in a dark night looks for the sun, so do I earnestly look after the brightness of that light, which is in the vision of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! I shall see my Saviour in the flesh, who is exalted at the right hand of the Father, and there shall bless Him for all the blessings I have received from Him. Thou wilt, also, set a guard over this body, even Thy holy angels, to keep my dust and bones, which were, and shall be, even for ever, the dwelling place of the Holy Ghost; for it is impossible that this flesh, which hath been quickened by a participation and communion of the Spirit, and thus ingrafted into the body of Christ, should ever be annihilated or for ever continued in the state of death. But Thou who art the fountain of life, shall require from the earth this

Thine own image; and by sending forth Thy Spirit afresh, Thou wilt again build it up as a glorious living body, that it may there become for ever a dwelling for thy Spirit to inhabit; there we shall follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth, O glorious and divine Leader! and there we shall sing the new song. Let us rejoice! Hallelujah! O come let us go forth to meet our Redeemer! Our conversation is in heaven; even in this life we must begin to know an eternal life, and follow in that order which Christ hath appointed. We shall be clothed upon, and not be found naked; and He who is the beloved Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world, shall lead us to the fountain of living waters, and wipe all tears from our eyes. What the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, nor hath entered into the hearts of men, is prepared for them that love God. This earthly life is but death; but that is life indeed which Christ hath begun in my soul. And now I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; therefore I will praise Him. O blessed soul, where Jesus hath His seat, who doth lead and bear well in all our motions and actions."

Those who were witnesses of his last moments inform us, that these were but a small part of the ardent breathing of the soul of this blessed man, after the enjoyment of God in eternal life. Just before he expired, he was heard to say, "Now I die, and have gained admission; like old Simeon, I die testifying to the truth of the Prophets and Apostles, blessing the Lord that He hath made the light of the Gospel, in His marvellous goodness, again to return after a season of such darkness." Having uttered these words, he shortly after sweetly fell asleep in Jesus.

OBITUARY OF WILLIAM SEXTON, OF DEPTFORD.

ANOTHER veteran has reached his home! We had lately to record the removal of old Robert Berry; now another member of the same Church has joined the choir above.

Our late dear friend, William Sexton, was a man of few words; but whenever he did speak, he had mostly something to say which had point, carried weight, and communicated savour. It is remembered, that when he joined our Church, he commenced by stating the time when he felt the Lord sent His law home with power to his conscience, producing conviction of sin. We know he had a clean deliverance therefrom, which raised him to a good hope in the mercy of God, but our impression is, that it was not so clear as in some cases; yet, he was led ever after to cleave to a free-grace Gospel, and to seek communion with those whom he believed to be the children of God. He was

then living in Buckinghamshire. He has this memorandum in his Bible, "William Sexton was baptized April 2nd, 1847, at New Land Chapel, High Wycombe, by Mr. John Evans, Minister." He married from that neighbourhood. He and his late wife lived together a year or two beyond their Golden Wedding. She died in 1883.

It is perhaps quite forty years since he left the country to live in Deptford. I believe he was formerly a member at Bridge Street Chapel, Greenwich, when the late Mr. Gwinnell was pastor. Afterwards, he met with some friends in a room at Deptford, where Mr. Bewick for a time preached. Subsequently, he went to London on Lord's Days to hear that plain, blunt, yet honest man of God, the late Mr. Gunner.

In April, 1866, a remnant of the congregation from King Street, Deptford, met for worship in a Schoolroom in Malpas Road, New Cross. A place despised by man, but honoured of God by His felt presence. Our departed friend soon found us out there, and from that time he gave up journeying to London. He continued with us; and, upon the increase of the congregation, the place became too strait for us; so in December, 1872, we came to Devonshire Road Chapel, Greenwich. It was there, in 1875, he joined our Church, and on September 5th of that year he was publicly received into Church fellowship at the Lord's table. I remember, when he was about joining us, I put the question (I have often put to others), whether he had read the "Articles of Faith?" I shall never forget his emphatic reply. Pointing to his breast, he said, "Ah! I have got them all here." And so I believe he had. He would say sometimes, after a good hearing time, "It is not altogether the words spoken, but the echo they find within." His was a religion of the heart. He was a considerable reader of the dear old divines, such as Brooks, Charnock, and Bunyan, also Romaine, Newton, and others. I remember him once telling me, that he has felt himself half in heaven when he has been reading "Romaine's Life, Walk, and Triumph of Faith." These, with his Bible and Hymn-books, were his chief companions. And although he imbibed so much, he was kept spiritually "poor and needy." This led him to prize the public ministry, both on Lord's Days, and week evenings. Besides which he spent much time in private prayer. Nor was praise absent. He loved music, and abounded in Tune-books, and he would often play from them on his flute.

For years, he suffered from a bronchial affection, which, in the wintry season, made it a labour for him to get to chapel, and at times kept him confined to his room.

During the severe weather of the past winter, he was constrained to remain much at home. One of our deacons visited

him on January 6th. Mr. Sexton told him he had been blessed with the dear Lord's presence for the previous fortnight. "Not a day," said he, "has past, but what I have felt something of it." He was then reminded of the word, "Say ye to the righteous, it shall be well with him." He replied with emphasis, "Ah! but *they cry!*" implying that he was identified with them in their tears, fears, exercises, and prayers, according to Psalm xxxiv. 17. He seemed in a loving frame of mind, and, although unable to get to chapel, he said, "I meet with you in spirit." He desired his love to all friends, and said, affectionately, "Good-bye, brother!"

He was at chapel for the last time, on Lord's Day morning, February 1st. Help was needed, and given, to convey him home that morning. I called upon him the night before he died. He was very ill, labouring for breath, and in measure beclouded in mind. He looked anxiously at me, and said, "I want to be sure that there is no deception *now*. What I want is real sincerity of heart." I said, "You have had that." He replied, "Sometimes I have felt I have." "But," I said, "you have had some tastes of God's love." He then brightened a little, and answered, "Ah! I'm sure I have." I said, "He would not have granted that, unless He had intended to give you Himself." At this, he looked at me and smiled. He felt so in pain at his chest, and made a slight moan. He then looked up and said—

"Thy whole dependence on Me fix—

I finished the verse for him—

Nor entertain a thought
Thy worthless schemes with Mine to mix,
But venture to be nought."

He said, "I can assure you I have cried mightily unto Him." I replied, "He is nigh unto all that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth." He rejoined, "If it were not in truth, it would be nothing at all." He further said, "I feel I have a real union of heart to the Lord. If I did not, I should be the most miserable creature living." From all he said, I discerned life, but not much liveliness. Therefore, upon leaving him, I told him that I trusted the Lord would lift up the blessed light of His countenance upon him.

After I had gone, his daughter entered his room; she had not been there long before he asked her to withdraw for a short time. She rightly conjectured that he wished to pour out his soul in prayer to God. About two o'clock, he called to her, saying, "Ann, I am going; I have got what I require. You have been

a good girl to me. But, oh, the blessed light of His countenance! How I long to be there. Dear Lord, don't hide Thy presence from me. I have the light of His countenance." His daughter said, "Father, do you feel at a certainty about it? Do you see the light?" He replied, twice over, "Blessed be His dear Name, I do! Dear Lord, don't delay. Give me Thy strength. Keep Thy presence with me." Seeing his daughter weep, he said, "Don't fret; it would be wrong for you to fret for me. May you follow me. I have walked in Zion's road. May the Lord give you grace to follow me." With eyes and hands uplifted, he said, "Blessed Lord, I am coming!" These and other expressions escaped his lips, during a period of nearly two hours; but it was only about four minutes before he breathed his last that he said, "Blessed Lord, I'm coming!"

May we not say of him, that he not only departed in peace, but with a measure of joy? We are hereby reminded of Dr. Watts' lines—

"Before we quite forsake the clay,
Or leave this dark abode,
The wings of love bear us away
To see our smiling God."

Thus, as he had lived, so he died. He lived in the faith and died in the faith. He lived in the Lord, and he died in the Lord. He left his clay tabernacle on the morning of Tuesday, February 10th, 1891, at four o'clock. He was in his eightieth year. I found it a pleasant duty and privilege to commit his remains to the grave, at Brockley Cemetery, on the following Saturday.

Our friend was, by the grace of God, an humble, peaceable, prayerful, and patient follower of Christ.

"Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him?" (James ii. 5.)

JAMES BOORNE.

THOU art my life; if Thou but turn away,
My life's a thousand deaths. Thou art my Way;
Without Thee, Lord, I travel not, but stay;
My light Thou art; without Thy glorious sight,
My eyes are darkened with perpetual night;
My God, Thou art my Way, my Life, my Light.
Thou art my Way; I wander if Thou fly;
Thou art my Light; if hid, how blind am I!
Thou art my Life; if Thou withdraw, I die.

—Francis Quarles.

THE ANXIOUS INQUIRER'S PAGE.

SOMETIMES a man, yea a man of God, is, as he apprehends, so far off from God, that He can neither help him, nor hear him, and this is a dismal state. "And Thou hast removed my soul," said the Church "far off from peace: I forgot prosperity." This is the state sometimes of the godly, and that not only with reference to their being removed by persecutors, from appointments and Gospel seasons, which are their delight, and the desire of their eyes; but also with reference to their faith and hope in their God, they think themselves beyond the reach of His mercy. Wherefore, in answer to this conceit, it is that the Lord asketh, saying, "Is My hand shortened at all that it cannot redeem?" and again, "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear" (Isa. lix. 1). Wherefore He saith again, "If any of them be driven out unto the outmost parts of the heaven, from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will He fetch thee" (Deut. xxx. 4). God has a long arm, and He can reach a great way further than we can conceive He can. When we think His mercy is clean gone, and that ourselves are free among the dead, and of the number that He remembers no more, then He can reach us, and cause that again we stand before Him. He could reach Jonah, though in the belly of hell, and reach thee even there, when thou thinkest thy way is hid from the Lord, and thy judgment passed over from thy God. There is a length to admiration beyond apprehension or belief, in the arm of the strength of the Lord. . . . This, therefore, should encourage them that for the present cannot stand, but do fly before their guilt; them that feel no help nor stay, but go, as to their thinking, every day by the power of temptation, driven yet farther off from God, and from the hope of obtaining of His mercy to their salvation. Poor creature, I will not now ask thee how thou camest into this condition, or how long thou hast been in this state; but I will say before thee, and I prithee hear me, Oh, the length of the saving arm of God! As yet, thou art within the reach thereof; do not thou go about to measure arms with God as some good men are apt to do; I mean, do not thou conclude, that because thou canst not reach God by thy short stumps, therefore He cannot reach thee with His long arm. Look again, "Hast thou an arm like God" (Job xl. 9), an arm like His for length and strength? It becomes thee, when thou canst not perceive that God is within the reach of *thy* arm, then to believe that thou art within the reach of *His*; for it is long, and none know how long.—*Extracted from John Bunyan.*

"THINE EYES SHALL SEE THE KING IN HIS BEAUTY."

(A few thoughts on a Sermon preached by Mr. Harbour.)

THESE eyes, which now are dim with tears,
With unbelief, with doubts and fears,
Impossible it seems to be,
They shall the King in beauty see.

These eyes, which look, and look in vain,
To see if they can read my name
Amongst the family of God,
Washed in the Saviour's precious blood.

These eyes, which search the Scriptures through,
Hoping the Saviour there to view;
Yet, each successive time they look,
To them it seems a sealed book.

These eyes, which would some promise see,
To set my soul at liberty,
And know that this their joy shall be,
"The King in beauty soon to see."

These eyes, which long to look beyond
These passing things, and grow less fond
Of trifling pleasures here below,
And more of Christ to see and know.

These eyes, while waiting to be blest,
Try to look firm, but cannot rest,
They are unsettled, and will be,
Till they "the King in beauty see."

These eyes, which long to see the same
As those who love and fear Thy Name;
And to behold those things, which they
Are favoured with from day to day.

These eyes, which dull and clouded are,
And heaven from them appears so far,
They feel to have so little light,
All seems to them as dark as night.

These eyes, which often look within,
See nought but misery and sin,
Yet fear to ask Christ to behold,
Fearing lest this should be too bold.

These eyes, thus looking for the light
To shine and make their way more bright;
Though hard to say how it can be,
"They shall the King in beauty see."

But now this gracious promise hear,
 May perfect love cast out thy fear ;
 This promise speaks, and speaks to thee,
 "Thou shalt the King in beauty see."

As Mediator, you shall view
 Him, as a Prophet, Priest to you,
 Though you may have to wait some time
 Ere you can say, "The Lord is mine."

You love God's people though they're few,
 Then it must be you love Him too ;
 Wait thou upon the Lord, for He
 Will make thine eyes His beauty see.

Press on, for though thy faith is dim,
 'Tis said of those who wait for Him,
 That they shall not ashamed be—
 Thine eyes the Lord Himself shall see.

Then wait upon the Lord in prayer,
 For no one ever perished there ;
 And let this thought encourage thee,
 "Thine eyes the King of kings shall see."

A. C.

THE DIVINE AND THE HUMAN SIDE OF SALVATION.

(JOHN vi. 37.)

I HAVE thought that our subject might be entitled, "The Divine and the Human Side of Salvation," but the Divine completely surrounds and encloses the human, reminding us of the sublime declaration that "In God we live and and move and have our being," a statement equally true of natural and of spiritual life.

This text we might call a sermon in miniature ; it contains in a nutshell, as it were, the whole kernel of the Gospel—the purpose of God, its certain accomplishment, and the eternal blessedness of all who seek salvation in Christ Jesus the Lord.

The Revised Version gives the first part of the verse a slightly different meaning to the familiar rendering we have known and loved so long, yet the change points out an interesting fact, "*All that [which] the Father giveth Me shall come unto Me.*" The *whole* people of God, regarded as *one Church*, shall come to Jesus as the gift of His Father, and every individual of them, as they come one by one, shall be welcomed, received, and blest.

What an attractive name for the Divine Giver—*Father* ! and how graciously expressed—not *My* Father but *The* Father, as Jesus said after His resurrection, "I ascend to My Father and your Father, to

My God and your God"; one of the sweetest truths of the Gospel is thus in one word brought before us—the communion of Christ with His people, their partnership in grace and in glory too. The present tense is used here, though in the context the past is employed, concerning this donation, "All that the Father *giveth* me." Perhaps the reason of this may be that our text is evidently intended to encourage every longing sinner to seek the Saviour; and so, instead of referring at once to the secret eternal past, it fixes our attention directly upon the present hour and moment; as though He said, "*Now*, while I am doing My Father's will, He is giving me the reward My heart desires, the joy of seeing My wandering sheep returning to their Shepherd; and the whole flock shall surely reach their destined goal, and there shall be one flock and their one Shepherd at last, for ever dwelling in the heavenly fold.

What a concise and full description of living religion is here! "Coming unto Jesus" is the very essence of the believer's life; coming, not once for all merely, but a continuous seeking after and finding Him, asking and receiving, knocking and being admitted into the presence of the Lord. "To whom coming" marks the beginning, the middle, and the close of the Christian course.

"Pressing onward as we can,
Still to this our hearts must tend,
Where our earliest hopes began,
There our last aspirings end."

The weary come for rest, the sick for healing; the defenceless come to put their trust beneath the shadow of Almighty wings, the sorrowful come to be comforted, the glad to praise; for if we would sum up all in one short word, Jesus is His people's *Home*. "Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations," said Moses of old; and if of happy earthly dwellings we have sung, "Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home," what shall we say of a Home in the Lord Himself, in whom all the fulness of God resides, where plenty, safety, love, and every blessing, for time and for eternity, are found?

Noah's dove, when she could find no rest on the flooded, desolate earth, went home again to the ark, and was welcomed there; and so, till all life's floods and storms are over, the children of God, like David, are often constrained to say, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee." Though all around be dreary and unfriendly, He is thy Home. Nor will the Home be changed. When earthly scenes are over, the believer only departs to be more fully "*at Home with the Lord*" (R.V).

"And *him* that cometh unto Me." The change from the plural to the singular number is very striking—not simply all, but *every one*; the whole includes each part. But to make assurance doubly sure, we are told that "*every one* that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." However large the number of the redeemed, they are gathered "*one by one*," and every one is precious in His sight.

And then the crowning point of the encouragement, "I will in *no wise* cast out." *Whoever* comes, *whenever*, *wherever*, *however*, shall in no case, under no circumstances, be cast out.

A minister once related an interesting account of a glass bottle blower, who was led to desire salvation. But he belonged to a class of men whose occupation requiring them to work for hours at a time in sand and water, were peculiarly liable to excessive drinking, and were generally a depraved set of beings. And as he had never heard of any of them being converted, the poor man was for some time sorely troubled with the fear that the Lord Jesus could not, and would not receive him. The Christian friend who tried to help him was at length induced to say, "Well, your Bible must be different to mine; yours must say, 'Him that cometh I will not cast out, unless he be a bottle blower.' But mine says, 'Him that cometh unto Me, I will in *no wise* cast out.'" The word, fitly spoken, was applied to the seeker's heart, and he found that there was room in the love of Jesus even for him.

How often is it thus, not only in the early but in the subsequent stages of experience. As a general rule, certain facts are believed firmly enough, but *one's own* case is so peculiar, it seems quite an exception, and, like the Psalmist, we say, "But as for *me*," as if we stood quite alone. For all such times of difficulty and trial, the strong consolations of the Gospel were provided, and this "in *no wise*" covers all the ground the believer can travel; coming to Jesus, or *wanting* to come, whatever one's condition, or feelings, or fears may be, the promise of Him who knoweth all things and who cannot lie ensures a loving welcome.

For "I will in *no wise* cast out," implies yet more, *far* more, than it expresses; it is not simply opening the door and letting the petitioner in, just tolerating his presence, and just relieving his necessities; it is a welcome warm and loving as the father gave the returning prodigal, a doing good to the received one with all His heart and with all His soul.

The love of Jesus passeth knowledge, and the little that is known of it here passeth *telling*. Oh, that we all, and many more all around us, may "*taste* and see that the Lord is good, and that His mercy endureth for ever."

H. S. L.

THE SEEKER'S CORNER.

To the Editor of the Sower.

DEAR MR. HULL,—While reading the "Seeker's Corner" in March number, I felt such a union of spirit to one writer that I feel constrained to write and thank you for opening a page for "Seekers." I have felt very much encouraged while reading it, although I am oftentimes afraid I am not a real seeker, for I do feel so very poor in spirit, and instead of growing in grace, I seem to get farther from it. But I do desire above all things to have Christ formed in my heart, the hope of glory. I can find no pleasure in the world; but I do love to meet with the Lord's dear people, though I feel so unlike them. I cannot speak of having experienced such deep convictions of sin as some have, which often makes me fearful lest after all I am not in the right way, and my prayer is, "Lord, do make me right. If I am deceived, do undeceive me, for I do not want to live and die a mere professor." I hope the Lord has opened my eyes to see my state by nature, and made me to feel, that unless washed in the precious blood of Christ, and clothed with His righteousness, I can never behold Him with joy. Oh, that He would bless me with the assurance that I am His! nothing short of this will satisfy me. I do want to realize Him as my Saviour. I do hope I know what it is to hunger and thirst after righteousness. Sometimes I have felt such sweetness in reading the Word and trying to call upon the Lord in secret. I have felt such nearness to Him that I wish I could love Him with all my heart, and never sin against Him again. At such times, I could truly say—

"Everything that's dear to Him
To me is also dear,"

and I long to know more of Him, and be enabled, like Thomas, to say, "My Lord, and my God," that I might praise Him while here below.

But, dear Sir, these seasons are very short, and I get into such a cold and careless state sometimes, that I fear it is all a delusion; and I think if I was a real child of God I should not get into such low places, for instead of prayer being a privilege it seems a task, and I find the things which I would I do not, and the evil which I would not, that I do.

"You that love the Lord indeed,
Tell me, is it thus with you?"

I do want to be led by the right way, and be taught by the Blessed Spirit. This portion has often tried me very much, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you,

will seek to enter in and shall not be able." Oh, what a mercy for those who are in the right way!

"In Thy fair book of life and grace,
Oh, may I find my name
Recorded in some humble place,
Beneath the Lord the Lamb."

May the Lord bless you in your work and labour of love, and spare you to His Church and people many years, is the prayer of

Yours sincerely,

April 9th, 1891.

E——.

["Blest souls that can say, Christ only I seek!
Wait for Him alway, be constant though weak;
The Lord whom thou seekest will not tarry long,
And to Him the weakest is dear as the strong."—ED.]

DEAR MR. HULL,—Your very cheering words were quite comforting to me, and I do feel encouraged to hope, as you do, that it is the dear Lord who is thus teaching and leading me; if so, what an unspeakable mercy, to one so undeserving, that I should know Him whom to know is life eternal.

Last Wednesday evening, Mr. B—— preached from the words, "So David waxed greater and greater: for the Lord of hosts was with him." He described and traced out the way in which the Lord leads His children, and I felt that I could see a similar teaching and leading in my own experience, so that I came home rejoicing in the hope that the Lord was my Redeemer, Teacher, and Guide, but sorrowing on account of my sinful and depraved heart, which is always sinning against such a good God, yet feeling that I would not part with my little hope for a thousand worlds.

But still, dear sir, I am at times filled with doubts and fears, lest after all I may be deceived. I often fear that it is all self-love, not love to God, and that it is my own glory that I seek, not the Lord's; to whom, in my right mind, I wish to ascribe all the glory and praise. But I have such a desperately wicked heart, that very often after praying I think, "Oh, what a good prayer I have made," and I even go as far as to wish some one had been there to hear it. God must be very merciful and long-suffering, or He would long ago have cut me off entirely, without any hope. I used to fear that these self-righteous and dreadfully wicked thoughts were sure marks against me, and that a child of God would never have such feelings; but a short time ago, Mr. B——, in enumerating the different enemies of a child of God, described this enemy, self, and he said that young Christians are often very much perplexed and troubled by it, so since then I have

been encouraged to pray to the Lord to destroy this enemy, or deliver me from its power, for I fear it will never be destroyed until death separates our two natures.

Sometimes worldly things seem so to engross my mind, that I fear I have no love to God; and then, again, after reading some precious portion from God's Word, or from the writings of some of His dear children, for a few minutes there seems such a sweet drawing out of love to God, and I feel then that I will never doubt my interest in Christ and the covenant again.

My daily prayer is that the Lord would grant me a fuller assurance of His love. Wishing you every blessing, both temporal and spiritual,

I am your affectionate young friend,

March 8th, 1891.

A. W.

[He (Jesus) shall gather the lambs with His arms, and carry them in His bosom.—ED.]

DEAR SIR,—I have been considering the matter of writing you, for some time past, to tell you of some encouragement you were the means of giving me in a sermon at your chapel last June. I was then a Seeker, and had been for nearly five years, but could find no light, hope, or comfort, and at that time I had got almost at the last extremity, which is "God's opportunity."

The text on the Sunday morning was, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love," &c. I very much enjoyed the words of the whole sermon, and I remember you specially saying to discouraged ones, of which I was one, "Don't give up seeking till you find Him! Just give His love a trial." And then I think you repeated that verse—

"Oh, make but trial of His love,
Experience will decide
How blest are they, and only they,
Who in His love confide,"

which caused me to gather more strength, and instead of giving up, as I had felt I must, I went to the Lord, when I got to the home where I was staying, and begged Him to reveal Himself to me, if possible, during that week. I might say, I did not let Him have any rest all that afternoon. I felt I specially needed Him during the coming week, being alone and a stranger in Hastings. I had come for rest in body, which was needed, and I sincerely hoped I should find a "resting in the Lord" in my soul, which I needed also; and, thanks to His dear Name, who never casts out those that come to Him in sincerity, He revealed Himself to me, and has delivered my soul from death, and set my feet upon a Rock, so that I can really say from experience, "The love of Christ

passeth knowledge," and it reaches even to me, unworthy though I am.

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, *who loved me, and gave Himself for me.*" The latter part of this text has been very much blessed to me. I do hope and pray that I may be kept in times of trial as well as times of joy, and hope, if ever I am in Hastings, to hear you preach again. Trusting you may be long spared to labour in the Master's vineyard, and asking you to excuse if I have in any way trespassed upon your time,

Believe me to remain, yours sincerely,

West Norwood, April 7th, 1891.

C. J. S.

["With pleasure we behold
Immanuel's offspring come,
As sheep are gathered to the fold,
And left no more to roam."—ED.]

DEAR SIR,—I have many times thought I should like to write a few lines, but have constantly postponed it, being sometimes (yea, very often) fearful, lest after all I should fall. In the year 1885, I think you preached in the evening at the anniversary of the Baptist Chapel, Chelsea. I had at that time gone through many troubles, though only eighteen years of age. I trust, dear sir, I have been enabled to see since then, that it was the dear Lord's way to show me how low He was pleased to bring me, and how high He could raise me.

Your text was 1 Pet. iv. 12, 13, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial," &c. How many times I have thought of it; the dear Lord did enable you to speak words of comfort to my sorrowing heart. I had sinned, but I dare not say there was no hope that night. I can remember your remark, "I feel to night as though I must, so to speak, commence at the first step of the ladder." Ah, I thought, I believe it is for me; and then the dear Lord enabled you so to speak, and to trace out nearly all my feelings, that when leaving the chapel, these lines in hymn 380 (Gadsby's selection)—

"The witness that I am Thy child,
Dear Jesus, to me now impart," &c.,

expressed the very desire of my soul. Many comfortable times I afterwards experienced in that chapel, under dear Mr. Brandon's ministry; but ever since hearing your message that night, I have felt guilty in not making it known to you.

Nearly three years ago, I came back to my native place, and have many earthly comforts, more so than when I was in London;

but, ah ! it has often grieved me that I get at times less earnest. I often feel a fear that, it is only when troubles come that I can really think of the dear Lord and His goodness.

I hope, dear sir, you are no worse in body. I always look for the small portion respecting your health in the *LITTLE GLEANER*, and hope, if it is the dear Lord's will, you may be spared to us many years yet.

Now I must draw to a close, and if these few lines should be the means of encouragement and help to you in your labour of love, may the dear Lord have the glory. I know, if I may speak for others, you often need encouragement ; for in our Sabbath School here at Barton, I sometimes feel, if there is only one that I should be the means of awakening to a sense of their lost state, it will repay all ; but I know I must leave that with the dear Lord, and if I do not see any good results, I dare not keep away.

Wishing you much of the dear Lord's help, mercy, strength, &c., to sustain your feeble body, believe me to remain,

Yours in love for the Truth's sake,

Barton, Beds, April 8th, 1891.

M. R.

[May the Lord still guide and teach thee, and preserve thee unto His heavenly kingdom, is the prayer of the Editor.]

DEAR SIR,—I have had many thoughts about writing for the "Seeker's Corner," but have not liked to venture before, although I have had encouragement from reading the different pieces sent. My greatest trouble at the present time is, and also for many months past has been, my proneness to sin, and yet I hate sin. "When I would do good, evil is present with me."

"Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
Prone to leave the God I love."

It was between six and seven years ago that—

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

I thought then I could live without sin, and was looking for perfection in the flesh, but oh, I find it so different ! The older I get, the greater sinner I see myself to be. I often think what a peaceful life it would be to be free from that "hideous monster, sin."

"Astonish'd and distress'd,
I turn my eyes within ;
My heart with loads of guilt oppress'd,
The seat of every sin."

“What crowds of evil thoughts!
 What vile affections there!
 Distrust, presumption, artful guile,
 Pride, envy, slavish fear.”

Another trouble is, when listening to God's ministers, sometimes I feel a little warmth in my soul, but when out of the chapel I so soon forget all about it. It seems Satan is ever ready to take away what little good we get at times. Sometimes I think, what a mercy believers in Christ Jesus are not left to themselves; they are kept by the power of God. If left to themselves, what would become of them? Another cheering thought is—

“Whom once He loves He never leaves,
 But loves them to the end.”

Jesus said, “I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand,” &c. (John x. 28—30). Oh, that I could love Him more, and serve Him in the right way. A beautiful hymn in Gadsby's, No. 875, seems the language of my heart—

“Jesus, to Thee I make my moan,
 My doleful tale I tell to Thee;
 For Thou canst help, and Thou alone,
 A lifeless lump of sin like me,” &c.

Dear sir, excuse the freedom in writing to you, being a stranger in person, but, I hope, not a stranger to God's people.

May the Lord bless thee, keep thee, and strengthen thee, both in body and mind, is the sincere wish of

ONE WHO WOULD LIVE RIGHT, BUT CANNOT.

Brighton.

P.S.—I do not know whether this is worth inserting in the SOWER, but will leave it to your judgment. Am so afraid of writing what I do not realize, but trust what I have written is not fancy.

[The people of God are holy unto Him in Christ, and they have the Spirit of holiness in them, but the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, so that they cannot do the things which they would; therefore they groan, being burdened. But sin shall not have dominion over them, for they are under the law of Christ and the rule of grace. Therefore we say to our friend, “Wage the war with sin,” “looking unto Jesus,” and you shall overcome through Him; for though there is no perfection here in the flesh, yet all His people are predestinated to be like Him as well as to be with Him. —ED.]

DEAR SIR,—I have lately been much encouraged in reading the Seeker's Corner. Your words to others have come with much sweetness to me, causing the tears to flow, and I feel it was of the Lord and I should like to acknowledge it. It gave me a hope in His mercy, and I trust He is teaching me. I feel I need Him now more than ever, for I am so prone to fall into temptation, and because I cannot resist it, I feel I cannot say the Lord is mine, though I can recall times and places to memory where He has blessed me, or I am greatly deceived, and when on my knees in prayer have felt a going out of heart unto Him; but this I have not so much enjoyed of late, and something seems to tell me that I may know and feel all this, and at last prove to be a castaway. I love God's ministers; their words are often a comfort to me. I love His truth, and to meet amongst His people. I want to have a right religion, and would live very differently if I could, but feel to have so much opposition from within and without. I sincerely hope the Lord will restore you to health again and grant you much of His presence.

Yours sincerely,
B. S.

March, 1891.

[Dear friend, we give this part of your letter as we hope it may prove useful to some, who, like yourself, are anxious to be right with God, through the blood and merit of the Lord Jesus. With reference to the inquiry you sent, we are inclined to believe that your difficulty arises through the tempter endeavouring to cast you down by perplexing questions. There is only one way by which the love of God can come to your heart, and that is Jesus Christ; so if you have ever felt love to God go from your heart, it is because He first loved you and manifested that love in His Son. The love of God is the love of the Trinity, and if you love God you love the Trinity. But that love comes to you *in Christ*, and yours can only return *through Christ*. "Every grace and every favour comes to us through Jesus' blood," and He says, "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me." You may hereafter find that the Holy Spirit is leading you by the right way, though now you are tried about it; beg of Him to open up the secret to you. He knows you would not go wrong and be found wrong with respect to any part of divine truth, and He will surely answer your prayer. We give you a few of Mr. Hart's words on the subject, and hope they may be useful to you—

"When we build on Jesus' merit,
Then we worship God aright;
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
Then we savingly unite."

If you build there, all will come right in due course.—ED.]

MY DEAR SIR,—I again enclose a few verses, composed one day while thinking of that precious Name, hoping they will do to fill up a space in your very valuable Magazine. I do trust I have had a glimpse of the preciousness of the Lord Jesus, but I long for a more sweet and full assurance that I am indeed His blood-bought child. It has been my highly favoured lot to have been brought up under the faithful ministry of a beloved servant of God (Mr. H——). This often causes much distress of soul when under sore temptation. The enemy comes in like a flood, suggesting that what, I trust, has been revealed to me by God's Holy Spirit is only mere head knowledge, obtained by hearing the Gospel proclaimed so often; but should I feel my soul melted and overcome with love to the Lord Jesus, when our much-loved pastor is setting forth the beauties and suitability of Immanuel to those who feel in themselves so sinful and utterly unable to do anything to merit the favour of a just and holy God? should I love to meet among the dear Lord's people, though often feeling unfit to mingle with them? I do indeed delight to go to the services of God's house. I can look back at the time when they appeared most tedious to me; but when about fourteen, I trust the Lord, in His free and great mercy, gave me the hearing ear and understanding heart. Oh, how differently I then listened to those glorious truths! I feel in myself so weak and sinful, but, in my most distressing temptations, I cannot give up my hope. I know and feel there is no other refuge and hiding-place but in the Rock of Ages; and my earnest prayer is, as the poet beautifully expresses—

“When I soar to worlds unknown
See Thee on Thy judgment throne,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.”

“And thou shalt call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins.”—MATTHEW i. 21.

“I WOULD see Jesus.” Oh, reveal,
Most Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove,
The glories of Immanuel,
And His most precious, matchless love.

“I would see Jesus,” Son of God,
Who left His heavenly Father's throne,
And here on earth made His abode,
To claim His loved ones for His own.

“I would see Jesus,” He who lived
A life of sorrow, grief, and shame;
With love that we cannot conceive,
He died to save rebellious man.

"I would see Jesus," He that gave
Himself a living Sacrifice.
He knew that He alone could save,
That He must be redemption's price.

"I would see Jesus." Oh, how blest
Are they, whose souls are bought with blood,
And clothed in spotless righteousness,
Wrought by the Son of man and God.

"I would see Jesus." Wilt Thou grant
A deeper taste of love divine?
For this, dear Lord, is all I want,
To know that I am truly Thine.

"I would see Jesus." Saviour, lead,
And guide me through this world of woe,
And with Thy hidden manna feed,
And succour me while here below.

"I would see Jesus," for I'm weak,
And very, very prone to stray;
O Holy Spirit, guide my feet,
And never let me miss the way!

"I would see Jesus," and would feel
His presence near me when I die;
O Lord, Thy love to me reveal,
Before to worlds unknown I fly.

"I would *know* Jesus." Soon He'll come,
Arrayed in Majesty Divine,
To call His own redeem'd ones home,
And be the Judge of all mankind.

Oh, then to view His *smiling* face!
To know my Judge my *Surety* is!
Then shall I sing redeeming grace
Through an eternity of bliss.

Your affectionate young friend,

Brighton, 1891.

R. E.

DEAR SIR,—I hope you will forgive me for taking the liberty to write to you, but I should so like to have your opinion on the following question, if you will kindly favour me with an answer in the SOWER. When a person has made an empty profession of religion, and continued in it for some years, does the Lord ever call such by His grace, or is there no hope for such an one? Does the Lord ever permit one of His children to commit such a sin, or is their case quite hopeless?

May I ask you, dear sir, (knowing the love you have for perishing sinners), to plead with the Lord on behalf of one who has thus

sinned, but who now plainly sees that her heart has never been savingly renewed by grace, and that the feelings she experienced were only natural feelings.

I was glad to hear, by your note in the SOWER, that your health is improving. Hoping you may yet be restored,

I remain, yours truly,

M. B.

[Dear Friend,—If your heart was not savingly renewed while among empty professors, we do sincerely hope it is now ; and under these circumstances, we are not surprised that you should feel to be without any well-grounded hope toward God. We well remember when we felt thus, and concluded that we were “ twice dead, plucked up by the roots ” (Jude 12). “ But God, who is rich in mercy,” showed us, that even then we were not cast away, and taught us effectually that blessed foundation truth, “ By grace ye are saved through faith ; and that not of yourselves : it is the gift of God.” And how often do we admire and wonder at that grace, which is free and all sufficient to such as, with us, are compelled to say with Mr. Hart—

“Sins against a holy God ;
Sins against His righteous laws ;
Sins against His love, His blood ;
Sins against His Name and cause ;
Sins immense as is the sea—
Hide me, O Gethsemane !”

Was not Saul of Tarsus among empty professors ? Was he not a very zealous one, excelling above many in knowledge and zeal ? and, “ touching the righteousness which is in the law,” he said he was blameless (Phil. iii. 6). But with regard to his obtaining mercy he says, “ The grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant,” &c. (1 Tim. i. 14). And many other good and great men, such as Luther, Philpot, Tiptaft, and many others, have proved the same *exceeding abundance* of grace in their measure, and why should not you ? If your former frames and feelings were only of the flesh, and you now lament it, the Lord can not only make you know and feel what was fleshly and wrong, but He can also give you that which is spiritual and right in the place of it. We sincerely hope that He has been removing your own building to make room for Himself in your heart. This is better than if He had left you to live and die in a false peace, the result of delusion. We hope we may hear, ere long, that you too have found the mercy of our Lord to be exceeding abundant, to the joy of your heart and of ours also. “ Mighty to save ” is Jesus the Lord. Call upon Him with unceasing prayer, and He will show His grace.—ED.]

LETTER FOR THE YOUNG.

DEAREST MOTHER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be with you from the Prince of Peace, who is exalted at God's right hand as a Prince and Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins unto Israel. I often wonder how you are getting on, whether lifted up or cast down; whether encouraged to hope, or sinking in the depths of despondency; whether thy hope is rising up in expectation, or whether it is almost overwhelmed with doubts and fears; whether thou art kept so long at Wisdom's gates that thy hopes seem in vain (for the blessing being so long deferred that thou art almost sick with waiting, and fears arise lest thou shalt never receive the spirit of adoption, to enable thee to cry, "Abba, Father," "My Lord and my God"), or whether thy desire is come, which is as a tree of life and yields precious fruit, such as righteousness, joy and peace, and the new man is put on, "which is created in righteousness and true holiness." Art thou still shut up, like the Psalmist, and cannot come forth? Is thy faith weak, thy strength small, thy evidences beclouded, and art thou bowed down through darkness and unbelief?

Fear not, for the Lord will make darkness light and crooked things straight, so that thy weak hands shall be strengthened, thy feeble knees shall be confirmed, and thy fearful heart made strong to rejoice in the God of thy salvation.

We are all quite as well as common. Jane and Mary Ann send their kindest love to you both, whilst

I remain affectionately yours,
Rotherfield, January 14th, 1857. THOS. RUSSELL.

DIED.—On April 14th, Francis John, the dearly-loved eldest son of Edward and Annie Carr, aged 16 years. Will friends kindly accept this intimation?

"He gives and He takes,
 And He makes no mistakes,
 Whatever may be the amount;
 Nor have we a right,
 However He smite,
 To call His decrees to account."

FAITH is the universal characteristic of all who are ordained to eternal life.

THE tempted and the tempter, though they may appear in such union as to have one heart, are laying the foundation of lasting enmity between themselves.

THE CALVINISTIC PROTESTANT UNION.

To the Editor of the Sower.

DEAR MR. HULL,—Being painfully aware of the sad state into which our Protestant nation has fallen, one can but be pleased and thankful when we see Protestants being aroused to some concern. I believe with you, in your remarks in your last issue, that the Calvinistic Protestant Union has exerted a telling influence (under God's blessing) among Protestants. As your correspondent, "A. J.," in the same issue intimated, there are branches of the Calvinistic Protestant Union in many towns, and we repeat the request there made to lovers of truth, "Lend it help to fight the foe for liberty." For the benefit of the readers of the SOWER who might wish to join the Union, or help by sending donations (the smallest will be thankfully received), I submit the names of the branches, and secretaries' addresses. Brighton—Mr. Robinson, 38, Duke Street, Brighton. Croydon—Mr. Rogers, 17, Dingwall Road. Eastbourne—Mr. G. Killick, 1A, North Street, Eastbourne. East Sussex—Mr. J. Dunk, Upper Dicker. Hackney—Mr. E. P. Conner, Poole Villa, The Grove. Highbury, Islington, and Clerkenwell—Mr. P. E. Golding, "Beaconsfield," Stroud, Green Road, N. Horsted Keynes and Dane Hill—Mr. S. L. Newnham, Horsted Keynes, Sussex. Hastings District—Mr. J. Freeman, 9 Devonshire Terrace, Hastings. Mid Sussex—Mr. Tingley, Skaynes Hill, Hayward's Heath. Portsmouth—Mr. J. T. Wiles, London House, Havant. South Surrey—Mr. G. J. Waters, Horne, Near Horley. South West London—Mr. W. R. Perrott, 96, Belville Road, Wandsworth Common, S.W. Tottenham—Mr. S. Brown, 9, Carlton Road, Tottenham, N. Uckfield District—Mr. George Pannett, Framfield, Sussex. Windsor—Mr. J. Denton, 52A, Victoria Street, Windsor.

Trusting it will not be encroaching on your space, and praying that the efforts of the different branches may be still further owned and blessed of God,

I am, dear Mr. Hull, yours sincerely,

JOHN DUNK.

[We gladly give insertion to the foregoing, and trust that the hearts of the people of God may be stirred up to help this excellent movement in opposition to Ritualistic traitors and Romanizing Jesuits, who abound among us, and are doing their utmost to ensnare the young. Dear friends, pray the Lord to bless our efforts, and give us, all the help you can.—ED.]

THE people of God possess, in common, one family likeness, not natural, but imparted, which is holiness to the Lord.



"THEY TOOK HIM IN FOR LIFE." (See page 143.)

"BE NOT FORGETFUL TO ENTERTAIN
STRANGERS."

I HAVE heard my father relate a very interesting anecdote of my grandmother. She was, when a young woman, godly, and, at the time here referred to, was living with her godly mother in the city of Chichester. At Petworth, about fourteen miles away, there lived a good man named Noel, whom God had called by grace, and had blessed him with the pardon of sin. Through the reading of His Word, he became dissatisfied with those professors with whom he came in contact, and not being able to hear the Gospel preached by a God-sent minister, he became so tried in mind that he made it a matter of prayer to God to deliver him from that place, where no food could be found for his soul.

After much trouble of mind, he asked the Lord to guide his way; and for a sign, he would set up his walking-stick, and whichever way it fell he would go to seek the place where he could hear God's Word faithfully preached. His stick fell towards Chichester, and the good old man followed the road, not knowing what would be the end of his journey. His only desire was to find a home with the people of God.*

While he was walking on the road, my grandmother and her mother were busy at their daily work, and my grandmother was powerfully struck with those words in Hebrews xiii. 2, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for some have thereby entertained angels unawares." She went to her mother, and said, "What can it mean? What strangers are we to take in?" Her mother said, "I don't know; surely it does not mean us." They did their work with a feeling in their mind that the Lord had spoken.

After some time, an old man knocked at the door with the simple inquiry if they could tell him where he could hear the real Gospel preached. He was invited into the house, as they wished to find out what kind of man he was. He was asked to take a seat, and tell them what Gospel it was he needed to hear. He told his tale of how God had taught him in his heart that he was a very great sinner, and he gave such a sweet account of how God had pardoned his sins through faith in the precious

* We commend the anxious desire manifested by this good man for the living ministry of the Gospel, but while we do not wish to judge him harshly, remembering the circumstances of his case, we think it much better to leave the manner of answering prayer with the Lord, than to be guided by any sign of our own devising. Yet the Lord, who knows our frame, may, in pity for our weakness, even condescend to meet us in such a way as He did the good man, when He finds the heart is toward Him
— ED.

blood of Jesus, that the two females were touched in their heart, and wept with joy. Knowing the same things, they said, "Abide here, and you can hear the Word."

Afterwards, he was interviewed by the late Mr. Edward Parsons, who preached at Chichester occasionally. The joy and peace known in that household, with the fellowship of saints, was very sweet. They took him in for life, and the old friend died after some long time, leaving my grandmother to prove that precious truth declared by the Lord, "He that receiveth a disciple in My name, shall receive a disciple's reward." Though he had no temporal goods to leave, yet they rejoiced that he had put up many prayers in their behalf, and believed that many answers to his prayers were fulfilled after his death.

E. C. PARSONS.

A LIVING SACRIFICE.

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."—ROMANS xii. 1.

IN his second Epistle to the Corinthians, Paul says, "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." In like manner he beseeches his brethren at Rome, "By the mercies of God." Man, in his natural state, feels no need of mercy, because ignorant of his true state before God; but when brought to see himself as God sees him, then he pleads guilty, and cries for mercy. When God first visited me with a sense of His mercy in Christ Jesus, in my first love, I begged of Him that I might be a living sacrifice unto Him. What is a living sacrifice? It is not giving the body to be burned, or to be destroyed by any other means. Every child of God, who is constrained by the love of Christ to deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follows Christ, is a living sacrifice. When our old man is crucified with Him, and its deeds mortified, then we are a living sacrifice. When Abraham was commanded to offer up Isaac, himself was a living sacrifice. When Moses choose "rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season," he was a living sacrifice. When Jesus Christ took our nature upon Him, "made Himself of no reputation," and lived a suffering life below, He was a living sacrifice, from the manger to the cross. Those who "wandered in dens and caves of the earth, being destitute, afflicted, tormented," were all of them living sacrifices, "holy, acceptable unto God." Under the Mosaic law, everything offered in sacrifice was to be perfect after its kind, without blemish. In Psalm li. David confesses his guilt

before God thus, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." In Psalm lxxxvi. he says, "Preserve my soul, for I am holy." In what sense can he be holy who pleads for mercy in the same breath? "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." "Their righteousness is of Me, saith the Lord" (Isa. liv. 17); "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water" (Heb. x. 22); "I will dwell in them, and walk in them" (2 Cor. vi. 16); "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost? . . . Therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor. vi. 19, 20).

The Scriptures are so full of evidence of the efficacy of the blood and righteousness of Christ to present the souls of God's people holy and unblameable in His sight, and also of the sufficiency of the indwelling of His Spirit to present both their bodies and souls holy and acceptable to Him, that all attempts to prove the contrary must be regarded as "perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds" (1 Tim. vi. 5). Perhaps some poor soul, on reading these words, "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. xii. 14), may be dismayed, and say, "Then I fear that I shall never see His face, for, instead of holiness, all within me appears to be unholy and unclean." But if you truly mourn over that which you feel, and if you feel your need of being washed and clothed, then Christ hath a fountain to wash you in, and a robe of righteousness to cover you. "Yes," say you, "I have proved this, but I want to feel a principle of holiness within; but, 'when I would do good, evil is present with me.'" This was Paul's complaint. But this desire to do good, and to be conformed to the image of God's dear Son, is a proof that a principle of holiness is already wrought in such characters, and that they are "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God." But, alas! I have seen many who live loose lives, and then say, "It is my old man that sins, but in Christ I am holy and clean." Alas! man, it is vain to talk of being in Christ, if Christ is not in thee; Christ formed in the heart is ever attended with holy desires and holy purposes. Thus "the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost," constitutes that personal "holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." J. J.

OUR life here is a warfare, and the great enemy is self.

OF all the blessings which can be obtained in this world, a tender conscience is one of the greatest.

THE LATE MR. THOMAS SPENCER.

To the Editor of the Sower.

MY DEAR MR. HULL,—About twelve months since you very kindly inserted in the *SOWER* a little account of the death of Mrs. Spencer, of Peterborough, sent by the kind interest of Mrs. Blinkhorn, of Lincoln. Possibly that kind friend may have again anticipated the desire of friends by sending a similar account of the dear husband, Mr. Thomas Spencer. But in case you have not heard, I send the enclosed, copied from letters received from their most affectionate and loving daughter, M. E. Spencer; and I feel it may not be out of place to make mention of a few circumstances that would be interesting to those of your readers who knew him, as well as to others.

We first became acquainted about twenty-six or twenty-seven years ago, when dear Mr. Spencer was the first to speak to me, then a stranger at Peterborough. Many things, that would not be interesting to every one, might be mentioned which endeared his memory to me during the years that have passed away. He was a man of very few words indeed, but his genuine, unaffected, and generally kind way of speaking to me found its way to my poor heart, so that we had many sweet times together. He had formerly lived at Woodnewton, near Kingscliffe, Northamptonshire, where he had been favoured by sitting under the ministry of a Mr. Ireson, and afterwards had often gone all the way to Stamford to hear the late Mr. Philpot, whose ministry had been much blessed to him. He once repeated part of the hymn, "Sons of God in tribulation," &c., and with emotion the words, "All to succour every tempted, burdened son." He had many heavy family trials, under which he was supported and comforted much by the Word, especially the Gospel by John, many parts of which he would dwell upon, especially of late years. He was a Strict Baptist in principle, but did not join the Church until some years after we had come to London. But we have reason to believe the Lord's time was the best time in respect to that, as he was much favoured in giving his experience before the Church. His late dear partner, Mrs. Spencer, told us afterwards (when, on a little visit, we spent a few days with them) that the friends were most affected, and received him gladly, and added, "So that we had the pleasure of rejoicing together." We feel the loss of such a warm-hearted and constant friend, but have no doubt he has gone to enjoy the blessedness of those "who sleep in Jesus," whom not having seen, yet he believed in, and who was so precious to him in all his trials here below. He was indeed a loving disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I must now conclude, trusting you will excuse the liberty I have taken, and with kind regards and Christian love to our friends, Mr. and Mrs. F——, hoping the Lord will still favour you in your work and labour of love, for His truth's sake,

I remain, with Christian love, yours very sincerely,
London, April 7th, 1891. THOMAS STANYON.

Peterborough, April 8th, 1891.

MY DEAR MR. AND MRS. STANYON,—I know you will be surprised to hear that my dear father was called to the better land at half-past three o'clock, a.m., last Thursday, April 2nd, after a few days' illness. He was taken on the Thursday previous with a rather sharp attack of bronchitis; and though he seemed to rally somewhat from that, he soon began to sink under his great weakness. It was very painful and distressing to see him struggling for breath at times, but just at the last, he was quite calm, and passed away very peacefully. He seemed very comfortable in his mind. We asked him if he was happy? and he said "Yes!" And, "Are you going to be with Jesus?" He said, "Yes!"

A few days before he was taken ill, I was busy in another room, and was singing the 144th hymn, "Jesus, my all, to heaven is gone," when he happened to notice the word, and calling me to him, asked me what hymn it was? I found it and read it to him; he so much enjoyed it, and said it seemed quite fresh to him. He found great sweetness in it, especially dwelling on the third verse, "The more I strove against its power," &c. He asked me to read it again, the day before he died, and seemed to experience the same sweetness in it.

I little thought that in my merely singing the hymn while at work, there should be a message from God to my dear father in that very hymn. I have thought since, what wonderful ways the Lord has in working!

At another time he started to sing hymn 500, "May the grace of Christ our Saviour," &c.; but could not get beyond the first five words, and then asked me to finish it. At another time, when rather restless, I repeated to him—

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
 In a believer's ear."

And he said, "Ah, 'How sweet the name of Jesus sounds!'" adding, "My dear Jesus!" And then he said to me, "And how do you know its sweetness—who taught you these things?" I answered, "This same Jesus!" and he seemed pleased. Hymn 1105 also expresses what his feelings were—

"Jesus, engrave it on my heart,
That Thou the one thing needful art," &c.

I think you will remember it as one of his favourite hymns.

A few days previous to his death, in converse with a friend, he said the 10th verse of the 2nd chapter of the 1st of Corinthians, had once been made a great blessing to him: "But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." And many other things which I cannot now remember.

