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