The blow seems too sudden for me fully to realize it. To think, that both my dear parents have been taken away in less than a year! But, oh! what a consolation and unspeakable favour it is to know, "It is well" with both of them. I hope it is from the Lord that I feel the stroke is in mercy, enabling me to say, though with tears, "Not in anger, but from His dear covenant love."

I feel that if my father's and my mother's God is mine, then I know it will be well. It was rather singular that my dear father was buried on the anniversary of the day on which I was baptized, only a few weeks before my dear mother was taken to her eternal rest. I must now conclude, with best love to you both, trusting you are well. Believe me,

Yours very sincerely,
MIRIAM E. SPENCER.

P.S.—The following is a copy of the memorial card:—In loving remembrance of Thomas Spencer, who died April 2nd, 1891, aged 71 years. Interred at Peterborough cemetery, April 6th. "To you which believe He is precious."

"What cheering words are these,
Their sweetness who can tell?
In time and to eternal days,
'Tis with the righteous well."

AN EXTRACT.

It may be taken as a rule that the less real religion the more form, and the more cleaving to a name. The words believer and believing are doubtless used in a more general or more restricted sense, as well as the word Christian; and if either be strained to an extreme, it becomes an error, and so may other portions of religious truths; as the extreme spirituality of some leads to the neglect of a consistent practice—and the extreme of practice leads to the error of all who do to live, and not live to do. Men are naturally apt to set up a thing, and everything must bow to that; to hold a small object so near the eye as to obscure all vision.

"A FRIEND LOVETH AT ALL TIMES."

"I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you."

It is the Lord who speaks these words,
Therefore they must be true;
They cannot fail, and He will send
The Comforter to you.

It is the Lord; He knows thy grief,
Thy burden and thy care;
'Tis He can give thee grace and strength,
Thy trials sore to bear.

It is the Lord; He sees how weak
And trembling oft you feel;
But He the Comforter will send,
And gently with you deal.

It is the Lord; He sees how faint
You are, and hears your sigh,
And when you least expect it, He,
The Comforter, is nigh.

It is the Lord; He knows that you
Need comfort by the way,
Or why should He have promised this,
Before He went away?

It is the Lord; He has all power,
Yea, love and wisdom too;
Friends may be willing, but can not
At all times comfort you.

It is the Lord; He knoweth how
And when to give relief,
Because He knows just how you feel,
The cause of all your grief.

It is the Lord, who always hears,
And listens to our cries,
Though very often they may not
Above a whisper rise.

It is the Lord; from first to last,
He is our All in All;
Then let us turn from earthly things,
And ever on Him call.

All needful comfort He can give,
He can our souls sustain;
Divine assistance, if we ask,
We surely shall obtain.

HOLY SPIRIT ; OR, SPIRIT OF HOLINESS.

THE Lord the Spirit bestows holiness upon His people, as the means of their happiness, nay, as their happiness itself. They fly not from sin, merely lest they should be damned for it (though it is certain, as God is true, that they who live and die in sin, whoever they be, shall be damned), but they avoid it, as the path of misery itself, in which they are sure never to find that presence which is better than life, nor that communion of the Spirit, which is one main-spring of all their joys. Some there are (and oh that it were too undeniable a truth !) who talk of keeping up this communion and enjoying this presence, even where Satan's seat is, and among the lying vanities and amusements of the world. The condemnation of such men is just (Rom. iii. 8). To do evil that good may come, to mix with sin to enjoy holiness, and to confederate with the devil to serve God, are some of the most horrible problems, which make real Christians tremble, excite wonder in heaven at the Divine patience, and raise a malignant smile in hell over the amazing impudence and apostacy of man. Such unhappy souls (for they never knew the happiness of the Spirit of holiness) have neither part nor lot in the matter ; but, like Simon Magus, the founder of such like heresies, are in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. They may talk of the Gospel, but do not enjoy it ; they may criticise upon doctrines, but do not know their power ; and they may split hairs perhaps on theological theses, but be all the while within a hair's breadth of hell. The Spirit of holiness will not be blasphemed, but at their cost, by those who profess to know God while in works they deny Him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate (Tit. i. 10). This is plain language ; but the times require it. The real Christian will not be offended at the truth, for he loves to be sincerely dealt with : and, as to hypocritical pretenders, they ought to be offended, that either they may be humbled for their sins, or be allowed no title to a profession which they disgrace. For this, we have the example of the primitive Church ; and it would be happy for the Church in all ages and countries, if she could follow it.

And now, O believer ! in whom this divine Spirit hath breathed His heavenly life, and whom He hath anointed with His holy unction, what says thy heart to this title of thy God ? Is He not the Holy Spirit, or Spirit of holiness, willing in thee all holy inclinations, stirring in thee all holy desires, prompting thee to all holy words, effecting in thee all holy works ? Hast thou a thought, a wish, an affection, a work, holy in the least degree without Him ? Thy spirit will witness for Him in all this matter—will witness His kindness, and mercy, and power, and Godhead

everlasting. His own Word proclaims His divinity ; thy heart feels it. If others doubt this glorious truth, thou canst not. Thou art taught by Himself, as well as by His Word, that none but almighty power could have raised thee from the death of trespasses and sins, and none but invincible grace have protected thee when raised. And thou hast seen in manifold instances (and thy memory can furnish both the times and occasions), how readily He has come in to thine aid ; when but for His aid, thou must have sunk under thy various temptations, and fallen into the snare of the devil. He furnishes thy mind with knowledge, not notional or speculative knowledge only, but with such full intelligence of necessary truth, as enables thy spirit to receive it as something belonging to thee, and to relish and enjoy it. He sanctifies thy affections, and prevents their entanglement with things beneath Him and below thyself. He gives thee sweet complacency of heart, and many a happy hour, which no eye but His beholds, and no mind but a Christian's can conceive. How kindly doth he bend down the old man of sin, and conquer those harsh and rugged dispositions, which no created strength could subdue ! What meek resignation, what placid contentment, what abstraction from the world and from self, doth it introduce into a heart, which, before, was like an untamed heifer, unaccustomed to the yoke, and which only sought SELF, and SIN for self, in all it thought or did ! How powerfully, yet how graciously, doth He sustain thy spirit in every trying hour ; and, though He suffer thee to slip, perhaps, that thou mightest remember where thy strength lies ; with what increase of fervour and holiness doth He raise thee up again, and with what sense of His unmerited mercy and love ! Oh, what a debtor, what a daily debtor, art thou to this Holy Spirit's wisdom, power, and grace ! It is, indeed, a salvation which thou canst not number ; a rich salvation, which all heaven cannot count. Thou wilt be counting it to eternity, and all the while be perceiving, more and more clearly, that thou wilt for ever be welcome to increase it. Oh, come, let us add something to it even here ! We have a bad world, indeed ; but still grace is to be obtained in it ; and we can augment our stock in this valley of Achor* for our heavenly Canaan. Soon, soon shall the hour come, when the shadows shall disappear, when the day of Christ shall dawn, and the full effulgence of the Divine glory shall irradiate, and fill, and make unalterably happy, our redeemed souls. Soon shall we see Jesus as He is, and, by the love of the Father, and power of the Spirit, be for ever like unto Him.

Wonderfully saved art thou, O Christian ! Wonderfully

* That is, by remembering and acknowledging the grace we receive in times of need.

redeemed from the earth! All things here are full of wonders, when we survey the visible creation as we ought. But how surpassing in wonder, how unutterably amazing, must the redemption of thy soul appear, when thou shalt be able more perfectly to trace it out, as it began in heaven, was carried on upon earth, and completed in glory!—when the wonders of God shall burst forth upon thy ravished soul in those realms of bliss, where mortality is swallowed up of life? There, even there, perhaps, in the perfect illumination of spirit and life, without one cloud to obscure, thou mayest justly take up the Apostle's words to proclaim the ineffable theme, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! Of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to Him be glory for ever. Amen."—*Fragment from Searle.*

THE POWER OF PRAYER.

"Call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me."

AFTER much exercise of mind and prayerful consideration, as to whether I should thus openly show the faithfulness of my God in answering, in so conspicuous a manner, my poor supplications to the conversion of an immortal soul, I have at last come to the conclusion to do so.

The Lord was pleased to afflict a near relative of mine, about three months ago, with what proved to be a sickness unto death. Soon after it began, I began to be very anxious about her soul, for I knew she was living without God, and without hope in the world; living, as it were, in a careless and indifferent way, as far as eternal things were concerned, as I fear many do. This anxiety about her immortal soul led me to supplicate the Lord in secret, that He would show her that she was a guilty sinner before Him, and lead her to Himself, the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness. Thus I spent week after week, watching unto prayer, till at last a friend of mine paid her a visit, and, finding her very ill, entered into a course of conversation about eternal things; but all she could say was, "I am a guilty sinner, a guilty sinner before God," with emotions that too well expressed the mental agony she was in on account of sin. In this state she was left crying for mercy. On hearing the news, I felt the Lord had heard and answered my prayer thus far, and this encouraged me still to persevere in prayer, that He who had taught her her sinnership, would also lead her to Himself, the sinner's Friend, and manifest to her His love and mercy.

About a fortnight afterward, we received a telegram to say she was much worse. My friend again paid her a second visit, I being unable to do so; and on arriving, found her in a dying state, but quite conscious; and when asked if the Lord had appeared for her, she exclaimed, with a face lit up with heavenly joy, "Oh yes! oh yes! He has come! He has come! and He has promised never to leave me nor to forsake me." After being in great agony, she said, "Weary, weary; no rest here; only one more river." And being asked if she was afraid to cross that river, she exclaimed, "Oh no! Jesus is here! He is here! and He has promised to be there; He has said He will never leave me nor forsake me," her countenance being full of joy. And with regard to myself, she said, "Tell him—tell him what the Lord has done for me. He understands all about it, he understands the secret." This seemed most strange to me, for she longed to see me, and me only, to tell it to, and yet I had never, to my remembrance, said anything to her about better things. But I take this as the Spirit of God working between the two, for on the reception of this news, the Lord at the same time answering my prayer in another direction, in His providence, the same day, filled my soul with exceeding great joy; and while thus melted down with love, praise, and gratitude to my God who had done such great things for me, these words completed my joy as they came with power divine, "They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which shall never be moved." I felt I could trust Him for time, trust Him for eternity, and never doubt any more.

But to return. My friend lay after this in an almost unconscious state, and was almost past speaking. Her last words were, "Jesus! Jesus!" and then convulsions set in, and, in a short time she breathed her last. When following her remains to the grave, I felt assured I was following one who was "plucked as a brand from the burning," one who was then resting in sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection.

"O grave, where is thy victory?
O death, where is thy sting?"

"The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Leicester, November 16th, 1890.

JOHN MARRIOTT.

EVERYTHING to make you like Christ is to be had from Him.

ONE cause of a barren ministry is, when man's word is substituted in the place of the Word of God.

THE ANXIOUS INQUIRER'S PAGE.

If thy heart be drawn more out to the Lord by the affliction, then the affliction is in love; if it is so sanctified, as that it draws out thy soul to love the Lord more, and to fear the Lord more, and to please the Lord more, and to cleave to the Lord more, and to wait on the Lord more, and to walk with the Lord more, then it is in love (Psalm xviii. 1—8; cxvi. 1—5; cxix. 61, 71). Oh! then it is the wound of a Friend indeed. It is reported of the lioness, that she leaves her young whelps till they have almost killed themselves with roaring and yelling, and then at the last gasp, when they have almost spent themselves, she relieves them, and by this means they become more courageous. And so, if the afflictions which are upon us increase our courage, strengthen our patience, raise our faith, inflame our love, and enliven our hopes, certainly they are in love, and all our wounds are the wounds of a Friend.

If you are more careful and studious how to glorify God in the affliction, and how to be kept from sinning under the affliction, than how to get out of the affliction, then certainly your affliction is in love. Where God smites in love, there the soul makes it his work how to glorify God, and how to lift up God, and how to be a name and an honour to God. The daily language of such a soul under the rod is this, "Lord, stand by me that I sin not, uphold me that I sin not, strengthen me that I sin not." He that will not sin to repair and make up his losses, though he knew assuredly that the committing of such a sin would make up all again, he may conclude that his affliction is in love.

I have read of a nobleman, whose son and heir was supposed to be bewitched; and being advised to go to some wizard or cunning man, as they are called, to have some help for his son, that he might be unwitched again: he answered, "Oh, by no means! I had rather the witch should have my son, than the devil;" his son might suffer, rather than he would sin him out of his sufferings. He that will not break the hedge of a fair command, to avoid the foul way of some heavy affliction, may well conclude that his affliction is in love. Christians! what say you when you are in the mount, do you thus bespeak the Lord? "Lord, take care of Thy glory, and let me rather sink in my affliction, than sin under my affliction." If this be the bent and frame of thy heart, it is certain the affliction that is upon thee is in love. The primitive times afforded many such brave spirits, though this age affords but few.

If you enjoy the special presence of God with your spirit in your affliction, then your affliction is in love. "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers,

they shalt not overflow thee : when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee" (Psalm xxiii. 4—6 ; Isa. xliii. 2). Hast thou a special presence of God with thy spirit, strengthening that, quieting that, steeling that, satisfying that, cheering and comforting that ? "In the multitude of my thoughts within me," that is, of my troubled, intricate, insnarled, intertwined, and perplexed thoughts (as the branches of a tree by some strong wind are twisted one with another, as the Hebrew word properly signifies), "Thy comforts delight my soul" (Psalm xciv. 19). Here is the presence of God with his soul ; here are comforts and delights that reach the soul ; here is a cordial to strengthen his spirit. When all things went cross with Andronicus, the old emperor of Constantinople, he took a psalter into his hand, and opening the same, he lighted upon Psalm lxviii. 14, "When the Almighty scattered kings, it was white as snow in Salmon ;" which Scripture was a mighty comfort and refreshment to his spirit. Now you are to remember, that Salmon signifies shady and dark ; and so was this mount, by the reason of many lofty, far-spread trees that were near it, but made lightsome by snow that covered it : so that to be white as snow in Salmon, is to have joy in affliction, light in darkness, mercy in misery. And thus God was to the Psalmist as snow in Salmon, in the midst of his greatest afflictions. When Paul would wish his dear son Timothy the best mercy in all the world, the greatest mercy in all the world, the most comprehensive mercy in all the world, a mercy that carries the virtue, value, and sweetness of all mercies in it, he wishes the presence of God with his spirit. "The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit" (2 Tim. iv. 22). In point of honour, in point of profit and pleasure, in point of safety and security, and in point of comfort and joy, it is the greatest blessing and happiness in this world to have the presence of God with our spirits, especially in times of trial. "For which cause we faint not ; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day" (2 Cor. iv. 16). By the outward man you are to understand, not merely our bodies, but our persons, estates, and outward condition in this world ; and by the inward man you are to understand, our souls, our persons, considered according to our spiritual estate. Now, when the inward man gains new strength by every new trouble, when as troubles, pressures, afflictions, and tribulations are increased, a Christian's inward strength is increased also, then his afflictions are in love ; when the presence of God is with our inward man, cheering, comforting, encouraging, strengthening, and renewing of that, we may safely conclude, that all these trials, though they are ever so smart and sharp, are yet in love.

I have read of a company of poor Christians that were banished

into some remote parts ; and one standing by, seeing them pass along, said, that it was a very sad condition which those poor people were in, to be thus hurried from the society of men, and to be made companions with the beasts of the field. "True," said another, "it were a sad condition indeed, if they were carried to a place where they should not find their God ; but let them be of good cheer, God goes along with them, and will exhibit the comforts of His presence whithersoever they go." The presence of God with the spirits of His people, is a breast of comfort that can never be drawn dry ; it is an everlasting spring that will never fail. Well, Christian, thou art under many troubles, many sore trials. But tell me, doth not God give into thy soul such cordials, such supports, such comforts, and such refreshments, that the world knows not of ? Oh, then certainly thy affliction is in love.

If by your afflictions you are made more conformable to Christ in His virtues, then certainly your afflictions are in love. Many are conformable to Christ in their sufferings, that are not made conformable to Christ in His virtues by their sufferings. Many are in poverty, neglect, shame, contempt, reproach, like to Christ, who yet by these are not made more like to Christ, in His meekness, humbleness, heavenliness, holiness, righteousness, faithfulness, fruitfulness, goodness, contentedness, patience, submission, subjection. But if in these things you are made more like to Christ, without all peradventure your afflictions are in love. If by afflictions the soul be led to show forth or to preach forth the virtues of Christ, as that word imports, in 1 Pet. ii. 9, then certainly those afflictions are in love ; for they never have such an operation, but where they are set on by a hand of love. When God strikes as an enemy, there all those strokes do but make a man more an enemy to God ; as you see in Pharaoh, and others : but when the strokes of God are the strokes of love, oh, then they do but bring the soul nearer Christ, and transform the soul more and more into the likeness of Christ. If by thy afflictions thou art made more holy, humble, heavenly, they are in love.—*Brooks.*

THE highest man in the spiritual life is the lowest.

TIME is like a creditor, who allows an ample space to make up accounts, but is inexorable at last. Time is like a verb that can only be used in the present tense. Time well employed gives that health and vigour to the soul which rest and retirement afford to the body. Time never sits heavily upon us, but when it is badly employed. Time is a grateful friend ; use it well, and it never fails to make a suitable return.

ANSWERS TO INQUIRIES.

To M. B——.

WE can now more clearly understand the nature of your trouble and the cause of your distress. We deeply sympathize with you in your present case, and can but say what we have often said before, that while it is right for the Lord's people to encourage those who are seeking after Him, it is very wrong to persuade them to take such an important step as you name, before they are satisfied it is what the Lord would have them do. He does thus satisfy some before they attain to the assurance of faith, and, when this is the case, "Him that is weak in the faith" is to be received.

We do not, however, look upon your case in the same light you do. We feel encouraged to hope that the Lord has brought you down that He may lift you up, and thus by bringing down the high tree, and drying up the green tree, then exalting the low tree, and making the dry tree to flourish (see Ezek. xvii. 24), He will teach you salvation by grace, sovereign, rich, and free—the ability and suitability of Jesus, who is able to save to the uttermost, and all to prove that His "thoughts towards you are thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you an expected end."

The reading of your distressing exercises brought vividly to our mind a similar state of soul we experienced some years ago, but the Lord has proved Himself far better than our then gloomy, foreboding fears, and this inclines us thus to write to you. Do not forget the precious blood of Christ. It cleanses from *all* sin, and why not yours? Try Him, dear friend. If you cannot pray, He knows what you feel, and understands your fears and despair, which are no hindrance to Him though they are to you. "Mighty to save," is Jesus. Look up, look up. Read hymn 956, Gadsby's Selection; also a narrative in the SOWER for September, 1884, page 244, by the late Mr. Francis; you may, perhaps, find something in them to encourage you. There are many things in the Scriptures that point to such cases; may the blessed Spirit bring them before you, yea, drop them into your heart, and you will then prove that the Lord has led you by a right way, to bring you close to Himself.

THE EDITOR.

To E. F. K——.

WE have not read the memoir you speak of, therefore cannot give our judgment upon it. It would not be doing right for us to decide, even on the ground of what we hear of it. But we

can, in a brief way, notice what you say respecting the great difference of condition and amount of trial experienced among even the Lord's own children. When He calls them out of the world, He causes them to go after Him "in the wilderness, in a land that is *not sown*," and they gladly follow Him without putting Him under conditions, believing, then, that He will surely do what is right and best for them, even though the way be through much tribulation. Thus they are then content to leave the future with Him, preferring that He should choose for them, instead of they choosing for themselves; and they are willing to be the least, and to take the lowest seat in the family, so that they may but have a place among the children. Now, if they were always of this mind, there would be no complaining when they see other of the Lord's people less burdened, tried, or afflicted than themselves. But we are apt to forget "the kindness of our youth, and the love of our espousals," when called to carry our cross, and to think that others are not troubled as we are; and, like Jeremiah, we are perhaps inclined to say, "*I am the man that hath seen affliction*," &c. But if we are once brought to feel that truth—

"To Him every comfort I owe,
Above what the fiends have in hell,"

we then neither murmur against the Lord, nor envy the lot of other of His children, much less the lot of worldlings. The Lord will surely lead His people by that way which will be most conducive to their spiritual welfare, for "He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust." Therefore the way by which we follow Him is most suited to our frame, though we may think and conclude otherwise. By these means we have to walk alone among men, and are taught to come "up from the wilderness, leaning on our Beloved." There always have been diversities of condition among the Lord's people. Solomon was not tried through life as his father David was, but each was led by the right way. So if we can but learn from the Lord that the way we are walking is the right one for *us*, we have no need to envy those whose way seems to be smoother than ours, even though they are the Lord's children, because their way would not suit us, and the Lord knows it. How much less should we then grudge the worldling and the mere professor their flowery path, since they have no fellowship with, or good hope in, Christ, especially if we can sometimes sing—

"The way I walk can not be wrong
If Jesus be but there."

THE EDITOR.

THE SEEKER'S CORNER.

To the Editor of the Sower.

DEAR SIR,—I have often felt much encouragement from reading the SOWER, especially the "Seeker's Corner." The first of the letters in the February number exactly expresses my feelings, excepting the last few lines. I often wish I had had a very marked beginning; and when I read accounts of the conversion of some people, I feel afraid that mine is only a natural religion, and because I have been brought up under the sound of Gospel truth, I naturally have a kind of love for God's truth and His people. Yet I know that I desire above all things to know Jesus Christ as my own personal Saviour; and I find many prayers in the Bible that just suit me, as that of Jabez, "Oh that Thou wouldest bless me indeed"; and many in the Psalms, as, "Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that Thou bearest unto Thy people. O visit me with Thy salvation." I feel so to lack real repentance and true sorrow for sin, and I fear I do not enough feel the burden of sin, as I have never felt as I have often read of other persons, feeling afraid to go to sleep at night lest they should wake up in hell. Yet I feel that sin is mixed with all I say or think or do, and, looking at my heart, I say, "Can ever God dwell here?"

One of the sins that trouble me most is that, very frequently when trying to pray, other things come into my mind, and I think of them, which I feel to be mocking God, and then I think I am a hypocrite, and am deceiving myself; yet my prayer is that the Lord will search me, and not let me be deceived.

It is a great encouragement to me that Jesus is appointed "a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins." I know it is He alone who can give me both; and He has said, "For this will I be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them." I sometimes think I take too much encouragement from the preached Word, as I often feel a hope that I am one of the Lord's people. About three years ago, I felt much encouraged by hearing a sermon on, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after." I like those words of Toplady's—

"Compared with Christ, in all beside
No comeliness I see;
The one thing needful, dearest Lord,
Is to be one with Thee.

"The sense of Thy expiring love,
Into my soul convey;
Thyself bestow, for Thee alone,
My All in All, I pray."

Some time ago I was feeling that I must be altogether out of the secret of true religion, and, opening my Bible, I read those words, which much encouraged me, "He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." Jesus Christ said, "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me, and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." I want to know that I am included in that gift, and that Jesus died for my sins. He has said, "My sheep hear My voice," and I want to hear His voice saying to me, "Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven."

"Oh, that we now might know
The all-atoning Lamb;
Spirit of faith, descend and show
The virtue of His name.

"Inspire the living faith,
Which whosoever receives,
The witness in himself he hath,
And joyfully believes."

Wishing you the blessing of the Lord, Yours truly,
A.

[The many shortcomings that seeking souls have to deplore, really cause us to hope they are of the number who "hunger and thirst after righteousness." Living souls are not satisfied with feeling their deficiencies, they want to have their needs supplied; and the Lord says in His Word, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him." Therefore we say to our correspondent, whatever you feel to come short of, or to be dissatisfied respecting its reality, take the matter to the Lord, and ask Him to give you His own testimony of His love to you, and of your union with Christ, and He says, "Ask, and ye shall receive." "The desire of the righteous shall be granted."—ED.]

DEAR MR. HULL,—My mind has been exercised to send you a few lines to put in the "Seeker's Corner," in the SOWER, if you think them fit to have a place in that much esteemed magazine. I trust I have known what it is to be one of the seekers for some years, and I am thankful that other seekers speak of feeling coldness and a lack of anything that is really good in themselves. I have been able to say in days gone by, "My Beloved is mine," but I want it again and again. "Oh, put Thy hand to the work again," is what I feel daily to desire. How full of gracious promises is the Word of God for seeking souls. I can say I have found it and did eat it to the joy and rejoicing of my soul. He has brought me out of the "horrible pit, out of the miry clay,"

but oh, to feel I am fixed on that blessed Rock Christ Jesus! and to love Him more and serve Him better is my desire. I feel sin is mixed with all I do. Yet I trust I can say with the Psalmist, "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth I desire besides Thee." I know that under your preaching, the Word has been the savour of life unto life to me. Sir, when you have sometimes been tracing out the path of a child of God, I have felt I could shout and tell you it was all for me. I feel as I am writing this, that we shall sing together, "To Him that hath loved us." And oh, the many feasts I had under that dear man of God, Mr. Covell. I love to look back on such sweet times; but now I feel I have to travel much by night; but as you so often tell us, He won't leave us at last in trouble to sink.

I must close this; it has been a trouble to write it; I hope all will be forgiven, if I have done wrong in writing. May the Lord bless you and give you more of His presence, and spare you yet many years, if it be His will, both to preach and to write. Wishing you and dear Mrs. H—— the very best of blessing,
I remain, a Seeker,

Hastings.

C. B.

DEAR SIR,—My mind has been led to write to you, as I can say, with others that have sent to you before, how much I like reading the letters in the "Seeker's Corner." I cannot say much myself, but must say this—

"Compared with Christ, in all beside
No comeliness I see."

And my cry often is, "Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation;" "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." Sometimes I am raised up to a little hope that I shall see better days, and that all will be well at last; but, at other times, I am obliged to ask the question, "Can ever God dwell here?"

"Is this polluted heart
A dwelling fit for Thee?"

I hope there have been times when I have felt sweet liberty in prayer, and once, when trying to pray, the words of Hezekiah were the language of my soul, where he says, "I do mourn as a dove; mine eyes fail with looking upward. O Lord, I am oppressed: undertake for me." And this was all I could say. When I got to the chapel, the same evening, the minister that was supplying took the same words for his text, and he made this remark, "Though our eyes often fail in looking up, His eyes never fail in looking down;" and I hope He looked down on me that evening.

Another time, when in passing through a great trial, knowing that in a few hours I should be bereft of one that was very dear to me, I threw myself down in an agony, and felt that I could pray for the dying one, even if I could not pray for myself; and I felt that the Lord was lending a listening ear to my poor petitions, and that it was into His bosom I was pouring all my sorrows. I rose from my knees feeling a certainty that my prayer was heard on behalf of the dear afflicted one, and that ere he departed he would satisfy those near and dear to him that all was well with his soul. I am pleased to say that we have a good hope that our dear relative is now where "the inhabitants shall no more say, I am sick." Though fond nature weeps, yet I can say, "The Lord hath dealt bountifully with us," and "He doeth all things well."

I well remember the time when you preached at our special services. I know there were many that were encouraged by your sermon, in the evening, from Ezekiel xvi. 6, and you mentioned this verse of a hymn—

"The time of love will come,
When we shall clearly see,
Not only that He shed His blood,
But each shall say, 'for me!'"

I felt that this was the desire of my heart, to know that He died for me, and I have the same feeling now; but I seem such a drone in religion, and feel to make so little progress; yet this part of a verse seems to make up all my religion—

"Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee;"

and I remember, some time ago, how sweet those same lines were to me when laid on a bed of affliction, also the words—

"His way was much rougher
And darker than mine;
Did Christ my Lord suffer,
And shall I repine?"

How these words stilled my murmuring and complaining spirit; my sufferings seemed nothing compared with the sufferings of the Lord, and I could forget myself for the time and sympathize with Him.

I hope I can, at times, thank the Lord for the means of grace, for often I get a little reviving time under the preached Word, and am enabled, in some small measure, to go on my way rejoicing. I remember especially one occasion, when hearing Mr. Warburton from these words, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. iii. 14).

I sat in the chapel and wept, not tears of sorrow, but I trust tears of joy, feeling all was well with my soul; and, as I left the chapel, my feelings were that—

“ If endless life was their reward,
I should possess the same; ”

but, as the Israelites of old had to gather fresh manna every day, so with me; I want fresh manifestations of His love and favour to my soul.

I can speak of other times, when, while hearing our own dear minister, feeling the same hope rising up within. I remember when he spoke from these words, “Thou hast seen Him, and He it is that speaketh with thee”; and again, when he spoke from these words in the Epistle of John, “If we receive the witness of man, the witness of God is greater.” I felt at these times that I must tell him how well I had heard him; but, when I saw him coming from the chapel, my courage failed, and so I did not speak to him. I often think it would be a great encouragement to our dear minister, were we just to tell him when we have had a little help by the way; but, often through fear of saying too much, we don’t speak when we could.

But how soon these sweet seasons are gone, and—

“ We to our own sad place return,
Our wretched state to feel.”

And this makes us say—

“ More frequent let Thy visits be,
Or let them longer last;
I can do nothing without Thee,
Make haste, my God, make haste! ”

I hope I have a kindred spirit with the dear people of God. Their hopes are my hopes, their joys are my joys; and, when they express the fears they are the subjects of, I find they correspond with what I so often feel myself.

Dear sir, I feel I must not close this scribble without telling you of a sweet time I had once, when out for a walk alone in the spring of the year, when everything around seemed dried and withered with the east winds, the hedges and trees all looked as though there was no life in them, and the things I felt within seemed to correspond with those without; when the thought came, that after all there was life at the root; a few sunny days, and what an alteration there would be in their appearance. Then that text came so sweetly to my mind, “A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked,” and I felt that I was the possessor of that little in a spiritual way; and though but little, I would not part with it for all the world; for—

“ Were I possessor of the earth,
 And called the stars my own ;
 Without Thy graces and Thyself,
 I were a wretch undone.”

I feel to want the Lord to “say unto my soul, I am thy salvation ;” and the Spirit to bear witness with my spirit, that I am a child of God. I dare not say I have no hope, but I feel to want the little hope I have strengthened, so that I may be able to say with Thomas, “*My Lord and my God.*” I have a kindred spirit with Ruth, when I meet with the dear people of God, where she said, “Whither thou goest, I will go ; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge : thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God” ; and, like her, I do not want to glean in another field, believing as I do, that what I hear from Sunday to Sunday is the pure, unadulterated truth of God.

I hope, dear sir, you will pardon me for thus writing to you, hoping that you will still have strength given you for your work ; and may the Lord be with you, and make His Word a blessing through your instrumentality.

Yours sincerely,

A LOVER OF ZION.

LETTER FOR THE YOUNG.

DEAR WILLIAM,—I was pleased to receive a letter from you about a fortnight ago, which nothing but a pressure of other engagements prevented me answering before. I dare say you would like to know whether I think the exercises you relate to be of God, and to bear marks of a work of grace having been begun in your soul ; for we are all anxious, in our early spiritual life, to learn what those we think well of think of us, though we learn, in after experience, to “cease from man,” and to seek the approving witness of the Spirit of God alone, witnessing with our spirits that we are His children. The Apostle John in his Epistle puts this on the right footing when he says, “If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater.” Therefore, my dear cousin, though the things you write afford me ground whereon to hope the work of grace is begun in you, and I would desire to write to you as to one seeking to know the Lord ; yet, my advice to you is, to seek rather the approbation of God in your own conscience (“He that believeth hath the witness in himself”) than the approbation of man. I do not say that that is to be slighted, but it will follow the former ; and, after all, what is the judgment of a fallible fellow-worm of the dust worth ? We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. He is our Judge, whose word will justify or condemn us in the last great day. Man is at best but a poor judge of the sincerity of

his fellow man, but God searcheth the heart, and the most secret motive and desire of our souls are known to Him with whom we have to do. I say not these things as though I thought you erred in this respect, for I have found you rather reserved than otherwise; but as one that has travelled in a particular road may direct another in the same path, I (though only a few miles from you) presume to point you to one waymark whereon is inscribed, "Cease ye from man," and it will tend for your future comfort to regard it. Further, keep close to the Word of God, and remember that it is the Word of God which, though the heavens and the earth may pass away, shall never pass away. Abide by it; try all doctrines by it; receive nothing but what may be proved from it; for though, to us, there may seem to be a want of clearness in particular difficult passages of the Word, and even [apparent] contradictions, yet it is not so, but must be attributed to the natural darkness of our minds; for, "the words of the Lord are pure words;" they are right to those that understand, and to those that seek after knowledge. It is not uncommon for us, when young in the divine life, to be taken with new and strange views as to particular doctrines or subjects, and being "ignorant of Satan's devices," we are apt to pride ourselves on the depth of our experience or knowledge. But Solomon assures us, "There is nothing new under the sun," and we are bidden to "ask for the old paths," the good old paths which our spiritual fathers have trodden before us, and to learn humility of Him who was "meek and lowly in heart," that we may "find rest unto our souls." "By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, and honour, and life;" "Yea," saith Wisdom, "riches and honour are with me, even durable riches and righteousness."

How soon will time with us be no more, and how much more blessed will it then be, to be partakers of these "durable riches and righteousness," than to be possessors of kingdoms without them. Happy, then, are you if sincerely desirous to know Jesus, and Him crucified; for those who seek, find; and to those who knock, it shall be opened; and He "is exalted to give repentance unto Israel and remission of sins."

I am glad if anything at our Tuesday evening meeting was made a blessing to you, and to find you can appreciate the privilege of being placed in a godly family. The change in your feelings and views will also be very grateful to Mr. M—, and none are so faithful to their employers, or so well fill every relationship of life, as those who fear God. In short, only so far as religion makes us better servants, masters, husbands, wives, parents, and children, is there any good proof that our profession is not in vain.

I am, yours affectionately,

Oakham, January 24th, 1854.

W. PEAKE.

CALVINISTIC PROTESTANT UNION.

THE first Annual Meeting of the Hastings branch of the above union was held (by the kind consent of the managers), in the Tabernacle, Cambridge Road, on Tuesday evening, May 5th. Mr. Hull presided. After singing, reading, and prayer, the president called upon the secretary to read the report, which showed that during the year nine lectures have been delivered, three prayer meetings have been held, and 5,600 tracts have been distributed. The income, from subscriptions and collections, amounting to £69 13s. 8d.; expenditure, £70 2s. 1d.; leaving a balance due to treasurer, 8s. 5d. The secretary, Mr. J. Freeman, then read the names of the committee.

In response to the chairman, Mr. E. Wilmshurst, of London, moved the first resolution, "That the report now read be adopted, printed, and circulated, and that the names now submitted form the committee for the ensuing year." He said that in London they had a great deal of mist and fog this last winter, but he thought the religious fog was the worst, because men rush on in the dark, being deceived, and false guides led them to destruction. The object of the Calvinistic Protestant Union was to enlighten them, and to be, as Moses desired Hobab to be to the children of Israel, "instead of eyes." He said he felt very great interest in the Hastings branch, because, although as a branch it was younger than several others, yet he looked upon it as the cradle of the Union, as Lutterworth was the cradle of the Reformation, because, under God, the president, Mr. Hull, was the first mover in originating the Calvinistic Protestant Union; and he could say also, that the Hastings branch had stimulated others to greater activity. He said it was most needful in all we do to have salt, the salt of grace, in the heart; when that was wanting, sacerdotalism and ceremonies, pleasing to the natural feelings and tastes, culminated in idolatry, which took its place, as is seen in Ritualism and Popery. The doctors were very anxious (and properly so) to prevent the spread of infectious diseases which kill the body, but the infection of Romish idolatry spreads rapidly, and kills its thousands, bringing death to the soul. Very few people now, he said, believed in astrology, but he would tell them how he believed in it. When the star of Protestantism rises over a nation, that nation prospers; but when it sinks, that nation also sinks, and loses its manhood and liberty. A party of travellers, not believing the tales about the Bedouins, crossed the desert without a guard, but, in returning, were robbed by them of all they had, even stripping them of their clothing. So we might think the Romanists and Ritualists were not to be

feared, but let them once get the power they were seeking, and most surely they would then strive to rob us of our liberties. They were seeking to influence the young, and we should endeavour to do the same, by instilling into their minds right principles and knowledge of truth. They were also exercising great influence over the press, but we were not half earnest enough. We should not forget that we all exercise an influence for good or evil. When he was on the coast of Devonshire, he saw a rock out in the sea called the Morte Stone, and very many vessels had been dashed to pieces upon it, but now they have a lighthouse there, and since that lighthouse has been erected, there had been no wreck there. The Calvinistic Protestant Union was endeavouring to show a light to warn against the dangers of Romanism and Ritualism. Once some sailors were quarrelling about a button, when they heard a voice calling, "A vessel is coming on the rocks." They immediately stopped their quarrelling, and tried to save the men on the vessel from their danger. It would be well if all true Protestants would do the same—stop all needless quarrelling among themselves, and unite to defend and spread the truth, taking their stand on the truth of the Bible, and putting their trust in the God of the Bible.

Mr. G. Meadows said he had much pleasure in seconding the resolution. When he was first asked to assist in forming this branch of the Calvinistic Protestant Union, he hesitated until he knew more about it, and who he was to be associated with; he objected to take a leap in the dark; but when it was started, and he saw who were the leaders, and how it was conducted, he joined it very heartily, and with the fullest confidence. He believed this branch had done good in several ways. First, it had stirred up many from their ease and indifference; secondly, it had brought together Christians of different denominations, thus promoting Christian and Protestant unity; thirdly, it had stirred up many to "all prayer." He had felt much pleasure in listening to the lectures, and believed they were men who had the cause of God at heart, and who possessed the salt Mr. Wilmshurst had spoken of. He also thought the finances were very satisfactory, and he heartily seconded the resolution.

Mr. F. Hughes then proposed the second resolution. "That the existence and spread of Romish and Ritualistic errors call for the united action and strenuous efforts of all true Protestants in opposition thereto." He said he was very pleased to stand a member of this branch of the Calvinistic Protestant Union, and hoped we should all stand as one in this good cause. He believed the formation of such a society as this was one of the greatest blessings that could befall Hastings; but all our strength must come from God, to whom we must go in fervent

prayer. He said, infidelity, scepticism respecting the Word of God, and the denial of the Holy Spirit's inward regenerating work, were a mighty power for evil; these were drawing men away from all that was of real value, into that which would prove their eternal ruin, if grace prevented not. Sensuality, too, was following infidelity, inciting and leading multitudes into evil ways, to their shame, disgrace, and ruin, and idolatry of the worst kind in Romanism and Ritualism was increasing. All these evils were coming in like a flood, and we were called upon to resist them with all our might, but we need the "salt" that had been spoken of to do so, and God's sword, the whole sword, the whole Word of God, both in doctrine and practice; he believed that, thus furnished, we should advance, and do much good in Hastings. He had much pleasure in proposing the resolution.

Mr. W. Hutchings, in seconding it, said he agreed with previous speakers that the Word of God was the standard by which to try all doctrines. When he was in business, he sometimes had a counterfeit sovereign handed to him. It looked very nice and bright, but immediately they put a little testing liquid upon it, the beautiful sovereign became black as ink, while the same liquid upon a real sovereign had no effect at all. So with the Romish and Ritualistic errors and practices; however beautiful to the eye, when brought to the test of God's Word, they appear in their true character, black as ink. He agreed with good John Newton, that being inwardly taught the truth of God's Word by the Holy Spirit, we should maintain it even against an angel who taught differently. Some talk about Apostolic succession, but he agreed with Mr. Hart—

"Build on no man's parts or merit,
But behold the Gospel plan;
Jesus sends His Holy Spirit,
And the Spirit sends the man."

He was glad to be a member of this branch of the Calvinistic Protestant Union, and he hoped that we should form one camp, though of different sections of the one Church, for the defence and spread of the truth. Jesus will maintain His Church, let us therefore stand staunch and true together, trusting in Him.

The chairman then asked Mr. W. Mayo if he would speak in support of the resolution. Mr. Mayo said he intended to ask to be allowed to do so, and especially so as his name had been mentioned in the report. He wished to say how heartily he was in sympathy with the Hastings branch of the Calvinistic Protestant Union; he had not missed a single meeting, either at the lectures or the prayer meetings, and had enjoyed them. He

admired the spirit in which the branch was conducted, and so long as it was conducted as it had been, he should feel one in heart with them, though not a member. It was most needful for Protestants to unite for the common cause. "United, we stand; divided, we fall."

Mr. Wilmshurst said he thought the meeting would like to give a vote of thanks to the president, and to the committee, for their satisfactory work done during the past twelve months, which was heartily responded to. The president thanked the meeting for himself and on behalf of the committee, wishing God speed to all Protestant efforts, and exhorted all to abide by the good old Book. He quite agreed with Mr. Hughes that we must take the whole Word of God; and whatever some might think of the term Calvinistic, he, as a Calvinist, was prepared to stand fast by the whole Bible. Calvin was a good, great and godly man, who, by the power and blessing of God, did a great work, which the Papists have not forgotten, as their hatred of his name proves. But he, the speaker, did not pin his faith to Calvin's sleeve, nor to that of any other man. He was one with Calvin, in as far as he was right with the Word of God, but whether it be Calvin or any other man who diverged from that Word, he then diverged from them. His Calvinism consisted in maintaining that the salvation of all believers was a free and sovereign act on the part of God, according to His eternal decrees, by Jesus Christ, and that the condemnation of the sinner was the result of his sin, and not due to the decrees of God, as some represented us to teach. Thus, while every saved one must give all the glory to God, as being saved by His grace through faith, which is the gift of God, the mouth of every lost sinner will be stopped, their sin being laid at their own door, and not charged to the decrees of God, for God could not be the Author of sin. It was one thing to say He permitted it, but quite another, and an awful one too, to say He decreed it. He, the speaker, did not think his hearers would consider that to be dangerous teaching, although we were reckoned to be most vile by some who are ignorant of our doctrine and faith. He hoped God would pour out His Spirit upon us and prosper our work. The great aim of Romanists and Ritualists was priestly power over the consciences and liberties of men, but all power belongs unto God, and it was our privilege to pray to Him for the help we need in resisting the foe.

The secretary said he had received through the year very kind assistance from Mr. Hooper, and he felt that he ought to make this public acknowledgment of it.

The meeting was then closed by singing the Doxology, and prayer. A good collection (£6 4s. 2½d.) was given at the doors.



"MY MOTHER'S FRIEND WAS POOR HERSELF." (See page 170.)

CARED FOR THROUGH LIFE, AND VICTORY AT LAST.

WHAT a wonderful thing is memory ; it clings to us as we grow older, whether we will or no. We look back upon the pathway we have come, and memory flits hither and thither upon circumstances in our past lives, like a bee from flower to flower. And as a bee passes by many a flower as unsavoury, so we, too, would be glad to pass by and forget things which happened in childhood which were not good. But as the bee finds a flower from which he may draw a little honey, so, too, there are things that memory brings to mind which are sweet to us, and of which we may truly say, "How sweet their memory still."

Memory brings to mind a dear old friend of my mother's. We were six in family, besides father and mother. Times were bad—so trying—and provisions very dear, so that a bit of meat was almost out of the question, as we say. My mother's friend was poor herself, with a growing family, and with a husband who treated her at times most cruelly. Her pathway oft was strewed with grief and sorrow, but God loved her—yes, loved her with "an everlasting love," therefore had drawn her to Himself to seek His face ; and He so enabled her at times to pour out her soul before Him, and to cast all her care upon Him, that she felt He cared for her. At times her employment was among the families of the rich, who lived upon the fat of the land, and the joints left from their table, with a liberal portion of meat upon them, were at times given to her. At such times as these, she would call upon my dear mother, and share with her some of that given to her, which, in our poor circumstances, was most acceptable. Thus the poor helped the poor ; yet, though poor as regards this world, she was "rich in faith, and an heir of the kingdom."

After I was grown up and left home, the dear but now aged woman came to see me one day, and, before leaving me, she said, "I have been very ill, my dear, since I saw you last, but the Lord appeared to me, and when I die I shall go to glory." I said, "Oh, to be able to say that. *I wish I could say it !*" to which she replied, "My dear, if you truly desire it, you will, in the Lord's own time. What a mercy that what the Lord doeth, He does for ever. Nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it."

When she was getting quite old, her children having grown up and left home, she lived in one room by herself ; and, as her relatives were not able to help her, she was thrown entirely upon the bounty of her Lord, and was favoured to prove His faithfulness to that promise, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," and that—

“E'en down to old age, all My people shall prove
 My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love;
 And when hoary hairs shall their temples adorn,
 Like lambs they shall still in My bosom be borne.”

One day I went to see her, and, as I was coming away, I gave her a trifle. She thanked me, and said, “My dear, I don't want you to think I want for anything; the Lord keeps me dependent upon Himself, but He never lets me want. I have nothing coming in regularly, but when the rent for my room is due, I have always got it. One gives me a sixpence, perhaps, another a shilling, another two shillings; and sometimes I have eaten my last meal; but by the time the meal-time comes round again, someone brings me something, if it is only enough for a meal.’ How blessedly she proved that—

“When the Lord's people have need,
 His goodness will find out a way.”

In waiting upon the Lord, one Sabbath morning, the preacher (Mr. Harbour) stopped during the service, and said, pointing to her as she sat in her seat, “I fear our dear friend is taken poorly.” Willing and loving hands lifted her out of the chapel, and a carriage took her to her home, while the pastor publicly, in a loving and affectionate manner, poured out a prayer on her behalf to the Most High. When I went to see her, I found her very happy in her soul, and, when coming away, and bidding her good-bye, she put up both her hands, and said, “Victory! victory, through the blood of the Lamb!” and soon after died.

May the Lord, if He will, bless this little recollection of the past to the readers of it, if so be that it may prove that He caused the memory of former circumstances to revive, and that He has a purpose to accomplish by it. How often she proved that—

“When through the deep waters I cause thee to go,
 The rivers of woe shall not thee overflow,
 For I will be with thee thy troubles to bless,
 And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.”

“Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like hers.”

J. R.

“If any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature;” not merely moralized (as every man ought to be), but spiritualized.

THE sun in the firmament shines only upon our faces, but the Sun of Righteousness shines into our hearts (2 Cor. iv. 6).—*Thomas Watson.*

RELATIVE CARES.

THAT's how they are, Lord, our earthly relations,
 Resting their heads in our own habitations,
 Tortured with terror-created sensations,
 "Sick of a fever."

Now overborne by the world's competition,
 Stupified now by their care-worn condition,
 Dazed by the risks which surround their position,
 "Sick of a fever."

Frenzied at seeing the nation's confusion,
 Evil and good in one seething infusion,
 Counting the care of our God a delusion,
 "Sick of a fever."

Blind to the finger which points at the flowers,
 Proving God's thought for these bodies of ours,
 Fear and mistrust every comfort devours—
 "Sick of a fever."

Maybe the impotent fighting is ended,
 Yet the dear kinship with which we are blended
 Lies—as to human means—still unattended—
 "Sick of a fever."

Come to our *homes*, O Lord; Thou—without telling—
 Knowest the gloom of a plague-stricken dwelling,
 Quieting, strengthening, nourishing, quelling,
 Rebuke the fever.

One word from Jesus, one whisper of glory,
 Strengthens the heart, and reduces the fury;
 Oh, as Thou did'st in the old-fashioned story,
 Rebuke the fever.

Spread the fair scenes of yon city before us;
 Soothe the worn brain with the heart-melting chorus
 Sung by the painless inhabitants o'er us—
 Rebuke the fever.

Let a sweet fear lest the world should disown Thee,
 Govern the actions of those who have known Thee;
 Let the black records of crimes we have shown thee
 Rebuke the fever.

With a clear token of mercy unchanging,
 Heart, lip, and love from sin's sweetness estranging;
 With a glad influx of helpful arranging,
 Rebuke the fever.

Check the rash words born of overwrought feeling,
 Stay the contagion, breathe health with the healing,
 So we can speak of Thy merciful dealing—
 Rebuke the fever.

M. A. CHAPLIN.

REAL RELIGION.

IN the chancel of Trinity Church, Cambridge, is a monument with the following inscription :—"In memory of the Rev. Charles Simeon, M.A., senior fellow of King's College, and fifty-four years Vicar of this parish ; who, whether as the ground of his own hopes, or as the subject of all his ministrations, determined to know nothing but 'Jesus Christ and Him crucified' (1 Cor. ii. 2). Born September 24th, 1759. Died November 13th, 1836."

About seventeen years before his death, Mr. Simeon having accidentally heard that a friend had made some remarks upon his habit of giving expression to his religious feelings in sighs and groans, as if it indicated that "all was not right in his experience," drew up the following paper :—

CIRCUMSTANCES OF MY INWARD EXPERIENCE.

It is now a little above forty years since I began to seek after God ; and within about three months of that time, after much humiliation and prayer, I found peace through that "Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world." About half a year after that, I had some doubts and fears about my state, in consequence of an erroneous notion, which I had imbibed from Mr. Hervey, about the nature of saving faith. But when I found from better information that justifying faith was a faith of affiance, and not a faith of assurance, my peace returned, because, though I had not a faith of assurance, I had as full a conviction that I relied on the Lord Jesus Christ alone for salvation, as I had of my own existence. From that time to the present hour I have never for a moment lost my hope and confidence in my adorable Saviour ; for though, alas ! I have had deep and abundant cause for humiliation, I have never ceased to wash in that fountain that was opened for sin and uncleanness, or to cast myself upon the tender mercy of my reconciling God. With this sweet hope of ultimate acceptance with God, I have always enjoyed much cheerfulness before men ; but I have at the same time laboured incessantly to experience the deepest humiliation before God. I have never thought that the circumstance of God's having forgiven me, was any reason why I should forgive myself ; on the contrary, I have always judged it better to loathe myself the more, in proportion, as I was assured that God was pacified towards me.* Nor have I been satisfied with viewing my sins, as men view the stars in a cloudy night, one here and another there, with great intervals between ; but have endeavoured to get, and to preserve continually before my eyes,

* Ezekiel xvi. 63.

such a view of them as we have of the stars in the brightest night : the greater and the smaller all intermingled, and forming as it were one continuous mass ; nor yet as committed a long time ago, and in many successive years ; but as all forming an aggregate of guilt, and needing the same measure of humiliation daily, as they needed at the very moment they were committed.

Nor would I willingly rest with such a view as presents itself to the naked eye ; I have desired, and do desire daily, that God would put (so to speak) a telescope to my eye, and enable me to see, not a thousand only, but millions of my sins, which are more numerous than all the stars which God Himself beholds ; and more than the sands upon the sea-shore. There are but two objects that I have ever desired for these forty years to behold ; the one is, my own vileness ; and the other is, the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ : and I have always thought that they should be viewed together ; just as Aaron confessed all the sins of all Israel whilst he put them on the head of the scape-goat. The disease did not keep him from applying to the remedy, nor did the remedy keep him from feeling the disease. By this I seek to be, not only *humbled and thankful*, but *humbled in thankfulness*, before my God and Saviour continually.

This is the religion that pervades the whole Liturgy, and particularly the Communion Service ; and this makes the Liturgy inexpressibly sweet to me. The repeated cries to each Person of the ever-adorable Trinity for mercy, are not at all too frequent or too fervent for me ; nor is the confession in the Communion Service too strong for me ; nor the *Te Deum*, nor the ascriptions of glory after the Lord's Supper, "*Glory be to God on high*," &c., too exalted for me ; the praise all through savours of *adoration*, and the adoration of humility. And this shows what men of God the framers of our Liturgy were, and what I pant, and long, and strive to be. This makes the Liturgy as superior to all modern compositions as the work of a philosopher on any deep subject is to that of a school-boy who understands scarcely anything about it.* The consequence of this unremitted labour is, that I have, and have continually had, such a sense of my sinfulness as would sink me into utter despair, if I had not an assured view of the sufficiency and willingness of Christ to save me to the uttermost. And at the same time I have such a sense of my acceptance through Christ, as would upset my little bark, if I had not ballast at the bottom sufficient to sink a vessel of no ordinary

* While we may not agree with all Mr. Simeon's views and expressions in his ministry and writings, these remarks will show how far he was, in spirituality, above many who despised him on account of his religion and humble spirit. We would that we all had more of the sweet grace traceable in these extracts.—ED.

size. This experience has been now so unintermitted for forty years, that a thought only of some defect, or of something which might have been done better, often draws from me as deep a sigh as if I had committed the most enormous crime; because it is viewed by me not as a mere single grain of sand, but as a grain of sand added to an already accumulated mountain. So deep are my views of my corruption, that I scarcely ever join in the Confession of our Church without perceiving, almost as with my bodily organs, my soul as a dead and putrefied * carcass; and I join in that acknowledgment, "There is no health in us," in a way that none but God Himself can conceive. No language that I could use could at all express the goings forth of my soul with those words, or the privilege I feel in being permitted to address the God of heaven and earth in these words, "Almighty and most merciful Father."

Hence, then, my sighs and groans when in secret, and which, when least thought of by me, may have been noticed by others. And if the Apostle Paul so felt the burden of sin as to cry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. vii. 24); if he, who "had the first-fruits of the Spirit, groaned within himself, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body" (Rom. viii. 23), yea, "groaned, being burdened" (2 Cor. v. 4), who am I, that I should not so feel, or so express my feelings, or that I should even wish to be exempt from them? So far am I from wishing to be exempt from them, that I wish and long to have them in a tenfold greater degree; and as already in my daily approaches to the throne of grace, and in my solitude, and in my rides, it is in sighs and groans that I make known my wants to God, more than in words, for "He knoweth the mind of His Spirit speaking in me," so I desire yet more and more that the Spirit of God may make intercession, both in me and for me, "with groanings which cannot be uttered," since words would fail to give them utterance (Rom. viii. 26).

But persons mistake who imagine that groans are expressive only of a sense of guilt: they are often expressions of desire; as David says, "Lord, all my desire is before Thee; and my groaning is not hid from Thee" (Psa. xxxviii. 9). And such, I trust, have been many of the groans which I have uttered in secret, and some of which may possibly have been overheard.

Nor is it on a personal account only that groans are uttered. A minister who knows what it is to "travail in birth with his people till Christ be formed in them," will find many occasions of sorrow, as I have of late years. I have had a people, some of

* Isaiah i. 6.

whom have ill understood their duty towards me (Heb. xiii. 17), and have constrained me "to give up my daily account, not with joy, but with grief;" or, as it is in the original, "with groans."

But supposing those expressions of my feelings to have been on a personal account only, and that only from a sense of my unworthiness, I am far from conceiving it to be on the whole an undesirable experience; for, by means of it, my joys are tempered with contrition, and my confidence with fear and shame. I consider the religion of the day as materially defective in this point; and the preaching of pious ministers defective also. I do not see, so much as I could wish, a holy, reverential awe of God. The confidence that is generally professed does not sufficiently, in my opinion, savour of a creature-like spirit, or of a sinner-like spirit. If ninety-nine out of a hundred of even good men were now informed for the first time that Isaiah in a vision saw the seraphim before the throne, and that each of the seraphs had six wings, and then were asked, "How do you think they employ their wings?" I think their answer would be, "How? Why, they fly with them with all their might; and, if they had six hundred wings, they would do the same, exerting all their powers in the service of their God:" they would never dream of their employing two to veil their faces, as unworthy to behold their God; and two to veil their feet, as unworthy to serve Him; and devoting only the remaining two to what might be deemed their more appropriate use. But I much doubt whether the seraphs do not judge quite as well as they, and serve their God in quite as acceptable a manner as they would, if their energies were less blended with modesty and conscious unworthiness. But whatever opinions the generality of Christians might form, I confess that this is the religion which I love; I would have conscious unworthiness to pervade every act and habit of my soul; and, whether the woof be more or less brilliant, I would have humility to be the warp.

I often, in my ministry, speak of Job's experience, after God had so revealed Himself to him, as proper for all: why, then, should I not seek it myself, and really, truly, deeply, and as before the heart-searching God, "abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes"? (Job xlii. 6.) Can I enter into the spirit of that word *abhor*, and not groan? Or, is that a word which is to have no counterpart in our actual experience? I do not undervalue joy; but I suspect it when it is not blended with the deepest humiliation and contrition. God has said that a "broken and a contrite heart He will not despise"; and is that an attainment that is so low and small that I may leave it behind me, as a state that was proper for me forty years ago, but not now? What is meant by a *broken heart*? Would to God that I

knew ! for, with all my groaning, I do not know a thousandth part of what it means ; and I would not feel my obligation to my Saviour less than I do for ten thousand worlds. Indeed, I consider that this very feeling will constitute the chief felicity of heaven ; and that every blessing we there enjoy will be most of all endeared to us as being the fruit of redeeming love. I behold the *glorified saints in heaven* falling on their faces before the throne, whilst they sing praises to their redeeming God (Rev. v. 8—14). What then should *I* do *on earth* ? Yea, I behold even *the angels* who never sinned adoring God in that same posture (Rev. vii. 11).

What, then, should *I* do, whose whole soul is but one mass of sin and corruption ? Finally, God Himself is light, and I am to be as like Him as I can. But what is light ? is it not a combination of different rays—the red, the orange, the yellow, the green, the blue, the indigo, and the violet ? Some would think, perhaps, that they could make better light, if they had the brilliant rays alone : but so think not I ; I would have the due proportion of the sombre with the bright ; and all in simultaneous motion : and then I think I should more resemble both the created and the uncreated light. At all events, this is my one ambition, to live with one Mary at my Saviour's feet, listening to His words (whilst others are cumbered about the world), and to die with the other Mary, washing His feet with my tears, and wiping them with the hairs of my head.

[We hope that many of our readers will find the same pleasure we have done in reading these excellent remarks, and in finding an echo in our own breast to the exercises described.—ED.]

THE LORD WILL PROVIDE.

THE following narrative, related some years ago by a minister, may be interesting and helpful to some who are tried in providence, and who are waiting to see the Lord's hand in answer to prayer.

A follower of the dear Redeemer, a sister in Christ, was left a widow, and from the loss of her earthly partner had to struggle on in this world of competition and change in a small business, and from adverse circumstances, apparently (for it was such only in appearance and not in reality), she was in great trouble and distress, especially at this time, having a bill due, nearly or quite £20, on the Thursday, and this was Wednesday. Many cries and tears had been pressed from her heart and eyes, having but a small part of the sum, very small, in hand, and towards evening

her heart was very disconsolate, desiring to "owe no man anything"; and desiring to bring no reproach on the cause of Christ, her soul was in great trouble, but when the storm gathered thickest and clouds darkest, deliverance was near.

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

How frequently we say, like Jacob, "All these things are against me," but they were all *for* Jacob, and all God's Jacobs shall so feel and see in the end.

Our sister thought she would go to chapel in the evening and see if the Lord had a word for her in her trouble, the day having passed away and no help from her business or other source appearing, and was preparing herself for the purpose, full of deep distress and sorrow, when a friend came and said, "Oh, you are going out?" "Yes, dear friend," was the reply, "I am going to the 'House of Bread.'" "Well," replied the friend, "I will not detain you, only to say, I have been so concerned about you for several days, I could not rest without coming to see you, thinking you might stand in need of help; and it has been so impressed on my mind, that, as I thought of leaving you £20 when I die, as also your sister, I have now made up that sum, and felt I must bring it to you; and your sister shall have hers at a future time; and then, as you are not relatives of mine, there will be no unpleasantness with my family about it when I am no more; but I could not rest by day nor night. Here it is, count it." "But, dear friends," observed the minister, "our widow sister was so overcome she could not count it; her soul was filled with overpowering joy at such unexpected help. 'Truly the Lord is good to Israel'; truly

The Lord is a strong hold in the day of trouble.' " And with the words of Kent we conclude this consolatory account of the Lord's care of His saints, who, if not now in the furnace, will find it confirmatory—

"In every state secure,
Kept as Jehovah's eye,
'Tis well with them while life endure,
And well when called to die."

THE spirit of a redeemed one can hardly hate a redeemed one, or be bitter against them. Christ in one saint cannot be cruel to Christ in another saint.—*Rutherford*.

"If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God" (1 John iii. 20, 21).

EXTRACT FROM RUSK'S "FIERY TRIAL."

IF God is your God, He will let you know that He is your Provider, Protector, Deliverer, strength, safety, and your all, and you shall get into such trials as none else of the children of men ever do, and He will not let you get out of your trials but in His way, and that is by a constant crying to Him, and watching His hand; and He will suffer every refuge to fail, and then He will appear, "When there is no eye to pity, and no hand to help." You may try lawful means, and it is right you should, but He will not let you succeed, until He has humbled you again and again; and in this way you will be led to watch His hand. These are hard lessons to learn, but very profitable to the soul, and the soul flourishes in this way; and all this you may see in the Prophet Habakkuk, who at last rejoiced in the God of his salvation, and calls God his God.

If He is your God, He will hear and answer your prayers, sooner or later, in a spiritual sense. It is the Good Spirit that puts this cry in the soul under sore afflictions, trials, and temptations, and they come after the Lord in chains, with supplication and bitter weeping He leads them; but the hypocrites in heart treasure up wrath; they cry not when God binds them. See this difference in King Saul and David: Saul goes to the witch of Endor, but David always cried to the Lord. After that dreadful fall, he confessed and prayed. When Ziklag was burnt, and his wives taken, he inquired of the Lord. When Saul pursued him, he cried to the Lord; and when Ahithophel turned his enemy, he cried to the Lord; and God did always appear in his behalf. Therefore David says, "I love the Lord, because He hath heard the voice of my supplications; therefore will I call upon Him as long as I live." And it is said that "David encouraged himself in the Lord his God," that is, his God in covenant—"He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure." If He is your God, you will at certain times be parched with thirst, and feel starving for food, for you cannot feed on the vanities of the world, nor yet upon husks; and this keen appetite for the bread and water of life, and for God, the fountain of life, and for those streams that make glad the city of God, all of which is brought about by these fires, prove to others, and will prove in time to you, that He is your God.

IT is too true that there is scarcely a man to be met with who is ashamed of his ignorance in religion; and this is his degradation and reproach.

“AFTERWARD.”

“Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected : for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.”

—HEBREWS xii. 16, 17.

THE preceding verse begins thus, “Looking diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God.” When God first showed me I was a sinner, I was very anxious to know whether, after having received the grace of God, it was possible to lose it. Not daring to trust the word of man on such an important point, I asked the Lord to show me whether it was grace indeed which I had received, and whether its maintenance depended on me in any measure. In His own time He gave me this, “I have loved thee with an everlasting love : therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee” (Jer. xxxi. 3).

With the words came such a sense of His almighty power and grace that all my fears vanished ; and though fears and doubts return, I am fully persuaded that “grace will complete what grace begins,” and that the true meaning of the Apostle is this, “Lest any man deceive himself in supposing he has grace when he has not.” It is plain that Esau was a thorough-going man of the world, one who feared not God nor regarded man—a type of many in our day and in our land, whose days are spent in the chase, their nights in the ballroom, the theatre, and other resorts not to be mentioned. Isaiah draws their picture to the life, and describes their end with terrible exactness : “The harp, and the viol, the tabret, and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts : but they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of His hands. . . . Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure : and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it” (Isa. v. 12—14).

Reader, it matters not whether thou art openly profane like Esau, or whether thou art clothed in a specious robe of profession. It is written, “His servants ye are to whom ye obey” (Rom. vi 11). Again, “Whosoever will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God” (James iv. 4). Oh, sinner, consider this, when sin is sweet as honey to thy taste ; “Consider this, ye that forget God” (Psa. l. 22). “Afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected.”

How many say, “Soul, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.” Afterward, God says, “Thou fool.” Ye who say in your hearts, “How doth God know ? and is there knowledge in the Most High ?” (Psa. lxxiii.)—ye who scoff at the name of

Christ, and sneer at those who follow Him—afterward, He “will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh” (Prov. i. 26). But there is another “afterward” for the seed of Jacob, to whom the Lord hath not said, “Seek ye Me in vain” (Isa. xlv. 19). Jacob, in common with all mankind, had a nature prone to evil, and he often stepped aside, and as often met with a chastening rod; but, in his life and in his death, it was manifest that, “Afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby” (Heb. xii. 11). The Psalmist, after describing the career and the fearful end of the wicked, said, “Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and *afterward* receive me to glory” (Psa. lxxiii. 24).

My fellow-sinner, by whose counsel are you and I guided? for depend upon it, whosoever is our leader and counsellor now, so shall our “afterward” be. “What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” (Mark viii. 36). If, like Jacob, we are wrestlers and prevailers with God, then this belongs to us, “Fear not, thou worm Jacob” (Isa. xli. 14).

“Worldlings may their gold display,
Tell what pleasures they afford;
Jacob smiles at all they say,
Jacob’s portion is the Lord.”

J. J.

AN EXTRACT.

WRITTEN BY JOSEPH IRONS ON HIS BIRTHDAY, NOV. 8th, 1816.

“THOU shalt remember all the way the Lord thy God hath led thee.” Hitherto the Lord hath helped me. Pause, O my soul! and reflect on the innumerable mercies and sins of the past thirty-one years! Born amidst the celestial rays of Gospel light, and nurtured by the careful hand of a pious father, but lived eighteen years a stranger to Christ, a captive to Satan, and a slave to the vanities of this world, how rich and sovereign the grace that directed my feet to Saint Mary Somerset Church, Thames Street! Oh, how great, how inestimable, how irresistible the power that spoke through dear Gunn to my soul! How profuse the mercy which singled out such a rebel as me as a monument of everlasting love—making me a recipient of grace divine, separating me from an ungodly world, and implanting within my soul a love for the things of God! How condescending is that blessed Spirit which taught me what I was, and testified of a precious Jesus to my soul! How mysterious, wise, and kind that providential hand which has led me on, from day to day, and has given supplies for all my real wants, and kept me

from falling away! Ah! Oh, what forbearance has my God displayed, amidst all my pride, sensuality, ingratitude, and rebellion! Often have I forgotten Him, but He has never forgotten me. Often have I forsaken Him, but He never will forsake me. Nay, blessed be His holy name, He has said, "My lovingkindness I will not take from you, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail." I look back with gratitude to the last Sabbath in March, 1808, when I preached my first sermon, and first opened my mouth in public for God, and feel constrained to exclaim, "'Be astonished, O heavens! and wonder, O earth!' that 'unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach the unsearchable riches of Christ.'" Here I behold the goodness and the sovereignty of God. Destitute of those literary advantages which the ambassadors of Christ in general are favoured with, and, consequently, destined to move in a humbler sphere (but, blessed be God, not the less useful); but this treasure being put in so unpolished an earthen vessel, proves, in the most conspicuous manner, that the "excellency of the power is of God, and not of the creature." Poverty, persecution, and affliction, have indeed made part of the covenant blessings I have received at the hands of my Heavenly Father; but oh, how are they sweetened—yea, forgotten, when I survey the names of more than twenty, whom, by the instrumentality of my poor labours, God has plucked as brands from the fire. These I have proof of; they are living witnesses for God, showing what the grace of God produces in the lives of His people. But how many more I know not; oh, that it may be a hundred times so many! My God, enable me to dedicate myself afresh to thee this day—my natal day. Take full possession of my heart, rule my affections, guide my future life, destroy my corruptions. Oh, save me from myself, and say unto me, "From this day will I bless you."

IN the *Pictorial World* for June 6th, there is a page of illustrations of "The Collection of Instruments of Torture from the Castle of Nuremberg," now on view at Mr. Louis Tussaud's Exhibition, Regent Street, London. Most of these cruel instruments were used by the "Holy" Inquisition for the punishment of so-called heretics; and the late Dr. Wylie, who visited Nuremberg Castle some years since, gives, in his "History of Protestantism," a thrilling description of the horrible tortures inflicted by these very instruments. It would be well if Protestants were to visit Mr. Tussaud's, and see these things for themselves. They would thus receive a powerful sermon as to the real character of "the woman drunken with the blood of the saints."

THE SEEKER'S PRAYER.

"O visit me with Thy salvation."—PSALM cvi. 4.

How lovely nature now appears,
In such rich garments clad;
The songs of birds enchant the ears,
Then why art thou so sad?

Surely the Lord, whose goodness clothes
Nature with beauty fair,
Will turn a loving look on those
That seek His face by prayer.

"But, ah!" you say, "I long to know
That Jesus died for me;
This would more happiness bestow
Than all on earth I see.

"Shall such a sinful one as I
E'er taste of joys divine?
For this great blessing oft I sigh,
To know and claim them mine.

"Shine on my dark and sinful soul,
Thou Sun of Righteousness;
For Thou alone canst make me whole,
And grant me perfect peace.

"I thirst and pant for grace to say
That 'my Beloved's mine';
Oh, do not longer from me stay,
Great Source of Love Divine."

Is this thy prayer? Then still press on,
For though the Lord delay,
He loves thee much, poor tempted one,
And will not say thee nay.

Like Joseph, He may hide His face
For purposes of love,
That you may value more the grace
He sendeth from above.

Yes, still seek on, though sore distressed
By what you feel within;
Thy weary soul shall find sweet rest,
And pardon for thy sin.

God's Spirit, who has made thee feel
All other hopes are vain,
Shall at His "time of love" reveal
Jesus, the Lamb once slain.

None ever sought the Lord in vain,
 Though some have long to wait;
 His faithful Word remains the same,
 He'll never such forsake.

Still pray, and never, never cease,
 Though evening time shall come;
 Jesus shall then grant light and peace,
 And bring thee safely home.

The Saviour doth for ever sit
 At the right hand of God;
 His merits, too, shall make thee fit
 For that divine abode.

R. E.

THE FARMER AND THE PARSON.

FARMER.—Well, doctor, you say a good deal about the devil, but I cannot blame you. Pulpit lips, like pulpit cushions, are chiefly lined with velvet. Amazing reverence is shown to Satan in a pulpit; it seems the privy closet of his highness. We never hear his name or habitation mentioned in modern sermons, which makes some people fancy that the devil sure is dead. However, let that matter pass, and tell me something more about believing. If faith is not a mere human assent to the Word of God, what is it?

DOCTOR.—Divine faith, sir, takes in this assent to the Word of God, but takes it in abundantly more. It is described in Scripture by coming to Jesus for help, looking to Him for relief, flying to Him for refuge, resting on Him for support, and feeding on Him as our heavenly bread. Which expressions not only suppose a credit given to His Word by the understanding, but a full reliance of the heart upon Him to fulfil His Word. The exercise of faith lies chiefly in the heart, as St Paul testifies, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness" (Rom. x. 10). Thus faith is not a mere credit given to the word of Jesus, but a heart-trust reposed in Him, and therefore called, believing on Him. The miracles recorded in the Gospel show the nature and use of faith; they tell a sinner what his business is with the Saviour, and how he must go to Him. Some came to Jesus for the pardon of sin, and received a pardon; others brought diseases, and were healed. Each bodily complaint brought to Christ was an emblem of some spiritual disease in our nature which needs healing, and can be healed only by the spiritual Physician. The manner of applying for a cure, is not recorded as a matter of mere history, but an example for imitation. Every one who went and got a cure, tells sinners to go and do likewise. This matter is important,

all are much concerned in it, and a few remarks on it may be needful. When the patients went to Christ, they pleaded no worthiness to recommend them. They did not come to buy, but to beg a cure. They carried no money in their hand, and brought no merit in their mouths, to purchase blessings; but came as miserable creatures, and in a worshipping posture to obtain an act of mercy. So must you go to Jesus, if you hope to speed, feeling yourself a miserable sinner, worshipping the Saviour, and seeking mercy to relieve your misery. Jesus Christ, though in heaven, is near you, round about you, always within call; and when your wants are felt you may go and be healed. Real beggars are relieved, now as aforetime, for Jesus is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever" (Heb. xiii. 8); but He turns sham beggars away from His door with indignation, just as we do; beggars who can make long complaints of their misery and feel none. Again, the patients came to Jesus, not as miserable creatures only, but as helpless ones, quite unable to relieve themselves. Some had tried human means, some had wasted all their substance on these means, but, finding no relief, they came at last to Jesus and sought a cure from His hand alone. Blind Bartimeus does not dream of putting one eye in, while Jesus puts the other; nor does the leper hope to help the Lord to scour away his leprosy. The patients who applied to Jesus expected *all* their help from Him. So must you apply if you expect relief; not vainly dreaming of any power to help yourself, and idly complimenting Jesus with a prayer for help; not hoping you may couch one eye by human wisdom, while Jesus tries to couch the other; not boasting you can heal some leprous spots, while Jesus scours away the rest. Such haughty beggars meet with no relief from Christ; He will be all or nothing. Again, the patients came to Jesus not only as miserable creatures and helpless, but as believers, who thought Him able to help and expected help from His mercy. This matter of believing was of the utmost consequence, and therefore Jesus usually asks a patient before a cure, "Believest thou that I am able to do this?" or tells him after a cure, "Thy faith hath saved thee." And this was said to inform the attending crowd that faith, which is the gift of God, procured the blessing. For though the patient's misery and helplessness brought him to Christ, it was faith alone that obtained the blessing. The patient got what he wanted by a firm reliance on the ability and mercy of this Divine Physician. "Thy faith hath saved thee." Even so it is now, sir, if you desire help from Jesus you must not seek to Him with a vain opinion of your own worth to recommend yourself, nor of your own power to help yourself, but must place your whole dependence on His mercy and power to save you. Your whole expectation of pardon must be from His blood, and your whole expectation of holiness from His merits.

He alone must wash, and He alone must work in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure. And if your eye be single, only fixed upon Jesus, He will show Himself a Saviour, and fill you with heavenly light and peace. When you pray to Jesus Christ to save you from the guilt and power of sin, remember, sir, He asks you by His Word the same question now as He asked then, "Believest thou that I am able to do this?" Not you and I together, no, but, Believest thou that I—I *without you*, I alone—am able to do this? And till you can answer this question truly, and say, "Lord, I do believe it," your petitions will draw down no blessings. Many prayers are words, that meet with no success. The petitioners continue slaves to evil tempers, and affections, because their petitions are not offered up in faith. Such heathen prayers never reach the skies, and consequently are of no avail. Lastly, when patients came to Jesus, miserable, helpless and believing, they never would, and never did, depart without a cure. Sometimes they were apparently neglected at the first application, and sometimes much discouraged by a seemingly rough answer, but at length their request was granted. And when any met with much discouragement before they gained a blessing, they were dismissed, not with any encomiums on their honesty, sobriety, and charity—very needful things in their proper place, and which might have belonged to the patients—but they were sent away with rare commendations of their faith, "O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt" (Matt. xv. 28). And so it is now, sir. All that seek to Jesus Christ with a due sense of their misery and helplessness, and with a single trust in His power and mercy, will obtain what they seek, for it is His own work in them. They may wait long at mercy's gate, and meet with some discouragement, but at length it will be opened. The mourners shall be comforted with pardon, and weary sinners will find rest unto their souls in Christ. Thus the promises, which are only gazed on by others as a fine picture, prove a heavenly feast unto them. By faith they are possessed and enjoyed as they were intended by the Lord, which brings abundant praise to God.

Once, sir, I went to Jesus as a coxcomb, and gave myself fine airs, fancying, if He was something, so was I—if He had merit, so had I. I used Him as a healthy man will use a walking-staff, lean but little upon it, and flourish with it in the air. But now He is my whole support—in fact, I cannot stir a step without Him. He is my All in All, He is now my Saviour; and bids me cast, not some, but all my care upon Him (1 Pet. v. 7).—*J. Berridge.*

UNTIL faith be tried, it is unknown in its power, either to ourselves or others.

THE ANXIOUS INQUIRER'S PAGE.

A REMARKABLE DREAM.

I THOUGHT I was sitting, a little before daylight, with my deceased brother on the wall of the parish churchyard, where we had lived many years together. We remained silent for some time, and then he asked me if I would not go with him into the church. I readily consented, and immediately rising up, walked with him towards the porch, which I thought was very large and spacious; but when he had passed through it, and came to the inner door that led to the body of the church, some way or other (but how, I could not well conceive), my brother slipped in before me, and when I attempted to follow, which I was all eagerness to do, the door, which slid from the top to the bottom, like those in some fortified towns on the Continent, was instantly let down more than half way, so that I now found it quite necessary to bend myself almost double before I could enter. But as I stooped to try, the door continued falling lower and lower, consequently the passage became so narrow, that I found it altogether impracticable in that posture. Grieved to be left behind, and determined to get in if possible, I fell down on my hands, and tried to squeeze my head and shoulders through; but finding myself still too high, I then kneeled down, crept, wrestled, and pushed more eagerly, but all to no purpose. Vexed to the last degree, yet unwilling to be left outside, I resolved to throw off all my clothes, and crawl in like a worm; but being very desirous to preserve a silk embroidered waistcoat, which I had brought from France, I kept that on in hopes of being able to carry it with me. Then laying myself flat on my face, I toiled, and pushed, and strove, soiled my embroidered waistcoat, but could not get in after all; at last, driven almost to despair, I stripped myself entirely, and forced my body between the door and the ground, till the rough stones and gravel tore all the skin and flesh upon my breast, and, as I thought, covered me with blood. Indifferent, however, about this, and perceiving I advanced a little, I continued to strive and squeeze with more violence than ever, till at last I got safely through. As soon as I stood upon my feet on the inside, an invisible hand clothed me in a long white robe, and as I turned round to view the place, I saw a goodly company of saints (among whom was my brother), all dressed in the same manner, partaking of the Lord's Supper. I sat down in the midst of them, and the bread and wine being administered to me, I felt such seraphic joy, such celestial ecstasy, as no mortal can express. I heard a voice call me three times by name, saying I was wanted at home. My joy was so great and overcoming, that it soon broke the silken bands of sleep, and

made me start up in bed, singing the high praises of God.—*Memoir of Major-General Burn.*

"All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" (Isa. lxiv. 6). "Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment" (Zech. iii. 3, 4). "Ye are complete in Him" (Col. ii. 10).

THE SEEKER'S CORNER.

To the Editor of the Sower.

DEAR MR. HULL,—Sympathy for you in your long and painful affliction constrains me at length to yield to the impulse of expressing the same to you by letter; and what I know of your kindness encourages me to think you will pardon the liberty I take in so doing. Month after month I have looked anxiously forward to receiving the *LITTLE GLEANER* and *SOWER*, that I might thereby learn what progress you were making towards health, and have been extremely sorry at the repeated discouragements you have had to battle with; but, nevertheless, glad that you receive help and support from the good Lord, who will never fail you nor forsake you, and who in every condition, in sickness, in health, in poverty's vale, or abounding wealth, is a never-changing Friend.

"Blest is the man, O God,
Whose mind is stayed on Thee."

"For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation *perfect through suffering.*"

I wonder if you remember preaching at —, from Philippians iii. 8, 9, "That I may win Christ and be found in Him." I shall never forget it, for it pleased the Lord, in His great mercy, through that sermon to make me dissatisfied with myself. The feeling deepened during the next day, in the evening of which I attended a Bible-reading conducted by yourself, when Hebrews i. was considered, and you told us about a poor girl, who prayed, "Lord, show me *myself*," and then, "Lord, show me *Thyself*." I adopted this language for myself, and that night was the first time I ever prayed in my life. Oh, with what agony of mind did I cry, "God be merciful to me *the sinner*," as I hid my face and dared not look up, fearing the terrible weight of my sins would

crush me into everlasting perdition, which I felt was my just due. There is a small rookery in front of the house where I live, and at times I have watched those birds and envied them, thinking their condition far preferable to that of possessing a soul which would be lost for ever and ever. My Bible, which had hitherto been a neglected book, now came into constant use; and, if I could have heard the Word preached every night, I should have been glad to listen.

Sometimes I felt a little hope spring up that, as it had pleased the Lord to preserve me so far, perhaps He intended to show me something better, and I would pray, "Create in me a clean heart, O God"; I know, "if Thou wilt, Thou canst make *me* clean." Thus the Lord led me; now feeling a little encouraged, then almost in despair; sometimes thinking all was wearing off, and I should lose my burden the wrong way, at other times fearing I should fall into some great sin; but, "When I said, My foot slippeth, Thy mercy, O Lord, held me up;" and since then, through His goodness, I have proved that He not only wounds, but also heals.

In the early part of September, I was laid aside for a little while with inflammation in the throat. The hardness of my heart at this time was terrible. It seemed as if—

"Nothing could move it, nothing break or melt,
Judgments and mercies were alike unfelt."

I wanted a repentant, a prayerful heart, but felt nothing but hardness; and these words were much in my mind, "Say, is thy heart well broke?" which only increased my misery, for I felt it was not, and thought the religion I had possessed could not be of the right kind, because it failed me when I most needed it. At length this came to mind, "Return unto Me, for I have redeemed thee" (Isa. xlv. 22), which seemed to soften me a little, and caused me to cry, "'Behold, I am vile,' *I am vile.*" I was then able to pray for pardoning mercy, and the Lord was pleased to bestow it on the unworthiest of sinners. He showed me that "there is forgiveness with Him," and mercy and plenteous redemption, and that it is "not by works of righteousness which we have done." Oh, the all-sufficiency of our Saviour and the *freeness* of His grace! "My soul shall make her boast in the Lord: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together." Since then I have been sorely tried, but the Lord knoweth how to deliver, and my hope is in Him. The deeper I am led into the knowledge of my own heart, the more am I surprised at the Lord's goodness, His condescension and long-suffering mercy, and often think—

“Dear Lord, and shall Thy Spirit rest
In such a wretched heart as mine?
Unworthy dwelling! glorious Guest!
Favour astonishing, divine!”

I do pray that the Lord will *sanctify* me through His truth, and I do long to serve Him better. I have felt I should like you to know what, through Him, I owe to you, and I trust you will pardon the very poor attempt I have made to relate a little of His goodness. I hope it may please the Lord soon to restore you fully to usefulness; or, if such be not His will, that you may feel His presence with you daily, and often hear His voice speaking to you in His holy Word; and may He grant you the same blessing as Enoch, who, “before he was translated had this testimony, that he pleased God.”

Yours sincerely,

M.

[This kind and cheering letter has been laid aside and overlooked; but having found it among other papers, we feel constrained to give it a place in the “Seeker’s Corner,” trusting that it may prove encouraging to others who are “seeking for Jesus.” And we pray that the Lord may graciously lead, teach, and preserve our young friend, so that she may live to show forth His praise, and that at last we may each meet in His kingdom above.—ED.]

DEAR MR. HULL,—It has been on my mind for a long time to try and send a few lines to you—indeed, ever since the first time I heard you preach, which was at the anniversary at Tamworth Road, Croydon, some six or seven years ago—but since reading the “Seeker’s Corner” in the SOWER this year, I have felt it more on my mind to do so. I have never forgotten hearing you at Croydon; it was not long after the Lord brought me to feel a concern about my state. You took for your text these words, “I will gather them that are sorrowful for the solemn assembly, and those among you to whom the reproach of it was a burden.” I think I shall never forget it. I sat and cried the whole time, for you did so enter into my feelings; although in some things you seemed to cut me off, but it is a mercy not to be cut off entirely.

After that I felt a desire to hear you again, but was not permitted to do so until you were at Dorking last autumn, and preached one week evening in the Public Hall. Your subject then was Paul’s thorn in the flesh, and I can say I felt it good to be there. I was at Brockham Green on Whit Monday evening, and should have liked to speak to you, but feared to presume. I do hope the dear Lord will go on to strengthen you in body and

mind, and, if His will, spare you many years for the work He has called you to. I do enjoy reading the dear little SOWER from month to month, and especially the "Seeker's Corner," for often in reading those sweet letters, I read my own experience much plainer than I could express it myself. It often leads my mind back to times when I hope the Lord has appeared for me, and encourages me amidst all my doubts and fears to hope I am one of their number. I often feel tried about the beginning, because I was not brought in such a marked way as many of the Lord's dear people are. Though not blessed with godly parents as many are, I was always brought up under the truth, for which I would desire to be thankful, but I often fear the truth is only in my head, and not in my heart. I do beg of the Lord to make me right and not let me be deceived. I know I cannot enjoy the things of the world as I once did, I believe they have lost their charms to me; but, oh, at times, I am plagued with such a worldly spirit, that I think the worldling cannot be worse than I am. Yet I cannot be satisfied in this state; it is a grief and a burden to me; for in my right mind I would have my affections taken up wholly with spiritual things. Oh, what poor helpless creatures we are in and of ourselves. But I hope, dear sir, it is not all darkness. I trust I know a little of the bright side, and it is a mercy to know a little of both.

I remember once in particular, I had been talking to a dear friend about some of the Lord's dear people, and how I had enjoyed their company. When I went to bed that night, I lay musing over it, and I thought, if it gives us so much pleasure to meet with the Lord's people here on earth, what must it be in heaven, where there is nothing to mar their happiness? and my heart seemed melted down in love to the dear Lord and His people. Then these lines of the poet came with such sweetness—

"There we shall see His face,
And never, never sin;
There, from the rivers of His grace,
Drink endless pleasures in";

and, as I lay with my face buried in the pillows, weeping for joy, I seemed to see the dear Lord's face, and I thought, Oh, if He were to send me to hell, I should have to love Him there! This was a sweet time to my soul; I could then say—

"Let worldly minds the world pursue,
It has no charms for me";

but oh, how many times I have doubted the reality of it since, and have felt ready to give up, and think I am quite out of the secret. But, dear sir, if the Lord had not a favour toward

me, would He have shown me all these things ? for I do hope it is His work.

But I am afraid I am imposing on your valuable time by sending such a long letter, so I close, wishing you every blessing you need, both spiritually and temporally ; and, if the Lord will, may you have constant proofs that your labours are not in vain in the Lord.

Yours affectionately,

A doubting, fearing one,
E.

June 8th, 1891.

DEAR SIR,—I have had many thoughts about writing to you, but have constantly postponed it, often fearing that I shall prove an outcast, for I feel at times so careless and indifferent about my soul ; but I do desire, above all things, “that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings.” I do trust the Lord has put that desire in my heart ; at times I hope it is the Holy Spirit’s doing, and then, at other times, I fear it is only what I think, and that I am destitute of divine grace, for I get into such a cold and careless state, and prayer becomes a task instead of a privilege, and worldly things seem so to engross my mind, that I fear it is all a delusion. Oh that the Lord would bless me with the assurance of His love !

“ ’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 ? ”

Oh that the Lord would decide this doubtful case, and

“ Shine upon this work of grace,
If it be indeed begun.”

I want Him to give me more faith ; I have such a faithless and unbelieving heart, so prone to wander ; I want to be kept every day by His mighty power.

Dear sir, it is now quite four years since I first, I trust, thought upon these things, but instead of growing in grace, I seem to get farther from it, and seem to get more wicked every day I live. Oh, will the Lord ever reveal Himself to me ? Shall I ever be able to say, “ My Beloved is mine, and I am His ” ?

Now, hoping I have not in any way trespassed upon your time, and that you may be long spared to continue your work and labour of love, is the prayer of,

London, May 12th, 1891.

Yours truly,
A.

LOVE is the mainspring of every action, in those who are born again.

"MY TIMES ARE IN THY HAND."

"My times are in Thy hand"!

I know not what a day
Or e'en an hour may bring to me,
But I am safe, in trusting Thee,
Though all things fade away.
All weakness, I

On Him rely,
Who fixed the earth, and spread the starry sky.

"My times are in Thy hand"!

Pale poverty or wealth,
Corroding care, or calm repose,
Spring's balmy breath, or winter's snows,
Sickness, or buoyant health:
Whate'er betide,
If God provide,

'Tis for the best—I wish no lot beside.

"My times are in Thy hand"!

Should friendship pure illumine
And strew my path with fairest flowers;
Or should I spend life's dreary hours
In solitude and gloom;
Thou art a Friend,
Till time shall end,

Unchangeably the same—in Thee all beauties blend.

"My times are in Thy hand"!

Many or few my days,
I leave with Thee—this only pray,
That by Thy grace, I every day
Devoting to Thy praise,
May ready be
To welcome Thee,

Whene'er Thou com'st to set my spirit free.

"My times are in Thy hand"!

Howe'er those times may end,
Sudden or slow my soul's release,
'Midst anguish, frenzy, or in peace,
I'm safe with Christ my Friend!
If He is nigh,
Howe'er I die,

'Twill be the dawn of heavenly ecstasy.

"My times are in Thy hand"!

To Thee I can entrust
My slumbering clay, till Thy command
Bid all the dead before Thee stand,
Awaking from the dust.
Beholding Thee,
What bliss 'twill be,

With all Thy saints to spend eternity

To spend eternity
 In heaven's unclouded light !
 From sorrow, sin, and frailty free,
 Beholding and resembling Thee,
 Oh, the transporting sight !
 Prospect too fair
 For flesh to bear,
 Haste ! haste, my Lord, and soon transport me there.
 —Dr. Gordon.

LETTER FOR THE YOUNG.

To the Writers in the "Seeker's Corner."

BELOVED SEEKERS,—It is most cheering to some of us older pilgrims to find so many precious souls inquiring their way to Zion, with their faces thitherward. Those who have trodden the same path cannot but feel the sweetest union of spirit with the dear babes in grace whose simple, artless letters to the Editor prove so plainly that the Lord is carrying on His work in many a heart. The secret desires, fears, hopes, longings, and feelings you have thus recorded are (for the most part) so evidently of the operation of the Spirit of God, that our hearts have been drawn forth in sincere love to, and fervent prayer for, these (to us) unknown correspondents. We feel impressed (with the Editor's kind permission) to address to you a few words of encouragement, caution, and counsel. The *encouragement* we are sure you will need, especially those of you who are not favoured with a godly pastor. We know, by the painful and prolonged experience of years long past, how babes in grace are often confused and perplexed by the diversity of preachers, where the supply system is maintained, and also how often they are sorely discouraged by the coolness of hard, quarrelsome professors, who having but little (if any) grace themselves, so frequently do their best to "unkindly quench the same" in others.

Most of you are greatly tried because you cannot tell the hour or day when the Lord first quickened your souls into divine life. We deeply sympathize with you in this, and would ask you, Can you remember the day of your natural birth? You cannot, yet you do not doubt you were born, and the chief evidence of this is, that you live; so, spiritually, if you are in the path of life, you must have passed through the gate of regeneration, or the new birth, which is the only entrance into spiritual life. The longing after Jesus, mourning over sin, dissatisfaction with everything earthly, love to the Lord's people, desire to follow the Lamb, anxious fears of coming short, and, above all, those secret sighs and groans which sometimes struggle up from the depths of your troubled hearts towards the throne of grace, plainly prove

that life is there. The spiritually dead may know much doctrinally in the head, but know nothing of these feelings experimentally in the heart. It is only God's elect who thus cry day and night unto Him.

Again, you are exercised as to the *reality* of what goes on within. Sometimes you are so careless, so cold, so carnal, so worldly, and so dead in your feelings; and perhaps see so much in others as well as in yourself to cast you down and perplex you, that you are ready to give up in despair. It is suggested to your minds, that if the work within were real it would be deeper, more definite and unmistakable—that you would experience more, know more, feel more, have greater depths of trouble, and brighter manifestations. There is one answer to all this, namely, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit" (John iii. 8). Life is life, however low its degreee. The measure of the operations of the Spirit is uncontrollable.

While pointing out to you, on the one hand, the evil of despising the day of small things, and the little measure of grace you possess, we must also, on the other hand, warn you of the danger of resting satisfied with what you have attained. Spiritual pride is an awful thing. To be overmuch content with the gift apart from the Giver, is to despise *Him*. True grace leads to its Author. That which comes from the Lord Jesus Christ will never leave the soul short of its true rest. Even the great Apostle eagerly pressed forward (Phil. iii. 12—14); counting himself "less than the least of all saints." Never expect to be satisfied with your attainments or spirituality here below. If you were, you would be in a dangerous state. The Christian's life, upon which, we doubt not, many of you have entered, is one of perpetual conflict and pressing forward. Satan will dispute every inch of the way. From sinner and from saint you will—every one of you—meet with many a blow. Your souls will sometimes be sorely discouraged because of the way. You will have to learn to live by faith, to take up the cross daily, to look to Jesus, to cease from man, and to wait upon the Lord. But you will also prove His grace to be all-sufficient. His strength will be made perfect in your weakness; His hand will always be underneath, even when unseen and unfelt; He will never leave you nor forsake you, even although, through the deceitfulness of your hearts, the power of unbelief and the subtlety of the evil one, you may be tempted to leave Him, and for a season to forsake Him—which the Lord, in His mercy, prevent. Moreover, His interpositions as a God of providence will become more and more marked the more you are enabled to watch His hand. You will

find the Lord's dealings outwardly in providence, and inwardly in grace, work together, overruling all things for your spiritual welfare, and His own eternal glory. Yes, dear seekers, "It shall be well with them that fear God." By these things you will daily learn more of you own helplessness and dependence upon the Lord, finding out by experiences (which will sometimes be very bitter and humbling) that without Him you can do nothing; seeing at the same time His faithfulness and love displayed in most merciful dealings, notwithstanding all your provocations, rebellion, and unworthiness.

Now, just a word respecting the letters from you which are published in the SOWER, and which you perceive from these lines some of us are so pleased with. You are undoubtedly greatly tried *before* writing them, *after* you have sent them, and also when they appear in print. It is well you should be tried about it. If you were not, it would be a very bad sign. Publicity, to every right feeling person, is rather to be shunned than courted. There are dangers connected with it, especially for the very young. The Lord keep the beloved correspondents of the SOWER from wrong feelings and desires, and enable them to seek for a single eye, a pure motive, and a humble heart, that they may be helped to go on telling us in simplicity and sincerity what they feel, hope, experience, and learn of Jesus. For our part, we are glad dear Mr. Hull has been led to encourage "seekers" to help raise these Ebenezers to the praise of our glorious King in Zion, and would encourage them to go on, in His fear, sending their communications.*

In conclusion, doubtless some of our readers and writers who are rather more advanced in the divine life, are exercised about following the Master in His ordinances, and joining His people in Church fellowship.† To you we purpose, if the Lord permit, to address a few words in a future number.

Meanwhile, with earnest prayers for your spiritual welfare, that you may be endued with much *humility and love*, the writer subscribes himself,

Leicester.

Yours affectionately.

E. C.

THE more faith, the more grace; and the stronger in believing, the stronger you will be.

* We heartily concur in this request, feeling sure that the correspondence has already borne good fruit, and that many elder saints have found pleasure and profit therefrom, as well as the young who are inquiring their way to Zion.—ED.

† We believe a goodly number of our young correspondents are already in the fold of Christ's Church on earth, and we pray that they may be "kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation."—ED.



PRAYER.

A WONDER OF SOVEREIGN GRACE.

IN the days of my unregeneracy, I was much attached to a young lad named Samuel Prior, and I also believe he was equally attached to me. Truly, I can say, I loved him as dearly as Jonathan loved David; I told him, like Samson told Delilah, all that was in my heart, and we always esteemed each other as a brother. One evening when we were both wallowing in sin and wickedness, and drinking it down as the greedy ox drinketh down water, the Lord was pleased to send the arrow of conviction into my soul, which so affected me, that I was obliged to leave his company. He, not knowing the reason, began to persecute me in such a manner, that I soon became the song of the drunkard: he became so exasperated, that he would watch every opportunity to meet with me as I returned from the meeting house, and would cry out, "I say, boys! there goes Dick the Methodist; I wonder whether he will give us 'Pretty Susan' now, or not?" At the meeting, he would sometimes sit behind me and pull my coat: and when at prayer, he, and the rest of my former fellow-companions in sin, would turn and stare me in the face.

After some years, health failed him, and he was obliged to leave his work. While at home, he would sometimes come into the shop in which I worked, and talk with my master, and make religion a laughing-stock, calling those who professed it, hypocrites and fools. This he did to tease me and hurt my mind, but the Lord stood by with a "Fear thou not; I am with thee: I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness." A few months after he was taken ill, he attended the General Baptist meeting house, and soon made a profession of religion. By them he was told to be careful of the young Bickell, for he held the doctrine of election; and soon he had enough to say about me. One day he strolled into the shop, and began telling my master what a horrid doctrine election was—that it came from the devil—and many things I should shudder to mention. He went so far that I could bear it no longer, and I begged him to answer me a few questions on the point. Finding he could not, he became greatly enraged, and told me, in the height of passion, that if I died I should go to hell. I told him that God had told me that my sins were pardoned, and, in spite of all his envy, I should some day see the Lamb in His beauty: this was more than he could bear, and he left the shop.

A few days after he started for Bude; he had not been there long before he became much worse, and was brought home to die. The evening he came home I had many struggles about going to see him. I thought, I shall get nothing but abuse, and what is the use of going there? still I thought something said,

"Go!" and do what I would I could not overcome the feeling. After supper, I went, and inquired of his mother how he was. She said he was very ill, and invited me upstairs. I said, "Well, Samuel, how are you?" He said, "Richard, I am a dying man, and shall soon leave this world for another!" directly adding, "Did you ever know what it was to have your sins pardoned?"

In my poor, feeble way I explained to him the place and time where God first sent the arrow into my soul, how long I groaned in agony and distress from a wounded conscience, and the time and place where first I found forgiveness through the blood of Christ. He looked at me with astonishment, and I could read in his face that it was something he knew nothing about. From this time he became as a weaned child; and, instead of arguing, was glad to lie in bed and listen to a free grace Gospel.

I went to him every night, except two, before he died—lent him the *Gospel Standard*—talked with him, and can say, God stripped him, in one month, of all his supposed righteousness, and brought him to accept the truth as it is in Jesus. He told his mother I was his only friend, and that no one told him such things as I did.

The night before he died, he told me he had seen Christ on the white horse of salvation, and burst out singing—

"The opening heavens around me shine
With beams of sacred bliss;
While Jesus shows His mercy's mine,
And whispers I am His."

The account made my heart rejoice, and my inmost soul sing praise to God for such a deliverance. He died the next day, and, I believe, died resting on the Rock of ages, having had all Arminianism blown to the four winds of heaven. I made his chest, and put his body into the silent grave; and, as I returned home, something said within me, and still whispers, "Is not this a wonder of sovereign grace?"

£. Lewdown.

RICHARD BICKELL.

ANSWER TO AN INQUIRER.

TO L. G.

THE work of God in the souls of His people is as sovereign as the work of Christ for them, and as their election to life and glory eternal. The work of God is not a stereotyped, but a diversified process in the experience of His saints, who are thus made sensible that true religion is a personal matter. All are exercised, but not alike; all are tried, but in different ways and degrees, and by very different means. Therefore we cannot prescribe any

set rule or measure of spiritual experience; only we may say of one and all, that the Lord leads them by the right way.

We have known some very godly, humble, choice souls, who from the time of their being brought into the liberty of Christ, never were left to doubt their standing in Him; and we have known other gracious souls who, after being blessed with the knowledge of the pardon of their sins, have been the subjects of such sore trials of their faith that, by reason of darkness and the prevalency of unbelief, they have concluded they were altogether out of the secret; but the Lord does not leave such, for, as Mr. Hart says—

“When the tempter sly
Asserts it fancied, forged, or vain,
Jesus [in due course] appears—disproves the lie,
And kindly makes it o’er again.”

We do not know into what unbelieving states we may come. Often, in a short period, we are called to pass through what we did not think, when the Lord delivered us, we should ever have to experience. Some are more favoured than others, but the Lord knows our frame, and deals with us in that way which will best promote spiritual health, wisdom, humility, love, and entire dependence upon Christ the Saviour of sinners. (See Isaiah xxxviii. 9—20, and mark the sixteenth verse.) These things teach us that in observing the Lord’s people we must allow a wide margin with respect to their exercises and experiences, and we shall perhaps find how much we need this same charity ourselves as we journey on.

The joy is not in being brought low, but in being recovered and restored, so as to be able to say, “Salvation is of the Lord.”

With respect to your second question, it certainly seems strange that any who have realized that they are “made accepted in the Beloved,” should never speak of it, to His praise. Surely it becomes them to put the crown upon His head, and

“tell to sinners round
What a dear Saviour they have found.”

Unless from want of ability of speech they cannot give a testimony in His favour, it looks like a great want of love, even amounting to a slighting of Him, never to speak of His doings for them and in them. May the love of Christ ever so warm, move, and constrain us that we may say with the Psalmist, “Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for *my* soul.”

Perhaps it may be that their experience is like a deep well, and therefore needs a man of understanding to draw it out; we hope it may be nothing worse than that.

THE EDITOR.

CHAFF OR WHEAT ?

"What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord."—JER. xxiii. 28.

I.—THE CHAFF.

IT is a very solemn and instructive fact that the "kingdom of heaven," in its external aspect (as existing on earth during the time-state) is always described in language which implies that it is a mixture of good and bad. The Lord Jesus constantly teaches this lesson in the parables, as the wise and foolish virgins, the sheep and the goats, the wheat and the tares, &c. A Judas was among the Apostles of Jesus. Many false brethren were found mingled with the true in Paul's days, and some of them, for a time, stood high in his esteem. Nadab and Abihu, among the priests, and Balaam among the prophets, are examples of the same thing under the Old Testament dispensation.

Now, the Word of the Lord came as a "fire" and as a "hammer" to Jeremiah (xxiii. 27) in its searching, separating power. He was constrained and enabled to speak it faithfully (v. 28), and so became as "God's mouth" (xv. 19) to communicate the awful question of Jehovah, with all its tremendous consequences, to us, "What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord." In this inquiry, the precious is taken from the vile, and a contrast suggested between the right and the wrong, the reality and the appearance, the good and the bad. This distinction being established, the relative value of the chaff and wheat becomes manifested; when it appears that the former is utterly worthless in comparison with the latter, which is exceedingly precious.

In this paper we purpose to describe "the chaff," and in a succeeding one, "the wheat;" noting, as we proceed, the distinction between the two.

The figure of the chaff used here and in other places of the Word (*e.g.* Matt. iii. 12; Psa. xxxv. 5; Isa. xli. 15; Hos. xiii. 3; Luke iii. 17, &c.) is of striking import. English farmers misapply the term to the cutting of stubble, hay, &c., but in the Scriptures it signifies exclusively the husks and refuse of corn. The Lord Jesus and the prophets by this expressive word denote false teachers and erroneous teaching, and describe as "chaff" "hypocrites in Zion"; who, being self-deceived, therefore deceive others—whose experience lacks reality and spirituality, but whose motives are base, whose profession is a mask, whose religion is unsound, and whose conduct is (in motive, word, and action) contrary to the precepts of the Scriptures. If men speak not, and act not according to this Word, it is because there is neither light nor life in them (Isa. viii. 20). Let us examine this chaff more closely, and the Lord give us grace, in the light of His

searching truth, to examine ourselves in accordance with the exhortation of the Apostle to the Corinthians (2 Cor. xiii. 5).

1. We observe, first, that chaff grows outside the wheat—that it is all *external*. There may be a great deal of outside show, very accurate expressions of correct notions of the truth, with much ignorant zeal for the letter, leading often to gross perversions in the end; added to this, we sometimes see loud protestations of humility and self-abhorrence. But, if all be merely the growth and product of nature, if there are no deep heart-humbings and abasement of the soul in secret before God, it is all chaff, and nothing but chaff. In such a case the boasted head-knowledge is not accompanied by the heart-experience of God's blessed truth, and the Word has never been made life and power. This knowledge is described in 1 Cor. xiii. 2, and the profession resulting therefrom is but "sounding brass" (making a great noise), or "a tinkling cymbal" (which makes a pretty noise), all amounting to "nothing."

2. Chaff is *lifeless*, whereas wheat possesses life, which springs up and is made manifest when it is sown; sown chaff, on the contrary, would utterly perish for lack of this life. The absence of life is the grand distinctive feature of the "chaff"—"He that hath not the Son of God hath not life." Let us pause to press home upon our consciences the important question: Is our profession the result and effect of the life of God in our souls or not? Are we wholly destitute of that life which is always in the wheat even when not in exercise, but which is never in the chaff? In those who correspond to the chaff there are no living spiritual desires after Jesus, no lively hope, no living faith, and none of that putting forth of life at any time in real prayer, which we shall afterwards see characterizes the wheat. The hope of such is but the "hope of the hypocrite" (Job viii. 13), their faith is "dead" (James ii. 17), and the light which seems so bright is but darkness (Luke xi. 35). Such a religion will be found in the end to consist in nothing more than a carnal desire to escape hell, a superficial acquaintance with the letter of Scripture, a profession adopted in order to stifle, as much as possible, natural convictions of conscience; and it is maintained by self-seeking, presumptuous confidence, sometimes up to the very last.

3. Chaff is utterly *fruitless* as well as lifeless. By its non-production of the fruits of the Spirit chaff-religion is known. Plant wheat, and it bears fruit after its kind. Chaff bears no fruit; it goes to corruption and rots. The appearance may have been there for a while, the similarity between the chaff and wheat is very close, but the one *is* fruit and therefore fruitful, the other is not. To be destitute of the Spirit of life is to be fruitless.

4. Chaff, however, *has its uses*. It affords protection to the

wheat while growing ; much in the same way as the scaffolding is necessary to the building during its erection, but it is removed at the completion of the edifice. Chaff, though useful to the wheat for a season, is not wheat, and at the harvest a final separation is effected, notwithstanding they have grown together so long.

Come, reader, join the writer in the solemn heart-searching inquiry : How stands the matter between our Maker and our never-dying souls ? When we give to the poor saints and to the cause of God, is our motive love of Christ, or love of self ? If it were the love of Christ constraining us, would our liberality be disfigured by the frequent display of so much that is fleshly ? Moreover, would not our help be much more substantial, more frequent, and more self-denying than it is ? Would there not be more reality in our offerings, and less show ? Or, are we (after all) ONLY chaff ?

5. Chaff *clings very closely to the wheat*. It requires a great deal of threshing, winnowing, and sifting to fully separate them. We may grow up in the company of the Lord's people, as chaff with wheat, and never be troubled about our state, never have one moment's concern as to anything being wrong,* only to find out in the issue that associations cannot save us. Godly parents, relatives, and friends are an inestimable blessing, but we must be made partakers of their grace if we are to share their glory hereafter. Ere long the last trumpet shall sound, the angel shall thrust in his sickle, the harvest of souls shall be reaped, the separation shall be effected, and then He "will gather the wheat into His garner, but the chaff He will burn with fire unquenchable" (Luke ii. 17).

6. Chaff is very *light*, it lacks weight, and so is inconstant and easily blown about, while wheat is weighty and solid. Being so light, chaff is very sensitive to the winnowing blast, which makes it manifest, and tends to separate it from the true wheat. When the fan of God begins to be turned, it creates a whirl and stir among the chaff, whereas the wheat quietly falls under it ; and is gathered together in a heap (at the termination of the process) purified and united. Christ's fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly and effectually purge His floor. A light, trifling, fussy profession cannot stand the test which proves it to be but chaff. With a feeling of relief we close these remarks ; and intend attempting in our next paper to describe "the Wheat."

* Dear readers, you who possess the fear of the Lord, do you not dread the thought of being left to such a state as this ? therefore there should be encouragement here for you, and we ever wish to encourage such as mourn over the sins and evils they feel, but who desire to get near the Lord, to have all made right through the blood and merit of Jesus.—Ed.

"I WAS DUMB, I OPENED NOT MY MOUTH;
BECAUSE THOU DIDST IT."

WHAT does a prudent, a gracious, a holy silence include? It includes and takes in these eight things.

1. It includes a sight of God, and an acknowledgment of God as the Author of all the afflictions that come upon us: and this you have plain in the text, "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because Thou didst it." The Psalmist looks through secondary causes, to the First Cause, and so sits mute before the Lord. There is no sickness so little but God has a finger in it, though it be but the aching of the little finger. As the scribe is more eyed and more properly said to write, than the pen; and he that makes and keeps the clock, is more properly said to make it go and strike, than the wheels and weights that hang upon it; and as every workman is more eyed, and more properly said to effect his works, than the tools which he uses as his instruments: so the Lord, who is the chief Agent and Mover in all actions, and who has the greatest hand in all our afflictions, is far more to be eyed and owned, than any inferior or subordinate causes whatsoever. So Job beheld God in all: "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away" (Job i. 21). Had he not seen God in the affliction, he would have cried out, "O these wretched Chaldeans, they have plundered and spoiled me! these wicked Sabeans, they have robbed and wronged me!" Job discerns God's commission in the Chaldeans' and the Sabeans' hands, and then lays his own hand upon his mouth. So Aaron, beholding the hand of God in the untimely death of his two sons, held his peace (Lev. x. 3). The sight of God in this sad stroke is a bridle both to his mind and mouth, he neither mutters nor murmurs. So Joseph saw the hand of God in his brethren's selling of him into Egypt, and that silences him (Gen. xlv. 8).

Men who see not God in an affliction, are easily cast into a feverish fit; they will quickly be in a flame; and, when their passions are up, and their hearts on fire, they will begin to be saucy, and make no bones of telling God to His teeth, that they do well to be angry (Jonah iv. 8, 9). Such as will not acknowledge God to be the Author of all their afflictions, will be ready enough to fall in with that mad principle of the Manichees, who maintained the devil to be the author of all calamities; as if there could be any evil or affliction in the city, and the Lord have no hand in it (Amos iii. 6). Such as can see the ordering hand of God in all their afflictions, will with David lay their hands upon their mouths, when the rod of God is upon their backs (2 Sam. xvi. 11, 12). If God's hand be not seen in the affliction, the heart will do nothing but fret and rage under affliction.

2. It includes and takes in some holy, gracious apprehensions of the majesty, sovereignty, dignity, authority, and presence of that God, under whose afflicting hand we are. "But the Lord is in His holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before Him"; or as the Hebrew reads it, "Be silent all the earth before His face" (Hab. ii. 20). When God would have all the people of the earth to be hushed, quiet, and silent before Him, He would have them to behold Him in His temple, where He sits in state, in majesty and glory, "Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord God" (Zeph. i. 7). Chatter not, murmur not, repine not, quarrel not: stand mute, be silent, lay thy hand on thy mouth, when His hand is upon thy back, who is all eye to see, as well as all hand to punish. As the eyes of a well-drawn picture are fastened on thee which way soever thou turnest; so are the eyes of the Lord, and therefore thou hast cause to stand mute before Him.

Thus Aaron had an eye to the sovereignty of God, and that silences him (Lev. x. 3). And Job had an eye upon the majesty of God, and that stills him (Job. xxxvii. 23, 24). And Eli had an eye upon the authority and presence of God, and that quiets him (1 Sam. iii. 11—19). A man never comes to humble himself, nor to be silent under the hand of God, till he comes to see the hand of God to be a mighty hand. "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God" (1 Peter v. 6). When men look upon the hand of God as a weak hand, a feeble hand, a low hand, a mean hand, their hearts rise against His hand: "Who is the Lord (said Pharaoh), that I should obey His voice?" (Exod. v. 2). And till Pharaoh came to see the hand of God as a mighty hand, and to feel it as a mighty hand, he would not let Israel go. When Tiribazus, a noble Persian, was arrested, at first he drew out his sword and defended himself; but when they charged him in the king's name, and informed him that they came from the king, and were commanded to bring him to the king, he yielded willingly. So when afflictions arrest us, we shall murmur, and grumble, and struggle, and strive even to the death, before we shall yield to that God who strikes, till we come to see His majesty and authority, till we come to see Him as the King of kings, and Lord of lords (Isa. xxvi. 11, 12; Rev. i. 5). It is such a sight of God as this, that makes the heart to stoop under His almighty hand. The Thracians being ignorant of the dignity and majesty of God, when it thundered and lightened, used to express their madness and folly in shooting their arrows against heaven, threatening-wise. As a sight of God's grace cheers the soul, so a sight of His greatness and glory silences the soul.

3. But a gracious, a prudent silence, takes in a holy quietness and calmness of mind and spirit under the afflicting hand of God.

A gracious silence shuts out all inward heats, murmurings, frettings, quarrellings, wranglings, and boilings of heart. Truly my soul waiteth upon God, or is silent or still ; that is, my soul is quiet and submissive to God ; all murmurings and repinings, passions and turbulent affections, being allayed, tamed, and subdued (Psa. lxii. 1). This also is clear in the text, and in the former instance of Aaron, Eli, and Job ; they saw that it was a Father who put those bitter cups into their hands, and love that laid those heavy crosses upon their shoulders, and grace that put those yokes about their necks, and this caused much quietness and calmness in their spirits. Marius bit in his pain when the chirurgeon cut off his leg. Some men, when God cuts off this mercy and that mercy from them, bite in their pain, they hide and conceal their grief and trouble ; but could you but look into their hearts, you would find all in an uproar, all out of order, all in a flame ; and however they may seem to be cold without, yet they are all in a hot burning fever within. Such a feverish fit David was once in (Psa. xxxix. 3). But certainly a holy silence allays all tumults in the mind, and makes a man in patience to possess his own soul (Luke xxi. 19), which, next to his possession of God, is the choicest and sweetest possession in all the world. The law of silence is as well upon that man's heart and mind as it is upon his tongue, who is truly and divinely silent under the rebuking hand of God. As tongue-service, abstracted from heart-service, is no service in the account of God, so tongue-silence, abstracted from heart-silence, is no silence in the esteem of God. A man is then graciously silent, when all is quiet within and without.

Terpander, a harper and a poet, was one that, by the sweetness of his verse and music, could allay the tumultuous motions of men's minds ; as David by his harp did Saul's. When God's people are under the rod, He makes by His Spirit and Word such sweet music in their souls, as allays all tumultuous motions, passions, and perturbations, so that they sit, Noah-like, quiet and still, and in peace possess their own souls (Psa. xciv. 17—19 ; cxix. 49, 50).

4. A prudent, a holy silence, takes in a humble, justifying, clearing, and acquitting of God of all blame, rigour, and injustice, in all the afflictions He brings upon us ; Psalm li. 4, "That Thou mightest be justified when Thou speakest, and be clear when Thou judgest," that is, when Thou correctest. God's judging His people, is God's correcting or chastening His people. "When we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord" (1 Cor. xi. 32). David's great care, when he was under the afflicting hand of God, was to clear the Lord of injustice. "Ah, Lord," says he, "there is not the least show, spot, stain, blemish, or mixture

of injustice, in all the afflictions Thou hast brought up on me ; I desire to take shame to myself, and to set to my seal that the Lord is righteous, and that there is no injustice, no cruelty, no extremity in all that the Lord has brought upon me." And so, in Psalm cxix. 75, 137, he sweetly and readily subscribes unto the righteousness of God in those sharp and smart afflictions that God exercised him with : " I know, O Lord, that Thy judgments are right, and that Thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me. Righteous art Thou, O Lord, and upright are Thy judgments." God's judgments are always just ; He never afflicts but in faithfulness. His will is the rule of justice, and therefore a gracious soul dares not cavil nor question His proceedings. The afflicted soul knows that a righteous God can do nothing but that which is righteous ; it knows that God is uncontrollable, and therefore the afflicted man puts his mouth in the dust, and keeps silence before Him. 2 Sam. xvi. 10, " Who dare say, Wherefore hast Thou done so ? "

The Turks, when they are cruelly lashed, are compelled to return to the judge that commanded it, to kiss his hand, give him thanks, and pay the officer that whipped them, and so clear the judge and officer of injustice. Silently to kiss the rod, and the hand that whips with it, is the noblest way of clearing the Lord of all injustice.

The Babylonish captivity was the sorest, the heaviest affliction that ever God inflicted upon any people under heaven ; witness Lamentations i. 12 ; Daniel ix. 12. Yet under those smart afflictions, Wisdom is justified of her children. " Thou art just in all that is brought upon us ; for Thou hast done right, but we have done wickedly " (Neh. ix. 33) ; " The Lord is righteous, for I have rebelled against Him " (Lam. i. 18). A holy silence shines in nothing more than in an humble justifying and clearing God from all that which a corrupt heart is apt enough to charge God with in the day of affliction. " God, in that He is good, can give nothing, can do nothing, but that which is good : others do frequently ; He cannot possibly," says Luther, on Psalm cxx.

5. A holy silence takes in gracious, blessed, soul-quieting conclusions about the issue and event of those afflictions that are upon us (Lam. iii. 27—34).

In this choice scripture you may observe these five soul-stilling conclusions—

1. That their afflictions shall work for their good. " It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth " (verse 27). A gracious soul secretly concludes, as stars shine brightest in the night, so God will make my soul shine and glitter like gold, whilst I am in the furnace, and when I come out of this furnace

of affliction. "He knoweth the way that I take; and when He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold" (Job xxiii. 10).

Surely, as the tasting of honey did open Jonathan's eyes, so this cross, this affliction, shall open mine eyes; by this stroke I shall come to have a clearer sight of my sins, and of myself, and a fuller sight of my God (Job xxxiii. 27, 28; xl. 4, 5; xlii. 1—7).

Surely this affliction shall issue in the purging away of my dross (Isa. i. 25).

Surely, as ploughing of the ground kills the weeds, and harrowing breaks hard clods, so these afflictions shall kill my sins and soften my heart (Hos. v. 15; vi. 1—3).

Surely, as the plaster draws out the core, so the afflictions that are upon me shall draw out the core of pride, the core of self-love, the core of envy, the core of earthliness, the core of formality, the core of hypocrisy (Psal. cxix. 67, 71).

Surely by these the Lord will crucify my heart more and more to the world, and the world to my heart (Gal. vi. 14; Psa. cxxxi. 1—3).

Surely by these afflictions the Lord will hide pride from my soul (Job xxxiii. 14—21).

Surely these afflictions are but the Lord's pruning-knives, by which He will bleed my sins, and prune my heart, and make it more fertile and fruitful; they are but the Lord's potion, by which He will clear me, and rid me of those spiritual diseases and maladies, which are most deadly and dangerous to my soul.

Affliction is such a potion as will carry away all ill humours, better than all the *benedicta medicamenta*, as physicians call them (Zech. xiii. 8, 9).

Surely these shall increase my spiritual experience (Rom. v. 3, 4).

Surely by these I shall be made more partaker of God's holiness (Heb. xii. 10). As dark soap makes white clothes, so do sharp afflictions make holy hearts.

Surely by these God will communicate more of Himself unto me (Hos. ii. 14).

Surely by these afflictions the Lord will draw out my heart more and more to seek Him (Isa. xxvi. 16). Tatianus told the heathen Greeks, that when they were sick, then they would send for their gods to be with them; as Agamemnon did, at the siege of Troy, send for his ten counsellors. "In their afflictions they will seek me early," or, as the Hebrew has it, they will morning me (Hos. v. 15). In times of affliction, Christians will industriously, speedily, early, seek unto the Lord.

Surely by these trials and troubles the Lord will fix my soul more than ever upon the great concerns of another world (John iv. 1—3; Rom. viii. 17, 18; 2 Cor. iv. 16—18).

Surely by these afflictions the Lord will work in me more

tenderness and compassion towards those that are afflicted (Heb. x. 34 ; xiii. 3). As the Tyrian queen said,

"Evils have taught me to bemoan
All that afflictions make to groan."

The Romans punished one who was seen looking out of his window with a crown of roses on his head, in a time of public calamity.

Surely these are but God's love-tokens. "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten" (Rev. iii. 19). Seneca persuaded his friend Polybius to bear his affliction quietly, because he was the emperor's favourite, telling him, that it was not lawful for him to complain whilst Cæsar was his friend. So says the holy Christian : "O my soul, be quiet, be still ; all is in love, all is a fruit of divine favour ; I see honey upon the top of every twig ; I see the rod is but a rosemary branch ; I have sugar with my gall, and wine with my wormwood ; therefore be silent, O my soul." And this general conclusion, that all shall be for good, had this blessed effect upon the Church, "He sitteth alone, and keepeth silence, because he hath borne it upon him" (Lam. iii. 28).

Afflictions abase the loveliness of the world without, that might entice us ; it abates the lustiness of the flesh within, which might else ensnare us ; and it abates the spirit in his quarrel against the flesh and the world ; by all which it proves a mighty advantage unto us.

(2.) They shall keep them humble and low. "He putteth his mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope" (verse 29). Some say that these words are in allusion to the manner of those that, having been conquered and subdued, lay their necks down at the conqueror's feet to be trampled upon, and to lick up the dust that is under the conqueror's feet. Others of the learned look upon the words as an allusion to poor petitioners, who cast themselves down at princes' feet, that they may draw forth their pity and compassion towards them. As I have read of Aristippus, who fell on the ground before Dionysius, and kissed his feet, when he presented a petition to him ; and being asked the reason, answered, "He has his ears in his feet." Take it which way you will, it holds forth this to us, that holy hearts will be humble under the afflicting hand of God. When God's rod is upon their backs, their mouths will be in the dust. A good heart will lie lowest when the hand of God is lifted highest (Job xlii. 1—6 ; Acts ix. 1—8).

(3.) The third soul-quieting conclusion you have in verse 31 : "For the Lord will not cast off for ever" ; the rod shall not always lie upon the back of the righteous. "At even tide, lo, there is trouble ; but before morning it is gone" (Isa. xvii. 14). As

Athanasius said to his friends, when they came to bewail his misery and banishment, "It is but a little cloud, and will quickly be gone." There are none of God's afflicted ones who have not their intermissions, respites, breathing-whiles; yea, so small a while does the hand of the Lord rest upon His people, that Luther cannot get diminutives enough to extenuate it; for he calls it "a very little cross that we bear." "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment (or for a little space, a little while), until the indignation be overpast" (Isa. xxvi. 20). The indignation does not pass, but overpass. The sharpness, shortness, and suddenness of the saint's afflictions is set forth by the travail of a woman, which is sharp, short, and sudden (John xvi. 21).

(4.) The fourth soul-silencing conclusion you have in verse 32: "But though He cause grief, yet He will have compassion, according to the multitude of His mercies." In wrath God remembers mercy (Hab. iii. 2). "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning" (Psalm xxx. 5). Their mourning shall last but till morning. God will turn their winter's night into a summer's day, their sighing into singing, their grief into gladness, their mourning into music, their bitter into sweet, their wilderness into a paradise. The life of a Christian is filled up with interchanges of sickness and health, weakness and strength, want and wealth, disgrace and honour, crosses and comforts, miseries and mercies, joys and sorrows, mirth and mourning. All honey would harm us, all wormwood would undo us; a composition of both is the best way in the world to keep our souls in a healthy constitution. It is best and most for the health of the soul, that the south-wind of mercy, and the north-wind of adversity, do both blow upon it: and though every wind that blows shall blow good to the saints, yet certainly their sins die most, and their graces thrive best, when they are under the drying, nipping north-wind of calamity, as well as under the warm, cheering south-wind of mercy and prosperity.

(5.) The fifth soul-quieting conclusion you have in verse 33: "For He doth not afflict willingly (or, as the Hebrew has it, from His heart), nor grieve the children of men." The Church concludes that God's heart was not in their afflictions, though His hand was; He takes no delight to afflict His children, it goes against His heart; it is a grief to Him to be grievous to them, a pain to Him to be punishing them, a death to Him to be striking them; He has no will, no motion, no inclination, no disposition to that work of afflicting His people; and therefore He calls it His strange work, His strange act (Isa. xxviii. 21). Mercy and punishment flow from God, as the honey and the sting from the bee; the bee

yields honey of her own nature, but she does not sting but when she is provoked; He takes delight in showing mercy (Micah vii. 18). He takes no pleasure in giving His people up to adversity (Hosea xi. 8). Mercy and kindness flow from Him freely, naturally; He is never severe, never harsh; He never stings, He never terrifies us, but when He is sadly provoked by us. God's hand may sometimes lie very hard upon His people, when His heart, His bowels (at those very times), may be yearning towards His people (Jer. xxxi. 18—20). No man can tell how the heart of God stands, by His hand: His hand of mercy may be open to those against whom His heart is set, as you see in the rich fool and Dives, in the Gospel: and His hand of severity may lie hard upon those on whom He hath set His heart, as you may see in Job and Lazarus.

And thus you see those gracious, blessed, soul-quieting conclusions about the issue and event of afflictions, that a holy, a prudent silence does include.

6. A holy, a prudent silence includes and takes in a strict charge, a solemn command that conscience lays upon the soul to be quiet and still. "Rest in the Lord (or, as the Hebrew has it, be silent to the Lord), and wait patiently for Him" (Psa. xxxvii. 7). I charge thee, O my soul, not to mutter, nor to murmur (Matt. xxviii. 5, 10). I command thee, O my soul, to be dumb and silent under the afflicting hand of God. As Christ laid a charge, a command upon the boisterous winds, and the roaring, raging seas, "Be still, and there was a great calm," so conscience lays a charge upon the soul to be quiet and still. "Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord" (Psa. xxvii. 14). Peace, O my soul, be still; leave your muttering, leave your murmuring, leave your complaining, leave your chafing and vexing, and lay your hand upon your mouth, and be silent. Conscience allays and stills all the tumults and uproars that are in the soul, by such like reasonings as the clerk of Ephesus stilled that uproar. "For we are in danger to be called in question for this day's uproar, there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this concourse" (Act xix. 40). O my soul, be quiet, be silent, else thou wilt one day be called in question for all those inward mutterings, uproars, and passions that are in thee, seeing no sufficient cause can be produced why you should murmur, quarrel, or wrangle under the righteous hand of God.

7. A holy, a prudent silence includes a surrendering, a resigning up of ourselves to God, whilst we are under His afflicting hand (Psalm xxviii. 8; James iv. 7). The silent soul gives himself up to God (1 Sam. iii. 18). The secret language of the

soul is this, "Lord, here am I; do with me what Thou pleasest. Write upon me as Thou pleasest; I give up myself to be at Thy disposal" (1 Sam. xv. 25, 26; Act xxi. 13, &c.).

There was a good woman who, when she was sick, being asked whether she were willing to live or die, answered, "Which God pleases." "But," said one that stood by, "if God should refer it to you, which would you choose?" "Truly," said she, "if God should refer it to me, I would even refer it to Him again." This was a soul worth gold. "Well," says a gracious soul, "the ambitious man gives himself up to his honours, but I give up myself unto Thee; the voluptuous man gives himself up to his pleasures, but I give up myself to Thee; the covetous man gives himself up to his bags, but I give up myself to Thee; the wanton gives himself up to his minion, but I give up myself to Thee; the drunkard gives himself up to his cups, but I give up myself to Thee; the Papist gives up himself to his idols, but I give up myself to Thee; the Turk gives up himself to his Mahomet, but I give up myself to Thee; the heretic gives up himself to his heretical opinions, but I give up myself to Thee. Lord, lay what burden Thou wilt upon me, only let Thine everlasting arms be under me: strike, Lord, strike and spare not, for I am lain down in Thy will, I have learned to say Amen to Thy Amen; Thou hast a greater interest in me than I have in myself, and therefore I give up myself unto Thee, and am willing to be at Thy disposal, and am ready to receive what impression thou shalt stamp upon me. O blessed Lord! hast Thou not again and again said unto me, as once the king of Israel said to the king of Syria, "'I am thine, and all that I have'" (1 Kings xx. 4). I am thine, O soul, to save thee; My mercy is thine to pardon thee; My blood is thine to cleanse thee; My merits are thine to justify thee; My righteousness is thine to clothe thee; My Spirit is thine to lead thee; My grace is thine to enrich thee; and My glory is thine to reward thee? and therefore," says a gracious soul, "I cannot but make a resignation of myself unto thee. Lord, here I am, do with me as seemeth good in Thine own eyes. I know the best way to have my own will, is to resign up myself to Thy will, and to say Amen to thy Amen."

I have read of a gentleman, who meeting with a shepherd in a misty morning, asked him what weather it would be? "It will be," says the shepherd, "what weather pleases me:" and being courteously requested to express his meaning; "Sir," says he, "it will be what weather pleases God, and what weather pleases God, pleases me." When a Christian's will is moulded into the will of God, he is sure to have his will.

8. But lastly, a holy, a prudent silence takes in a patient

waiting upon the Lord under our afflictions till deliverance comes (Psa. xl. 1—3). “My soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from Him” (Psa. lxi. 5). “It is good that a man should both hope, and quietly (or, as the Hebrew has it, silently) wait for the salvation of the Lord” (Lam. iii. 26). The husbandman patiently waits for the precious fruits of the earth (James v. 7, 8). The mariner patiently waits for wind and tide; and so does the watchman for the dawning of the day; and so does the silent soul, in the night of adversity, patiently wait for the dawning of the day of mercy. The mercies of God are not styled the *swift*, but the *sure mercies* of David, and therefore a gracious soul waits patiently for them.—*Brooks*.

THE LIGHT OF HIS COUNTENANCE.

HIDE not Thy face from me, dear Lord,
 Nor put me far away,
 But let me oft enjoy Thy smile
 While in this world I stay.
 It is the smilings of Thy face
 Which fills me with delight;
 But oft I mourn Thy absence, Lord,
 And feel as dark as night.
 But while my soul doth mourn and sigh,
 I long for light again
 To beam upon my aching heart,
 And ease me of my pain.
 And when the Sun of Righteousness,
 With healing in His wings,
 Ariseth on my sin-sick soul,
 It healing virtue brings.
 It warms and cheers my deathly soul;
 Fresh life and light it brings;
 It wins my heart, and draws it forth
 With love to better things.
 Then fears and doubts they lose their hold,
 A lively hope is felt;
 Such peace and joy then reign within,
 The heart begins to melt.
 And oh, how rich it is to feel
 Our hearts made soft by love,
 A kindred spirit to enjoy
 With saints that are above.
 To feel sweet union with the Lamb
 O what amazing grace,
 Bestowed upon such worthless worms,
 Its wonders who can trace?

GEO. HARDING.

THE ANXIOUS INQUIRER'S PAGE.

SAVING FAITH AND ITS OBJECT.

[The following letter by the godly John Newton is a choice honeycomb, full of the very essence and spirit of the Gospel. It sweetly accords with what the Apostle of the Gentiles was taught of God to write to the Church at Corinth: "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us who are saved it is the power of God." If we compare this utterance with the complaints often made of the lack of power in the Gospel ministry, we may be helped to discern where the deficiency lies. A cold repetition of orthodox truth; a withholding part of the truth through fear of man; and a line of preaching which makes a changeable experience a large part of a believer's ground of confidence, may well fail to prove "the power of God unto salvation." The "preaching of the cross" is God's own divinely ordered method of bringing sinners to believe in Jesus; and in its absence there is very little conversion-work, while believers are kept weak and unhealthy.

The testimony here reproduced is specially commended to the prayerful consideration of two classes of persons.

First, to those who speak of unbelief as a necessary part of their faith, and who seem to cherish doubting as a mark of Gospel humility. All true, living, saving faith, the faith of the operation of God, though often sorely hampered by unbelief, lives on Jesus, clings to Him, and centres in Him. While the sinner feels the bite of sin, faith looks to the antidote as displayed in the Gospel.

Secondly, this choice testimony may be helpful to seeking souls, who find unbelief a clog to their feet, and mourn over it while pressing to Jesus. How *natural* for the convinced sinner to be looking for qualifications in himself, so that he may not go empty-handed to Christ for salvation and pardon! May the Holy Spirit lead such persons to look alone to Him who is the Author, the Centre, and the Finisher of faith!—W. L.]

MY DEAR MISS JEAN,—Mr. C——'s last letter is dated the fourth of June, and yours the third. As you stand first in date, you must first be answered. I cannot always write when I would, but I can always find time to read what you write; and therefore I beg you will not keep silence from a fear of interrupting me in my supposed important business.

When you tell me what a sad heart you have, and what strange and evil thoughts pester your mind, you tell me nothing new. I also feel the same. The hearts of all men, women, and children are deceitful, and desperately wicked. It is a mercy to know and

feel this truth, provided the knowledge of the disease leads us to the great Physician. Our depravity, like the human face, has universally the same leading features. People of all ages and sizes, in all countries and climates, have a nose, eyes, &c., and yet it will be difficult to find two faces so exactly alike that one cannot be distinguished from the other. Thus constitution, education, habits of life, make each person, in some respects, an original; but the heart, from whence the issues of life proceed, is exactly the same in all. Grace will make you feel your inward malady, teach you to loathe it, to watch, and pray, and fight against it, and to be humbled for it, but it will not free you from it while you are in this world; therefore your life will be a continual warfare, but death will put an end to it. Then you will leave the flesh and all its inseparable evils behind you. Till then we must "groan, being burdened," as others have done before us. You must not expect to be better than Paul, who tells us that in his flesh there dwelt no good thing, and that, when he would do good, evil was present with him.

Young converts are apt to think their cases singular. I thought my own so once, and should have reason to think so still, if the Scriptures did not teach me otherwise. The case of Jonah is singular indeed. He was entombed alive three days in the belly of a fish, and came alive out of it. He is the only one I have ever heard of in such a situation. I could point you out a shorter road than that by which I travelled myself, but I question if unbelief will permit you to walk in it; and perhaps the Lord sees it best that we should all, like Israel, be led round about.

Our Lord, in John 3rd, teaches us the sure way of salvation by a very instructive and plain emblem. When the Israelites were bitten by poisonous serpents, God commanded Moses to set up a brazen serpent upon a pole, and whoever looked up to it was instantly healed. If, with such a sure and easy remedy at hand, they presumed rather to trust in plaisters or their own contriving, they must die. Again, they could get no help by meeting at the foot of the pole, and saying to each other, "Ah! I am worse bitten than you." Looking to the serpent was necessary if a man had received but one bite, and it was sufficient to cure him if he was bitten from head to foot. Now the Lord has opened the eyes of your mind. You know that you are a sinner, and what a sinner deserves. You know likewise who is the Saviour. Faith goes to the Cross. Consider who hangs upon it—Jesus, the Son of God. Read John i. 1—3; then consider, why did He who was with God, who Himself was God, assume our nature? The Apostle says, "He came into the world to save sinners." "But will He save me?" Yes, if you come to Him; for He says, "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out."

Here, you see, He makes no exception; He prescribes no condition, but gives the power when He says, "Look and live;" "Believe, and thou shalt be saved." Then think of His sufferings. If He sweat blood in Gethsemane, and died in agonies upon the cross to save sinners, will He be disappointed, and suffer in vain?

But, if you listen to unbelief, it will try to persuade you that it would be presumption in such a sinner as you to believe that Christ really means what He says, and is able to make His word good. Stop the mouth of unbelief with those words, "In no wise." If He should cast you out, it must be in some wise; either for the nature, number, or aggravation of your sins. But, if His Word may be safely taken, though you were chargeable with all the sins that have been committed in L—— since it has been a parish, yet, if you had a sense of your need of mercy, and were made willing to accept it in His appointed way, "by the Spirit," would He who gave you a sure and safe warrant to trust in Him, cast you out? The point is, not what you think of yourself, but "What think you of Christ?" Not, "What can I do?" but "What has He done?" He has obeyed the law, made an atonement for sin, brought in an everlasting righteousness. He has lived, and died, and risen again; and now He reigns a High Priest upon the throne, and all for us, "therefore He is able to save to the uttermost."

But there is a growth and gradation in the Christian life. If you wish to enjoy a stable peace, you must ask for a simple, upright, and humble spirit. You cannot avoid many of the effects of indwelling sin, but by His grace you may avoid wilful sin, and you will do this more successfully, the more firmly you trust in Him. You must likewise read and take heed to His Word, by which young persons are enabled to cleanse their ways, and carefully attend the preached Gospel. You have reason to fear the snares of the world, and to watch and pray against them; and, if you are honest in this effort, the Lord will help you in two ways—He will give you such tastes of happiness as the world cannot give; and He will, when needful, put some wholesome bitters in your cup of earthly comforts, that you may not drink too eagerly. In a word, though believers will surely repent, and be found in the use of the means of grace, these things have nothing to do with their acceptance. They are "accepted in the Beloved," because He died for sinners, and because, renouncing every other plea, they commit their souls and their all to Him, as their Wisdom, Righteousness, their Lord, their Prophet, Priest, and King.

Do not indulge unbelief, but consider it not merely as a weakness, but a sin. Yea, it is the greatest of all our sins, and the

source of them. We can believe one another, and yet distrust and contradict the God of truth. When He says to a poor sinner, "I will receive you," surely He will do as He says? You are yet but a young plant, may the blessing of God water you, and make you grow in faith and holiness; "then shall you know, if you follow on to know the Lord."

I commend you to the great and Good Shepherd. Endeavour to be cheerful, thankful, humble, and watchful. You have no sufficiency in yourself, even to think a good thought; but let not this discourage you. Look to Him, and you shall be enlightened. You shall be able to do all things, through Him who is always near to strengthen you. Pray for us, and believe me to be,

Your very affectionate friend,

JOHN NEWTON.

A WORD TO SEEKERS.

"Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee."—PROVERBS iv. 25.

OUR life on earth is often compared to a journey or a race. If we see a man going on a long journey, his eyes are generally steadfastly fixed in the direction in which he is going; or if running a race, his eye is fixed on the goal. In the various pursuits of life, men of one idea, whose minds are steadily fixed on the attainment of the object they have in view, are generally the most successful, while to others of an opposite character, it may be said, "Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel." The heavenly race is infinitely more important and difficult than any earthly race can be, but the above counsel of the wise man is needful in both. He that sets out for heaven hath need to observe three things—First, to start right; secondly, to run right; thirdly, to endure to the end. To start aright, Christ saith, "Ye must be born again" (John iii. 7); "Born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John i. 13). This signifies that this great change is produced not by any power or will of the creature, "but by My Spirit, saith the Lord" (Zech. iv. 6). The first thing a sinner becomes sensible of after being thus quickened, is his real state and condition before God, as a breaker of His laws and a rebel against His authority, and his need of being washed and clothed and endued with a new heart and right spirit; to which sense of need the promise is made, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you. . . . And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes" (Ezek. xxxvi. 25—27). Now, when we realize in our

souls the fulfilment of these promises, is the journey ended, and the victory won? Surely not. Paul was much more advanced than we, when he said, "Not as though I had already attained, . . . but I follow after. . . . But this one thing I do, . . . I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. iii. 12—14). Again, "So run, that ye may obtain" (1 Cor. ix. 24).

When the manslayer fled to the City of Refuge, did he stop to admire the scenery, or pluck the flowers that grew by the wayside? Nay; he knew the avenger of blood was behind, and all his powers were exerted to reach the place of safety. And, dear seekers, you will find the poet's words true—

"When their pardon is signed and their peace is proclaimed,
From that moment the conflict begins."

Also, you will fall in with some professors who carry about with them a head well furnished with cut-and-dried notions, and with the help of balances of deceit, they will weigh and measure you, and ask, "Do you know the truth? Do you believe in election, predestination, &c.?" But you will act wisely if, like the Pilgrim, you stop your ears to such knotty questions, and cry, "Life! life! eternal life!" Though these doctrines are grand truths, yet to know them aright we must be taught them by God. Turn aside from all teaching that is only man's, and, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby" (1 Peter ii. 2). "One thing have I desired of the Lord" (saith the Psalmist), "that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple" (Psa. xxvii. 4). Again, "Here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come" (Heb. xiii. 14). So you see, there is no end to seeking, desiring, hungering, thirsting, and pressing on, from the first step to the last of this rich journey. As I wish to direct seeking souls to God's own Word, rather than the traditions of men, I must still hold up Christ to them as the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (John xiv. 6). In this day of great profession, thousands are gathered, some to this sect, some to that. But "to Him shall the gathering of the people be" (Gen. xlix. 10). These "endure, seeing Him who is invisible." "They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God" (Psa. lxxiv. 7).

J. J.

THE highest character to which I aspire (God grant I may be entitled to it) is that of an elect sinner, redeemed with blood and saved by grace.

THE SEEKER'S CORNER.

To the Editor of the Sower.

DEAR AND ESTEEMED FRIEND,—I thank you very kindly for your letter, which I received with glad surprise. I should not have written again, but to tell you how favoured I have been. I would desire to praise the dear Lord for His goodness and tender mercy, to one so unworthy of the least of His favours. Sunday night I felt a little of the spirit of prayer, and a sweet softening of heart—what I have not experienced for many weeks. But Monday morning I felt as dark as ever—no life, no light, no liberty, according to my feelings. I had to go into C—— to take something R—— forgot. On my way back, I was longing and sighing for a token for good, yet fearing the Lord would be gracious no more, when these words came into my mind, as though spoken audibly—

“ Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust Him for His grace;
Behind a frowning Providence,
He hides a smiling face.”

It came two or three times, and such a sweet power accompanied it, that I do think it was from the Lord. At night I had such a sweet spirit of prayer, I was quite melted down, and it lasted some time. When I awoke Tuesday morning, these words were first in my thoughts—

“ Payment God cannot twice demand,
First at my bleeding Surety's hand,
And then again at mine.”

It was repeated two or three times before I took much notice of it, then it was repeated with power, and left such an impression in my heart. It was present with me all day, and on Wednesday too. I did not know that I had ever read it, neither did I know where to find it, but I searched the hymn book on Wednesday night till I found it. On Tuesday I read the portion in Philpot's “Harvested Sheaves,” for the 13th. It was so suitable and sweet. The text was, “Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you” (1 Peter iv. 12). Mr. Philpot says, “The fiery trial then is not a strange thing, which happens only to a few of the Lord's people, but is more or less the appointed lot of all. Do we not hear the Lord saying to His Zion, ‘I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction’”? He also says, “This suffering with and for Christ in the furnace of affliction salts the soul, preserves it from corruption, communicates health, gives it savour and flavour, is a token of interest in the everlasting covenant, and is a seal of friendship and peace with God.” These things applied

with almighty power to my soul were very precious. Surely it is as you told me, a much safer place to be low, poor, and needy, than to be as the worldling or mere professor. It is a sharp place in the fiery trial, to have every hope cut down, every fair prospect blighted, and have nothing whatever to cling to. The Lord's smile hidden, and His loving hand in obscurity that uses the chastening rod. But oh, what a mercy we have such a God to deal with. When He manifests Himself to the soul, then with the poet we can say—

“Ten thousand thousand suns are dim
In lustre when compared with Him.”

I do thank you for pointing out the two hymns, they are very precious words, and very weighty too. My dear friend, I have not forgotten you at the throne of grace. May the Lord answer prayer on your behalf, for there are many offered up, and I believe “the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”

What are all our sufferings compared with His, who “endured the cross, despising the shame,” and all for the sake of guilty man. Oh, that I could rightly praise Him for His goodness to my soul. While I write I tremble lest fear again overtake me, and cast me down into the gloom of dread despair.

I must close, my dear friend. May the Lord be sweetly with you in all your labour, is the prayer and desire of

Yours most truly,
B. N.

January 17th.

DEAR SIR,—Forgive me troubling you with a letter, but since last night I have been so tried and worried, that I did not say those things I ought; and a fear that you should be deceived in me, makes me feel I must write to you, and speak those things my heart dictated, but tongue refused to utter. I wanted to tell how oft I feel anything but like a partaker of grace, and how oft-times I am unmindful of Him, who, as you said, has done such great things for me. Oh, were it not for His longsuffering mercy, I must ere this have been banished to where hope never comes; and though sometimes I hope I have an interest in His death and resurrection, yet at times I seem to be given over into the hand of the enemy. I feel I can have neither part nor lot in the matter; but I have been brought to that place to lie before Him, feeling He would be just even if He banished my soul to hell, and still I would plead the finished work of a precious Saviour. This was years after I hope I had had a taste of His love and some token for good. I have nowhere else to go, and I can say with Esther of old, “If I perish, I perish.” To Him I must look

again and again ; but, with Manoah's wife, I feel, would He have showed me *all* these things if He meant to have cast me away ?

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

Why should He have saved me from the hand of Satan the times He has, if He had not a favour toward me the same as to His people, and the many, many times He has visited my soul (if I am not deceived) with His love and grace, and made me long for His embrace, melting me down and causing me to weep to the praise of the mercy I have found ? But these things and times that are past do not serve me now. I want them made over and over again to my needy soul.

Sir, you said you supposed the one circumstance I mentioned of temptation, I had not known such before. I answered, " Yes." But I felt I could not then mention details. There are many things I have had to bear and pass through, known only to God and my own soul ; but some day I may be able to tell you of two particular times. Twice I have been driven to the verge of self-destruction, even with the means within my hands. Who could have delivered me but an *almighty* Power ? Oh, Mr. H——, the remembrance of these times, the weeks and months of suffering, terrify and fill me with awe. I must praise Him, I must praise Him, for He *hath* done great things for me,

" Who must for ever dwell in hell,
Were not salvation free."

The first time my hand was stayed was the first time I fully realized my life was not in my own hands, and the words were applied, " Ye are not your own." But it was a long time before the remainder was brought home with power, " Ye are bought with a price." Oh, what I realized then is far beyond my power of expression, and I cannot convey a tithe of what my Jesus has been to me. He has brought me up out of a horrible pit ; He has set me upon a rock, and He has spread His banner of love over me. And yet I am often as though I had never heard His name, and feel not worthy to meet with the people of God, and think if they knew me they would shun me ; but I am compelled to come ; your ministry, Mr. H——, is meat and drink to my soul.

These are the reasons I have written you ; but, sir, if you feel these are not the marks and signs of one who should profess His name, oh, do not receive me, for to me it is a most solemn and momentous matter, to touch those emblems of a precious crucified Saviour with unworthy hands. I dare not deceive you, and could not bear the thought, for it was almost more than I could bear when you said you received me. I did not expect it

in the way it came ; and, when one and the other were shaking hands with me, it was whispered, "You are not worthy, you have not told them all." This has tried me so all night, and to-day, too. I trust, sir, you will forgive the liberty I have taken to write you, and believe me yours sincerely,

March 2nd.

J. D.

DEAR MR. H——,—I heard from those at home, and I feel it was very kind of you to write them. The little tract you sent was very nice, it quite did me good when I read it.

As regards myself, I scarcely know what to say. I am very comfortable, with the exception of Sabbaths, and they are so different from what I have been accustomed to, I cannot feel quite reconciled to it. I can get out only in the evening, and then I have gone to ——, not far from here, that you spoke about, and should quite hope the truth is preached there ; but they do not seem to go very deep into the experimental knowledge of divine teaching.

Since I have been here, I hope I have proved that the dear Lord is not tied to means in blessing our souls, for I had a most blessed time during the night last Sunday before going to sleep. I lay wondering why the dear Lord brought me to such a place as this, and everything appeared so dark within, and feeling so disappointed to think I had been to hear the Word preached and all to no profit, that I felt in a very rebellious state. But in the night I awoke with these sweet words upon my mind, "Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you," and with the words a most blessed and sweet confidence that the dear Lord had a favour toward me, one of the most rebellious of His creatures. And upon the back of those sweet words came that blessed hymn of Newton's, 277 in Gadsby's, commencing, "Now I see, whate'er betide." I felt I could go with the whole of the hymn, and I was like another being. Oh, how it has helped me through the week ! and, bless His holy Name ! if it were not for these little helps, I fear I should sink in despair ; but oh, what a good and gracious Lord He is ! He knows just the time we need His helping hand. But we so often feel to want a fresh application ; as you said one Sunday, we do not like stale bread, we want it renewed.

I have been to —— again this evening ; felt I wanted another visit from the Lord, and He was pleased to favour me with a sweet feeling from one of the hymns sung, commencing, "Oh, my distrustful heart," hymn 339. Oh, how good of the dear Lord thus to bless a poor worthless worm of the earth, and enable one to fall before His blessed feet, and to be like clay in the hands of the potter, willing for Him to manage us and all our concerns, and bring us to feel that—

" Thus our pride and self must fall,
That Jesus may be all in all."

But how soon I lose the sweetness of His presence, and, as the poet expresses it, "I to my own sad place return," &c.

But I must close, or I shall tire your patience. My kind Christian regards to Mrs. H——; I trust she is better, and also that your frail tabernacle is no worse. May the dear Lord bless you both, and lift up upon you the light of His blessed countenance, and abundantly bless your labours both in the ministry and in writing. With my very kind Christian regards,

I am, yours truly,

March 23rd, 1891.

R.

LETTER FOR THE YOUNG.

HOW WILT THOU DO IN THE SWELLING OF JORDAN?

MY DEAREST CHILD,—I often think of you when I don't see you, and try to speak to the great God for you when I can't speak to you. And if He will but hear and answer my poor petitions for you, you will be in heaven hereafter as certainly as that you are now on the earth.

I came here last Saturday; how time flies! Having to preach on Monday eve, the Lord helping me, I shall not return home till Tuesday, so shall not be at the anniversary. Give my love to Mr. H—— and the other ministers. I hope the Lord will favour the friends with a good day, which, I have no doubt, they desire.

I hope Miss W—— continues to improve in health. The Lord make His face to shine upon her, and give her to feel how precious He is. Tell her, when she can't pray for herself, to pray for poor me. I need much from the Lord; indeed, I feel I can do nothing without Him, except it is to sin, and sin "dwelleth in me," and it is as natural to me to sin as it is to breathe. Do you know any one else like it? Don't you think it will be a great miracle if I am ever found in heaven? The good Lord have mercy upon me, for this I daily need. I am here like a novice among wise men; yet there are a few of the "poor in spirit," and these, like the "common people" in our Lord's day, seem to hear the Word gladly. May the Lord bless you, my dear child, is the desire of

Your affectionate father,

May 11th, 1878.

H. HAMMOND.

My life, and all I have from Adam, is subject to death; I want a life that death cannot touch—it is in Christ.

ROME AND THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

THE priests are everywhere seeking to get control of the public schools. The Mayor of St. Paul, Minn., has appointed a priest, the president of the Roman Catholic Seminary, a member of the School Board, and two priests have been placed on the committee of the School Board of New Haven, Conn., to prepare an order of religious services for the use of the public schools. The result is what might be expected. The order of services contains prayers to the Virgin Mary, which Protestant children must repeat or leave the schools. The Roman Catholic vote in many of the New England cities is such a potent factor in elections, that public men who are ambitious do not hesitate to barter the rights and privileges of their children for office. This is deplorable. But as this is a free country, Rome is making the most of its freedom to poison the minds of American children.

If the American people like the teachings of Rome and prayers to the Virgin Mary for themselves and their children, they can have them, as, we repeat, this is a free country, and each one can worship God or the Virgin as he pleases. But if the people who worship the Virgin could be taught how much better it is to worship God in spirit and in truth, they would not bother the Virgin with their petitions that she cannot answer, as she has not divine power, but they would go directly to Jesus, the Son of Mary according to the flesh, and obtain from Him what their souls desire, for all power in heaven and on earth is His. The American people must awake, for there is danger ahead.—*English Churchman.*

APOSTATES AND "RANSOMERS."

THE following recently appeared in the *Echo*.—

SIR,—The position now assumed by Cardinal Manning is that the energy of the "Ransomers" is to be limited to the cases of "apostate" priests and nuns. An apostate is one who has renounced his principles, whether religious or political. Such an one is deemed an apostate only by the class from which he is alleged to have apostatized. A matter of opinion. Now, it does not appear to have occurred to the Cardinal that he himself is an apostate, but, nevertheless, he would be rather surprised if the principle he is said to advocate were meted out to him when he takes the chair or appears on the platform of the "Catholic Truth Society," or other essentially Roman sectarian meetings.

Yours, &c.,

U. H. COLLETTE.



"THE WAVES SEEMED TO PREACH TO ME." (See page 226.)

A VISIT TO THE SEASIDE.

IN the month of July, in the year of 18—, being very much afflicted in body, but more so as it respects the mind—"Alas! the day of Jacob's trouble, is great, there is none like unto it!"—I was ordered by my medical adviser to the sea coast for a change of air. I did not go for some time after I was thus advised, till my poor body was in a very weak state, and it was hoped that the change would prove beneficial to the restoration thereof. While there, being very ill in body, and very much distressed in my mind, the subjects of an eternal world and the things of eternity seemed to engross my whole attention, and the question, "What shall I do, when that important day comes?" A day for which all other days are made, viz., the day of judgment, when "All nations must be assembled before Him," and when they will be all distinguished, and known, and divided into two classes, viz., "the righteous," and "the wicked"—"the sheep and the goats"—him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not. Ruminating upon these, which to me were then most important things, and are so now, "For experience teacheth knowledge," and while standing on the beach of the Sussex coast, I saw a beauty even in the waves of the sea. They seemed to teach some very useful and important things, which will never be erased from the memory while reason holds her seat. While thinking upon the subject which my poor mind had been sorely exercised with for days and weeks—yea, I may say for several months—wondering how the scene would end, and feeling in my soul that it must live for ever in bliss or misery, in happiness, or in never-ending torments, and greatly fearing that the latter would be my portion—the thought came, "Who can dwell with everlasting burnings?"

I, indeed, for a time, experienced in my conscience "*a hell*," for I had no quietude day nor night; no solid peace, no resting-place, *manifestly*, when the words of the Prophet Isaiah seemed to be like a dagger to my already troubled heart. "The wicked are like the troubled sea that cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt." Such were the feelings of my mind, and wherever I was, wherever I went, still the concerns of my soul seemed to follow me. "Oh! what shall I do? where shall I go?" was my incessant cry; when on one bright sunshiny day, the waves of the sea seemed to preach to me the everlasting gospel; and although to some it may appear visionary, still I felt it and realised comfort therefrom. I thought that I could see five waves, the first of which came, as it were, a little way and went back; the second overshot the first, and so on until the fifth, which seemed to cover the whole which had gone

before. This taught, or seemed to preach to me the following things :—

First. Things presented by the first wave.—The entrance of sin into the world ; sin reigning unto death, that it was spread over the whole of Adam's posterity, and the consequence thereof is, they go astray from the womb speaking lies, "aliens to the commonwealth of Israel, having no hope and without God in the world."

Secondly. The second wave went further.—There was not only an entrance of sin into the world, but there is the guilt of sin, known and experienced by all those who will be delivered therefrom ; for no individual will be brought to know and feel the guilt of sin experienced by *him* or *herself*, but that poor soul that shall and must be delivered therefrom.

The third wave.—This seemed to represent and set forth the misery that the entrance of sin has entailed upon all mankind, and the misery that is known, felt, and experienced, by that poor soul that is brought to know and feel his ruined and undone condition ; that is made alive by the quickening power of God and the Eternal Spirit : "And you hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins" ; thus feeling sin to be sin, feeling the guilt arising therefrom, and the misery that it entails.

The fourth wave.—This seemed to set forth that unbelief we are the subjects of, that I was the subject of ; this evil heart (though often in my best affections I would have had it otherwise) "prone to depart from the living God," perhaps after I had experienced a little of the sweet smilings of His face, which, to the soul that enjoys the same, is a heaven upon earth. How true are the words of the poet :—

"Thy shining grace can cheer,
This dungeon where I dwell ;
'Tis Paradise if Thou art here,
If Thou depart, 'tis hell."

Then comes the wave of unbelief, and calls in question all which one has ever enjoyed, and down sinks the soul in its feeling enjoyments, and asks the question, "If I love, why am I thus ?" It is our mercy if it drives us to the same quarter as it did one of old "And she went and enquired of the Lord" ; and at that place our matters are always set right ; Satan is nonplussed, and our unbelief is put to the flight.

The fifth and last wave—This preached to me the love of that God, who I hope I could say, or rather desire to say, "He is my God" ; and when we are brought by sweet meditation and contemplation to think on this love, we are lost in wonder, love and praise ; and the soul that has ever experienced this love in the smallest degree, will say with the Psalmist, "O ! taste and see that

the Lord is good." Thus, notwithstanding that sin entered into the world, and guilt is known, felt, and experienced by all those who are, sooner or later, delivered therefrom; and there is also that misery, that eternal weight of misery that awaits all those who do not experience what sin is, and what sin has done for them, individually and personally, but are kept by Satan in chains until by-and-bye they will find themselves in that place where hope can never come. Yet the unbelieving waves that many of God's children have, and which will continue to try them while in this time state, shall lastly be overcome by the aboundings and super-aboundings of God's love to us, which will swallow up every difficulty, every trial, however painful, when we get to that fair haven of rest on high to go no more out for ever.

"Lord, help us then to raise our songs
To Thee, to whom all praise belongs,
For love which is so rich, so free.
And may each say, 'It is for me.'

"Then when we meet around Thy throne,
We'll sing of wonders yet unknown;
With all Thy blood-bought ransomed throng,
And Christ alone shall be our song."

A. P.

THE HOME AT BETHANY.

'Twas a humble home, in a lowly spot,
On Judæa's fertile soil;
But contentment can sweeten the lowliest lot,
And love lighten the heaviest toil.
And love brightened the life in that lowly home,
And cheered every trouble and care;
For, better than love of all earthly ties,
The love of Christ was there.

In that happy home some time had dwelt
A brother and sisters twain;
In sweet content and heavenly peace,
Each loved, and was loved again.
And the God of love, the Prince of Peace,
In human nature drest,
He loved them all, and had often made
Their home His place of rest.

And one had washed His feet with her tears,
And wiped them with her hair;*
And the ointment poured from the contrite heart
Had shed its rich fragrance there.

* Some do not understand this Mary to be the same person who washed the Lord's feet with her tears.—ED.

She had sat at His feet to hear His word
At the close of the summer's day;
And He said, "She hath chosen that better part
That shall not be taken away."

But "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth";
And though not permitted to know
The end in view, yet from every stroke
Shall their good and His glory flow.
And sickness may enter the happiest home,
By the will of the great All-wise;
And death, with relentless hand, may rend
The fondest of earthly ties.

Alas! the brother lies sick unto death,
While the sisters weep and pray,
And long, as they watch the shortening breath,
For the Friend who is far away.
And fain would they hasten His quick return,
Ere life's fading breath hath sped,
And the fading lamp hath ceased to burn,
And the brother loved lie dead.

But they watch in vain—the day has passed,
And the morrow, and following day:
And the loving heart has ceased to beat—
The spirit has passed away.
And they lay him to rest in the quiet grave;
And oft from their hearts have cried,
"Oh, if the Master had but been here,
Our brother had not died!"

But the Lord, when His own good time has come,
To Bethany comes again,
And finds that the friend He has loved so well
In the grave four days has lain:
And one sister meets Him on His way,
And with heart most sorely tried,
"Oh, Lord," she cries, "if Thou hadst been here,
My brother had not died!"

"But," adds Martha, "I know that even now
Thy power and Thy grace are free;
And that any request Thou wilt ask of God,
Shall surely be given to Thee."
But He speaks not like one who as suppliant craves;
His Godhead He still doth retain;
Sweet words of authority fall from His lips,
"Thy brother *shall* rise again."

But the faith that just now had so firmly spoke
Of the power so full and free,
Again has drooped, and the tear-dimmed eyes
The Omnipotent cannot see.

"I know that he shall," the sister replies,
 "But that time is far, far away;
 In the resurrection, when all shall rise,
 At the last great judgment day."

"Thy faith looks forth to that glorious morn,
 But dost thou in *Me* believe?
 For *the* resurrection in truth am I,
 And the life of all that live.
 The soul that is brought in *Me* to believe,
 From the grave of sin shall rise;
 And living, believing in *Me*, shall receive
 A life that never dies."

And faith revives at that glorious word—
 "With the word of a King is power"—
 The mists of dark unbelief have fled,
 And its clouds no longer lower.
 And hope and love, by the Holy Ghost,
 In the heart are shed abroad:
 "Yea, Lord, I believe that Thou art the Christ,
 The Son of the living God."

Then she straightway speeds to her sister dear,
 That *her* grief relieved might be;
 And whispers low, "The Master is come,
 And, behold, He calleth for thee."
 And the gentle one falls at the Saviour's feet,
 Regardless of all beside;
 She also says, "Lord, if Thou hadst been here,
 My brother had not died!"

He sees the tears that they freely shed,
 And the friends that around them throng;
 And God-like sympathy fills His breast,
 As slowly they move along.
 And His tears of heavenly pity fall
 On the place where Lazarus sleeps:
 At the lowly grave of a humble friend,
 The world's Creator weeps.

Why did He weep? He knew His power
 Could break death's strongest chain;
 And had He not given His sacred word,
 "Thy brother shall rise again"?
 'Twas His will that those who had sown in tears,
 Soon now with joy should reap,
 And the glory of God should be there displayed—
 Then *why* did Jesus weep?

Pause, Christian, pause, and awhile reflect;
 Thy risen and glorious Head
 Has even in this an example left,
 That thou in His steps should tread.

And as He wept with His sorrowing friends,
 Be it thine His rule to keep :
 Not only "rejoice with them that joy,"
 But "weep with them that weep."

See—He nears the grave, and gives command
 That the stone be rolled away.
 "But, Lord, four days in the grave he has lain !
 By this time he must decay !"
 But the gentle voice, in mild reproof,
 Is heard, "Said I not unto thee
 That if in Me thou wouldst believe,
 Thou the glory of God shouldst see ?"

And the Voice that at first out of nothing spake
 All things in the heavens and earth,
 Now calls aloud by the opened grave,
 And bids the dead "Come forth !"
 And he that *was* dead, at that powerful word
 Feels life through each member flow ;
 And the same sweet Voice once more is heard—
 "Loose him, and let him go !"

And again there is joy in Bethany's home,
 As they gather around the board,
 With the brother restored from death's dark cave,
 And death's all-conquering Lord.
 And friends and neighbours gather around,
 The rejoicing ones to greet ;
 And the fragrant balm of grateful love
 Is poured on the sacred feet.

Oh, Thou, who thus in Bethany's home
 Showedst forth Thy wondrous love,
 Prepare us all, by Thy Spirit's power,
 For Thy happier home above ;
 That with them and all of the ransomed race,
 Redeemed by Thy blood alone,
 We may praise Thee while endless ages roll,
 Around Thy eternal throne.

Chippenham.

R. W. H.

SALVATION.

WE see that salvation consists of three parts. Salvation *past*, Salvation *present*, and Salvation *future*. Salvation *past* consists in having our names written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world. Salvation *present* consists in the manifestation of Jesus to the soul, whereby He betroths it to Himself. Salvation *future* consists in the enjoyment of Christ when the elect shall sit down to the marriage supper of the Lamb, and be for ever with the Lord.—*J. C. Philpot.*

CHAFF OR WHEAT?

"What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord."—JER. xxiii. 28.

II.—THE WHEAT.

IN our last it was our painful task to describe the chaff, and now we proceed to consider the wheat, which, however, during its growth is so encompassed with chaff as often to seem completely hidden. Notwithstanding, a grain of wheat—almost imperceptible, and quite insignificant—is wheat. And grace, however small, *is* grace, though it may be hidden and tried.

1. Let us think of *its source*. Wheat is not produced from tares. Wheat springs from a grain like itself, which, having been sown in the earth, died, and then became the root, from which it received its life, and, in process of time, came to maturity. Now, Jesus was the corn of wheat which fell into the ground and died, and, therefore, sprang up, and brought forth much fruit (John xii. 24). The Christian derives his life from his Saviour's death. The host of the ransomed will constitute the glorious harvest of "shocks of corn fully ripe," which all sprang from this root. Their life is the effect of His death. Under the quickening power of the Holy Spirit, the life of Christ is imparted to them, which is the best proof they can have that the Son of God yielded up His life for them. In the day of regeneration, the life of God implanted begins to work in those strugglings forth upwards to the light which distinguishes the living seed. In this secret experience of the hidden inward power of God, the quickened soul meets with much opposition. Adversaries threaten to devour it, and earth's clods lie heavily upon it. Gradually, however, it presses towards the light of day, "here a little, and there a little"; and so it grows—"first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear" (Mark iv. 28). The wheat, springing up, appears in—

2. *The blade*. Life always discovers itself sooner or later. In the renewed heart, as the effect of divine life, there is the up-rising of spiritual desires, feelings, thoughts and aspirations above the earth, in which, by nature, we are rooted, towards the Sun of Righteousness. Sincere desires after Christ, the feeling sense of need of Him, the irrepressible sensations of sorrow and grief because of sin, the wishes and thoughts of the earth-bound soul aspiring to higher things, the longing for communion with the Lord—in these consist the pressing upward of the life of God in the soul, and by them the wheat is revealed in the "blade." But every step is disputed, and the puttings forth of life are often checked by cold east winds and nipping frosts. Sometimes, also, the tender blade is trodden down and trampled to the ground.

But all is overruled for good. The checks, so unwelcome at the time, prevent too rapid growth, and the trappings down and oppressions cause it to take root more deeply, and so, afterward, to grow more strongly. One of the most interesting features of the writings in the "Seeker's Corner" has been those descriptions of experience which were so manifestly the workings of the fear of God in the writers' hearts, the simple tales enabling us to trace the tender unfoldings of the blade, the gracious springings up of life. A spirit of prayer is common to all the seeking seed of Jacob, for prayer is the lifting up of the soul to God. Montgomery beautifully describes it—

"Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near."

The blade of desire and the fear of God grows by imperceptible degrees, till we see—

3. *The Ear.* This stage of growth marks the promise of fruit. The blade has shot upwards till the commencement of the formation of the fruit proves the true nature of the plant, for "By their fruit ye shall know them." When the corn has grown so far, it is more exposed than before to the storms which sometimes beat upon the wheat in ear with remorseless fury. Growing Christians meet with tempests that threaten to uproot and overthrow. The "ear" signifies *knowledge*; and a genuine, vital experience of divine things will result in an increased spiritual acquaintance with self, and the grace of Jesus. The storms that assail the saint make him realize his frailty, weakness and insufficiency—his inability (of himself) to stand—as nothing else can.

The sweet promise of fruitfulness is accompanied by the most puzzling appearances of chaff (unsuspected till now), very closely connected with, and enveloping and hiding the grain. When the grace of God is clearly revealed, so soon, and in like proportion, will there be a discovery of the existence of flesh and sin. Unbelief cleaves closely to *faith*; presumption, on the one hand, and despair on the other, seem as if they would destroy the Christian's *hope*, or at least, prevent its fruition, and the irreconcilable enmity of the carnal mind is ready at times to choke the buddings of *love* to the Lord in the exercised saint. When there appears so much in the profession which is natural and sinful, it becomes a question whether there is any possession at all. Can there be any reality—any fruit—underneath the chaff, so painfully felt and so conspicuously present? Time proves this. The corn still grows, and in its due season appears—

4. *The full corn in the ear.* The period of fruition has arrived. Desire is the "blade," prayer the "ear," and the reception of answers to prayer the "full corn in the ear." Conviction of sin is the "blade," repentance for sin is the "ear," and sin's remission is the "full corn in the ear." The Lord never leaves His work imperfect. He creates need in order to supply it, both need and supply being His gift.

The "full corn" denotes ripeness, and surely it is a blessed thing to see a ripe Christian standing in the field of the Church militant awaiting the coming of the Reaper. In a poor season, however, many ears are light, and others apparently blasted; yet we must not judge too harshly; there may be some fruit even in these. But we may profitably note that the distinguishing mark of a blighted, shallow experience is just this—a *lack of humility*. Look over the waving corn in all its golden glory, and you will observe that the heaviest, most fruitful ears hang lowest. The most fruitful Christian will always be the humblest. The existence or lack of true humility is always the test of fruitfulness.

5. Again, we may remark that all the fruit of wheat is *in its head*, teaching us the important and never-to-be-forgotten lesson that all the saint's fruit is in his Head—Christ Jesus. The ripe golden wheat is very beautiful and precious, and very much more so is the analogous fruition of the Christian's life; the ripening fruits of communion with the Lord; the meek and chastened spirit delighting in His Word; the shedding abroad of the love of God; the simple dependence upon Christ; the "peace that passeth all understanding"; the anticipations and foretastes of the rest that remaineth; the gracious applications of the exceeding great and precious promises, and the sweet bedewings and renewings of the blessed Spirit daily experienced. Such an one indeed "brings forth fruit in his season" (Psa. i. 3), in distinction to "the chaff which the wind driveth away" (ver. 4).

6. Standing corn is *remarkably pliant*, yielding to the breeze; it breaks not; seeming for a moment to be overthrown, it speedily resumes its uprightness. So when the winds of adversity blow over the Lord's fields of corn, His wheat also is cast down for a moment, but it is not destroyed; on the contrary, the Christian is, in the end, strengthened by the shaking and the trial, which have also promoted the setting and ripening of the fruit. The grace of God keeps its favoured possessor upright in heart, and the same grace orders all things well, until at last the harvest home is shouted, and the ransomed soul is gathered, as a shock of corn fully ripe, into the heavenly garner. "What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord."

Leicester.

E. C.

"OUR ROCK."

(DEUTERONOMY xxxii. 31.)

ONE of the grandest names of the Lord Jesus Christ is the figurative title so often applied in the Old Testament to the God of Israel, "*A Rock*," and, as we find it emphatically put in one expressive passage, "The Rock of Ages" (Isa. xxvi. 4, margin).

Moses used the word again and again, and we know how much it suggested to his mind, for he clave the rocks in the wilderness by God's command, and water was given the people out of the great depths, so that they all drank of that river, and all the spiritual among them drank of that "*spiritual Rock* that followed them, and that Rock was Christ."

I was much interested in a piece I read recently in a publication, about the difference between God's first and second command to Moses; the first time He bade him take his rod and *smite* the rock in Horeb (Exod. xvii. 6); the second time he was only to *speak* to the one in Kadesh, thus beautifully prefiguring that Jesus should be smitten *once for all*, and thenceforth, by prayer and supplication, the sacred streams of love and mercy should be sought and found by all the weary pilgrims to the heavenly land, and the Rock of Ages once cleft by justice is eternally the Shelter and the Supply of all who put their trust in Him. This Man shall be a Hiding-place from the storm, and a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. The higher the rock, the longer its shadow; and this Divine Rock casts His protecting shade over the whole of our pilgrimage. How sweet the thought that wherever we may be we are still beneath His protection, still within His gracious care! The hunted David often sheltered in literal caves, but his God was his true Protector, his everlasting and unchanging Friend. On this Rock of Ages we build our hopes for eternity, steadfast and sure; *within* His mediatorial work of Providence and grace we live and have our being—for this same Jesus, who was once slain as His people's Sacrifice, lives for ever as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Here may we trust and rejoice, and may the streams of love that flow from Him refresh us all our journey through!

The feeble conies are wise, for they make their houses in the rocks, and they who are privileged to "dwell in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty," and some of us have proved by sweet experience, that in the hour of deepest trial we have felt most blessedly the truth of the wondrous words, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee"; and, let what will come, nothing can happen to us without His knowledge

and control, and therefore nothing can possibly really injure those who are resting there.

“Wide as the world is Thy command;
Vast as eternity Thy love;
Firm as a rock Thy truth shall stand,
When rolling years shall cease to move.”

Therefore, may we “trust, and not be afraid,” and assured that “Thou, Lord, art our salvation.” May we triumph in Thee as our “*Strength* and our *Song*,” until all the dangers and sorrows of this life are overpast, and we see Thee as Thou art in that fair land where desert mercies are no longer needed, for, “in Thy presence is fulness of joy, and at Thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.” Amen.

August, 1891.

H. S. L.

A DYING SAINT.

A RELATIVE one day said to the late Mr. W. Day, of Bristol, “It is a comfort to you to see your children round you.” “Yes,” he answered, with an allusion to the occasional dimness of his vision, “it is. It would be more so if I could see them. But I can only see one now, and another then.” “You can, however, see Jesus by the eye of faith.” His countenance kindled with a smile of joy, and, clasping his hands, he exclaimed, with a loud voice, “He is my great, my only Object. O my God! My portion! My all! Blessed be Thy name! Thou hast said unto me, ‘Thou art Mine.’” Then, with much energy, he added, “The Bible is nothing to me; the Bible is nothing to me, but as it reveals to my soul a covenant Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. There I see perfection. When I look at man—when I look at myself, I see nothing but vileness—a rent here, a chasm there. It would drive me to despair. Oh, when,” and he wept profusely, “when shall I behold Christ as He is, and cast myself at His feet? He has offered me a pledge of this beyond all your imagination can conceive. I have seen Him rising before me in all the majesty of the Godhead. The world has shown me its favours, and has taken them away again. I have enjoyed many tokens of the lovingkindness of my God, and I have at other times been stripped of what I most valued. But oh, my God, my Redeemer, Thou hast never failed me!” Then, stretching out his hands to his family around his bed, he cried, “O Lord, shine forth, shine forth in Thy glory upon these dear ones! Thou wilt never leave them—Thou wilt never forsake them!” It was an affecting, a sublime scene. It was like a patriarch standing on the threshold of heaven, looking back to bless his family, and looking forward, earnestly longing to take his last step.

THE ANXIOUS INQUIRER'S PAGE.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER BY W. ROMAINE.

THE Holy Spirit will glorify nothing but Jesus. He will stain the pride of all greatness and of all goodness excepting what is derived from the fulness of the incarnate God. I know one who learned this very slowly, but has had much pains taken with him, and to make what I have been saying more plain I would illustrate it by his experience. He was a very, very vain, proud young man, knew almost everything but himself, and therefore was mighty fond of himself. He met with many disappointments to his pride, which only made him prouder, till the Lord was pleased to let him see and feel the plague of his own heart. He tried every method that can be tried to give peace, but found none. In his despair of all things else, he betook himself to Jesus, and he was most kindly received. Now you know whereabouts I am, and what my present state is : it may be of some use to you to be informed how I was brought into it. God's dealings with me have been wonderful, not only for the royal sovereignty of His richest grace, but also for the manner of His teaching, on which I cannot look back without adoring my meek and lowly Prophet. He would have all the honour of working out and also of applying His glorious salvation. When I was in trouble and soul-concern He would not let me learn of man. I went everywhere to hear, but nobody was suffered to speak to my case. The reason of this I could not then tell, but I know it now. The Arminian Methodists flocked about me and courted my acquaintance, which became a great snare unto me. By their means I was made to believe that part of my title to salvation was to be inherent—something called holiness in myself—which grace was to help me to, and I was to get it by watchfulness, prayer, fasting, hearing, reading, sacraments, &c., so that after much and long attendance on those means, I might be able to look inward and be pleased with my own improvement, finding I was grown in grace, a great deal holier and more deserving of heaven than I had been. I do not wonder that I received this doctrine. It was sweet food to a proud heart. I feasted on it, and to work I went. It was hard labour and sad bondage, but the hopes of having something to glory in of mine own kept up my spirits. I went on day after day striving, but still I found myself not a bit better. No galley-slave worked harder or to less purpose. I saw more sin in myself instead of more holiness, which made my bondage very hard. The more I pursued the thing I wanted, it flew farther and farther from me. I had no notion that this was divine teaching, and that God was delivering me from my mistake in this way. Now and then a little light would break in and

show me something of the glory of Jesus. But it was a glimpse only—gone in a moment!

As I saw more of my heart, and began to feel more of my corrupt nature, I got clearer views of Gospel grace, and in proportion as I came to know myself, I advanced in the knowledge of Christ Jesus. But this was very slow work; the old leaven of self-righteousness stuck close to me still, and made me a dull scholar in the school of Christ. I was forced to give up one thing and another on which I had some dependence. I was left at last, stript of all, and neither had, nor could see where I could have, aught to rest my hopes upon that I could call my own. This made way for blessed views of Jesus. Being now led to very deep discoveries of my own legal heart; of the dishonour which I had put upon the Saviour; of the despite I had done to the spirit of grace, by resisting and perverting the workings of His love—these things so humbled me that I became very vile in my own eyes. And as self was debased, the Scriptures became an open book, and every page presented the Saviour in new glory. Then were explained to me these truths, which are now the very joy and life of my soul, such as:

First, the plan of salvation contrived by the wisdom of Jehovah Alehim, fulfilled in the Divine Person and work of Jesus, and applied by the Spirit of Jesus. The whole was so ordered from first to last that all the glory of it might be secured to the persons in Jehovah. The devil fell by pride, and tempted and seduced the man into pride. Therefore, the Lord, to hide pride from man, has so contrived His salvation that he who glorieth should have nothing to glory in but the Lord.

Secondly, the benefits of salvation are all the free gifts of free grace, conferred without any regard to what the receiver of them is, nothing being looked at by the Giver but His own sovereign glory. Therefore, the receivers are the ungodly—the worst of them, the unworthy, the chief of sinners—such are saved freely by grace, through faith, and that not of themselves, it (namely, salvation by faith) is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast.

Thirdly, when I considered these benefits, one by one, it was the very death of self-righteousness and self-complacency; for when I looked at the empty hand which faith puts forth to receive them, whence was the hand emptied—whence came faith—whence the power to put forth the empty hand, and whence the benefits received upon putting it forth? All is of God! He humbles us, that we may be willing to receive Christ; He keeps us humble, that we may be willing to live by faith upon Christ received, and as it is a great benefit to have this faith, so it is:

Fourthly, a great, inestimably great benefit to live by faith,

for this is a life in every act of it dependent upon another. Self is renounced, so far as Christ is lived upon, and faith is the most emptying, pulling-down grace—most emptying because it says and proves it, too. "In me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing," therefore it will not let a man see aught good in himself, but pulls down every high thought and lays it low in subjection to Jesus. It is called the faith of the Son of God because He is the Author and the Finisher of it—He gives it; He gives us to live by it; He gives the benefits received by it, He gives the glory laid up for it: so that if I live to God, and in any act have living communion with God, it is by nothing in myself but wholly by the faith of the Son of God. When I wanted to do anything commanded I found

Fifthly, a continual matter for humiliation—I was forced to be dependent for the will and for the power, and having done my best I could not present it to God, but upon the golden altar that sanctifieth the gifts. Not the worthiness, not the goodness of the gifts, but the sanctifying grace of the great High Priest alone can make them holy and acceptable. How low did this lay the pride of good works, since after all they were viler than dung, unless perfumed with the sweet incense of Jesus' blood and righteousness! Here I learnt to eye Him in all my works and duties—the Alpha and Omega of them—the life and spirit of all my prayers and sermons, and hearing, and reading, and ordinances; they are all dead works unless done in, and by, the faith of the Son of God. Against this blessed truth, of which I am as certain as that I am alive, I find my nature kick. To this hour a legal heart will be creeping into duties to get between me and my dear Jesus, whom I go to meet in them. But He soon recovers me from the temptation, makes me loathe myself for it, and gets fresh glory to His sovereign grace; and, as all the great and good things ever done in the world were done by faith, so all the crosses ever endured with patience were from the same cause, which is

Sixthly, another humbling lesson. I find to this moment so much unbelief and impatience in myself that if God were to leave me to be tried with anything that crossed my will, if it was but a feather, it would break my back. Nothing tends to keep me vile in my own eyes like this fretting, and murmuring, and heart-burning, when the will of God in the least thwarts my will. I read "the trial of your faith worketh patience"—the trial of mine the direct contrary. Instead of patient submission, I want to have my own way—to take very little physic, and that very sweet; so the flesh lusteth! But the Physician knows better, He knows when and what to prescribe. May every potion purge out this impatient, proud, unbelieving temper, so that faith may

render healthful to the soul what is painful to the flesh ! And as no cross can be endured without the faith of the Son of God, so

Seventhly and lastly. There is no comfortable view of leaving the world but by this same faith. "These all" who had obtained a good report in every age "died in faith." On their death-bed they did not look for present peace and future glory, but to the Lamb of God. Their great works ; their eminent services ; their various sufferings—all were cast behind their backs, and they died as they lived, looking at nothing but Jesus. He was their Antidote against the fear and against the power of death. They feared not the cold death sweat. Jesus' bloody sweat was their dependence. The dart lost its force in Jesus' side. The sting was lost in His corpse. Death stung itself to death when it killed Him. There is life—life in its highest exaltation—and glory in not breathing the air of this world. This life through death Jesus entered on, and we enter on it now by faith ; and when our breath is stopped, we have this life as He has it—pure, spiritual, and divine. Because He lives it, we shall live it also. Yes, my dear friend, we, you and I, after we have lived a little longer to empty us more, to bring us more out of ourselves, that we may be humbled, and Jesus exalted more, we shall fall asleep in Jesus—not die, but sleep—not see, not taste death, so He promises us ; but in His dear arms sweetly go to rest in our weary bodies, when our souls shall be with the Lord. And then we shall be perfect in that lesson which we learn so very slowly in this present world, namely : that from Him, and of Him, and to Him are all things, to whom be all the glory for ever and ever.—Amen !

These are the things which God Himself has taught me—man had no hand at all in it. No person in the world, not I myself, for I fought against them as long as I could, so that my present possession of them, with all the rich blessings which they contain, is from my heavenly Teacher alone. And I have not learned them as we do mathematics, to keep them in memory, and to make use of them when I please ; no, I find in me to this moment an opposition to every gospel-truth—both to the belief of it in my head, and to the comfort of it in my heart. I am still a poor, dependent creature, sitting very low at the feet of my dear Teacher, and learning to admire that love of His which brought me down, and keeps me down at His feet. There be my seat till I learn my lesson perfectly ! That will soon be. There is nothing in His presence but what is like Himself. In heaven all is perfection. The saints are as humble as they are happy, clothed with glory and clothed with humility, with one heart and one voice, they cry, "Worthy is the Lamb !" They look not at,

they praise not, one another ; but the Lamb is glorified in His saints, and will have from them never-ending praise and glory, for the glory which His sovereign grace has bestowed upon them. In a measure I now feel what they do. My heart is in tune, and I can join that blessed hymn, looking at Him as the River of Grace, as they look at Him the Giver of Glory. I can take the crown most gladly from the head of all my graces, as they do from the head of their glory, and cast it down at His loving feet. "Worthy is the Lamb," He is ! He is ! Blessing on Him for ever and ever.—Amen !

THE BELIEVER'S SURE FOUNDATION.

(2 TIMOTHY ii. 19.)

My God, my Saviour, and my All,
 My Refuge and my Stay ;
 My firm Foundation, strong and sure,
 Which never can decay.

Hast Thou not stamped upon my breast,
 In living letters bright,
 "My love, My dove, My undefiled,
 My chosen, My delight" ?

Hast Thou not sealed me with Thy blood
 A favourite of heaven ?
 Hast Thou not whispered to my soul,
 "Thy sins are all forgiven" ?

Oh, well do I remember where
 And when it was impressed !
 The blessing overcame me quite,
 And gave my spirit rest.

With such a mark, I safely may
 Conclude that I am Thine—
 A little branch united to
 The true and living Vine.

By knowledge and by purchase, too,
 Thine I shall ever be—
 A stone in mercy's building fair,
 To all eternity.

Not all the powers of earth or hell
 Combined, or yet alone,
 Shall ever pluck from mercy's walls
 One precious living stone.

Cemented with a Saviour's blood,
 It must and shall endure ;
 While on it is inscribed these words—
 "The Lord's for evermore."

THE SEEKER'S CORNER.

To the Editor of the Sower.

MY DEAR SIR,—I do not think this scribble will be worthy for the SOWER, but I feel I must tell you how much I have enjoyed reading the little book, and can bless God that He ever put it into your mind to open a corner for Seekers, which I hope may be blessed to many. One of my greatest desires is to be found among God's people. I believe I have really felt this hymn to be very sweet to me—

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

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

Oh, sir, I feel what a great blessing it must be to have a right religion, for I often wonder how it will be with me when I come to die. I love to read of the death of the Lord's saints. I have felt so happy in reading about them at times, that I have felt as though I could then go with them, as it were, to heaven's gate; and I have said, “Oh, that my last end may be like theirs,” but not without desiring to live their life. Yet what hard work I do feel it to be, to live to God as I would! I sometimes feel such a sweet love to Him, or I hope I do, that I long to be with Him in heaven. I feel I can truly say, “Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth I desire beside Thee.”

But I do not stay in this frame long at a time, and I often wonder where the scene will end. I try to quietly think it over, and wonder how it will be with me when I come to die. I desire to return many thanks to the kind friend that wrote such a nice and encouraging letter to Seekers; I felt it to be a blessing to me, and the Seeker's Prayer I felt to be very sweet, for I can say these are just my experiences. There is nothing on this earth could give me so much happiness as to know that my sins are forgiven. How often have I prayed that at eventide it may be light, and I have once or twice felt that it would be so! Then, again, my hopes seem all gone, and I feel to be in the dark, and fear I shall die in the dark. Oh, how dreadful it will be if such is the case! I am sure I have no other hope but in the

dear Saviour of sinners ; and, if I perish, I must perish crying for mercy !

Dear sir, my prayer is that the Lord may bless you and yours, and give you much of His sweet presence, and grant you strength of body, so that you may be enabled to labour and sometimes inclined to give us answers, for they are often so encouraging to me. I have found them at times to be so very sweet. Hoping you will forgive me for sending this very poor scribble—

“ Oh, may I live to reach the place
Where sin no more defiles,
Where He unveils His blissful face,
And looks, and loves, and smiles ! ”

Yours in Christ,
E. C.

July 15th.

[Dear friend, though you are an older seeker than many whose epistles appear in the “Corner,” we believe many of your words will find a place in the hearts of those whose faces God has set Zionward. But we trust the Lord will graciously accord you the desire of your heart, even the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins, and of your acceptance in the Beloved. Then we trust you will unite with many other Seekers, who have obtained like rich mercy, in singing of “Sovereign grace, o’er sin abounding.”—ED.]

DEAR SIR,—I have no doubt you will think me a strange correspondent, inasmuch as I am a foreigner, and an Israelite by birth ; but I trust, by the grace of God, I am not a foreigner to Christ Jesus, and I also trust that I am an Israelite indeed.

I have been reading your valuable little book, and received a great deal of good food from it, and I thought I should like to send a few lines for the “Seeker’s Corner.” “Seek, and ye shall find,” is commanded by Christ Himself. I may say with the Apostle Paul, “By the grace of God, I am what I am” ; and, by the grace of God, the Holy Spirit brought me out of darkness (or blindness) into that marvellous light. I may say that my faith came by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear” (Matt. xi. 15).

I was very much encouraged in reading in your little book these words, “Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound : they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance.” They came very sweet to my soul—

“ How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer’s ear.”

When I look back only a little while ago, that Name was nought to me. Who knows the Shepherd but the flock ? And yet there

is nothing wonderful about my conversion.* "Is the Lord's hand shortened to His people?" "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." Blessed be God for the promise! Although, when I look back in the glass of reflection, I think with amazement how I, who was yet a little while ago a hater of the name of Jesus, am now a believer in Him who was crucified on Calvary for the sins of His people. "Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare" (Isa. xlii. 9). I do not write for the sake of writing, but for the encouragement of those who may read your little book, to show that the Lord still works among the natural seed of Abraham—

"Ye chosen seed of Israel's race,
A remnant weak and small,
Hail Him who saves you by His grace,
And crown Him Lord of all."

I often feel a desire that the Lord may speak unto my soul, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile"; and sometimes I feel very much exalted that the Lord has shown things new and old unto me. But how very often do I feel within myself the terrible judgment which I deserve through my unbelief in time past, and I say, "Am I worthy to be among those whom the Lord had chosen before the world was?" But the Lord said, "Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated." "Behold, what manner of love!" And why hath the Lord made me to differ from my brethren? Like one of old, I am become an alien to my mother's children, and even to my parent, but, blessed be God, He whispers in my ear, "When thy father and thy mother forsake thee, then will I take thee up."

I shall not take any more of your space, and I trust each one that reads this may be benefited, and give all the praise and glory to God in the highest, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

Yours in loving bonds of Christ,

August 8th, 1891.

E. W.

DEAR MR. HULL,—I have felt much encouraged, from time to time, in reading the SOWER, especially the "Seeker's Corner," for I see much there that corresponds with my own experience. I feel it an unspeakable mercy to have been arrested and brought under conviction of sin against a holy and just God, and I trust I have been made to feel my need of the Saviour. What a mercy to have a living cry put into our hearts, and especially in the days of youth; but there are times with me when I get into such dark and low places that I cannot realise my interest in the precious blood of Christ. I long to feel that He has a favour towards me, even me! I feel it would be heaven to my soul to

* That is, as a Jew.—ED.

be in His embrace. How I desire to serve Him in an acceptable manner; but I get so dull, heavy, sad, and lifeless at heart, oftentimes sighing and groaning beneath this body of death! I want to serve Him with all my heart, mind, and soul, and to be altogether filled with Him. Oh, that He would be pleased to pour out upon me the spirit of prayer! I often feel I can rise no higher than the poor publican, when he said, "God be merciful to me, a sinner!" I do feel an aching void which none but Jesus Himself can ever fill. I want to be weaned from all below, and have my heart fixed alone upon a precious Christ. Oh, for more of that godly sincerity, and of that precious righteousness which He alone can give, for I solemnly feel that "my best is stained and dyed with sin; my all is nothing worth." Oh, that I could live, day by day, in converse with Jesus, the Friend of poor, lost, and ruined sinners; but I seem to be such a poor thing in religion. I feel I am behind all the Lord's people, and not worthy a name or place among the followers of the Lamb; but there is still that secret hope, which is as an anchor to the soul, that I shall be one day found amongst His jewels. But, oh, I would not deceive myself for ten thousand worlds! The Lord knows I am honest in this matter, for I feel it would be an awful thing to be deceived at last.

Now I think I will bring this scribble to a close; hoping you will please excuse the liberty I have taken in writing to you, and may the Lord abundantly bless you in your work and labour of love is the earnest desire of

August 5th, 1891.

S. B.

"The soul that with sincere desires
Seeks after Jesus' love,
That soul the Holy Ghost inspires
With breathings from above."

There is both room and bread in the Father's house, and Jesus says "They that hunger and thirst after righteousness are blessed, and *shall* be filled."

"Blest soul that can say, 'Christ only I seek,'
Wait for Him alway, be constant, though weak;
The Lord whom thou seekest will not tarry long,
And to Him the weakest is dear as the strong."

THE EDITOR.

MRS. ELIZABETH ROWE says, in her last letter to Dr. Watts, "I have now done with mortal things, and all to come is vast eternity—eternity! How transporting is the sound! Before this comes to you I shall have reached the celestial heights; and while you are reading these lines, I shall be adoring before the throne of God."

EXTRACTS FROM A SERMON BY MR. LATCHFORD.

"My voice shalt Thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee, and will look up."—PSALM v. 3.

It is no use looking down, nor is it any use looking in, it all must be looking out and up. Remember the position of the Church in the Song—"Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her Beloved?" (Song viii. 8). What a mercy to have the Beloved to lean upon, for Solomon's words will be found true, that "two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labour; for if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow; but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up" (Eccles. iv. 9, 10). What a mercy to have One ready to lift up, though full of mud, dirt, wretchedness and sinfulness! He knows the family features; and the mud, dirt, wretchedness and sinfulness they are in possession of cannot put out the family features. In all their wretched state He begins to say, "Why, what in the world have you been about?" But, poor souls, they have not a word to say, and blessed be God, they have no occasion to say one word, nor does He enquire of them to give Him information. Did Jesus speak these words? Yes. Shall I speak these words? Yes; and I have a right to use them upon the ground of Scripture—"The words that I have put into thy mouth shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord" (Isaiah lix. 21). While the language of complaint arises from any of them, He does the same, as their Head, feeling with them.

This Psalm is upon Nehiloth, which means a stringed instrument, that by the touch is played upon. None but spiritual minds are capable of spiritually understanding anything that is left upon record in God's Book. The first instruction of man into the wisdom of God, is for a man to learn that he is a fool. The way to prevent cross-sightedness in a child of God is to look straight, and not to look either to the right hand or to the left. If you have a tongue to make use of, shall I say, imitate the example of Jesus? If there is anything to complain of, complain to Him. He knows it. Do not complain of Him—God has given me only a right to complain to Him, not to complain of Him. Did God ever treat His people roughly or hardly? As you are a fallen creature, never entertain the thought for a moment that God has dealt hardly with you; for if you come to deservings, what do you deserve? All God's children new-born have a voice, and that voice must be used. Perhaps it may be by way of complaint, or by celebrating God's goodness for some

signal instance of His interposition. The Lord of life and glory in travelling through this dreary world, for the grand purpose of accomplishing redemption for His people, secretly made use of the voice of complaint; and yet, strictly speaking, He could have no complaint to make. He was, to all intents and purposes, sinless, though He was surrounded with the infirmities of our nature; for He took upon Him our nature [not fallen]. In every particular was Jesus surrounded with infirmities. I read that Jesus felt pain and hunger and weariness, for "being wearied with His journey, He sat down." But was it merely for the purpose of resting Himself that He sat down on Jacob's well? or did He not sit down there for the express purpose of having compassion on one of the election of grace? Divine instruction on this subject will be needful. God bestows a great deal of pains on those that belong to Him, so that they begin to find the need of teaching, and the use of their voice, and to understand the loosing of their tongue, so that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, and says, "I will look up." What! shall there be nothing to prevent? Nothing *can* prevent—not all the concerns of this world can do it, nor all the temptations and insinuations of the devil, nor all the power of indwelling sin, nor all the taunts and jeers from an ungodly world, that come from professors of religion, for those things are done by professors that many who make no profession at all would blush at doing.

But what shall we "look up" for? Wisdom to direct us in the path He calls us to walk.

"It is mine to obey, it is His to provide." Wisdom is necessary for those that feel their foolishness and ignorance. Where must wisdom come from? "He hath abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence," as Paul says (Eph. i. 8), therefore when I feel my want of direction in anything, I feel I must direct myself to Him. When He stands in the name and situation of wisdom, "a wayfaring man, though a fool, cannot err therein" (Isaiah xxxv. 8). I must look up for power to uphold me. I must look up to Him and not to man. I want everything that a merciful God has to bestow, then "I will direct my prayer to Him, and I will look up," that I may be strengthened by the Spirit in the inner man. I am too apt to rest in time-things. I will look up to His mercy to cheer me, I will look up to His love to warm me, I will look up to His grace to defend me, I will look up to His faithfulness to make the whole of His promised blessings good. I will look up, fully expecting that I shall be drawn one of these days from all that at present troubles me. I want to be in that land where I shall be free from everything that can cause disease or distress. If you have ascertained that you are God's property, then you

can ascertain that you are God's care, "casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you" (1 Peter v. 7).

Do I know that my God will appear for me? I do—then I have a right to expect it. Did you ever know one fail that made God his trust? Or did ever any trust Him, and were confounded? Now prove to me one instance of the kind. The man that makes God his trust will find Him to be a firm Friend, will find Him to be a fast Friend, and will find Him to be an exceptional Friend, whose love is always at the same height, at the same heat, for God's mind is a fixed mind. His purposes cannot be frustrated, and His promises are unalterable.

"His promise is yea and amen,
And never was forfeited yet."

LETTER FOR THE YOUNG.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I am perfectly ashamed to have let all this time pass without writing a line to you. I have often thought of you, and we have often spoken of you, I assure you, however my silence must have been calculated to make you doubt it.

I have you in affectionate remembrance. It is sweet to have any place in the hearts of God's dear people; but it is more than sweet to have a place in the heart of Christ! It is life; it is health; it is salvation; it is exaltation; it is supply here, and bliss hereafter! I do not doubt your having a place in the heart of Jesus. May you enjoy the privilege of having an invitation to come at all times to His throne. Oh, may you be led, above all things, to seek constant familiarity with Him. If anything lies between Him and your soul, you must be lean, weak, and barren. If you abide in Him, and He in you, you must bear fruit.

We were sorry to hear of your very heavy affliction. May you have found it truly a sanctified affliction—blessed furnace that purges away any of the loads of dross and tin we have in us, and in any measure develops the image of Jesus in us. We are going on here much the same. I am longing to see the Lord's Word prosper in the thing whereto He sent it; I have been encouraged by His promise that it shall do this. I hope soon to hear you are quite restored, if that would be best for you. What a mercy to have a God of infinite wisdom to care for us! It was a mercy you reached your home before you were laid up; it would have been an additional trial to have had an affliction so painful among comparative strangers. I must conclude. My wife joins me in love to you; many would add a subscription to this message if they knew of my writing.

Shefford, Beds.

Yours, in the Gospel,
S. SEARS.

POPERY AND RITUALISM ; OR, THE BEAST AND ITS IMAGE.

A FRIEND has requested us to insert some of the following extracts taken from the *English Churchman*, and to give our thoughts as to how far the blasphemous dogma of the Mass evidences its followers to have upon them the mark of the Beast spoken of in Revelation xiii. 11—17, &c. We regret that we have not time to enter into the subject largely by giving a strict exposition of these various passages of Scripture, but only say that we consider the portrayal of the Beast and its image in Revelation, is most apt and forcible as applied to Popery and Ritualism in our day. In this our beloved land, the Beast had received a deadly wound by the glorious Reformation ; therefore to counteract that, Pusey, Newman, Manning, and others set to work to make an image of the Beast. Priestcraft had fallen into decay, and unless something was devised to restore it, priestly authority and domination over the liberties, consciences, and souls of the people must become obsolete. Hence the dogmas of Apostolical succession, the Mass, or Real Presence as it was first termed, and auricular confession were reburnished and reintroduced into what was understood to be the Protestant Church of England, which now swarms with Romanizing bishops and clergymen, aided by statesmen, as Gladstone, Salisbury, &c., and carressed by nobles and silly women, whose only commendation is their money and subserviency to the image of a Romish priesthood.

That *huge lie*, the Mass, is their miserable substitute for living faith in Christ—in which, material eating, and in some cases for the present, drinking, is asserted by them to be a receiving Christ savingly ; and thus they delude their dupes with that which is natural, in order that they may keep them from inquiring after that which is spiritual. Then by auricular confession they are seeking to enslave the consciences of women and men, that they may thereby have supreme control over their liberties and lives. This element is at the root of most of their church extension work and their so-called charities.

To show that we have not over-stated the case, we will give a few extracts which will illustrate and confirm our view :—

The *Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, the organ of the Roman Catholic priesthood of Ireland, in its July number, warmly acknowledges the services of the Ritualists of England on behalf of the Church of Rome. Here is an extract from its article, the italics being our own :—

“There are two forces at work regarding the Catholicism of the country. It will throw light on the purpose of the present

paper to indicate them. One is inside the Church, and the other outside it; one Catholic, the other Protestant, though Catholicizing. *The Ritualists, and the Ritualists alone, are doing all that is being done among Protestants.* How many parsons, from Newman to Rivington, have been converted by priests? True, all have been *received* by priests. But how many have confessed their obligations to our sermons or our writings that we Catholic priests were in any degree answerable for their conversion? The Catholicizing movement in the Establishment has not been the result of the missionary activity of the Catholic Church in England. It is true to say that convert priests receive more converts than others, but that is mainly on account of personal influence in certain non-Catholic quarters where we have no access, as well as having a keener grasp of difficulties which we never feel. Men who pass through the fire themselves are good guides. *This external movement is of vast importance. At this hour five thousand Church of England clergymen are preaching from as many Protestant pulpits the Catholic faith (not, indeed, as faith), to Catholicizing congregations, much more effectively, with less suspicion and more acceptance than we can ever hope to do.* Protestant sisterhoods are doing, we feel sure, the best they can under the circumstances to familiarize the Philistine with nuns—and that is much. Protestant societies, like St. Margaret's, Westminster, furnish poor country missions (there are poor country Protestant missions, and city ones, too) with black vestments for requiems on All Souls. *This is, indeed, a matter for devout thankfulness. We could desire no better preparation for joining the Catholic Church than the Ritualists' preparatory school; and the fact that from them we have secured the majority of our converts strengthens us in our view of it."*

In the next extract we have the blasphemy of Rome set forth, and also the fact that Ritualists draw their teaching from that source:—

In the "Catéchisme de la Persévérance of the Abbé Gaume" we read:—"Quelle langue pourrait dire la dignité du sacerdoce et la grandeur du prêtre!" He then, after noting the greatness of Adam, of Moses, of Joshua, &c., proceeds thus:—"There is a man greater still. There is a man who, every day, when it pleaseth him, opens the gates of heaven, and, addressing the Son of the Eternal, the Monarch of the world, saith, 'Descend from Thy throne! Come!' Obedient to the voice of a man, the Word of God, by whom all things were made, leaves that moment the mansions of glory, and is made flesh in the hands of that man more mighty than kings, than angels, than the august Mary; and that man saith to Him, 'Thou art my Son; this day have I

begotten Thee,' 'Thou art my Victim'; and He suffereth Himself to be immolated by that man, to be laid where he will, to be given to whom he will. That man is the priest."

But, alas! the "Manuel des Confesseurs" of the author of this pernicious and blasphemous nonsense has been "adapted" for men who call themselves Anglo-Catholics, and who plainly tell us, "We are teaching men to believe that God is to be worshipped under the form of bread, and they are learning the lesson from us which they have refused to learn from the Roman teachers who have been amongst us for the last three hundred years" ("Essays on the Reunion of Christendom," p. 180).

The Romanists state that the bread and wine which they see, handle, and taste are the "accidents" of the mass, but the "essence" is the body and blood of Christ. The Ritualists declare that the elements of bread and wine remain as they appear, but after the act of consecration our Lord's body and blood are present in the sacrament, and are therefore received by the faithful communicant.

As a proof that Ritualists teach the dogma of the Mass, read the following:—

The Rev. C. F. Garnsey is reported to have said, at a recent meeting at Sydney: "Clergymen, and they alone, would be judged by those who, in a spiritual sense, were not their equals." "If they (laymen) were their equals, why did they not administer that which they dare not touch—the sacred blood and body of the Lord?" Here it is distinctly asserted that laymen are not "in a spiritual sense" the equals of ministers, because the latter administer the Lord's Supper and the former do not! If this be so, the standard of spiritual greatness is official position, and not personal religion. Was, then, we ask, Judas, who was a devil, greater in a spiritual sense than the penitent and believing woman, who was a sinner saved by grace, whose sins, which were many, were forgiven her, as was proved by the fact that she loved much? Is the drunkard or the fornicator, the liar or the hypocrite, who, as a minister, constantly administers the Lord's Supper, in a spiritual sense greater than the humble Christian man or woman who, though holding no official position, lives and walks in the Spirit? To ask such questions is to answer them. Man looks upon the official position; God looketh upon the heart.

ALL the disputes between us and the Arminians may be reduced to these two questions—1st. Is God dependent on man, or is man dependent on God? 2nd. Is man a debtor to God, or God a debtor to man?

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ALL the disputes between us and the Arminians may be reduced to these two questions—1st. Is God dependent on man, or is man dependent on God? 2nd. Is man a debtor to God, or God a debtor to man?

THE MATERIAL CROSS.

WE warn you, English Protestants, that there are traitors in the National Church at this very day who would again mock us by exhibiting in their churches, and in their chancels, these purely Pagan emblems of the cross. Wherever the material cross is exalted, whether in churches or charitable institutions, be sure Christ is not preached—the form, but not the power of religion, there prevails. We urge these considerations upon you advisedly and deliberately. The Church of Rome, with its lying mummeries, extols the cross and debases the Saviour. The Church of England, and its servile toleration of an idolatrous and persecuting system, would imitate its follies and will assuredly share its doom.

If you are members of the one true Church of Christ, raise your voice and maintain, through good report and ill report, the freedom of your glorious inheritance. The cross is the emblem of the slavery of the soul; and as you value the dearly-bought liberty of worshipping the God of your fathers in the simplicity of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we beseech you and implore you, suffer not this cross-worshipping mania to defile and destroy you.

A LESSON FOR PREACHERS.

DR. WILLIAM HARRIS, in his memoir of the life of Dr. Manton, mentions the following anecdote of him:—"Being to preach before the Lord Mayor, the Court of Aldermen, &c., at St. Paul's, the Doctor chose a subject which afforded him an opportunity of displaying his judgment and learning. He was heard with admiration and applause by the more intelligent part of the audience. But as he was returning from dinner with the Lord Mayor, in the evening, a poor man, following him, pulled him by the sleeve of his gown, and asked him if he were the gentleman who preached before the Lord Mayor? He replied, he was. 'Sir,' says he, 'I came with hopes of getting some good to my soul, but I was greatly disappointed, for I could not understand a great deal of what you said; you were quite above me.' The Doctor replied, with tears, 'Friend, if I did not give *you* a sermon, you have given *me* one; and by the grace of God, I will never play the fool to preach before my Lord Mayor in such a manner again.'"

It is a greater mercy to have a spiritual appetite for the means of grace, and to be providentially debarred from enjoying, than to have opportunities of attending them, without an appetite to partake of them.

The Sower, October, 1891.



THE HILLS OF BASHAN. (See page 254.)

WONDERFUL FULFILMENT OF PROPHECY.

"And Bashan and Carmel shake off their fruits."

THIS text was constantly in my mind while I wandered through Bashan. We might begin, "Alas! for Palestine!" and go on through the whole passage; for Palestine's palaces are dust, her stately columns fallen, her streets silent, her fields desolate, while God alone performs His dreadful part, fulfilling to the very letter the prophetic curses pronounced upon the land long, long centuries ago.

We rode along the line of the Roman road—at least as closely as branches of the great old oaks, and jungles of thorns and bushes, would permit; for "the highways lie waste" (Isaiah xxxiii. 8). Every opening to the right and left revealed ruins—now a tomb in a quiet nook, now a temple in a lonely forest glade, now a shapeless and nameless heap of stones and fallen columns, and now, through a long green vista, the shattered walls and towers of an ancient city. The country is filled with ruins. In every direction to which the eye turns, in every spot on which it rests, ruins are visible—so truly, so wonderfully, have the prophecies been fulfilled: "I will destroy your high places, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation" (Lev. xxvi. 30); "The palaces shall be forsaken" (Isa. xxxii. 14); "I will make your cities waste. The land shall be utterly spoiled" (Isa. xxiv. 3). Many other ruins, doubtless, lie concealed among the forest, buried beneath giant oaks, or shrouded by luxuriant brambles. Judging by the "thorns and thistles" which hem in every path, and half conceal every ruin, one would suppose that Bashan had received a double portion of the curse.

The mountains of Bashan, though not generally very steep, are rugged and rocky; yet everywhere on their sides I saw the remains of old terraces—along every slope, up every bank, from the bottom of the deepest glen, where the oleander bends over the tiny streamlet, to the highest peak on which the clouds of heaven sleep, cradled in winter snows. These tell of former toil and industry; and so do the heaps of loose stones that have been collected off the soil, and piled up in the corners of the little fields.

In the days of Bashan's glory, fig-trees, and olives, and pomegranates, were ranged along those terraces, and vines hung down in rich festoons over their broken walls. But now Bashan *has* shaken off its fruits: "For a nation is come up upon My land, strong, and without number. He hath laid My vine waste, and barked My fig tree: he hath made it clean bare, and cast it away. The field is wasted, the land mourneth. The new wine is dried up, the oil languisheth. The vine is dried up, and the fig-tree

languisheth ; the pomegranate-tree, the palm-tree also, and the apple-tree, even all the trees of the field, are withered ; because joy is withered away from the sons of men" (Joel i. 6—12). The scenery is still rich. It is rich in the foliage of the ever-green oak—the "oak of Bashan"—rich in numbers of ever-green shrubs ; rich in green pastures. It is picturesque too, and occasionally even grand, for the glens are deep and winding, and the outlines of the intervening ridges varied with many a dark cliff and wooded bank.

The whole mountain range is of volcanic origin, and the peaks shoot up, conical or cup-shaped, forming long serried lines. One thing struck me as peculiar. The rocks are black, the soil is black, the buildings are all black. It might be thought that the landscape would thus have a gloomy aspect ; and it would have, were it not for the fresh green grass of the glades and meadows, and the brilliant foliage of the oak forests, which often glitter beneath the blaze of sunshine like forest prisms. I confess it was with feelings of awe I looked from time to time over those desolate, but still beautiful slopes, to that more desolate plain. I knew what caused the desolation. The silence awed me, too, yet more, for it was profound. The voice of nature itself was hushed, and not a leaf in the forest rustled.

There is always something cheerful, something reviving, to the flagging spirit, in the unceasing murmur of a great city, now rising, and now falling on the breeze, as one approaches it or passes by ; and in the continuous hum of a rural scene, where the call of the herd, and the whistle of the ploughman, and the roll of the waggon, and the bleating of the flocks, and the lowing of the kine, melt into one of nature's choruses. Here cities studded the whole country, but the stillness of death reigned in them. There was no ploughman in the field, no shepherd on the hill-side, no flock on the pasture, no waggon, no wayfarer on the road. Yet there was a time when the land teemed with an industrious, a bustling, a joyous population. At that time prophets wrote : "Your highways shall be desolate" (Lev. xxvi. 22) ; "The way-faring man ceaseth ; the earth mourneth and languisheth" (Isa. xxxiii. 8, 9) ; "The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled ; for the Lord hath spoken this word. Therefore hath the curse devoured the land. Therefore the inhabitants of the land are consumed, and few men left. Every house is shut up. The mirth of the land is gone. In the city is left desolation, and the gate is smitten with destruction" (Isa. xxiv. 3—12). Many of the people of those days, doubtless, thought the prophets were but gloomy dreamers, just as many in our day regard their writings as gorgeous fancy pictures of Eastern poets ; but, with my own eyes, I saw that time has changed every prediction into

a historic fact. I saw now, and I saw at every step through Bashan, that the visions of the prophets were not delusions ; that they were not, even as some modern critics suppose, highly wrought figures, intended, perhaps, to foreshadow in faint outline a few leading facts of the country's future story. I saw that they were, one and all, graphic and detailed descriptions of real events, which the Divine Spirit opened up to the prophet's eye through the long vista of ages. The language is doubtless beautiful, the style poetic, and gorgeous Eastern imagery is often employed to give sublimity to the visions of the seer, and to the words of the Lord ; but this does not take away one iota from their truth, nor does it detract in the slightest degree from their graphic power. Were the same holy men inspired now by the same Divine Spirit to describe the actual state of Palestine, they could not possibly select language more appropriate or more graphic than that found in their own predictions thousands of years ago. This is no vague sentiment written at random or penned for effect. God forbid I should ever pen a line rashly or thoughtlessly on such a topic. It is the result of years of study and years of travel. It is the result of a calm and thorough comparison of each prophecy of Scripture regarding Palestine's history and doom, with its fulfilment, upon the spot. I had no preconceived theory of prophetic interpretation to defend. My mind was not biassed by a false faith in literality on the one side, nor by a fatal scepticism regarding prophetic reality on the other. Opportunities were afforded me of examining evidence, of testing witnesses, of seeing with my own eyes the truth or the falsehood of Bible predictions I embraced these opportunities as God gave them ; and to the utmost of my power and the best of my ability. I examined deliberately, cautiously, and, I believe, conscientiously. My examinations extended over all Palestine, and over most other Bible lands ; and now I thank God that, with the fullest and deepest conviction—conviction that all the ingenuity of modern criticism, and all the plausibility of modern scepticism can never overthrow, could never shake—I can take up and re-echo the grand, the cheering statement of our blessed Lord, and proclaim my belief before the world that, “till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.”—*Extract from “The Giant Cities of Bashan, and Syria's Holy Places,” by J. L. Porter, A.M.*

My hand cut off from my body, what can it do ? and a sinner out of Christ, what can he do ?

REGENERATION, which is a work of the Holy Spirit, is a new creation, as much as if a brute was made an angel.

EXTRACT FROM SERLE.

WHY am I grieved if others think lightly of my gracious attainments ? Because I am grown unjustly great in my own esteem for things which are not my own, but given to me. But doth not this very grief prove that their judgment is but too right, and that my real stature is not so tall as I think it ? If I were humbled in myself, in some degree, as I ought to be (for, in the full and just degree, no man can be humbled in this life), I should approve their sincerity towards me, and contentedly sit down before them in the lowest room. Their mean opinion would not hurt me, because it would be the same as my own. The vileness of my heart, and the slow progress I have made in Christian experience, are indeed sufficient to humble me every day I breathe ; and it is nothing but my blindness, or a falseness to myself, that leads me to forget, either my own real condition, or the place where I ought to stand. We are not naturally honest to ourselves, and we do not wish that others should deal too plainly and strictly with us. If we were truly honest and wise (and grace only can make us so in any degree), we should meekly hear, and even wish to hear, of our own frailties, errors, and defects, that we might grow the true Christian growth, which doth not consist in the favourable opinion of men and of our own minds, but in lowliness of heart and spirituality of life, respecting ourselves ; in patience and quietness, and goodwill with regard to others ; in contrition, humiliation, and submission before God. If we do not live for God in our religion, we must live outwardly, and so shall endeavour to make a fair show in the flesh ; but if we have His presence indeed, the truest part of our life will be hidden, and we shall much and gladly retire within to enjoy it. The most certain sign of our real growth will be the sinking into ourselves, as vileness and nothing, the being thought meanly of with content, if not pleasure, and the rising up of our souls towards God with private delight, ardour, affection, and constancy. We shall aim, through grace, rather to be gracious than to appear so. This hidden life my soul pants for, O Lord, Thou knowest, whatever becomes of my outward respect among men. If I have the more of Thee for this loss, it will be indeed most rich amends. Oh, make me more and more dead to the opinion of even gracious men, that my poverty and meanness may be ever before me.

“ Careless, myself a dying one,
Of dying ones’ esteem ;
Happy, O Lord, if Thou approve,
Though all beside condemn.”

WHEN you are not discouraged, but encouraged to come to Christ, that’s the end of corruptions.

DIVINE DISCIPLINE.

"And David went up by the ascent of Mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot: and all the people that were with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up. And one told David, saying, Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, O Lord, I pray Thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness."—2 SAMUEL xv. 30, 31.

IN offering a few considerations upon this humiliating page in the life-history of the man after God's own heart, let us briefly dwell upon the following particulars.

First. We have a striking instance here of sorrow and shame being the sure accompaniments of sin. Our God is a God of equity, and by Him are actions weighed. "Justice and judgment are the habitation of Thy throne" (Psa. lxxxix. 14). When Nathan, sent by God to call David to account for his great transgression, received from him the humble, heartfelt confession, "I have sinned against the Lord," he immediately received a free and full pardon—"The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die" (2 Sam. xii. 13). "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John i. 9). But although the Lord freely pardons the broken in heart, and has even promised to forget their sins—"For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb. viii. 12)—yet we find His forgiven ones are not able to forget their own sins. Again and again have they in their feelings to visit the humiliating spot where their feet have slipped, and there laid low in the dust of self-abhorrence, and taste sin's exceeding bitterness. May we not hold forth this experience as being an evidence of interest in the covenant of grace? If a gracious God remembers not our forgiven transgressions against us, we shall, under the influence of sovereign mercy, be brought to recall our sins against Him in a way of self-condemnation. "That thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God" (Ezek. xvi. 63). In this humiliation of king David, we have a particular instance of the truth expressed by the Lord Jesus in His Sermon on the Mount, "For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again" (Matt. vii. 2). David in the past had used violence against the upright and innocent in the matter of Uriah the Hittite. Uriah was a most faithful servant, therefore the cruelty of his master was the more aggravated. Now we see David's kindness

and generosity abused to an extraordinary degree by his wicked son Absalom. Is it not highly probable, as he was thus fleeing before his enemies, and having to "see violence and strife in the city" (Psa. lv. 9), his mind would revert to the time when he had shed innocent blood?

How his chastened and subdued spirit manifests itself, as he exclaims, concerning Shimei, who cursed him as he journeyed on, "Let him alone, and let him curse, for the Lord hath bidden him"! Yet, at the same time, his heart is uplifted to the Lord against whom he had sinned. "It may be that the Lord will look on mine affliction, and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day" (2 Sam. xvi. 11, 12). The same humbled spirit is manifest in the Prophet's words, "I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against Him, until He plead my cause and execute judgment for me" (Micah vii. 9).

Then, again, David's conduct towards Uriah had been traitorous as well as violent. Now he has to cry, out of the bitterness of his soul, "For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it. . . . But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance" (Psa. lv. 12, 13).

"With the pure Thou wilt show Thyself pure; and with the froward Thou wilt show Thyself froward" (Psa. xviii. 26). The patriarch Jacob deceived his father Isaac in obtaining the blessing; and, although we trace the absolute sovereignty of God running through this event, according to the discriminating word, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated" (Rom. ix. 13), yet we find Jacob punished for his deception, in Laban deceiving him concerning Rachel (see Gen. xxix). Again, when Joseph's brethren stood before him, his rough dealing brought back to their remembrance their cruelty to their defenceless brother. "And they said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us" (Gen. xlii. 21). Afterward, when Joseph manifested himself to them, he silenced their fears by saying, "Be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life" (Gen. xlv. 5). He comforts them by referring to the sovereign purpose of God, shown in His overruling their cruel action, and bringing good out of that evil; yet the fact remains, that they endured bitterness in their minds, when circumstances came upon them, producing reflection upon their past sin. How solemn it is to have past sins brought afresh to the mind; and these instances under consideration are surely left on record as an admonition to us, reminding us of the words of the Apostle, which, by painful

experience we have proved, "For what a man soweth that shall he also reap."

Secondly. We have an illustration, in the circumstance before us, of the uncertainty of human friendship. We are reminded of the Prophet's words, "Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide." Some, through the peculiar sensitiveness of their nature, are constantly in danger of leaning too much upon creatures; but our God is jealous, and well knows how to dry up our springs of human comfort and aid, that we may of necessity learn to trust in Him, rather than to put confidence in man. Little did David suspect, that his favourite and trusted counsellor would one day use the influence and power he possessed in trying to dethrone him. If we carefully read 2 Samuel xvi. 23, "And the counsel of Ahithophel, which he counselled in those days, was as if a man had inquired at the oracle of God: so was all the counsel of Ahithophel both with David and with Absalom," it evidently appears that poor David had grievously misplaced his confidence. Probably, infatuated by the gifts and wisdom of this man (who, it is evident from Psalm lv. 14, was a professor of religion), his heart was departing from child-like dependence on the Lord his God. How difficult a matter it is rightly to use the advice of valued friends, and yet not to get our hearts drawn from the Lord, who has so graciously encouraged His people, however insufficient they may feel themselves to be, to seek unto Him for wisdom, "who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not."

Thirdly. Let us now take notice of the working of faith in the heart of this afflicted, chastened servant of God. As he ascends the mount in the deepest sorrow and humiliation, with his spirit crushed within him, the crowning sorrow overtakes him. The news that "Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom," humanly speaking, must have taken away all hope. Possibly, up to this point, he might still have entertained the thought that this wise counsellor might be able, by his influence, to turn the tide of events. But now, alas! he is even numbered among the rebels. In this moment of threatening despair, when everything seemed to point to destruction, the principle of faith asserts itself. The servant of God, forsaken and helpless, is enabled to look right away from all creature help; he casts himself from sheer necessity upon the Lord. "O Lord, I pray Thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness." Thus is true faith made manifest in the hour of trial, according to 1 Peter i. 6, 7, "If need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory," &c.

Lastly. See the compassion and faithfulness of God, in quickly appearing for David's relief. As soon as he gained the summit of the hill, "Behold, Hushai the Archite came to meet him," who became the instrument of defeating the counsel of Ahithophel. We cannot see how the conduct of David is to be justified in causing Hushai to act with dissimulation, yet we read, "For the Lord had appointed to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent that the Lord might bring evil upon Absalom" (2 Sam. xvii. 14). What is mysterious to our finite comprehension we must leave with Him who is "great in counsel," and whose ways are "past finding out." The Lord's dear troubled, chastened ones are made to experience at times the truth of the promise, "Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear them" (Isa. lxxv. 24). Therefore, when under the stroke of His chastening hand, when in the day of our calamity we are forsaken by our most trusted friends, when dangers are thick around us and all human aid cut off, let us then seek to cast ourselves upon His mercy and faithfulness who has said, "Call upon Me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me."

Cheltenham.

W. B.

CAPTIVITY.

THE bondage and slavery under which wretched man lies through sin, although it may be truly said to be forced upon man as a descendant of Adam (Rom. v. 19) by Satan, yet as to sinners themselves it is voluntary, and they like their state well. When Cyrus proclaimed to the Jews dismissal from captivity in Babylon, many of them slighted it, and preferred captivity to freedom; even so is it now. This practice is the temper of all Adam's seed; what they are they love to be, and have neither will nor power to change their condition; therefore the Redeemer must come with an almighty and sovereign power to demolish the strongholds of sin and Satan, and by divine grace make the sinner "willing in the day of His power." While he lingers, like Lot of old, covenant mercy must take his hand, and, by the sweet force of omnipotent, invincible grace, draw the sinner from the Sodom of this world into the blest enjoyment of pardon, peace, and Gospel liberty.—*Elkanah Wales* (A.D. 1641).

Do you grow in grace? then you will think less and less of yourself.

THE believer is made sensible that he is a wretched, ruined sinner, and so he lives upon grace every moment.

HOLY DESIRES.

"THOU Searcher of all hearts, prove me and examine my thoughts. Look well if there be any wicked way in me; any beloved and ruling sin; any root of bitterness yet undiscovered; and lead me in the way everlasting. Show me the true state of my soul. Bring me out from every false refuge, strip off every deceitful covering, every covering that is not of Thy Spirit. Forbid that the anchor of my hope should be cast, or the house of my dependence built, on any but Christ, the Rock of Ages. Forbid that I should rest short of that repentance which is Thy gift, and is connected with life eternal; and forbid, O forbid, that I should sit down without aspiring to that conformity unto Thee in righteousness and true holiness; abstracted from which, repentance is false, and faith is dead." Such are the breathings of the soul, and the honest desires of the heart that is born of God. If this, O man, be not the language of Thy inmost heart, thou art far from Christ, thou art yet in thy sins; thou hast not in heart "forsaken all"; thou hast never been made to rise up and follow the Lamb of God in sincerity. But, if this is thy wish and prayer, I am bold to say that it is the echo of effectual grace, and that God hath begun that good work in thee which shall be carried on to the day of Christ, and be with honour and glory at His appearance. That Spirit of regeneration, who hath drawn the outlines of His sacred Spirit upon thy soul, will go on to protect the imperfect draught, until He hath finished it with the perfect likeness of Himself in glory (1 John iii. 2). What He hath begun in this life shall be completed in the glory beyond death. The dawn of grace is the morning of consummate sanctification, when thou art taken up to shine at God's right hand. Until then, look incessantly unto Jesus, "the Author and Finisher of our faith." Even while the penitent sense of thy past offences, and of thy many corruptions, humble thy soul and overwhelm thy conscience with a holy blush, let glowing gratitude, aspiring love, and unlimited confidence in the blood of sprinkling, exalt thy heart and wing thy affection to the throne of grace. But beware of ascribing any part of thy conversion to thyself, for the work was God's, and so should be the glory. Do not rob God by putting free-will for free-grace; but remember that you would never have risen up and followed Christ if He had not, by the life-giving call of His Spirit, said to your heart, "Follow Me," for it is no thanks to *you*, but to *Him*. If you love Him, it is "because He first loved you." Man's will was never yet beforehand with God. "Herein is love," says the Apostle, "not that we loved God, but that God loved us," &c. Under such impressions, all David's devout aspiration will be the counterpart of yours

—"Make me to go in the path of Thy commandments, for therein is my desire. Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison of Thee!" This is the prelude to that still more triumphant song, which the spirits of the just are now singing before the throne of God and the Lamb, "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever."
—Toplady.

THE ALL-SUFFICIENT SACRIFICE.

I've sinned against the Infinite
 In breaking of His law,
 For the best moment I have lived
 Is not without a flaw.

Who can appease an angry God,
 Whose life is fraught with sin,
 Who am myself defiled throughout,
 As helpless as unclean?

Were all the timber in the world
 Hewn down to make the fire—
 Were all the saints to act as priests,
 Arrayed in white attire;

Were all the cattle on the hills;
 Brought for a sacrifice,
 And the vast ocean filled with oil—
 The whole would not suffice.

I should unpardon'd still remain,
 My soul defiled would be;
 I to the lowest hell must sink
 To all eternity.

The waters of the universe
 Could never make me clean;
 But Jesus' sacrificial blood
 Can cleanse from every sin.

The Ethiopian it makes white,
 The leper, too, makes clean;
 And on the millions now in heaven
 A stain cannot be seen.

The world elect it purified
 When He hung on the tree;
 Now God the Father's piercing eye
 No spot on them can see.

His blood is of intrinsic worth,
 Our vileness to remove;
 It towers above our highest crimes,
 And buries them in love.

Illustrious Lamb! the Lamb of God!
 How precious is Thy blood,
 That saved me from eternal hell,
 And has redeemed to God.

To Him that washed us in His blood
 Be endless praises given;
 Join to perpetuate His fame,
 Ye blood-washed hosts of heaven.

The cleansing sea, that made us free
 From everlasting death,
 Will yield a never-dying song,
 With ever-living breath.

E. M.

GROWING IN GRACE.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—How much I am indebted to you for so long a letter, I cannot say; I esteem it highly, and you for it. Knowing your great hurry of business, I could not expect it, but you are good and I am thankful. At present I am also busy about my Bible; being suffered to live to read it over once more, two things have occurred to me in the present perusal, in both which I am enabled to triumph. The one is a deeper discovery of the horrible state I am in through sin, so that as a child of Adam, I feel nothing in myself but the working of corruption—by and under the law, dead to God, but all alive to sin, every faculty at work to bring it forth; the mind, the heart, the senses, yea, the very imagination, in prayer disturbing, distracting, and lawless. I can do nothing but cry out, Rom. vii. 24. Reading verse 25, I get my second lesson and find employment for my dear Lord Jesus. A body of sin and death like mine wants an Almighty Saviour, and I am learning to put more honour upon His word and work daily. I find more need of Him than ever, and it is some true joy that He is most exactly suited to my desperate case. Having no hope but in His blood and in His righteousness, no strength but His arm, no happiness but out of His fulness, I am led even to triumph in what He is to me. I would lay myself at His feet, and would bless His dear name that He is become all my salvation, and glory in Him that He is all my desire. This is the best reading that I can have. Self brought down and crucified daily. I then see reason to magnify the person of God-Jesus. In this spiritual crucifixion of self and sin, in this true and growing up out of self into Christ, may the Holy Spirit teach me to profit daily.

Pray for yours, in our common Lord,

W. ROMAINE.

A BRIEF MEMOIR OF MARY ANN POUNDS.

My dear wife was born of godly parents, in the year 1829, who at that time were members of Mr. Irons' Church, Camberwell. When old enough they took her there, and her father had such a spirit of prayer given him for the child's salvation that he greatly hoped the Lord would call her by His grace. When she was about sixteen years of age, the late Mr. T. Stringer was called to preach at Mr. G. Francis' Chapel, Snow's Fields, and hearing he was so much like Mr. James Wells in his manner, she determined (out of mere curiosity) to go and hear him. Then and there the Lord met with her—"opened her eyes," "turned her from darkness to light," and "from the power of Satan unto God." From that time there was a cry put into her soul after the Lord and His salvation. Soon afterward Mr. Stringer persuaded her to be baptized, and to join the Church. It was against her will, not feeling satisfied at that time as to whether she was one of the Lord's living people; yet no doubt Mr. Stringer could see the grace of God in her, and knew the step to be a right one, though subsequently it cost her many years of trouble, fearing that she had passed through the ordinance in a wrong way.

Having removed to Limehouse, we attended Zoar Chapel (Great Alie Street), and subsequently joined Mr. Wanstall's at Limehouse, and remained there until his death. Since then, the old ministers having died, we have been going about from place to place, seeking a place of rest but finding none. My dear wife was a lover of the Lord's solid people, and desired for years to live close to one of His sanctuaries that she might go in and out without so much fatigue, being very feeble through a long-standing affliction. That desire, however, the Lord did not see fit to grant, but was Himself her sanctuary. She was of a retiring nature, and loved to be much alone. In our many trials and difficulties, how I have known her cleave to the Word of God, plead it before Him, and draw some encouragement and hope therefrom, that the Lord would be as good as His word, and she would wait and watch to see the Lord's hand appearing for us, in providence especially.

Oh, with what weight did her family lay upon her heart, and how she has wrestled with the Lord for their souls' salvation, and has often tried to encourage me also to hope in His word, and she lived to prove Him to be faithful and true. She also found that hanging upon His faithfulness to His word, and His almighty power to perform it, was the right way to heaven. The Lord evidently sanctified her through His truth.

One of the main desires of her soul, through the whole of her

life, was to realize that peace which comes through the blood of Jesus. She could not bear to see professors of the truth mixing up with the world, and said, "Ever since I found I was born in death, there has been no desire to go back again into the world; I was cut clean off from it." This was her manner of living for forty-five years, without realizing her soul's desire, and yet kept seeking, praying, waiting upon the Lord in His ordinances and in His Word. In private, and under all her troubles, did she cleave unto the Lord, and to His Word, to which I, as well as her old Bible, can testify, until the end of the year 1889, when, through a serious illness, she was brought down almost to death. At this period, the Lord, in a most gracious way, came down and manifested Himself to her soul. I being away from home at the time, my dear wife wrote giving me an account of this special visit, which I will here insert that the reader may have it from her own pen, also another letter which I received fourteen days later :

December 4th, 1889.

MY BELOVED,—I wrote yesterday, but lost the post, so suppose you will not have the letter until this evening. I am still going on favourably, but cannot get my appetite quite right, which keeps me weak; but I hope soon to be able to eat more, then I think my strength would increase. I trust you are still being helped through. Yesterday's letter had some good news, don't you think? But the Lord had reserved the "*best wine*" for the latter end of the feast, and as I tasted it and found it good, I desired with all my heart that it might please the dear Lord to give you a taste of His mercy too. Have you had an extra taste at any time the last three weeks? If not, it is surely coming.

Well, my dear one, this *last* affliction the Lord has seen fit to sanctify for the good of my soul, and it is indeed sweet affliction which brings "*Jesus to the soul.*" While I was so very ill and weak the dear Lord sustained me by pouring into my mind a little consolation—by drops, as I could bear it. For I was too weak to bear much at the time. No one knew it but myself, and it has been continually dropped into my soul at intervals, night and day, for the last fortnight. It appeared like the "*drawings*" of the "*Father's love,*" drawing my very soul to Jesus—and the Holy Spirit leading me, and teaching me too, to "*think*" upon His name.

Only think of *this* coming to one who at times has feared everything has been *wrong* and *nothing right*. Well, these "*sips*" have encouraged me to "*hope in His mercy,*" and a lot of things that have appeared so very crooked of late years with us are being made straight.

I now view them as fatherly chastenings to *you* and *me*—

“Not in anger, not in anger.
But from His dear covenant love.”

Oh, with what pleasure (as I have laid awake nearly all night) have I been led to “think upon His name”—as the Saviour, the suffering Jesus—the sin-pardoning God. How I have longed that He would be pleased to speak the word home and make it manifest to my soul, by the Holy Spirit applying the virtue of the “Blood of Jesus” to cleanse my conscience from all sin, that I might not fear to die, and that the Holy Spirit might be pleased to “bear witness” with my soul that I am a child of God. It did indeed appear as though it must be the Holy Spirit taking the things of Jesus and showing them to my soul.

“He shall take of Mine and show it unto you.” Thus I could see the Trinity of Persons and desired Him to bring me to the acknowledgment of the mystery of the “three Persons in one God.”

I cannot tell you all that passed through my mind *now*. I may at times, when I reflect.

I am now waiting for more grace to reach “poor sinful me,” and my poor dear husband too. I must break off abruptly, for some one has come into the room. Will write again soon. Hope to have yours to-morrow.

YOUR LOVING WIFE.

December 18th, 1889.

MY BELOVED HUSBAND,—I tried to answer your letter last Saturday but could not. This morning I have received another, and knowing you are anxious, must try to answer both. My dearest, I am in a very different frame of mind now; have not that “continual dropping” of the Word into my mind which greatly encouraged me to hope in His mercy; but our frames and feelings make not the least difference in His love and favour, do they? No, our judgment, when in our right mind, tells us it is true that He is Jesus Christ “the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.” And now I glean from your letters that you are feeling discouraged on account of feeling and “learning out” the sinfulness of your poor heart. My dear one, I have been and am constantly poring over my sinful nature, but I trust the Lord the Holy Spirit must have taught us these things, and our need of the Saviour, who is Christ Jesus, or how should we have known our total ruin through sin? I do not think the Lord would have shown us our great need of His salvation to be through His own life and death, “if He had meant to kill us.” You and I are just the kind of sinners He came to save, for “He came not to call the righteous, but sinners.” He came to seek

and to save those who were lost. Now we are feelingly *lost sinners*, and longing to taste that the Lord is gracious—longing to have a sweet manifestation of the pardon of all our sins, sealed home upon our consciences by the sealing testimony of the Holy Spirit. It is so, is it not? May the Holy Spirit be pleased to lead us to Jesus and give us that living, saving faith in Him, that we may feel the virtue of His holy Name, and that it may be a “strong tower” unto us, unto which we may run and be safe. I wish we could as clearly see and know what to do as David did. He asked the Lord, “Shall I go, or shall I not?” “Shall I do this, or shall I not?” and the Lord answered him, upon which he acted and proved it right.

We should like it so, should we not? for then we should feel in the right place, come what will. I hope you are still being daily helped through your trying task; and if it can please the Lord to grant you the desire of your heart (that you may clearly see your eternal interest in the Lord Jesus and have that assurance which you are longing for), it would rejoice my heart.

I feel just the same as you do, in need of all spiritual things, and cannot get near to Him by reading, prayer, or thinking. The Holy Spirit alone can lead us to Him, and take of the things belonging to Jesus and show them to us, and then apply them. We are not sufficient to think anything as of ourselves.

Oh, my dearest, may the blessing of the Lord rest upon your spirit!

YOUR LOVING WIFE.

After a short time the sweetness of this gracious visit from the Lord wore off, and she was left to almost call in question the reality of it, and was much depressed and perplexed about it; but she often said, “I should like the same over again.”

Darkness and depression of mind continued until 1890, when she was again seized with affliction, which subsequently proved to be internal cancer and terminated in her death.

Neither my dear wife nor any of us had the least idea of the nature of her complaint, and she thought if she could go to the sea-side that her appetite and strength might return. A way being made, she went, but instead of getting stronger she got weaker and weaker, until it became apparent that she could not recover and that her end was fast approaching. My daughter and brother at once sent for me to come down, as it was evident that she had not long to live. I arrived the same afternoon, and had no sooner entered the room than she held out her hands to embrace me, and said, “It is all right,” and appeared quite cheerful. I asked, “Has He come?” She said, “Yes, and it is all right.”

The restlessness of death had set in and she was constantly

wishing to be raised. About seven o'clock in the evening, members of her family arrived from London, and she began to beg of the Lord to take her to Himself, saying, "Do take me! do take me, *dear* Lord!" I asked her if she was happy. She replied, "Yes." I asked again, if it was "peace-speaking blood," and she gave us to understand that it was indeed, saying many times, "Peace-speaking blood," and all at once, with all the power she had, said, "Triumphantly, triumphantly," and then changed the word to "Triumphing." I said, "Triumphing in what, my dear!" She paused, then with sweet emphasis replied, "In—the—Lord—Jesus—Christ," and broke out in a most beseeching manner, "Do take me! do take me!" One of her sons said, "Where, mother dear?" She replied, "To heaven." He said, "But would you not like to remain with us a little longer?" She replied, "I should, but it is not His will."

Among many other things she uttered were, "Faithful God," "Praise Him," "Help me!" I believe, had we started to sing, that she would have joined in, but the scene was too overcoming for that. Seeing she was getting very weak and that very soon the power of speech would be gone, and feeling that our parting was at hand, I said, "Good-bye, dear." She pulled me to her and said "Good-night, and it is a good-night." She then kissed each member of the family present and desired me to pray.

I tried, in a few words, to commit her into the Lord's hands, and begged Him to grant her request. When done, she added, "Amen"; then she broke out again with great earnestness, desiring the Lord to fetch her, saying, "Take me, Lord—dear Lord!" and at last said, "*I can't wait.*" In a moment she was quiet—appeared to have fallen asleep, but it proved to be unconsciousness. She remained perfectly quiet for about eleven hours, when she was faintly heard to say, "Now! now! Lord! Lord!" and all at once her countenance was lighted up with a smile, and she was gone.

Thus ended a path of tribulation indeed, for she had suffered a standing affliction of twenty-two years, together with providential trials, and sore troubles, which made her "a woman of a sorrowful spirit."

Now, though it is cutting to the flesh, I rejoice to know that—

"Her race is run;
Has dropped her mortal load,
And took her flight
To glory and to God."

One would have thought she might have escaped the scourge of tongues, living as she did such a secluded life; but some said she was proud—some one thing and some another—which much

distressed her, as nearly the last entry in her diary will show. She there writes: "I had hoped by this time to have escaped the scourge of tongues and to have been freed from secret enemies, but find it is not so, which is a grief to me. I cannot say, with the dear Lord, 'Reproach hath broken My heart,' but it is fast breaking my spirit." So that she went home to glory wounded.

Now she is above it all, and her happy spirit is exulting in the virtue of that "blood" she so much desired to realize, and now with her enlarged powers she has broken forth in that never-ending song, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name be all the glory!" May I and the children the Lord has given us follow her there, is my heart's desire.

ROBERT HENRY POUNDS.

"SHE AROSE QUICKLY, AND CAME UNTO HIM."

(JOHN xi. 29.)

TO MR. JOHN HODGES, ON THE HOME-CALL OF HIS BELOVED WIFE,
AUGUST 9TH, 1891.

THE Master called your loved one,

"My beloved, come away;
I've need of thee in heaven;
Come dwell with Me for aye."

'Twas a hasty summons given;
Full well she knew His voice,
And quickly rose to meet Him,
Adore Him, and rejoice.

What rapture filled her spirit
When she beheld her Lord,
Upon His throne of glory,
By heavenly hosts adored.

She heard the glorious welcome,
"Come in, ye blessed, come!
Inherit now thy mansion,
Prepared for thee at home."

She joined the song of triumph,
"Salvation to our God";
Was robed in spotless garments,
Washed in her Saviour's blood.

And now before His presence
She evermore will stand,
Crowned with a crown of glory,
With palm and harp in hand."

K. T.

"IT CAME TO PASS."

WE often find this expression in the Bible, and we may apply it in two different ways. It will point to the *human* side of our affairs, the apparently casual manner in which the events of life take place, or "happen," as we say; and it is also a beautiful illustration of that universal truth, the Lord "spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast."

In that delightful record of the wonders of the providence and grace of God found in the book of Ruth, we read that when the young Moabitess went gleanings, her hap happened to light on a part of the harvest field of Boaz, her late husband's near kinsman, and there she was noticed by the man who was able and willing to effectually help her widowed parent and herself. "The lot is cast into the lap"—things come accidentally to us as it seems—"but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord," who "worketh all things after the counsel of His own will;" who "giveth meat to them that fear Him, and will ever be mindful of His covenant." When Abraham's trusted servant went to win a wife for Isaac, he prayed that the damsel of whom he should ask a drink of water, might be the very one whom God should choose to fill that important position, and that her willingness to give drink to the camels also might be the sign that she would return with him to his master. "And it came to pass, before he had done speaking, that, behold, Rebekah came out . . . with her pitcher upon her shoulder," and with cheerful alacrity supplied the sign he sought of the Lord.

In Joseph's case, for a long time things "came to pass" in a different way; injustice, cruelty, and ingratitude first cast him into, and then prolonged his stay in prison, and until the word of the Lord came to the time of its fulfilment, it tried him as silver and gold are refined by the fire. But when "it came to pass," that Pharaoh's dreams needed, and could not find an interpreter, then the long-promised exaltation came to the youth who had waited patiently for the Lord, and all the woes and disappointments of former days proved but so many links in the golden chain of providential and gracious care. Not one good thing failed of all that God had either spoken or intended; all came to pass; and "Whoso is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord."

"It came to pass" is often connected with the *definite promise* of the Lord of all. In the case of Israel's deliverance from Egypt, the whole issue was made known beforehand. Thus saith the Lord to Abraham, "Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and

they shall afflict them. And that nation whom they shall serve will I judge ; and afterward shall they come out with great substance" (Gen. xv. 13, 14). "And it came to pass the self-same day"—when the appointed time was accomplished—"that the Lord did bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt" (Exod. xii. 51). "He brought them forth also with silver and gold : and there was not one feeble among all their tribes" (Psa. cv. 37). "For He remembered His holy promise, and Abraham His servant" (ver. 42).

How beautifully this formula comes in with the long-predicted birth and life, sufferings and death, of the Lord Jesus Christ! He was to be born in Bethlehem, And "it came to pass" that through the arbitrary decree of Cæsar Augustus, Mary and Joseph had to journey to the city of David, to enrol their names, and so Bethlehem became the birthplace of their glorious Son. The Prophets said that He should be despised, rejected, and should die a violent death, but that a bone of Him should not be broken nevertheless ; and "it came to pass" that when His life work was accomplished, He was crucified, and no bone of His sacred body was broken, though torn and lacerated ; and "it came to pass" also that He "ascended up on high, led captivity captive," and thence He gave, and is still bestowing, gifts unto men, "even the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them" ; so *shall* He "see of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied." And for His sake it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered from every evil here, and shall finally be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation. "It came to pass" that all Paul's fellow-voyagers with himself escaped safely to land ; and oh that we may be cheered now with the sweet assurance that this God, who only doeth wondrous things, may be our God for ever and ever, our Guide even unto death ; and, however much or long we may be tossed with tempests, all will be well.

"Soon shall His dealings be unrolled,
The wondrous chart will fix our gaze,
And heaven's revolving years unfold
New matter and new theme for praise.

"Wave upon wave which rolled before
Tempestuous o'er the ruffled breast,
Then, lulled asleep, shall break no more
The rapture of eternal rest."

H. S. L.

WHAT makes Christ more precious to the believer to day than He was yesterday ? Why, he sees he wants more.

FREE GRACE.

DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,—Grace and peace be with you from the Fountain Head of the Church militant here below, and may you richly enjoy your own interest, through the Lamb once slain for poor needy and naked sinners, for of a truth there is no other safe way, nor any other sacrifice for sin for such poor outcast and vile worms as we daily see and feel ourselves to be ; yet have we this hope, even in our darkest moments, that we shall yet praise Him for His wonderful goodness towards the children of men.

I am glad you have taken on you to give out the hymns, as I could see none more adapted for the office, and I could desire that you may be rewarded from on high while thus engaged, from time to time, without fearing the frowns of mortal man, or courting their smiles. I can say, for one poor thing, I have felt some sweet influence under the service of singing the hymns you have given out. Though of all I am the most unworthy, yet do I now and then get a sip and a glimpse of love, which melts my hard, rocky heart into sweet and humble submission to all God's sovereign will. It is then I see all His will toward me is love, pity, and compassion, though I am so prone to get into darkness, doubts, and fears again. Oh, my brother, when shall my fears be for ever subdued, so that I shall feel no Canaanite in the land ? Will this precede the day of my death, or must I wait until then ?

Though I change, our covenant-keeping God changeth not, and this is the reason I am not consumed. His mercies endure for ever ! Oh that I could more resemble Him who trod the wine-press alone ! who alone gained the victory over sin, death, and hell, and "led captivity captive, and received gifts for men ; yea, for the *rebellious* also."

Oh, my dear friend, grace shall reign through righteousness unto eternal life, to every son and daughter of Immanuel's compassionate love, and it is they only that really feel they need a better righteousness than their own ; and what any mortal man can want to take up a profession of religion for, without the blessed regenerating Spirit's own work, I cannot imagine, unless it be to satisfy nature, and to escape hell by their own merit ; but (poor blind wretches !) God requires a far nobler sacrifice than this, and if no other sacrifice than creature merit is found, woe be to every soul of man ! But, blessed be God ! He hath given us to know redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of our sins, by His own mighty arm and outstretched hand, in plucking us as brands from the everlasting burning when we lay at the pit's mouth, expecting every moment to be swallowed up as our just desert. Oh, what love was that ! Oh, what compassion of our

God, which saved us even then ! My brother, it was more than a "think so" religion, for our souls were at stake. It was then with us, life ! life ! eternal life ! or damnation ; and if a poor soul does not cry then, "I know nothing of the matter," it is then that the Spirit of love puts power into the sinner's soul to cry aloud for mercy, as the publican did. Yes, and God heareth such cries, too, and will open to him a door of hope, and deliver the needy and the undone, sooner or later.

My dear brother, I speak from known experience in this matter. "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death"—eternal death ! Out of the pale of mercy's channel, mortal man may fancy himself to be very great and pious indeed, and yet be nothing but a firebrand of hell, after all he has done here with his good qualifications and good deeds. It is none but the poor and outcast from among men, and sinners of the deepest dye, when brought to know it, who will feel it to be true ; yes, and these poor condemned wretches know that if they are saved at all, it must be all of free, sovereign, unmerited favour, from first to last. Such poor things know through what channel mercy is obtained ; yes, my brother, and when rich and sovereign mercy doth reach the sinner's case, and gives him a plunge in the fountain of the Saviour's blood ; when he has been washed and made clean from all his filth, through love and blood ; oh, how astonished does the poor wretch then stand, ravished and amazed, and wonders what it all can mean. Why such love as this ? Where is my sin ? Where is my load of guilt ? Where are all those my accusers ? Yea, the poor creature finds none ; thus he stands, as did Joshua, in a change of raiment indeed, adoring the riches of sovereign love, free favour, and free pardon. Oh, how he can bless and praise God's holy Name, who hath now made him "accepted in the Beloved."

Now the soul vainly imagines his misery and bondage is all passed, and the true light and life which now shineth will shine all the rest of his path home to bliss, for now he feels assured that all is right between Christ and his poor soul, nor would he commit another sin for all the world ; yea, he would rather die than sin against such love ; truly he is in the banquetting house, and the banner over him is love. But ere long ask this poor thing how matters stand with him ? whether he is still feasting on the Paschal Lamb ? and most likely he will cry out oftentimes, "My leanness ! my leanness !" Yea, after twenty or thirty years' travelling along the heavenly road, oh, my brother, what does thy own soul have to ascribe to God for all His mercies up to the present time ?

Yours in love,

Goudhurst, Kent, August 6th, 1863.

G. ROOTS.

THE ANXIOUS INQUIRER'S PAGE.

USEFUL HINTS.

SOME complain greatly of their state and condition. None so dead, so dull, so stupid as they are, nor know they whether or not they have any spark of spiritual life left in them. Some, by way of recovery, betake themselves to duties, which are like the attempts of a man in a dream, wherein he uses great endeavours without any success. Howbeit, the generality of professors seem to be in a pining, thriftless condition. The remedy for this state is a faith's view of Christ. "Abide in Me and I in you : as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, no more can ye except ye abide in Me." When the Lord Jesus is near us, and we behold His glory, He will frequently communicate spiritual refreshment, to the peace and support of the soul. We shall not only hereby have our graces excited with respect unto Him as their Object, but be made sensible of His gracious actings toward us, in the communication of Himself and His love toward us. When the Sun of Righteousness ariseth upon any soul, "there is healing under His wings," and His beams of grace and love shall convey, by His Spirit, holy and gracious refreshment, for He is present with us by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost—thence, as He is the Comforter, these blessed effects do follow, to the comfort and enlargement of the soul.

But many love to walk in a very careless, unwise profession : so long as they can hold out in the performance of outward duties, they are very regardless of the spiritual privileges, of those internal movements which are the marrow of life divine, and the matter of God's promises to the believer, such as vital communion with Christ, peace in the soul, spiritual consolations, the blest enjoyment of assurance. Without some taste and experience of these things, or earnest and strong desires after the enjoyment of them, profession is heartless, lifeless, useless, and religion itself a dead carcase without an animating soul. The peace which some enjoy is a mere stupidity : they judge not these things to be real which are the substance of Christ's present reward, and a renunciation whereof would deprive the Church of its principal support in all its sufferings. It is a great and serious evidence of unbelief when we can satisfy ourselves without experience in the heart of the precious blessing promised in the Gospel, and made known to the people of God. How can it be supposed that we do indeed believe in a fulness of glory, joy, happiness, the faith of which is the foundation of all religion, when we do not believe the promises of a present and all-important interest in the things that are revealed in the heart to the people of God ? How is it so many, under a profession, are easy, and content to go destitute of these

present comforts, and have no certainty as to the end? But herein many deceive themselves. They would, they affirm, have peace, and joy, and assurance, but it is only to countenance them in their evil and worldly frames, and careless walking.

Where light is without affection, it ends in dead formality or atheism; and where the affections are without light, they sink in the bog of superstition: doting on pictures, images, and outside services, to make up for the want of an internal religion. The steam of their disordered mind will cloud and darken the understanding, that it shall not be able to discern any spiritual object, least of all the greatest of them, the assurance of salvation. Persons under the power of such distempers may have the same doctrinal knowledge of the Person of Christ, His office, and His grace, and the same evidence of its truth fixed on their minds, but, when they look at their own state, they are dark and confused. When there is a true concernment, and a true conviction as to where we stand, then the mind and heart will be greatly affected by it. They cannot make a shift to live on hopes, as many do, that all will be well at last; though the anxiety about it, and God's appointed means for the instruction of His people are neglected, and every trifle is set before the things of God. This apathy differs much from the experience of God's true children, who, in seasons of darkness and coldness, get anxious for a revival, and seek unto the only way of restoration and recovery, and often, with strong crying and tears, turn as prisoners of hope to the only way of peace and consolation. Then it is the fulness, glory, and beauty of God's great salvation in Christ Jesus shines with peculiar blessedness, when the Spirit of God reveals that, notwithstanding all we fear and feel, Christ is made of God unto us "wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption."—*Owen*.

THE late Dr. Grosvenor being at the funeral of Dr. Watts, a friend said to him, "Well, Dr. Grosvenor, you have seen the end of Dr. Watts, and you will soon follow; what think you of death?" "Think of it," replied the doctor, "why, when death comes, I shall smile upon *death*, if God smiles upon *me*."—*Ryland*.

STRONG preachers have ever been Bible preachers. The old reformers drew their weapons from the heavenly armoury. The sermons of Bunyan, and Baxter, and Flavel, and men of their stamp, were full of God—instinct with living doctrines. Their very garb was after the Scripture pattern. Whitefield, as a custom, read the Bible day by day on his knees, praying over every sentence, line, and word. Preachers who saturate their sermons with the Word of God never wear out.

THE SEEKER'S CORNER.

FOR SEEKERS.

"Looking unto Jesus"—HEBREWS xxii. 2.

Now, "looking unto Jesus,"
So let us run the race,
For He, who ever sees us,
Knows just our state and case.
E'en though in deep depression,
Still, still to Him we'll look;
To save us from oppression,
He kindly undertook.

So, "looking unto Jesus,"
We travel day by day;
No ill can ever seize us,
For He preserves alway.
Sometimes we feel confounded,
Like Jonah in the deep;
And when by woe surrounded,
We look with eyes that weep.

Still, "looking unto Jesus,"
'Midst changes, bonds, and grief,
His mercy sometimes frees us,
And brings us sweet relief.
At length the night of sorrow
To gladness turned, we may,
When comes the joyous morrow,
With singing, praise and pray.

Thus, "looking unto Jesus,"
Sweet object of our view!
No other sight can please us,
Or yield us comfort true.
Oh, may our eyes be ever
Upon the Saviour turned,
And may we never, never
Grow cold or unconcerned.

Yes! "looking unto Jesus,"
What time we sojourn here,
Will comfort bring, and ease us
From every doubt and fear.
'Tis sweetest consolation,
For, "looking up," we see
The glorious revelation
Of love and mercy free.

*Leicester.**E. C.*

WHEN you make Christ your one hope, then you will be happy.

LETTER FOR THE YOUNG.

MY DEAR BOY,—I must try and pen a few lines to you, but I feel so very unwell, and, what is still worse, so dead in my soul towards God. Oh, this dreadful unbelief—how it mars every bit of comfort, and robs the Lord of the glory due to Him! How solemn it will be should my religion prove at last nothing but of the flesh! I am now getting near the end of all things in this life, and feel I want to stand upon firm ground for eternity, but I am in the Lord's hand, and cannot move a finger towards my own salvation, but I do want the Lord to save me fully, freely, and entirely.

I like your uncle's letter very much. We find, with all his rich experience, that he is not free from doubts and fears; and that part on the "Righteousness of Christ" was very nice. Could we ever be looking to Him and *less* to ourselves, it would be much more for our comfort. How very backward my heart is to go to Him; if He draws, then I can run, and if He withholds the sweet influences of His Spirit, I live only to my wretched self.

I had a sweet help one day, and very unlooked for. I had felt very low, and took up one of the periodicals to look at the deaths, and it said how much a portion in Jeremiah was blessed to one person. I reached the Bible to look at the portion; when I read it, I wondered what he could see in that. I could see nothing. So I was led to read the chapter before it; and, oh, with what sweetness the words dropped upon my heart, and especially these, "Is Ephraim My dear son? is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still." Oh, what love filled my heart to the Lord, His people, His ways, and especially to His Word! I never remember to have felt such love—intense love—to the Bible before. *Happy moments!* how it seems to mould the soul into the image of the dear Redeemer; everything is all right and straight for the time, and the soul seems crucified to the world, and the world to it. Oh, that the Lord would favour my soul with much of His sweet spirit, that I may live more to Him, and less to myself!

How pleased I am to find you are, in some humble measure, kept like the Psalmist—thirsting for God—the living God! And of His good pleasure may you be kept earnestly seeking, till you obtain the sweet testimony in your soul that Christ is indeed formed in you, the hope of glory!

With kindest love, I remain,

Your affectionate mother,

Swindon, March, 1876.

ELIZA BRIGNELL.

A PROTESTANT PARTY IN THE HOUSE.

"A DETERMINED attempt will be made," says one of the London correspondents of the *Yorkshire Post*, "at the next general election to run certain candidates upon what may be called Protestant lines. The Parliamentary Committee of the National Club have been giving the subject close attention. They are prepared with some candidates, and they hope to see a distinctly Protestant vote fully organized in at least a few constituencies."

We think it will prove a disgrace to Protestants if some such movement as the above cannot be effected. No party politics ought to prevent it being carried out. Our enemies are not slow to use the weapon of political representation against us, as the following extract from the *English Churchman* will show:—

The late Mr. Frederick Lucas, M.P., first editor of the *Tablet*, was a very zealous advocate of forming a Roman Catholic Party in the House of Commons. What he said in support of his plan might, says the *Protestant Observer*, with equal truth be applied to the formation of a Protestant Party, as now urged by the Committee of the National Club. The document from which we quote is a statement which Mr. Lucas addressed to the late Pope Pius IX.

"A member of the House of Commons," Mr. Lucas wrote, "once said to me that, 'with a good cause and ability to speak, two members were a party.' That is, that two members having justice on their side; insisting only on what was right, however unpopular it might be; free from all suspicion of dishonesty, insincerity, or corruption; capable of enforcing with a moderate amount of eloquence the cause they had in hand, and able (by there being two of them) to defend one another when attacked—that two such men might produce an impression upon the House, upon the country, and upon the Minister, and labour usefully to whatever question they applied themselves. A Parliamentary party of two is unquestionably a small party; but my experience in the House of Commons tells me that in substance this saying is quite true. A small party able to take a creditable part in the discussions and business of the House, known to represent a considerable opinion out of doors, devoted to the public object which they have in view, demanding only what is just, and seeking that justice with integrity—a very small party under these conditions, perfectly independent, properly supported by the country, and shrinking from no labour and responsibility in the House, is really able, with the blessing of God, to accomplish a great deal. Two men can do something, but twenty men acting with united strength are a very powerful force.

"And how are they powerful? In one part by their influence in critical debates and divisions. Twenty men acting together are always formidable. They make a difference of forty according as they take one side or the other in a division, and how many Administrations are there whose fate has been sealed by less than forty votes? No Minister, however strong, can despise a compact body of twenty members. The strong Minister of to-day is in a minority to-morrow, and the next day he finds himself in opposition. A dissension has arisen in his Cabinet, a colleague has seceded, supporters fail him, and friends become lukewarm; a critical division approaches, and then the leader of the Government and the leader of the Opposition both look with a wistful eye upon that compact force of twenty votes. All leaders of politics are accustomed to expect such incidents as these; and when a party of twenty seems likely to remain compact and to grow in strength, it is always treated with a good deal of respect by both sides of the House of Commons. If it is not wanted now, both sides know that before very long its votes may be, if not necessary, exceedingly convenient and profitable; and though an honest politician will not abandon his own principles to purchase twenty, or indeed any number of votes, yet it is in human nature that every party leader and every party will avoid giving needless offence to a body of members of Parliament, whose votes, by the strange caprice of fortune, may at some not very distant day stand him in good stead." ("Life of Frederick Lucas," vol. ii., pp. 276—279.)

[We would that Protestants would sink their political differences, which they might do without supporting Home Rule, or *vice versa*, in order to oppose the deadly foe to our liberties—Popery.—ED.]

"WHAT hast thou that thou didst not receive?" And if you are a receiver, what have you to boast of, but the bounty of your Bestower?

CHRIST is the Lord of life in the hour of death. He'll turn death itself into life, and turn that hell which you and I have so justly deserved, into glory inconceivable.

A TIMID, time-serving, sneaking professor and preacher of the Gospel is like a rat playing at hide-and-seek behind a wainscot, who pops his head through a hole to see if the coast is clear, and ventures out if nobody is in the way, but draws quickly back when danger appears. We cannot be honest to Christ except we are bold for Him. He is either worth all we can lose for Him, or He is worth nothing.

The Sower, November, 1891.



**"THE MORE SHE READ IT, THE MORE DECIDED HER SERIOUS
IMPRESSIONS BECAME." (See page 283.)**

THE ACTRESS.

How often, as those lines of the immortal Cowper are sung, are the children of God reminded of some special circumstance in their own history, or in that of others, which proves, beyond dispute, that—

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

In His dealings with many of His saints, in calling them by grace, leading them on their journey through the wilderness, and performing many things which concern their welfare for time and for eternity, they at times see His eternal counsel concerning them so specially manifested and portrayed, that they are compelled to exclaim, “ Who is a God like unto Thee ? ” And as they realize His special covenant mercy and favour in ordering their steps, controlling circumstances, and bringing them to a knowledge of His electing love in Christ (see Eph. i. 3-6 ; 2 Tim. i. 9), and their interest in His atoning blood, whereby they are made holy and reconciled unto God, they with humble adoration sing—

“ Why me ? why me ? O blessed God ;
Why such a wretch as me ?
Who must for ever lie in hell,
Were not salvation free.”

The following authentic narrative proves how the Lord Jehovah, in bringing to pass His inscrutable purposes toward His chosen vessels of mercy, uses the most simple means and instruments to accomplish His will, in bringing His sheep to His fold and His prodigals to His home, in order that no flesh should glory in His presence, and that every one of His redeemed should be thoroughly persuaded of that precious truth, “ By grace are ye saved through faith ; and that not of yourselves : it is the gift of God ” (Eph. ii. 8). Our fervent prayer to God is that all our readers may be favoured to learn this truth, as did the subject of the following affecting narrative.

An actress, in one of the provincial theatres, whose character was not in any way different from that generally ascribed (and in most cases, perhaps, with truth) to persons of her profession, was one day passing through the streets of the town in which she then resided, when her attention was attracted by the sound of voices, which reached her from a poor cottage before her. Curiosity prompted her to look in at the open door, when she saw a few poor people sitting together ; one of whom, at the

moment of her observation, commenced giving out the following hymn, which the others joined in singing—

“Depth of mercy! can there be
Mercy still reserved for me?” &c.

The tune was sweet and simple, but she heeded it not; the words had rivetted her attention, and she stood motionless, until she was invited to enter by the woman of the house, who had observed her standing at the door. She complied, and remained during a prayer which was offered up by one of the little company; and uncouth as the expressions sounded, perhaps, to her ears, they carried with them a conviction of sincerity, on the part of the person then employed. She quitted the cottage, but the words of the hymn followed her; she could not banish them from her recollection; and at last resolved to procure the book which contained it; she did so, and the more she read it, the more decided her serious impressions became; she attended the ministry of the Gospel, read her hitherto neglected, despised Bible, and bowed herself in humility and contrition of heart before Him, whose mercy she now felt she needed, whose sacrifices are those of a broken and contrite spirit, and who has declared, that with such sacrifices He is well pleased. Her profession she determined at once and for ever to renounce; and for some little time excused herself from appearing on the stage, without, however, disclosing her change of sentiments, or making known her resolution finally to leave it. But she was now to experience the truth of her Lord's declaration, that “if any man will come after Me, he must take up his cross and follow Me.” The manager of the theatre called upon her one morning, and requested her to sustain the principal character in a new play, which was to be performed the next week for his benefit. She had frequently performed this character, and excited general admiration: but she now, however, told him her resolution never to act again, at the same time giving her reasons. At first he attempted to overcome her scruples by ridicule, but this was unavailing; he then represented the loss he should incur by her refusal, and concluded his arguments by promising, that if, to oblige him, she would act on this occasion, it should be the last request of the kind he would ever make. Unable to resist his solicitations, she promised to appear; and on the appointed evening went to the theatre. The character she assumed required her, on her first entrance, to sing a song: and, when the curtain drew up, the orchestra immediately began the accompaniment. But she stood as if lost in thought, and as one forgetting all around her, and her own situation. The music ceased, but she did not sing; and, supposing her to be overcome by timidity, the

band again commenced. A second time the instruments were silent ; and still she did not move. A third time the air was played ; and then, with clasped hands, and eyes suffused with tears, she sang, not the words of the song, but—

“Depth of mercy! can there be
Mercy still reserved for me?”

It is almost needless to add, that the performance was immediately ended: many ridiculed, but some were led from that memorable night to “consider their ways,” and to reflect on the wonderful power of that religion which could so influence the heart, and change the life of one hitherto so vain, so sinfully pursuing the road which leadeth to destruction.

It will be satisfactory to the reader to know, that the change in this lady was as permanent as singular; she walked consistently with her profession of religion for many years, and at length became the wife of a minister of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. “Is not this a brand plucked from the burning?” “His way is in the sea, and His path in the great waters, and His footsteps are not known.” “Is there anything too hard for the Lord?”

There is a period, known to God,
When all His sheep, redeemed by blood,
Shall leave the hateful ways of sin,
Turn to the fold and enter in.

At peace with hell, with God at war, ·
In sin's dark maze they wander far,
Indulge their lust and still go on
As far from God as sheep can run.

But see how heaven's indulgent care
Attends their wanderings here and there;
Still hard at heel, where'er they stray,
With pricking thorns to hedge their way.

When wisdom calls, they stop their ear,
And headlong urge the mad career;
Judgments nor mercies ne'er can sway
Their roving feet to wisdom's way.

Glory to God, they ne'er shall rove
Beyond the limits of His love;
Fenced with Jehovah's SHALLS and WILLS,
Firm as the everlasting hills.

Th' appointed time rolls on apace,
Not to *propose*, but *call* by grace,
To change the heart, renew the will,
And turn the feet to Zion's hill.

—Kent.

A PASTORAL EPISTLE.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—I am once more seated to address you. I take up my pen with consciousness that I can write nothing that will profit you without the gracious anointing of the Holy Ghost. I am commencing my letter just as you are gathering together to hear that man of God, John Kershaw, and much do I desire that his preaching may be made a blessing to your souls. I have just been telling the Lord that some in the congregation are still dead, and entreating Him, if His heavenly will, to use His servants this day to their awakening. Oh, my friends, what a fearful word is dead—"dead in trespasses and sins"—dead under the fearful curse of a broken law; and then how terrible beyond description the thought, soon it will be said of your bodies, he is dead, she is dead, and oh! the soul, the undying soul, where will be its dread abode? If you die graceless, in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone! The wrath to come! The wrath to come! Fearfulness must surprise the hypocrites one day, and the sinners in Zion, the careless ones in the midst of Gospel light, will one day be afraid, for "Who shall dwell in everlasting burnings?" Oh, think and tremble; death is now upon the road. I have been thinking of some of you, and addressing the throne of grace about you, as hungering and thirsting for Jesus. My prayer is, "Lord, use Thy servant this day to heal the wounded conscience, and give peace to the troubled breast." Oh, seeking, thirsting ones, my heart rejoices over you, for—

" These pinings prove that Christ is near,
And testify His grace;
Call on Him with unceasing prayer,
And you shall see His face."

Loved with an everlasting love, with loving-kindness the Lord is drawing you to Himself. Bought with the matchless blood of the Incarnate Son of God, He is winning the purchase of His blood. 'Tis the Holy Ghost that has quickened your dead souls, and given you faith to believe your just desert is hell, and has brought you to cast aside all your filthy rags, and made you willing in the day of Jesus' power to come to the open Fountain, to hide in the rent Rock, and to fall beneath the shadow of the cross. Oh, thirsty, needy, naked, helpless, guilty and poor ones, love's table is spread for you. Atoning blood was shed for you. Gospel invitations were written for you. "Yet there is room"—room! room! room!

" He is able, He is willing;
Doubt no more."

Holy Ghost, give faith in the Gospel message.

I have just been pouring out desires for you, my dearly beloved friends, who have fled to Christ, and have been blessed with faith in His sure word of promise. O Lord, send a plentiful rain upon Thy garden at Clifton. What weeds, what insects, what bleak winds, what scorching suns, what little foxes to spoil the vines, what enemies without and within, has Thine own garden ! May the Lord pour from the treasures of His truth abundant waters to every root. Stamp upon the sad vermin that overruns so often His plants. Keep night and day—at night from unbelief, in the day from presumption and pride. Oh, may the garden of grace at Clifton be a bed of spices indeed, sending forth in this desert world odours celestial. Oh, may there be such a blessing from on high resting on us, that all round about Thy hill may be a blessing.

My friends, seek after more grace. Grace, abundant grace, is in Christ to meet all your necessities. Oh, for grace to enable us to have much to do with the fulness of grace that is in Christ. Lowliness of mind, meekness of wisdom, penitence of heart, contrition of spirit, constraining love, victorious faith, earnest zeal, expectant hope—aye, all that is necessary to give us confidence and peace in looking back to the cross, to enable us to walk in the sweet footsteps of our Divine Master, to strengthen us to vanquish the terrors of death and the cross—all, all is in Jesus, and is a gratuitous treasury ever open to supply the needy saint. Oh for the ministry of the Holy Ghost in our hearts, making us to more and more realize our need, and helping us in all our straits to go to this rich storehouse !

My dear friends, I anticipate with pleasure my return to Clifton, and trust we shall all have cause to be thankful to God for His restoring mercy to me. I am each week better, though certainly not quite well ; but it is hardly to be expected that I should very rapidly recover. I have written to Mr. Flitton, asking him if he could supply my place, so as to enable me comfortably to continue one Lord's Day more here. I am hoping, if God will, I shall see you face to face on Lord's Day the 26th. I trust by that time I shall have strength to commence taking the whole of the services. Pray, dear friends, that I may commence in reality to preach with holy oil and heavenly fire the mighty and glorious Gospel of the grace of God. I long to have the rich blessing of Barnabas, who was "a good man, full of the Holy Ghost : and much people was added unto the Lord."

I have been favoured to meet at the Lord's table a little band of French believers ; but how few ! only four besides ourselves. The expounding of my dear friend, Monsieur Dournin, is very clear, striking, and powerful. He is an earnest labourer, going from village to village, using every means to put the truth before

the people, who, alas! are shut up in the grossest ignorance, superstition, and idolatry. Ours is indeed a favoured country. Oh, may it never again be overrun with popish priests and shrouded in the thick darkness of Romish night.

With much affection, and many wishes that the choicest blessings for time and eternity may rest upon you,

I am, yours affectionately,
Boulogne-Sur-Mer, May 7th, 1857. S. SEARS.

THE BLESSED DEAD.

WE insert the following notes at the request of some dear friends, they being the substance of a sermon preached at Dane Hill, Sussex, on the death of Mr. Simeon Buckman, Lord's Day, May 26th, 1822, by William Roberts.

The text selected by our departed friend for the solemn occasion of his funeral sermon is recorded in Revelation, fourteenth chapter, part of thirteenth verse, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth : Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours ; and their works do follow them."

In addressing you upon this solemn occasion, I hope to bear in mind the deceased's dying charge, that there is no dying in the Lord, without first living in the Lord. And seeing it is appointed for all men once to die, and how soon that hour, that solemn hour, may arrive none of us can tell, it must therefore be a matter of the greatest importance to know we are now in the Lord.

Death, then, is the common lot of man ; there is no discharge in this war.

"Crowded like forest trees we stand,
 And some are marked to fall ;
 The axe will smite at God's command,
 And soon will smite us all."

The deceased was the subject of a long and severe affliction, which he bore with Christian fortitude and patience, till the messenger Death came to call him away to his eternal rest. I visited him many times during his affliction, and I am very sorry that I had not an opportunity of visiting him once more, but our next meeting will be never to part again. Oh that my hearers may be of that number who live in the Lord, and that they may "die in the Lord."

I believe our deceased friend had renounced all for Christ. At one of my visits I observed to him, "If my life should be spared and I should be at Dane Hill, probably I shall be requested to speak about your death, by preaching a funeral sermon." I said,

"What shall I tell the people about you—that you were a very good man?" and to this he quickly replied, "Don't you tell the people any lies about me." "What shall I say then—that you were a poor, wretched sinner, saved by grace, through the atonement and merits of Christ Jesus?" At this he burst into a flood of tears—not tears of distress, but tears of joy, which spoke the feelings of his heart, and his faith in the Redeemer.

I now hasten to notice the second branch of my text, namely, the blessedness and privilege connected with dying in Christ the Lord.

First. They are blessed, and only they, who are in the Lord, because, "Absent from the body, present with the Lord."

"There shall they see His face,
And never, never sin;
And, from the rivers of His grace,
Drink endless pleasures in."

Oh, my friends, what a blessedness must this be to die in the Lord, and to fully realize all, and more than all, that is said in these words! Well does the Apostle say, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit."

Secondly. Their privilege: "They rest from their labour," &c. The words intimate that the Christian's life here is a life of toil and painful exercise. Sometimes it is compared to a race. So says the Apostle, "So run that ye may obtain"; and, "Seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus." Sometimes it is compared to wrestling. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. vi. 12). Again, it is called a fight. "So fight I, not as one that beateth the air," &c. (1 Cor. ix. 26). These comparisons are made use of to show that the Christian's life is a life of conflict and painful exercise; he is like a man toiling and rowing against wind and tide. True, very true, are the words of the poet—

"The world opposes from without,
And unbelief within;
We fear, we faint, we grieve, we doubt,
And feel the load of sin."

This has been the case, beloved, with all those who are already safely landed, who are entered into their heavenly rest.

"Once they were mourning here below,
 And wet their couch with tears;
 They wrestled hard, as we do now,
 With sins and doubts and fears."

There is labouring to bear with patience the will of God in His dealings and dispensations, for these are often very trying to flesh and blood. Our deceased friend had his share of afflictions, and no doubt he found the Apostle's words true, that "no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous but grievous."

Again, it is labour and hard labour (at times) for the saint to withstand Satan, and his own general unbelief, and to hope against hope; but there is a rest, "a rest that remaineth," sure for them that die in the Lord.

Thirdly. What the text asserts, "They rest." Rest signifies repose—cessation from labour; not from exercise, because their happy spirits will be constantly employed in admiring and adoring their God and Saviour, who saved them and washed them in His blood, and made them kings and priests unto God, &c. But this is a glorious rest, a rest that sin and Satan shall never more interrupt.

No more are they to be disturbed with afflictions and the perplexing cares of this vain world, for God Himself shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more pain, no more sorrow, no more death; "for the former things are passed away"; and, "behold, all things are become new." Happy, thrice happy are "they who die in the Lord; they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them." Which leads us to observe that, though they have works, and good works too, yet these do not go before them to procure their admittance or to gain them the favour of heaven, for that was completed, perfectly completed, by their blessed Redeemer upon the cross. What are those works that will follow them? Not all their works, I assume, for if some of their works were to follow them to heaven, the very sight of them would tend to make them uncomfortable there; but all their sinful works were atoned on Calvary's bloody mount. Their works of faith, as evidences of their attachment to their Saviour. Then shall it be repeated, "These are they that have come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and have made them white and clean in the blood of the Lamb." "By faith they endured, as seeing Him who is invisible." Their faith led them to build upon Him as their Rock, and to live upon Him as their Prophet, Priest, and King.

Again, their works of love do follow them. "Then shall He (the King) say to them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungered, and ye gave Me meat:

I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink : I was a stranger, and ye took Me in : naked and ye clothed Me ; I was sick, and ye visited Me," &c. Their works of faith and labour of love shall not be forgotten, for "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me." Saith the Lord, "Mine elect shall long enjoy the works of their hands." John, the servant of Jesus Christ, was commanded to write this ; and there is the testimony of the Spirit to ratify and confirm the same. May He confirm it in your hearts,

Having briefly touched the leading branches in this text, I shall draw to a close by dropping a few remarks, by way of reference to this bereavement.

First. To the branches of the family, the bereaved widow and the children. Death has made a breach in your family, by taking away the head ; but he will not stop here. Soon, very soon, he will visit you again. This speaks to each of you, "Be ye also ready, for in an hour when ye think not, the Son of Man cometh." May this stroke be sanctified to you all. Death rends asunder the closest natural ties ; he takes or rends the husband from the wife, the wife from the husband—the parent from the children, and the children from the fond embrace of the affectionate parents. It rends asunder the union between the body and soul, yet it doth not dissolve the union that exists between Christ and His people.

May it be your main concern to live in the Lord, that you may "die in the Lord," and finally enjoy the blessedness spoken of in my text, to rest from your labours and your works to follow.

Secondly. To that part of the congregation who are in the Lord. Death is no more the king of terrors to you. Your blessed Redeemer has taken away the sting of death, and triumphed over the grave. Let death come suddenly, or with a more deliberate step, being in Christ, your spiritual Ark, ye are already prepared and safe. "Blessed are the people who are in such a case."

Thirdly. To you who are not manifestly in the Lord, what shall I say to you ? My poor fellow sinners, you who are living without God, without Christ, and without a Scriptural hope in the world, should death call you away, should thy soul be required of thee this night, what would be the awful consequences ? You must sink lower than the grave, to regions of sorrow, doleful shades ; be cast out into outer darkness, where there is nothing but wailing and gnashing of teeth. May this bereavement be sanctified to you ; may this call awaken you to a sense of your danger, ere you realize it too late. Remember, "As the tree falls, so it will lie," lie for ever. If you die out of Christ, you will rise again without an interest in Him.

May the Lord bless these few remarks to your souls' profit, for His mercy's sake. Amen.

TRUE GOSPEL.

WHAT, therefore, am I to do when the law attacks and presses upon my conscience, especially when I feel that I have not done what it requires, and I am guilty in every particular? This thou mayest, with confidence, say to the law: "Cease. O law, to contend with me as a believer; I have nothing at all to do with thee, and I will not hear thee for this very reason—because thou comest to condemn me, to dispute with, and to inquire of me how good and righteous I am. For it matters not at all what I am, what I ought to do, or ought not to do, in point of salvation, but what Christ Himself is, what He gives, and what He has done. For we are now in the Gospel bride-chamber, where the Bridegroom and the bride are entirely alone; thou hast no business to enter there, nor to interfere with one word." Still the law will continue to assail and say, "Nevertheless, thou must do good works, and keep the commandments, if thou wilt be saved." Here again answer: "But thou art told there is no room for thee to attack me concerning them; for I have gotten my righteousness, and the sum of all my salvation, without any of my works *in Christ Jesus my Lord*; and I was saved long before thou ever camest unto me, therefore I have no need of thy presence at all." For, as I have said, where works are of no avail, there neither can the law be of any weight or moment; and where there is no law there can be no sin, therefore no condemnation. The spouse is to reign with Christ alone in the bride-chamber, all others being shut out; in Christ she has all things in one treasure, and wants no one thing more as necessary unto salvation, wherefore, the law, together with its trumpets and thunders, is to be excluded as often as it comes to attack the conscience. For it has nothing to do there, nor does it come at all in season, when it wishes to make a great bustle where it has no business to make any, nor even in the least to obtrude itself. For here we upon this article, which is our creed, "I believe in Jesus Christ my Lord, who suffered for me, died, and was buried," &c., in whom all laws, kingly, Mosaic, and Divine, do meet. Therefore, I am boldly to shun everything that would dispute with me concerning sin, righteousness, or any such things that oppose my salvation. Behold, this is the liberty that Christ should shadow forth to us in this place: That, as Christians we should suffer no master to rule in our conscience, most steadily cleaving to this one thing—that we are planted, quickened, crucified, justified, and sanctified through Christ, so that we can say, "Here is my righteousness, here is my treasure, here are my works—in a word, here is all God requires, here is all the law demands, and here is full salvation."—*Luther.*

THE TRUTH.

THE truth has to a great extent fallen in our streets, hence many among us are weak and sickly. Censoriousness and unspirituality abound. But little growth in divine things is manifested. If, however, the life of God is really in our souls, and the fear of God in any measure of exercise, there must be some degree of growth in grace and knowledge. The Holy Spirit is the Teacher of the disciples of Jesus, and He does not leave them under the condemnation of those who are ever learning and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth. What would be thought of a family in which the children always remained infants in stature, in understanding, and conduct? The one great evidence and invariable characteristic of life, in its earlier stages, is *growth*, and growth much depends upon the kind of food assimilated.

Now, the chief cause of the evils we deplore is the prevalence of imperfect views of truth (often caused by trusting to the judgment or being swayed by the dictation of others), amounting to perversion of *doctrine*, confusion of judgment in regard to *experience*, and a *practice* in some things exactly contrary to the precepts of the Gospel. We will briefly notice these points.

1. Corruption in *doctrine* is truth perverted, either by being taken from or added to. In either case it is held in unrighteousness. The solemn fact is forgotten that, on the one hand, the setting forth of only half a truth may be the worst kind of *falsehood*; and on the other hand, a truth exaggerated and distorted is often the worst form of *error*. Again, it is possible to thrust forward one or two doctrines, to the neglect of others of equal importance. This is a very common way of omitting to declare the whole counsel of God. There may be the perpetual repetition of a doctrine, with a view to vindicate one's soundness, and "to acquit one's self of a kind of exacted homage to a form of sound words," while one's religion remains entirely destitute of the Spirit which quickeneth, resting merely on opinions respecting the letter of truth.

The presentation of half-truths and distorted truths, with the exclusion of neglected truths, can never form wholesome nutriment for the living children of grace. It proves the existence of a very unsatisfactory state of things, that there should be so much misapprehension of what constitutes sound doctrine according to the Scriptures.

2. If you consider the ordinary run of statement concerning *experience*, we find very little clear understanding of the nature of the work of the Holy Ghost in the hearts of the elect, and its effects inwardly and outwardly. The workings of the flesh are

confounded with the workings of the Spirit. Darkness is often put for light. There is but little taking forth the precious from the vile in such matters. This want of discrimination is the cause why many true children of God are so sadly perplexed in judgment respecting even such essentially vital and experimental truths as sanctification by the Holy Spirit, a law work, the revelation of Christ to the soul, the assurance of faith, the pardon of sin, and the justification of the sinner, &c. Many who possess some measure of saving knowledge of these truths do not understand their own experience. They walk in darkness and bondage, partly through lack of sound instruction in the things of God, and partly, perhaps, through their own neglect of the Word.

Imperfect, one-sided statements of doctrine and experience in the pulpit, lead to delusions and uncertainties in the pew. The supply system is working sad havoc. The diversity of preachers, many of whom are notoriously destitute of ministerial qualifications, has produced a class of captious, critical, and contentious hearers, who have but little acquaintance with even the first principles of vital godliness.

3. The same confusion exists in respect to *practice*. The precepts are the Gospel rule for new creatures in Christ Jesus, but by many they are ignored on the ground of alleged inability; by some they are legalized, as if merit attached to a consistent walk; and by others they are made a whip of to flog the saints of God. In fact, it is not too much to say that the precepts of the Word are shamefully disregarded and abused. For example: take those relating to the *tongue*, in James iii., and those relating to *brotherly love*, in 1 John iii., together with the plain, pointed instructions of Jesus concerning offences arising between brethren, in Matthew xviii. 15, and it becomes painfully evident that much of our practice is precisely the very opposite of what is there inculcated. Self-will is far too rampant in us all. The flesh is indulged; the word of reproof is despised; uncircumcised hearts and ears receive not the whole counsel of God.

Many, however, err from ignorance. Lack of knowledge has led to the present confusion. But there is pardon for sins of ignorance. The precept and the promise still hold good for Zion's sons, "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not."

With these thoughts and feelings, necessity seems laid upon us—if the Lord permit and enable—to pen a series of papers upon some of those fundamental truths of the Gospel which are so imperfectly apprehended, and of which the true signification is so much lost sight of. We therefore intend (D.V.) in the next paper to offer a few thoughts upon the subject of the ATONEMENT, as

this is the foundation upon which all things in connection with life and godliness rest ; and afterwards, in dependence upon the Holy Spirit, who is promised to lead humble seekers into "all truth," we will attempt to clear the stumbling-blocks from the path of anxious inquirers after truth, in respect to such subjects as Sanctification, Adoption, Redemption, Justification, &c.

May the simple unfoldings of the Gospel of the grace of God be owned and blessed to the instruction, edification, and confirmation of seekers after, and lovers of, the truth as it is in Jesus.

"CAST ME NOT AWAY."

(PSALM li.)

O Love divine, touch Thou a bleeding heart
With Thy own blood, and heal its open wound ;
None, save Thyself, can tell its poignant smart,
When nought but death and hell through sin abound.

Blot out ! blot out its crimson stains, and say,
"I thy salvation am, thy pardon's sure !"
The life, with grief now ebbing fast away,
Shall then revive beneath Thy gracious cure.

Purge through and through, 'till cleansed from every blot,
The prostrate penitent shall rise to life anew ;
Thy loving-kindness, Saviour, changes not,
Thus "it is written,"—say, is it not true ?

Let not a life redeemed with Thy own blood
Become the prey of Satan and of sin ;
Do not disown the claim, "My Lord, my God,"
For Thou art still what Thou hast ever been.

Back from the borders of the gaping pit,
Bring yet again the guilty, by Thy grace,
To tell it to the perishing—and it
Shall be recorded to Thine endless praise.

Come, ye who thus before the blood-stained throne
Now weeping sue, in Jesus' precious name,
Think not that He will once thy cry disown,
Or bid thee perish in thy sin and shame.

His grace that broke thy thirst and love of sin,
And bowed thee at His feet to tell thy grief,
With open heart receives each suppliant in,
To bind the wound, and give thee sweet relief.

Not willing thou shouldst sink to rise no more ;
He lives to save, and gracious waits to be ;
Salvation's joys He will in love restore,
And speak thy pardon, sovereign, full, and free.

E. M.

OBITUARY OF MR. J. H. PRUCE.

JOHN HINTON PRUCE died at Swindon, June 21st, 1891, in the seventy-sixth year of his age. He held the office of deacon at Providence Baptist Chapel for nearly forty-seven years.

He was separated from the world by God's grace when about twenty-four years of age, and as he had never been in the habit of attending any place of worship, being entirely in and of the world, he was entirely ignorant of even the external forms of religion. But on being awakened by the Spirit, he began to feel his danger as a guilty sinner, and at first met with the Wesleyans. But finding his state of mind was not entered into nor his case dealt with by the ministry, he next tried the Independents. Here he became instructed more in the Word and learned the way of salvation, but had not yet experienced it. This minister, who, it is believed, was a godly man, was removed from Swindon, and supplies were engaged to fill the pulpit. Our friend Puce, with some others, could not hear these to profit, and came out from this people, and met together in a cottage for prayer and reading the Word, and getting a minister occasionally to preach to them. About this time Mr. Puce was enabled to realize his interest in redeeming grace. He was baptized at Alvescot by the late Mr. Shorter. In 1843 a piece of land was purchased and a little chapel built. In 1844 Mr. Shorter opened it. A little Church was formed, and our friend chosen deacon (with a Mr. Barrett), which office he filled with great credit, and much to the comfort and edification of the people until his death. His calm, deliberate judgment and wise counsel will be greatly missed by us. He was eminently a man of peace and of a loving spirit, praying for Zion's prosperity continually.

He held fast to the truth as he had received it by Divine teaching, and found the same truth support him even to the end. He was confined to his bed about three months, and endured great sufferings, especially at times. These were borne with Christian fortitude, and in them he often referred to the greater sufferings of the Lord Jesus. He was also favoured with clear and blessed views of the Divine attributes and the marvellously rich display of them in the Scriptures, so that it was a privilege to hear him relate, from time to time, the precious things God revealed to him. He said to the writer, "Give my dying love to the dear friends, and tell them that I die as I have lived. I have lived a poor sinner, whose only hope is in the mercy of God through Christ, and I die a poor sinner in myself, but, through rich grace, a pardoned and redeemed sinner, and I shall stand among the great multitude to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb for ever."

Swindon.

R. P.

PARDON AND PEACE.

THE following instance of divine and distinguishing grace is recorded in the life of Pastor Chiniquy, who met, after many years' absence, with one of a gang of eight who were all sentenced to death, but, through the priestly influence of Chiniquy, the sentence was commuted to penal servitude for life. This unexpected meeting with one of the number, gave opportunity for the recital of the following circumstances :—

“ After you had given us your last benediction when on board the ship that took us from Quebec to Botany Bay, the first thing I did was to open the New Testament you had given me and the other culprits, with the advice to read it with a praying heart. It was the first time in my life I ever had that Book in my hand ; you were the only priest in Canada who would put such a Book into the hands of the common people. I must confess that the first reading did me no good, for I read it to amuse myself, and satisfy my curiosity, more than through any good motive. The only good I received from that first reading was that I clearly understood, and for the first time, why the priests of Rome fear and hate that Book. It was in vain I looked for mass, indulgences, purgatory, scapulars, confession, holy water, the worship of Mary, or prayers in an unknown tongue. I concluded from my first reading of the Gospel that our priests were very wise to prevent us reading a book which was really demolishing the Roman Catholic Church ; and I felt surprised you had put into our hands what seemed to me so opposed to the belief and practice of our religion as you taught it us when in jail, and my confidence in your judgment was much shaken. To tell you the truth, the first reading of the Book went far to demolish my Roman Catholic faith, and to make a wreck of the religion taught me by my parents, and at the college, and by yourself. For some weeks I became more of a sceptic than anything else ; the only good that first reading did was to give me more serious thoughts, and prevent me from uniting myself to Chambers and his companions in a foolish plot to take possession of the ship, and escape to some distant shore ; but he was betrayed, and hanged. If my first reading did me no good, I cannot say the same of the second. I remembered, when handing us the Book, you told us to read it with prayer to God for light to understand it. I was tired of my former wicked life ; I felt the need of a change. You often, when speaking to us, used the words of the Saviour, ‘ Come unto Me, all you who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest,’ but, with all the other priests, you mixed the invocation of Mary, and confidence

in signs of the cross, confession, and scapulars, so that your sublime appeal to these words of Christ were drowned by absurd and impious superstitions. One morning, after a sleepless night, and feeling pressed down with the weight of my sins, I opened my Gospel Book, after ardent prayer for light and guidance, and my eyes fell upon the words of John, 'The Lamb of God, that takes away the sin of the world.' These words fell upon my poor guilty soul with a divine power. I spent the day in crying, 'O Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world, have mercy upon me, and take away *my* sins.' The day was not over when I felt and knew that my cries had been heard at the Mercy Seat. The Lamb of God had taken away my sins; He had changed my heart, and made quite a new man of me.

"From that day the reading of the Gospel was to my soul what bread is to the poor hungry man, and what pure and refreshing waters are to the thirsty traveller. My unspeakable joy was to read the Holy Book, and speak to my companions in chains of the dear Saviour's love for poor sinners; and, thanks be to God, a good number have found Him altogether precious, and have been sincerely converted in the dark holes of that convict ship. When at work in Sydney with the other culprits, I felt my chains to be as light as feathers, when I was sure the heavy chains of sin were gone; and although working hard under a burning sun from morn to night, my heart was full of joy when I was sure that my Saviour had prepared a throne for me in His kingdom. I had hardly spent a year in Australia in the midst of the convicts, when a minister of the Gospel, accompanied by another gentleman, came to me, and said, 'Your good behaviour and Christian life have attracted the attention and admiration of the authorities, and the Governor has sent us to hand you this document, which says you are no more a criminal in law, but that you have your pardon, and you can live the life of an honourable citizen by continuing to walk in the ways of God.' After so speaking, the gentleman put one hundred dollars into my hand, adding, 'Go, and may you be a faithful follower of the Lord Jesus, and God Almighty will bless and make you prosper in all your ways.' All this seemed a dream or a vision, but it was a reality. My merciful heavenly Father had again heard my humble supplications; after having taken away the heavy chains of my sins, He mercifully took off the chains that wounded my hands and feet. I spent several days and nights in weeping and crying for joy, and blessing the God of my salvation; Jesus, the Redeemer of my soul and body."—From "*Fifty Years in the Church of Rome*," by Pastor Chimiquy.

A CHANGE OF HEART.

"And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us : whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul."—
ACTS xvi. 14.

How simple is the language of Scripture, yet how sublime ! How sovereign mercy and discriminating grace shines forth throughout its sacred pages ! The name of this woman, her calling, and the place of her abode, are all carefully noted down. She went to a prayer-meeting, which was held by a river side, in which she took no active part, but was a listener, for the narrative says, she "heard us." And what was the result ? We are not told that there were any such scenes as those which are now called "revivals." No setting forth Jesus Christ as One who will save sinners, providing sinners will but make it possible for Him to do so, by rising from the grave of sin, by some innate power of their own, and knocking at the door of mercy, while yet mercy is not felt to be needed. If it were so, then the sinner would be his own saviour, for it is the first awakening of the soul to a sense of the need of that which saves, that is most essential to its salvation. "Whose heart the Lord opened." The Lord, who "shutteth, and no man openeth ; who openeth, and no man shutteth." The Lord, who "looseth the prisoners," whose "voice breaketh the cedars, even the cedars of Lebanon" (Psa. xxix. 5).

"In spite of unbelief, and pride,
And self, and Satan's art,
The gates of brass fly open wide,
And Jesus wins the heart."

John Newton proved the truth of this, and I have proved it, and every sinner that is really passed from death unto life knows full well that it was effected by God's Spirit alone, and is constrained to say, in humble confession—

"I can hold out no more ;
I sink, by dying love compelled,
And own Thee conqueror."

The bones in Ezekiel's vision "were very dry." The last vestige of life had disappeared. "And He said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live ? And I answered, O Lord God, Thou knowest." "Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones ; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live . . . and ye shall know that I am the Lord" (Ezek. xxxvii.)

What thousands there are who worship an unknown God, or a creature of their own imagination. But the man who received

his sight said, "Why, herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence He is, and yet He hath opened mine eyes." Reader, whoever thou art, mark this: thou mayest have all knowledge, and understand all mysteries, while thy heart has never yet been opened. If so, how vain thy profession! how sad thy position! for then, in the day of death and judgment, the only One that can save thee will disown thee, and His answer to thy every plea will be, "I know you not."

"Whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul." Both Paul and his Master have spoken many things which are not attended to by many professors: they receive the doctrinal part, but the practical part they turn away from. They do not "receive with meekness the engrafted Word, which is able to save their souls" (James i. 21). Lydia said, "If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there." Here was humility, in submitting herself to the judgment of the saints, and love, in constraining them to abide at her house. Now, when the Lord, by His Spirit, opens—breaks up the fallow ground of—a sinner's heart, this is the seed He sows, and these are the fruits which follow. And whosoever may read these lines, if they profess the Lord has opened their heart, and yet do not bring forth the fruits of the Spirit (Gal v. 23) in some degree, they are yet in the "gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity." The Word says of him that "hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" J. J.

CHRIST IS EVERYTHING TO US.

WE must take heed of drawing any part of salvation but from Christ. If we seek salvation, let it be in the person and work of Jesus Christ; if the Spirit, or any gifts of grace, let us seek them in His unction; if strength, let us seek it in His power; if purity, in His conception; if mercy, in His nature, which was touched with our infirmities; if redemption, in His passion; if forgiveness, in His condemnation, or being a curse for us; if satisfaction, in His sacrifice; if cleansing, in His blood; if mortification, in His sepulchre and death; if newness of life, in His resurrection; if immortality, in His person; if a heavenly inheritance, in His entering into heaven; if all good things, in His kingdom and dominion. All treasures are in Him; and they who are not content only with Him shall have no rest anywhere, although, too, they may look half-heartedly at Him. Nor can there be any unbelief or doubtings while His fulness is thus known.—*Calvin.*

PATIENT WAITING.

THIS we should remember, not to set bounds and limits to the Lord in point of time, not to set Him a day, and think it must be as we desire. How patiently will some men bestow long attendance upon others where they expect some good at their hands. Yet we are very brisk and hasty with Him who never delays but for our good, to ripen these mercies which we, as foolish children, would pluck while they are green, and have neither sweetness nor goodness in them, and which the children will have when God's time comes. Christ is a King worth waiting for, and there is in this gift an honour and happiness far above all else in the world. The things you seek, remember, are great things, such as the forgiveness of sins, enjoyment of peace, evidence of sonship, heirship to a kingdom; and shall we, condemned rebels, heirs of the bottomless pit, deservedly servants to sin and Satan—shall such as we be in haste with such a Lord in having granted immediately to us our requests? Never was any waiting soul, but found it fully recompensed by the opportune answer, whenever and however He graciously appeared. Says the Psalmist, "In waiting, I waited"; but the time, however long, was well bestowed, for David says, "He inclined His ear to me, and heard my cry, and brought me up out of the horrible pit." You that have this persuasion, how will your hearts be taken up with His love "who hath so loved you as to give Himself for you," who interposed Himself to bear off from you the stroke of everlasting death, encountered all the wrath due to you, and went through that great work by reason of His unspeakable love? Oh, let Him never leave my heart who refused to leave the Cross for my sake, and gave His life a ransom for many.

Strive ye, believers, to adorn and commend the religion you profess to others, especially to those who are about you, and nearest to you in the flesh. Give no just cause of prejudice against religion. Beware, not only of gross and culpable failings and ways of sin, but of such order and kind in small offences as may expose you in trifles to have your religion questioned and your profession marred. Study both a holy and wise carriage before the world as a believer, and pray much for it—"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." But if a private Christian be thus obliged, how much more the ministers of the Word. Oh that we teachers and preachers could remember our deep obligation to the Gospel we profess, that our lives should be consistent with the holy truths we preach!

It has been rightly said, "Either teach none, or let your life teach too." The Sunday's sermon lasts but an hour, but a godly

life is a continued sermon all the week long ; and this will mark the difference between an outside Sunday religion, and the true grace of God in the heart, which is rooted and grounded in Christ Jesus,—*Archbishop Leighton*.

HEART BREATHINGS.

Do Thou, dear Lord, my heart prepare,
To give Thee welcome ever there ;
My honoured Guest, oh, deign to be,
And condescend to sup with me.

I want Thee, Lord, from day to day,
To commune with Thee by the way,
That I from earth-born cares may be
Led forth, with Thee in company.

Oh, may Thy Word distil as dew
Upon my soul, my strength renew ;
My soul shall then be on the wing,
And of Thy mercies sweetly sing.

Thou knowest, Lord, how I'm beset
By foes within and foes without ;
Then cast o'er me Thy loving wings,
Where peace and safety sweetly reigns.

Should I grow weary by the way,
As oft I do, be Thou my stay ;
Then may Thy Word bring sweet relief,
To encourage hope, and strengthen faith.

When winds and waves against me beat,
To Thee, dear Lord, I would retreat ;
Oh, may Thy Name a haven be,
Where I may anchor peacefully.

When Thy appointed time shall come
To gather all Thy ransomed home,
May I amongst them honoured be,
In heaven to sup, dear Lord, with Thee.

Upton Manor.

J. S.

DIVINE HELP.

ADVERSE circumstances often cause rebellion in the heart against God. Israel soon found this out—"It had been better to serve the Egyptians than that we should die in the wilderness." Happy is the believer, who, the more adversity assails, is made by divine grace to cleave closer to Jesus. "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."—*Anon.*

THE SEEKERS' CORNER.

To the Editor of the Sower.

DEAR SIR,—I feel constrained to drop a few lines, though I hardly know what to write about, as I am not sufficient of myself even to think a good thought. I feel it a great mercy to even have a desire towards God; but, oh, I feel so sinful; I often wonder why God should ever look in mercy upon one so vile as I feel myself to be. I feel to need daily His forgiving mercy. Oh that the Lord would appear unto my soul, as I trust He has done in days gone by, if I am not greatly mistaken! Oh that the Sun of Righteousness would arise with healing in His wings, for I do desire to love and fear His name. I want to be kept close to His dear feet, clinging to the hem of His garment. My desire is still to go on praying and crying to Him to grant me the desire of my heart. Oh, if I could only get a glimpse of His dear face, which is so precious to my soul! for "He is the chief among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely" One to my soul; but my fear, at times, is that it is not the Lord's own work upon my soul, and lest I have no part nor lot in the matter. I feel my heart such an unworthy dwelling-place for such a Guest. Oh, I do hope that I am a child of God, and that I am not deceived in this matter. I do love His people and His house, though I feel myself "the vilest of them all." I do thirst and pant after Him, yea, I long for communion with Jesus.

"Oh, could I know and love Him more,
And all His matchless grace explore,
Ne'er would I covet man's esteem,
But part with all, and follow Him."

I feel—

"There is nothing here can satisfy;
Give me Christ, or else I die."

Oh that He would turn and look upon me once more, and break this heart of stone.

"Oh, blessed sight! oh, lovely form,
To sinful souls like me!
I'd creep beside Him as a worm,
And see Him bleed for me."

Wishing you every covenant blessing for time and eternity, I remain,
Your affectionate young friend,

September 8th, 1891.

S. B.

DEAR MR. HULL,—Noticing with deep regret that the letters for the "Seekers' Corner" have diminished this month, I thought perhaps you would not consider it out of place if I were to write again; but you can do as you feel led about inserting it in print.

But with all humility I desire to thank and praise our glorious Redeemer for His grace and favour manifested to such a vile worm of earth, by nature, but in Christ Jesus, washed, cleansed, and purified. Oh, the riches of grace! it does lead me to exclaim, "Why me, Lord? why me? Since I wrote to you in February last, I have been ill, suffering from extreme weakness, but have had such precious visits from my Lord and Master, that I can say of a truth, "Sweet affliction, thus to bring me nearer to God." All that I expressed in my last letter to you, as being the "chief desires of my heart," have been abundantly answered.

Soon after writing to you, this precious portion was given me, "Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body and your spirit which are His," causing indeed an uplifting of heart to Him.

Perhaps it will be encouraging to some of our dear seeking friends to know that the Lord does still hear and answer prayer. Experience makes us bold to say so, does it not, dear sir? But before-hand, sometimes, what a conflict we have. I was brought into a state of perfect bondage, feeling my life to be a blank, through many trying, perplexing things meeting together; but my mind was repeatedly calmed by precious portions from the Word of God, or a line of a hymn, such as—"In quietness and confidence shall be your strength"; and, "Let patience have her perfect work." The converse of dear friends also (in a measure) reassured me. So I was enabled to feel, "Safe in jeopardy, happy in trouble." For several days I felt to be as in a trance with open eyes, and seemingly holding converse with angels. Language fails to describe the blessedness and peace enjoyed. This portion came to me with special power, "Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty," so enrapturing me with love to my heavenly Friend, that I felt I could not live in this sin-polluted world. But recovery is granted, and now I desire to be submissive, and to do His will. Oh to be kept faithful while here below, and to be enabled to live more to His honour and glory.

I feel thankful that your valuable life is spared; may it be continued in usefulness to the cause of Christ. I feel a bond of union to you on account of your care for the lambs of the flock; but when love is shed abroad in our hearts, we cannot help feeling a concern for others.

Yours very sincerely in Christ Jesus,

October, 1891.

E. B.

[We shall still feel a pleasure in inserting the correspondence of our friends who may feel inclined to relate their spiritual exercises, as seekers, and also as finders when they gain answers to their prayer and encouragements from the Lord, which we pray they may do in His good time.—ED.]

LETTER FOR THE YOUNG.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I was glad to hear from you, and glad to find that the good Lord continues to incline your heart still to seek, to watch, to wait. Your profession, I believe, to be more than nature could produce. That only aims at the applause of men, though some have sought the approbation of God Himself by their own supposed righteousness. Your account of yourself brought three things to my mind.

1. A man whom I personally knew in London, who was a constant hearer of the late Mr. Huntington, and whose experience was very similar to yours, once had an interview with Mr. Huntington, and after the relation of what he had known and felt, requested Mr. Huntington to faithfully tell him what he thought of his state. Mr. Huntington's reply was: "I believe you have a little of all that is, and that you only want perfect love to 'cast out fear, which hath torment!' The Scripture saith, 'He that feareth is not *made perfect* in love'; but mind, it does not say either that he has *no love* to God, nor that he is not interested in the love of God to him." The poor simple, honest creature (for such I believe him to be) was much encouraged, and though faint, he still pursued. Since I left London, I have never heard of him.

2. Two verses of two hymns came upon my mind, and we are to teach and admonish one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. I will repeat them—

"Wait for His seasonable aid,
And, though it tarry, wait;
The promise may be long delayed,
But cannot come too late.

The other was—

"Blest is the man, O God,
That stays himself on Thee;
Who waits for Thy salvation, Lord,
Shall Thy salvation see."

3. The words of the sweet Psalmist of Israel came upon my mind: "But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me: Thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God." It must be spiritual poverty, or being poor in spirit, that David meant, and this poverty is fourfold.

(1.) A total destitution of every spiritual good thing, which is the state of all mankind naturally, in consequence of the awful fall of Adam, who lost the image of God. Millions and millions are in that fearful state, but totally ignorant of it.

(2.) There are some whose eyes God hath opened, and whose souls the Lord hath quickened to perceive, and to feel that wretched state, and to desire, sigh, groan, pray, and to wait upon

the Lord, in the means of His appointment, to be brought out of it; that is, that He would graciously bestow upon them the things that accompany salvation—Christ and His saving benefits, the Holy Spirit and His rich consolations. These are such as the Lord has made poor, and they are taught that God only can make them rich, by favouring them with that appropriating act of faith that shall bring Christ into their hearts the hope of glory.

(3.) Though salvation in and by Christ can never be lost, the joy of it may be for a time; though the Spirit never departs from the soul He takes possession of, yet His gracious influence may for a season be withheld; though the good treasure, or grace in the heart, shall never be taken from us, but always abide, yet it may be very much out of exercise: so that the Christian, though still possessed of all things in Christ, may be very poor and needy as to his present feelings and apprehensions.

(4.) When compared with what we shall be when we arise in the Saviour's likeness, see Him face to face, and know as we are known, the brightest saint may truly say, "I am poor and needy." David, and you and I, and, I believe, most of the Lord's family upon earth, are often like the Saviour's kinsmen after the flesh, of whom the Lord said, "Your time is always ready, but My time is not yet come." Therefore, I must add another verse which occurs to my mind—

"Tarry His leisure then;
Wait the appointed hour;
Wait till the Bridegroom of your souls
Reveals His love with power."

My travelling days are over; old age with its infirmities creeps on; I am nearly two years beyond the age of man; the grasshopper begins to be a burden; and I assure you that, though I have been more than half a century in the ways of God, and have seen and enjoyed those ways over and over again, yet I am often so poor and needy—so feeble, fickle, and sinful—that I frequently am compelled to use the Psalmist's words, "Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth." It is an encouragement to me that such a man of God should be constrained to pray such a prayer. May the Shepherd of Israel be your Guide, Provider, and Protector; cause you to lie down in green pastures, and lead you by the still waters; satisfy your soul with fatness, and make you drink of the river of His pleasure. I remain, yours affectionately in Christ,

Sunderland, June 30th, 1849.

SAMUEL TURNER.

THE outward world is a copy of the inward world, and what is done in nature is an illustration of what is done in grace.

ESCAPE FROM A ROMAN CATHOLIC INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL.

EXTRAORDINARY STORY.

WE here give the particulars of a painful case in which Frances Sedrick, aged eleven years, was charged before Messrs. O. D. E. Fortnum, W. S. Gilbert, and J. M. Garrard, at Hendon, with having, on September 18th, absconded from St. Margaret's Roman Catholic Industrial School, Mill Hill, Hendon, while detained there, under a magistrate's order, until the age of sixteen years.

Mary Emmeline Porter, manageress of the school, said that prisoner was admitted to the institution on the 16th inst., under an order of Mr. Rose, of Marylebone Police Court, to be detained until she was sixteen years of age. Soon after her arrival at Mill Hill, prisoner absconded, and was brought back by the gardener. She was then deprived of her clothing, and placed in one of the dormitories, whence she escaped by dropping a distance of about thirty feet from a window into the public highway. The police brought her back, having found her making her way to Marylebone, wrapped in a blanket.

Questioned by the magistrate as to why she attempted to run away, the child told a piteous story, which caused a good deal of sensation in court. She did not like the place, and therefore ran away. When taken back, she was told that if she misbehaved herself again, her mouth would be "strapped up." One of the sisters showed her the woman who did the strapping up, and told her the straps were upstairs. The same official took her to a room in which a coffin was standing, and, pointing it out, said she had a good mind to lock her in with it. The place was dark. After this had happened, they took her to a room and put her to bed, and she was so terrified that she jumped out of the window and tried to reach her own home.

In reply to questions by the chairman, the manageress of the school said that no such punishment was administered. The prisoner reiterated her statement, and asked not to be sent back.

The mother of the child explained that she was sent to the school for being a truant, but hoped the magistrates would allow her to go home, as she had received such a thorough fright. She also drew attention to the manner in which the child's hair had been cut off, adding that she had beautiful long light hair, which had been destroyed as though she was a convict. The manageress said this was one of the rules of the establishment, although the prisoner's hair was clean when admitted.

The Chairman said he was afraid the Court had no power to

interfere with the order of another Court. The prisoner cried piteously, pleading not to be sent back to Mill Hill. Mr. Cox, one of the magistrates, ultimately advised the Bench to apply to the Home Secretary for a modification of the order, and the Bench decided to send the child to the workhouse for a week, assuring her that she would be well treated. This pacified the child, who seemed glad to leave the Court with her mother.

When the case came again before the Edgware Bench, Mr. Besley, Q.C., represented the mother superior of the school, and Mr. George Wallis appeared for the child. Mr. Tootell (clerk) first read a letter from the Home office, stating that the Home Secretary had decided to transfer the girl Frances Sedrick from St. Margaret's Industrial School to St. Mary's Industrial School for Roman Catholic Girls, West Croydon. The Bench then ordered that the police should remove the child to Croydon.

[Does not the decision of the magistrates in referring this girl's case to the Home Secretary, and the action of the latter in transferring Frances Sedrick to another industrial school, indicate that they were persuaded that the child's complaint was substantially justified?]

Mr. Pool, an elderly gentleman, living at 282, Kennington Park Road, stepped forward and asked for the assistance of the Bench. He had seen a report in the newspapers of the escape of a girl from St. Margaret's School, and having two stepdaughters there, aged sixteen and eighteen respectively, wished to obtain possession of them. He then made a long statement, from which it appeared that the names of the children were Florrie and Edith Staunton, and that, notwithstanding he had obtained the order of Cardinal Manning, he had not seen the children for eight years.

Mr. Besley explained that St. Margaret's School was divided into two parts, one being an industrial school and the other a private school. If the gentleman who had just concluded an inflammatory statement had made inquiries, he would have found that the grandmother of the children by will appointed Cardinal Manning the trustee and guardian. They were not in the industrial school at all. The Chairman said the magistrates had no power to interfere, and the applicant must apply to the Home Secretary. Mr. Besley thought that the Secretary of State had nothing to do with it, but that Cardinal Manning or his secretary had entire control.

The Rev. John Bullen, M.A., writing to the *Liverpool Courier* with reference to the foregoing, says:—"The story of the little girl Sedrick, lately escaped from a Roman Catholic convent at Mill

Hill, only to be immured in another, is painful in the extreme. Would that I could say that it had touched all hearts ; but, alas ! this is not so, while those whose tongues and pens might be effectually used in defence of this poor desolate child are silent and unmoved. For my part, I could not even read of that despairing cry, uttered by one who knew well what she had to expect, without the deepest emotion ; but what must have been the reality to her ? Unhappy little one ! May God help her, for it seems to be clear that there is no help in man. Yet I cannot help hoping that cases like the present one, so often recurring, will at length open the eyes of intelligent and Christian persons to the absolute necessity of convent inspection throughout the whole of England. How can English mothers read this heartrending circumstance and still remain indifferent and untouched ? Is the life of pleasure actually eating away all that noble-hearted sympathy of which we heard and found so much in days gone by ? Let the women of England take this matter up. It is one in which thousands are involved, whose secret anguish is known only to God."

"THAT YE MAY BE SINCERE."

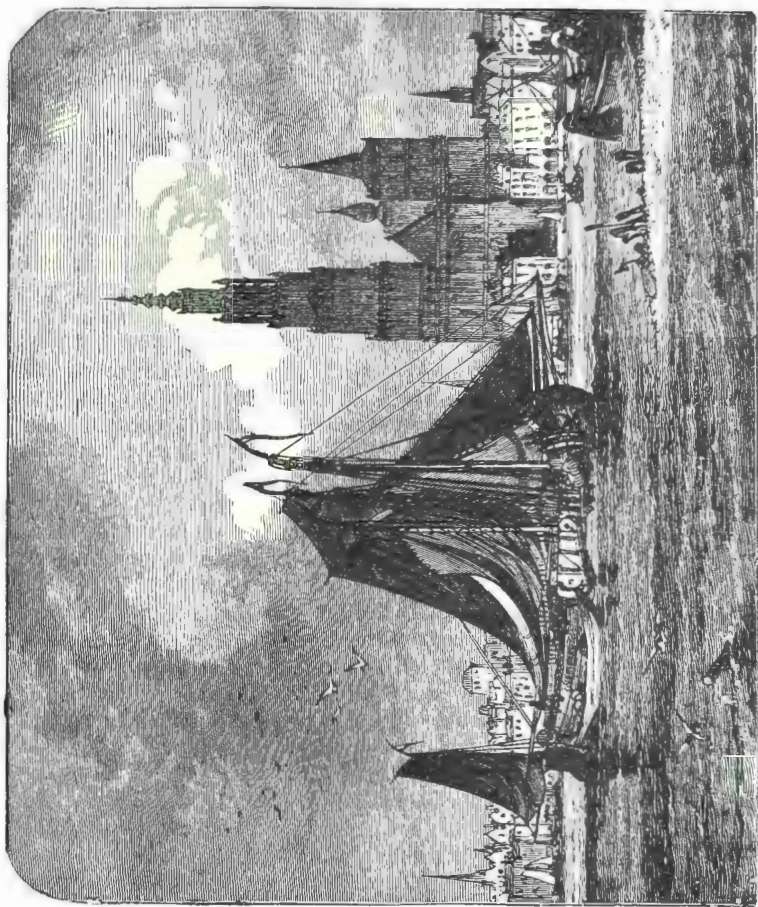
(PHILIPPIANS i. 10.)

SINCERITY is a great ornament ; and it is one of the essentials of the Christian character. A man must be sincere, or he cannot be a Christian. To be sincere is to be simple, open, free from fraud and duplicity. A double-minded man, or a double-faced man, or a double-tongued man is no Christian, let him be what else he may. God's Israelites have no allowed guile. They hate hypocrisy and pretence. To be sincere is to be (in this sense) pure, bearing examination as to principles, possession, and practices. Any man who does not frequently examine himself, and is afraid to be examined by others, has reason to question his sincerity. Oh, may we be sincere ! sincerely believing God's truth, sincerely seeking God's glory, sincerely doing God's will, and sincerely seeking to promote God's cause. Without sincerity our profession is a lie, our pretensions an insult to God ; and our end will be according to our deeds.

Reader, are you what you profess to be ? Is there no pretence, no putting on, no deception in your profession or conduct ? Oh, "That you may be sincere !"

"May we be kept sincere,
And after Jesus breathe ;
Still walk in godly fear,
And close to Jesus cleave ;
In all sincerity rejoice,
And hear Thy kind approving voice."

The Sower, December, 1891.



ANTWERP.

THE YOUNG MARTYR OF ANTWERP.

AT the time to which our narrative refers, Martin Luther and his friends were trying to make known to those about them the great truths of the Bible. This was the way in which they hoped to save people from the errors taught by the Romish priests, and there was nothing those priests were more afraid of than the Bible, therefore they tried in every way to keep people from becoming acquainted with that blessed book and its teachings. In the city of Antwerp they diligently persecuted and put to death those who attempted to preach the Gospel to the people. They offered a reward to every one who would give them notice of persons who were preaching the Gospel, and those persons would immediately be taken up and thrown into prison, or put to death, on which account it was as much as a man's life was worth in those days to attempt to tell "the old, old story of Jesus and His love." And yet, even then, there were numbers of people who longed to hear the Gospel, and in unexpected ways God raised up persons to preach it.

¶ One Sunday, a great crowd of people met together on one of the wharves by the river Scheldt, in Antwerp. They wanted to hear about the Bible, and they hoped that some good minister would come and preach to them. No minister came; but still they waited there. However, among that crowd there was a young man named Nicholas. He was not a minister, but God had taught him to know and love the Bible, and he made up his mind to give those people a plain Bible talk, so he stepped on the deck of a vessel in the river, which we see in our picture. There he stood up, and taking out his Bible, he read the account of Christ feeding the multitude with five loaves and two fishes; and then he gave them a good, plain, earnest sermon on the subject, and the people were delighted to hear him.

But some one went and told the priests that Nicholas was preaching the Gospel to the people, and they resolved to stop him from preaching, so they hired two wicked men to make away with him. These men met him in the street. They seized him, bound him hand and foot, put him in a sack, tied up the sack, and threw him into the river, and drowned him.

These priests thought they could stop the people from learning about Jesus by throwing this young man into the river; but they were mistaken. Why, they might as well have tried to stop the sun from shining, for, although the enemies of true religion have tried in many ways to destroy it, they have never been able to do so. They have burnt the Bible, they have put people in prison for reading it, they have killed the ministers of Jesus, and tried in many ways to stop the progress of the Gospel; but they have

never succeeded. The good work has gone on. It is going on still, and it will go on in spite of all that men may do to stop it. We may be sure of this, because Jesus Himself hath said that "the gates of hell shall not prevail" against Him and His cause until all His redeemed ones are brought to His fold, and His victory over all His foes and theirs is for ever complete. Thus He will "clothe His enemies with shame; but upon Himself shall His crown flourish." Oh, that our young readers may know His great salvation!

"I AM NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST."

(ROMANS i. 16.)

WHAT a glorious period would it be for the Church of Christ in our day, if our pulpit ministrations and our religious press issues bore the stamp and the spirit of the above words of the Apostle, but, alas! the practical testimony of too many is, "I am ashamed of the Gospel." And why? For the reason that so many accessory means are considered to be needful to give force and effect to the popular Gospel of our day. Of such a Gospel they may well be ashamed; but not so with the great Apostle, though with such mountains of difficulties before him, for he, David like, in the strength of Jehovah, went forth with "Christ, and Him crucified," as the power of God to salvation. The Gospel that Paul preached was the Gospel of free and sovereign grace through Christ Jesus, which he had received from the Lord Himself, so that he could boldly say, "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Gal. i. 8). Paul calls it Christ's Gospel (2 Cor. ii. 12).

The Gospel of Christ, though it exhausts all the powers of human speech to explain or to make it fully known, yet enough has been made known in types and figures of speech to give some idea of its greatness and of its value; and enough has been experienced in the souls of God's people to understand the meaning, in some measure, of its preciousness and suitability to their needs and their circumstances, but which is hid from the wise and prudent of this world. As Paul says, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him" (1 Cor. ii. 9); and, as David says, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him" (Psa. xxv. 14). Christ's Gospel is a Gospel of glad tidings.

Let us try and gather up some of those expressions of Scripture that set it forth as such.

The Gospel is a proclamation of pardon and forgiveness to the

guilty ; it is liberty to the captive ; it is comfort to the distressed ; it is a free discharge to the debtor ; it is bread to the hungry ; it is drink for the thirsty, and rest for the weary ; it is a feast of fat things and unsearchable riches.

It is also compared to rivers of water in a barren land, and as streams in the desert, and as fountains of living water ; all which set it forth as a Gospel that needs not to be ashamed of, and of which Paul was not ashamed. And he exhorts Timothy thus : " Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of the Lord, nor of me His prisoner." The whole of the Gospel was, according to Paul, contained in Christ, and Him crucified, Christ, and Him glorified, and around this truth all others revolve. Christ is the Sun of the spiritual world. He is the Fountain of life, light, and heat. Without Him all would be spiritual sterility and death. Without Him all would be blank and despair. May we keep close to this great doctrine as the rock on which to build.

But from whence did it originate ? And it will enhance its value if we try and trace it to its source, which will be profitable. Christ said, " Search the Scriptures ; they are they which testify of Me."

We shall find it bubbling up in the Prophets. We shall see it in Malachi in the Sun of Righteousness, the Messenger of the Covenant. We shall see it in Zechariah in the open Fountain and the holy oil. We shall see it in Micah in His coming and kingdom, so also in Daniel. In Isaiah of His sufferings ; in the Song ; the Psalms, all which are full of Gospel matter. We see it back through the types, until we are brought down to the first promise (Genesis iii. 15). Here, as to a question of time, we catch the first sound of Gospel grace ; but from here we fall back into eternity. And to Paul was the revelation of God's purposes of love and of grace made known more fully, as to no other ; and it is here where we must look, and learn how the Gospel is well laid and established ; and it is here where we are led by the Apostle into the grandeur and the certainty of the Gospel, with its exceeding great and precious promises, which are all yea, and Amen in Christ Jesus, and to expect the final issues of all God's purposes and plans which concern the Church and His glory. Do we not often feel a disposition to linger over such truths as this, and hang about them and long to be led into them more fully ?

Oh, what a dignity is stamped on faithful Gospel ministers, inasmuch as they are made the messengers of a royal proclamation of the mind, and will, and purposes of God, in and through Christ Jesus, respecting the Church and the world ; and, for this reason, every heaven-taught minister of the Gospel may boldly say with Paul, " I am not ashamed of the Gospel of

Christ." And so may every individual believer say ; they feel it to be their privilege to make their boast of such a Gospel and of such an origin to their spiritual birth. Paul and Peter dipped their tongue and pen deeply here ; and what was the result, but in the exclamation, " God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead [not half dead] in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved through faith)" ? (Eph. ii. 4, 5). " Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father " (1 Peter i. 2) ; " Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation " (1 Peter ii. 9). Yes, electing love before all time, a holy calling in time, and separation from the world and the things thereof, through the Holy Spirit, by holy fear, constraining love, and sealing us unto His eternal kingdom and glory. Of such a Gospel that brings to light death abolished, sin atoned for, life and immortality, we have reason, with Paul, to say, " I am not ashamed of it." It admits of no peradventures, for Christ says, " I give unto My sheep eternal life ; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand " (John x. 28). And again, the words of the Apostle " Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ " (Phil. i. 6). We are fully warranted to believe that there will be no after-thoughts with God. As a wise Architect, everything is considered, everything provided for and laid down according to His eternal mind, will, and purpose. Now, in time, and forward through all eternity, will be the unfolding of eternal ages before time, so that the believer's hope is stamped with a divine certainty. Mark the words of the Apostle, " Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath : that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us : which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast " (Heb. vi. 17—19). There is nothing shaky—there is no uncertainty or any peradventures about the Gospel. Christ in the Gospel is the Alpha and the Omega, the Foundation, the Rock of our strength. " Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious : and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded " (1 Pet. ii. 6). Is not this precious consolation for the poor and needy children of God, in all their trials, sorrows, and temptations, while passing through this wilderness world ? The love of God in Christ Jesus has no beginning, it has no ending, for it runs thus : " I have loved thee with an everlasting love " (Jer. xxxi. 3) ; and our Lord's testimony is, " As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved

you " (St. John xv. 9); yet the language of the timid heart often is—

"But can my heart aspire so high
To say, 'My Father—God?'"

God calls us to look up and contemplate the ordinances of the heavenly bodies—the sun and the moon—to give us to read the stability of the covenant of grace, founded in the cross of Christ, and ratified by His blood and death. God appeals to our parental love and affection to confirm us in His own (Psa. ciii. 13; Isa. xlix. 15). Surely, we may well say that the Gospel is like a mighty river; the more we wade in it, the deeper it becomes, because its source is in the everlasting hills; and it may well be called an ocean, stretching forth into eternal ages, as Kent describes it, "Without a bottom, brim, or shore." Yet vain man will be casting the lead of human reasoning over to sound it; but it is too deep, too high. Is not this sufficient cause for saying, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel"?

I am not ashamed of the Gospel, for the purity and blessedness of its teaching.

Professing Christians may be, and often are, a shame to the Gospel. Paul had to censure the Church at Corinth and the Galatians for that which was a shame to the Gospel in their practices; but not so with the Gospel, for that is an honour to any nation, or people, or community. Kings need not to be ashamed of it, for it teaches his subject to honour him (1 Peter ii. 17). It teaches his subjects to pray for him and for all in authority under him (1 Tim. ii. 2; Titus iii. 1, 2). It teaches lawful obedience to his claims, as taught by Christ Himself (Luke xx. 25). It teaches masters how to act towards their servants, and servants how to honour and serve their masters (Eph. vi. 5—9). It teaches the respective duties of husbands and wives (Eph. v. 22—29; Col. iii. 18, 19). It teaches the duties of parents to children, and children to parents (Eph. vi. 1—4). It teaches the duty of man with man (Rom. xii. 17—21). It teaches righteousness and equity, industry and honesty (Rom. xiii. 7—10). It teaches the fear of God (1 Pet. iii. 10—12).

The Gospel condemns vice of every kind—rioting, drunkenness, chambering and wantonness, strife and envying (Rom. xiii. 13). It condemns fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, thieves, the covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners (1 Cor. vi. 9, 10). It condemns oppression (James v. 1—6). It condemns envy, hatred, and malice (1 Pet. ii. 1). It is worthy of a mansion or palace, and to be exalted in every household, for the purity of its teaching, both for morals and for spirituals, and every virtue; no teaching else is so pure, or so safe.

The teaching of the Gospel brings to view something of what the believer is called unto beyond this time state ; for instance, in our personal estate, in the change which is to take place in us ; and the Apostle gives it, for he says, that at the coming of Christ, these vile bodies shall be changed and made glorious (Phil. iii. 21), without a wrinkle or a spot, made perfectly holy ; all traces of sin shall thus disappear (Eph. v. 27). The future state of the righteous shall be freedom from troubles ; there shall be no tears there (Rev. vii. 17). There shall be no suffering there ; the glorified shall know no pain ; it will be a state of freedom from all disease, therefore no death will be known there (1 Cor. xv. ; Rev. xxi. 4).

The Gospel reveals the kind of inheritance it shall be, namely, "incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away" (1 Pet. i. 4) ; "a kingdom which cannot be moved" (Heb. xii. 28), and the glory thereof uncreated. Christ shall constitute the glory of this inheritance (Rev. xxi. 22—27). There shall be no succession of day and night, for "there shall be no night there" ; it shall be eternal day (Rev. xxii. 5). And the saints shall possess it, and enjoy it for ever and for ever, in spotless purity, holiness, and harmony. Should not the believer then echo the words of the Apostle, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ" ?

Paul was not ashamed of the Gospel, for its conquests and ultimate triumphs. He would go with it to Rome, the seat of paganism, as the mighty power of God to salvation. Paul said, "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down strongholds." And these weapons were the doctrines of the cross of Christ ; which bring out and establish God's eternity, God's sovereignty, God's purposes of love in redemption by Christ ; Christ as King and the Anointed of the Father—the eternal Son of God—co-equal, co-eternal with the Father—Christ crucified and Christ glorified. It was this preaching which stirred up the enmity in the hearts of men, and raised bitter opposition to the teaching of the Apostles. The devil has always tried to barricade the progress of the Gospel by raising evil reports against those who publish it (Acts ii. 13). He seeks to defame their characters, their doctrines, and has often stirred up the minds of evil men to persecute them. This he did of Christ Himself ; for what evil names did they not call Him, what false charges did they not lay to His character ? and so now of His followers. That ministry, which charges sin home to the conscience, that humbles man, and exalts Christ, Satan will oppose. It was this preaching, accompanied by the power of the Spirit, which threw open the prison doors of paganism and idolatry, superstition and will-worship, in which the devil held men captives—which sent conviction into the

heart, and raised the cry, "What must I do to be saved?"—that softened the hard heart and humbled the proud heart. So manifest was the preaching of the Apostles, and the power that attended it, that the cry was raised, "These are the men that have turned the world upside down"; some said they were mad, nevertheless thousands were gathered from the kingdom of Satan, and translated into the kingdom of Christ Jesus, as trophies of His grace, made new creatures. Thus the predictions of the Prophet were fulfilled, "He shall divide the spoil with the strong." When Christ, by His grace, invades the soul—hitherto the territory of Satan—He conquers, casts out Satan, breaks his rules, spoils his kingdom, and establishes His own—erects His standard, and enthrones Himself the Monarch of that soul. Christ's kingdom shall prosper; "For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." Christ is now gathering out from all nations Jews and Gentiles, His elect; and the time is coming when He will take to Himself His great power and ride forth as the universal Sovereign, "King of kings, and Lord of lords," as Head of all rule and authority, and shall subdue all things to His sway; and, Satan bound, universal peace shall succeed to tyranny, wickedness, and oppression, and the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea.

We cannot close this article better than by quoting the words of the Apostle to Timothy: "But thou, O man of God, flee these things [before named]; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, . . . until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: which in His times He shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen" (1 Tim. vi. 11—16).

Penmon.

J. S.

EVERY time thou thinkest of Christ, be astonished, and wonder; when thou seest sin, look at Christ's grace which did pardon it; when thou art proud, look at Christ's grace, that will humble and strike thee down in the dust.

AN architect cannot say to his rule, his line, or other instruments, "Go, build a house." He must first take them into his own hand, ere the wished-for effect will follow. What are ministers of God but mere instruments? And if ever they are useful in building up the Church of Christ, 'tis His own hand must make them so.—*Hitchins.*

WORDS OF GREETING.

Brighton, May 27th, 1881.

DEAR FRIEND IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST,—Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied unto you.

“He knows how weak and faint thou art,
And must appear at length;
A look from Him will cheer thine heart,
And bring renewed strength.”

Your kind letter was very welcome, and its contents testifies of the power of that kingdom which the Lord, in His mercy and grace, has put within you, and manifests you a vessel of mercy, loved with the same love wherewith the Father loves the Son. It is sweet to be able to tell of past acts of loving-kindness of the Lord, in blessing His own Word with comforting application to your soul when cast down and weary, when at times we feel as the Psalmist, “My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness. I am troubled; . . . I go mourning all the day long.” But a little further on he could say, “Lord, all my desire is before Thee; and my groaning is not hid from Thee” (Psa. xxxviii.)

I like Mr. W——’s sermons, and knowing you are not able to get out, thought of you sometimes. We are but poor things; we don’t like to think no one thinks of, or cares for us or our souls. Perhaps it is a weakness, yet the Lord says (and we would do it if we could), “Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted.” “And if thine enemy hunger, feed him; and if he thirst, give him drink.” But none but the Lord can soften our hard hearts and bring us into a Gospel spirit; and then, if He keep us not, we to our “own sad place return,” and we become “earthly, sensual, and devilish.” But when the Lord was pleased, in His sovereignty, to bless you in your “times of refreshing,” then the fruit of the Spirit was brought forth, “Love, joy, peace,” &c., to His praise, and you could feel—

“One there is above all others
Well deserves the name of Friend;
His is love beyond a brother’s,
Costly, free, and knows no end.
They who once His kindness prove,
Find it everlasting love.

“He ever liveth to make intercession for them” (Heb. vii. 25).

Miss Vinall.

D. FISK.

THERE is nothing that cometh to us by chance or fortune, but by our heavenly Father’s providence.—*Bradford.*

THE ANXIOUS INQUIRER'S PAGE.

SEEKING.

"*Ye shall seek Me.*"—JOHN xiii. 33.

It is an unspeakable mercy to be interested in the purpose of Jesus respecting His dear people, which is expressed in these words, and so to be made a true seeker after Him. All power is His, and all things are committed into His hand. He is, therefore, able to carry out His own glorious decrees that all His children *shall* seek Him, and that those who seek shall find. While they have needs to be supplied, sorrows to be soothed, sins to be cleansed, wounds to be healed, questions to be answered, difficulties to be surmounted, crosses to be borne, losses to be made good, and burdens to be carried, His people must necessarily seek Jesus to do these things for them, because they have no other helper. Yet many such are sorely perplexed about their state; full of fear and uncertainty; daily writing bitter things against themselves, and experiencing the painfulness of that heart-sickness which is caused by hope deferred. With a sincere desire to be enabled to write what shall prove a word in season to some of the Lord's weary little ones, we commence penning a few thoughts on the important subject of "Seeking." Taking up the four words of Jesus as they stand in the text, we begin by describing—

I. *The Seekers*—"Ye." The Lord was instructing the Apostles after the Last Supper, and subsequently to the departure of Judas, who, having left the little company, had gone forth from the hallowed chamber with intent to betray the Master into the hands of His foes. Freed from the dark presence of the arch-traitor, Jesus addressed them all as "little children." Let us mark the tender significance of this gracious appellation.

1. Jesus often called His true disciples "little children," thus using a term of closest relationship and endearment to express His infinite love to them and their dependence upon Him. In the very nature of the case, *little* children are obliged to rely upon their father's resources for the supply of every need, because they have nothing of their own. It is just this entire dependence upon the Lord, into which they are brought by the spirit of adoption, that distinguishes His children from the world. They feel daily that without Him they can do nothing. Living upon His bounty, they have nothing but what is received from His hand. Whether He bestows, or withholds, or takes away, it is all in love to their souls.

2. Children are partakers, in varying degrees, of their father's nature. By virtue of the quickening power of the Holy Spirit

implanting the principle of life which constitutes the "new creation," the children of grace are made partakers of the Divine nature. The possession of this newness of life is evidenced by the existence of spiritual feelings. They sorrow for sin after a godly sort, long for the Saviour's pardoning love to be revealed, and feel their helplessness and unworthiness; they are dissatisfied with themselves and everything here below; they mourn the hidings of their Father's face, and long for His manifested presence, desiring those heavenly consolations which flow therefrom.

3. Children also exhibit a measure of likeness to their father, although in some instances the traces may be very faint. However, the godly are God-like in respect to the features of the new creature in Christ Jesus, with its heavenly nature and needs. As man was created originally in the image of God, so is he new-created into the same (Col. iii. 10; i. 15, &c.), by the gracious and powerful operations of adopting mercy.

4. Children are possessors of their father's love, and the objects of his tenderest solicitude and most anxious care, even before they know him or understand anything of his affection for them. The Lord's love surrounds His children, His hand upholds them, His power preserves them, His arm protects them, and His bounty provides for them before the eyes of their understanding are opened to perceive their Father's loving-kindness in all things and at all times

5. But then, these children are said to be "*little*." Seekers cannot do so much, reach so high, nor travel either so far or so fast as others. A sense of their manifold deficiencies causes them to entertain low, humble views of themselves. Consciously little in grace, knowledge, experience, gifts, and spirituality, they are contented to take the lowest place as "less than the least of all saints." Jesus says, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven."

6. From the other part of the text before us, we learn that these little children had their Lord's presence for a short time: "A little while I am with you." But it was not His will they should enjoy His company long. The whole period of the dear Redeemer's public ministry on earth was but short, and in the course of those three swiftly-flying years, the intervals during which He vouchsafed personal intercourse, even to His most favoured Apostles, were very brief. His visits, highly valued, lovingly remembered, and eagerly longed for, last but for "a little while" here below.

"But, ah! when these short visits end,
Though not quite left alone,
We miss the presence of our Friend,
Like one whose comfort's gone."

7. Yes! Jesus was about to depart from them, and kindly forewarned them of His approaching absence. His hour was nearly come to leave them. In His absence they would learn some salutary lessons—especially this, that they could not do without Him—by which means they would be drawn to seek Him. This brings us to the second thing in the text:—

II. *The purpose of Jesus*, expressed in the word "*shall*." When Jesus leaves His children for a season, as to the sensible enjoyment of His presence, it is that His purpose concerning them may be accomplished, "*Ye shall seek Me*." Thus the counsel of peace is confirmed: "All that the Father giveth *Me shall come* to Me, and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37). Lamenting His absence, and mourning over the sins which procured it, they are sometimes ready to give up seeking. This many of them certainly would do, were it not for His determination to the contrary; by the carrying out of which, through the gracious operations of the Holy Spirit upon their hearts, they endure to the end, seeking His face, notwithstanding all their unbelief, doubts, fears, gloomy forebodings, and castings down.

The Lord uses a variety of means to bring His children to seek Him. If in times of trouble His needy, destitute ones foolishly look for relief elsewhere, they meet with disappointment on every hand.

When the thirsty soul is brought to seek the water of life, all other cisterns besides Jesus are broken, all other streams run dry, all other sources fail; till at last the poor and needy, who are only too prone to "seek water where there is none," come, when their tongue faileth for thirst, to the One Fountain, and ask of Him, who, in answer to their cry, gives them freely to drink of that well which springs up into everlasting life (John iv. 14), and so fulfils His most precious promise, Isaiah xli. 17, 18.

Again, the transgressor flying from the Avenger of blood, with guilt on his conscience, fear in his heart, and justice on his track, can only find safety in the appointed City of Refuge. All other hiding-places will prove vain. He must reach and enter in the divinely-ordained City, or perish. It is God's purpose that he shall seek and find refuge in Jesus.

"Prisoners of hope, to Jesus turn,
He's a Strong-hold, ordained for you;
Gird up your loins, and cease to mourn,
And to the Lamb your way pursue."

Sometimes Satan is permitted to harass the poor distressed child of God with sore temptations. He is driven hither and thither by the adversary—hunted like a partridge upon the

mountains. At length, alarmed at the power of his cruel foe, and his own increasing inability to resist him, he falls, wounded and bruised, at the Saviour's feet, seeking, in the extremity of distress, that help and deliverance without which he must perish.

Moreover, providential trials are sent to stir up the nests of these seekers after Jesus, lest they should settle on their lees, or wander from Him. To prevent this, idols are often either marred or removed, spoiled or taken away. Wave after wave of sorrow rolls in. One loss will be followed by another, till they are brought to their "wit's end," and—to *Jesus*.

"He will by means like these
Thy stubborn temper break,
Soften thy heart by due degrees,
And make thy spirit meek."

Such are some of the means by which Christ's purpose concerning His followers is carried out. It is under a felt sense of helplessness and need His mercy is sought. Let us proceed to consider the path of seeking, Jesus is determined the "little children" shall walk in.

III. THE SEEKING: "Ye shall *seek* Me." Many are the aspects presented by this subject.

1. Seeking is that *active exercise of living faith* by which the tried, exercised soul comes to God in prayer; and it is almost always the effect of sanctified trial. Such an one believes that Jesus can save, and, relying only on His grace, he seeks thus in faith for that salvation to be made known to him. The inmost feelings of his heart flow upward to the Lord in that prayer which is—

"the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear;
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near."

2. Seeking is the *going forth of desire* for the love of Jesus. The child of grace daily proves the vanity of all created good. Jesus is made to him the "one thing needful"; there is none on earth he desires besides Jesus. Now, such a spiritual desire as this is a proof of the possession of grace, even though it goes no farther than "a thought upon His Name," a wish to experience its efficacy and taste its sweetness.

"The soul that with sincere desires
Seeks after Jesus' love,
That soul the Holy Ghost inspires
With breathings from above."

3. Seeking is a *feeling after Jesus*, with the desire to realize

His presence. It may be compared to a blind man groping for a wall. He stretches forth his hands and feels for the wall, because he is seeking that support, guidance, and comparative protection which it affords. If he can but get in touch with the wall, he will feel safer, know better where he is, and be able to get along more comfortably, even though he cannot see it. So seekers, when they cannot see Jesus, feel after Him, with a desire to lean upon Him, and to be guided right, and protected by Him.

4. Seeking is the *listening of the ear of the soul* to the Shepherd's voice in His Word and ways. It is the looking of the eye of faith to Jesus, to watch His hand in providence, or to catch a glimpse of the light of His countenance in the ordinances of His house. The Lord's presence is sought in every furnace, and seekers long for communion with Him at His throne.

5. In this path the believer will meet with *much discouragement*, both inwardly and outwardly. Sin, Satan, the world, creatures, and even the Lord's people, will often daunt the soul which is trying to get near to God, while His own dealings often seem, at first, most mysterious. When one of old pressed through the crowd, and trembling cried for help to Jesus, He appeared to take no notice, and "answered her not a word." If she looked to the disciples for help, her hope was disappointed, for they *even prayed against her*, and "besought Him to send her away." The silence of Jesus, the opposition of the brethren, and the extremity of her case, must have filled her heart with many fears. Nevertheless, she was enabled to persevere in seeking, and at length found abundant mercy. The Lord is always faithful to His own promise, "Seek, and ye shall find."

6. A feeling of *deep unworthiness* is often a stumbling-block to the trembling seeker whose heart is faint with fear. There is so much imperfection even in his seeking, he doubts whether he seeks aright. His desires seem so mixed in motive that he trembles lest they should only add to his sins. The Lord, however, in due time, will turn this stumbling-block—as He does all others—into a stepping-stone.

7. Moreover, the *anxieties inseparable from a time-state* tend to wean him from the pursuit of better, higher, holier, and nobler things. The seeker knows he is too much engrossed with temporals; he does not fully follow the Lord; he comes short in seeking *first* the kingdom of God. His soul is much discouraged by the sight and sense of manifold infirmities and sins. Sins that seemed slain will revive again. The fountains of the great deep will be unsealed, and the chambers of imagery opened anew. The trembling one flies to Jesus, and now seeks in Him a refuge even *from himself*. The cross of Christ, who died for sinners and saves from sin, is his only hiding-place.

8. It is evident that seeking is a perpetual conflict with various powers, and it is accompanied with much exercise of heart and mind, in the course of which seekers become increasingly dissatisfied with themselves, and more and more intent upon the true Object of this spiritual quest, which is—"Jesus only." This is the last point :—

IV. THE OBJECT SOUGHT : "Ye shall seek *Me*." No one, by nature, ever can or does truly seek Jesus. Self-seeking is the motive of all men's actions and of all their religion, apart from Christ. The Holy Spirit, however, reveals the things of Jesus to the poor sinner whom He has taught to feel his need, so that Christ is made the one object of his soul's longing. His language is, "Give me Christ, or else I die." He seeks the favour of the King, in whom all fulness dwells. He desires to cast himself entirely upon the Lord. He longs for wisdom to know his Master's will in all things, for strength to do His will at all times, and for grace to submit cheerfully to whatever His will ordains. He seeks his Saviour's presence, persuaded that "the way he walks cannot be wrong, if Jesus be but there." He waits *upon* Him in prayer, and *for* Him in patience.

Jesus is the Shepherd whom the sheep and lambs of His flock would follow "whithersoever He goeth." They creep to His feet, they seek His face, and desire to hear from His lips the assurance of the pardon of their sins. They seek for the single eye to His glory, that their consciences may be kept tender in His fear, their hearts humbled by His voice, their spirits meekened and chastened by His merciful rod, and their souls blessed with His love. They seek the anointings of His Spirit, the application of His blood, and an interest in His intercession. They seek to be one with those who are one with Jesus. They seek the smiles of His face, the comfort of His presence, and the joys of His salvation.

"Blest soul that can say, Christ only I seek,
Wait for Him alway, be constant though weak;
The Lord whom thou seekest will not tarry long,
And to Him the weakest is dear as the strong."

Leicester.

E. C.

SICKNESS is not the same to a carnal man as to a spiritual one. The same may be said of health, of friends, of learning, of increasing riches.

CHRIST JESUS turns all things into blessings ; He turns temporal blessings into spiritual blessings, and temporal miseries into spiritual blessings too.

THE SEEKERS' CORNER.

To the Editor of the Sower.

DEAR SIR,—If you think well to put these verses in your SOWER, we thought they might be suitable for the "Seekers' Corner."

It is very interesting to us older ones to find so many lambs bleating for the green pastures and living waters; it is the same field of conflict we entered so many years since, and have lived to prove that—

" Our Captain is stronger
Than all that oppose."

Wishing you complete restoration to health (if the Lord's will) and every needed blessing,

Yours respectfully,

M. S.

" O wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me from the body of this death ? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."—ROMANS vii. 24.

As soon as a sinner (through grace)
Feels bound with the cords of his sin,
And turneth to Zion the face,
He feels opposition within.

Convinced of his vileness, he seeks
More grief and contrition to feel;
Yet while his confession he speaks,
He finds his heart harder than steel.

When Christ in the Gospel appears,
He longs in this Refuge to hide,
But doubtings, misgivings, and fears,
The reasoning mind will provide.

When trying to do His commands,
His precepts so sweet to obey,
The foes from within are at arms,
To hinder, oppose, or delay.

The image of Jesus to bear,
Engages the soul with delight;
But oh, what corruptions appear,
Each glad expectation to blight.

More ready to halt and to doubt,
Than able to "run and to win";
Sore pressed with temptations without,
But more with the evils within.

Ah ! well may the Christian exclaim,
While bearing this conflict alone,
" Alas ! wretched man that I am !
With sin being burden'd, I groan."

Poor soul, thy Deliverer see!
 The Saviour of sinners is near;
 Our Sanctification is He—
 Lo! all thy perfection is here.

Thy foes He will help thee to face,
 His blood is a balm for thy wounds;
 "I thank Thee, Thou God of all grace,
 Through Jesus my comfort abounds."

M. S.

SEEKING FOR JESUS.

COPIED from an original written by a person during the night,
 when poorly in bed. (Slightly altered.)

I've often heard of Jesus,
 That He's the sinner's Friend;
 And those He came to die for
 He loves unto the end.

But what I long to know is,
 That Jesus died for me;
 If He would give the witness,
 None happier could be.

If He would but forgive me
 My lifetime load of sin,
 I'd never cease to thank Him,
 The Lamb who once was slain.

I know I should be thankful
 For mercies He bestows;
 But Jesus' blood-bought pardon—
 'Tis this I long to know.

I've often tried to find Him,
 But Him I cannot find;
 I often pray with groanings,
 But still I'm all behind.

Oh, is there hope for me, Lord?
 It all depends on Thee;
 Say to my soul, dear Jesus,
 "Salvation thou shalt see."

I'm getting weak and faint, Lord;
 Each moment hastes the end!
 I'm fearful death should seize me
 Ere pardon Thou dost send.

If Thou wilt not regard me,
 I'm sure 'tis only right;
 But do for Jesus' sake, Lord,
 Blot out my sins to-night.

THE REQUEST OF A SEEKER.

THE following lines form part of the experiences of a "Seeker," whose letter appeared in the March Number of the SOWER :—

I'm waiting for a promise, Lord,
My soul to satisfy—
Some promise from Thy precious Word;
Do not my suit deny.

Hast Thou not said in Holy Writ,
That Thou wilt answer prayer?
Then, Jesus, send some sentence sweet,
And ease me of my care.

Although I have not felt sin's smart,
As oft Thy people do,
Yet, Jesus, Thou didst melt my heart,
And make me humble, too.

"Your life is hid with Christ in God,"
Was spoken plain to me;
Then why should I give place to doubt,
Who have had such words from Thee?

Ah! well do I remember where
And when it was impressed;
It made me long to lay my head
Upon His loving breast.

And once, when feeling very sad,
These words were to me given,
"At ev'ning-time it shall be light";
(They made me think of heaven).

But such a fearful heart is mine,
So full of unbelief;
I often feel and say that I
Of sinners am the chief.

It says within that Book of books,
That all who seek shall find;
And those that think upon Thy Name
Shall not be left behind.

Then do, dear Lord, reveal Thy love
To this poor heart of mine;
Bid me from every fear depart,
And tell me I am Thine.

Then shall my happy soul adore
The riches of Thy grace,
When Thou shalt answer my request,
And show Thy smiling face.

LETTER FOR THE YOUNG.

MY DEAREST CHILD,—Thank you much for your letter. No doubt you have been expecting to hear from me before now, but I am a poor hand at letter-writing, and therefore rather reluctant to begin. As time passes on, you doubtless become more and more anxious, and by the time you receive this, you will feel that a very important crisis is drawing nigh.

“ If unto Jesus thou art bound,
A crowd about Him will be found.”

And it would be very strange if it were otherwise. But remember, there is One who is above every cloud, and has power over every crowd. My poor petition is, that He will be with you, to uphold you with the right hand of His righteousness ; and I pray God it may become more and more manifest that He has wrought a real work of grace in your soul. My dear child, you must not think that going before the Church and being approved, and being baptized and received into Church fellowship, is every thing. Oh, no ! Salvation is not in the Church, but in God. It is not in ordinances, but in Christ. It is not in a profession, but in the power and grace of the Holy Ghost in the soul.

Still, Christ says, “ If ye love Me, keep My commandments.” Yes ! This is the touchstone—Love. “ If ye love Me.” And this is the best evidence you can have of interest in Him, and the best warrant with which to go forth.

“ ’Tis love that makes the willing feet
In swift obedience move.”

And now let me remind you, that when you have been before the Church, and been baptized, that does not end the matter. You have then but put on the yoke of Christ. You will have to wear it all your days. It is now but the beginning of days. “ He that putteth his hand to the plough and looketh back, is not fit for the kingdom of heaven.” You have a life before you, long or short, as God has ordained, and during that life you have to maintain a profession, and that before many witnesses. May He enable you so to maintain such a profession, that you shall never be put to shame.

And now, dear child, don’t be over anxious to tell a great long tale before the Church, as a little love and feeling in the heart is better than great heaps of words upon the lips. There is a savour in love and life, which the living in Jerusalem can soon scent out ; and if the life and love of God flow from your heart into theirs, there will be a “ knitting together in love.”

Your ever affectionate father,

Chippenham, September 18th, 1880.

H. HAMMOND.

NATIONAL PROTESTANT CONGRESS.

ONE thing, at least, has been proved by the meeting of the National Protestant Congress at Brighton, and that is that Protestantism is not dead amongst us. This has greatly cheered the hearts of those who are in the vanguard of the movement. The large and enthusiastic audiences which have gathered each day, and three times a day, in the Dome and the Pavilion, in spite of very inclement weather (for on Tuesday night it was blowing half a gale), have shown conclusively that the Church of Christ is at last awakening to the danger in her midst. The battle-cry of the Lord of Hosts against the enemy of His truth has been heard. Numbers are rallying to the standard, and warfare has begun. The roaring of the waves upon the sea-shore which comes to us as we write, ever significant of a coming storm, seems an apt simile of that wave of Protestant enthusiasm which has been spreading over Brighton slowly but surely for some time past, and which, we trust, will surge until it reaches the utmost shores of our land. As more than one of the speakers hinted, to speak upon a subject so near and dear to the hearts of Englishmen, who consider that their hearthstone has been invaded, their rights as freeborn Britons assailed, and their patriotism trampled on, sorely tempts human nature to use heated language and personal recriminations. The fact that this has, in obedience to the leaders of the movement, by whom such action was strongly deprecated, been most sedulously avoided in the main, at least bears testimony to the power of grace, bestowed by that Divine Spirit, to whose aid alone Protestants look for victory. The standard grasped by such a powerful hand can never fall. Such was the confident feeling which showed itself throughout, and which doubtless accounted, too, for the moderation of the language used, and the deeply spiritual tone of the proceedings.

PROTESTANT NOTE.

A LEADING American religious newspaper says :—"It seems that the High Churchmen of England accord to the Romish Church a consideration that they would not accord to Dissenters. They object to the establishment of a mission in Spain because it is invading the sees of a sister Church (!), even the Roman Catholic Church of that land! Surely they have no such scruples in reference to Presbyterians, Baptists, or Methodists.* It seems

* It is well to remember that while clergymen are allowed, by them, to imitate Papal idolatries, and even to lift the hat to the Papists' god of dough as they pass papal Mass-houses, the Bishops of Chichester and Exeter have inhibited clergymen from preaching in their dioceses; the

that some of the Protestants in Spain prefer an Episcopal form of government. They are under the general supervision of Senor Cabrera, who, however, has not been ordained as Bishop. In 1878 these congregations appealed to the Lambeth Conference for recognition and the ordination of a Bishop. This was declined at the time; and when a similar application was made to the Lambeth Conference of 1888, the committee put them off again. An application to the Irish Episcopate was treated with more favour. Archbishop Plunkett, of Dublin, consented to perform such Episcopal functions as the Spanish Reformed Church in Spain may need, and has done so. His conduct has scandalized the High Churchmen." Scotland affords a case in point. There the Presbyterian Church of Scotland possesses temporal as well as spiritual authority according to law; but we never heard, from High Churchmen, a complaint as to the intrusion of Episcopalian bishops, and the encouragement of schism thereby, in that country.—*English Churchman*.

WAR ON THE PRIESTS.

PERHAPS the most significant feature of recent events in Ireland, judging from the Dublin newspapers, is the revulsion of feeling uprising against the priests. The priests have even been openly charged with abetting the "murder" of Mr. Parnell. They declare against liberty for merely one class or creed or kind of Irishmen. May we not even yet see the Pope and his wary satellites hoist with their own petard? At such a crisis we hesitate to again traverse the merits of Home Rule, but the attitude thereto of our Irish Nonconforming brethren must always be of special interest. What that attitude still remains may best be judged from the following quotation from a letter just addressed to us by an experienced and trusted Irish Baptist pastor. He says:—"Solemnly I believe every vote given for the McCarthyite party is a dagger plunged into the heart of Irish Protestantism and liberty. Should Home Rule be granted to the anti-Parnellites, it

former, one who had allowed a Nonconformist to engage in prayer at one of his public prayer-meetings, and the latter, one for attending a Nonconformist chapel. But a son of Mr. Gladstone, who is Rector of Hawarden, has, with other clergymen, who scorn Nonconformists as schismatics, protested against any endeavour for the conversion of members of the Greek and Papal Churches, because *they* are held to be orthodox Christians!!! Poor Nonconformists! What do you now think of home reunion with holy Mother Church (!!!)? May the good Lord ever save us from such tender mercies as these! Who are the heretics now? Let the conduct of Durnford, Bickersteth, Stephen Gladstone and Co. suffice as the answer. We are sure that our godly Evangelical friends in the Church of England will agree with us as to this view of the case.—Ed.

must mean priestly domination, with its inevitable consequence, war to the knife for life and conscience. A strong and increasing party is, however, getting weary of ecclesiastical dictatorship, and the few priests who gazed at the procession of 30,000 men at Mr. Parnell's funeral, were hissed and hooted from the streets. God grant real heart emancipation to Ireland from her superstitions, sins, and sorrows, and bring one and all into that liberty where-with Christ doth make His people free." And so, verily, say all of us !—*Baptist*.

CHRISTMAS WISHES.

MY DEAR SISTER,—Although I have not heard from you for some time, yet I cannot help wishing you every Christmas blessing.

And what these are, how many, how great, none can tell. It is the great mystery of godliness—God manifest in the flesh—God born for us in the flesh—born in us by the Spirit. Then we keep Christmas when we are new born—the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

This new birth of Christ formed in us, and dwelling in our hearts by faith, appears as our birth in this world does. The new-born babe enters the world with crying, so the Lord's people enter the spiritual world with the cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and are taught by the same Spirit to cry, "Abba, Father." They are the brethren of Christ, one with Him, and His Father is their Father. Oh, inestimable privilege ! and what a blessing to believe it ! How many soever they be, I wish you may enjoy them this Christmas. When the infant is born it cries for food : in like manner believers, "as new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that they may grow thereby." In Christ their souls live, as their bodies do in this world. On Him also they live, and by feeding on his Word, prayer, and praise, they grow up into Him in all things. For ever blessed are they who keep such a Christmas as this, who can call God their Father, Christ their Elder Brother, and the Spirit their indwelling Teacher. Thus would I live ! thus may you live—in Christ—on Christ—and to Christ. If we receive much from Him, let us not rob Him of His honour and glory. If we do much for Him, we have nothing to glory of : for HE "worketh in us to will and to do of His good pleasure." I am for good works as much as any, but I would do them to a right end, and upon a right motive ; and after all, doing the best that can be done, I would not lay the weight of a feather upon them as regards my salvation. No ; not an atom—that all rests on Christ. He is my Foundation—my Top-stone—my All in All.

These are good Christmas wishes that I hope you may enjoy.

December, 22nd, 1772.

WILLIAM ROMAINE.

THE EDITOR'S CLOSING ADDRESS.

DEARLY BELOVED FRIENDS,—Once more we are permitted to address you as we close our year's editorial work, and we desire to do so with sincere gratitude to our covenant God, who has upheld, led, preserved, and greatly favoured us as the months of 1891 have passed into eternity. Oh, that we all may have grace enough in our hearts to testify that "the Lord hath been mindful of us," and that it is by the help obtained of Him we continue to this present day. Temporally and spiritually He has blessed us, so that often we have been compelled to inwardly exclaim, "Who is a God like unto Thee?" &c.

"Oh, may His love our souls constrain
To make returns of love again,
That we, while earth is our abode,
May live like those who're born of God."

Dear friends, we thank you much for the kind interest and sympathy so constantly manifested in our long and trying affliction, and we bless God that while there are many who have no bowels of compassion, even for the afflicted, save within their own defined circle, and even there they only exist conditionally, we have found a goodly host who have made prayer to God continually for us; and they have likewise added "to brotherly kindness charity," thus proving that their works are wrought of God and not the outcome of carnal policy. Such as these we ever desire to be our friends, and for such we hope ever to feel a spiritual affection, let them be called by what name they may, heartily reciprocating that godly, Christ-like benediction, "Grace be with *all* them that love *our* Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen."

Once again, dear readers, we ask your kind prayers, sympathy, and help in our work. We hope you will bring our Magazines before the notice of others, and thus try to secure fresh subscribers. We have to contend against much secret as well as open jealousy and opposition, which we grieve to find amongst those who profess to have the Spirit of Christ. But "every man's work shall be tried," and we desire that ours may abide the fire and be approved of Him who "regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward" (Deut. x. 17). We desire ever to have a single eye to His glory, the peace and prosperity of His Zion, and the salvation of precious souls. Brethren, pray for us, for the peace of Jerusalem, and for the prosperity of the kingdom of Christ. And may we all have grace to love Him more and serve Him better, is the prayer of

Yours in Him,

THE EDITOR.

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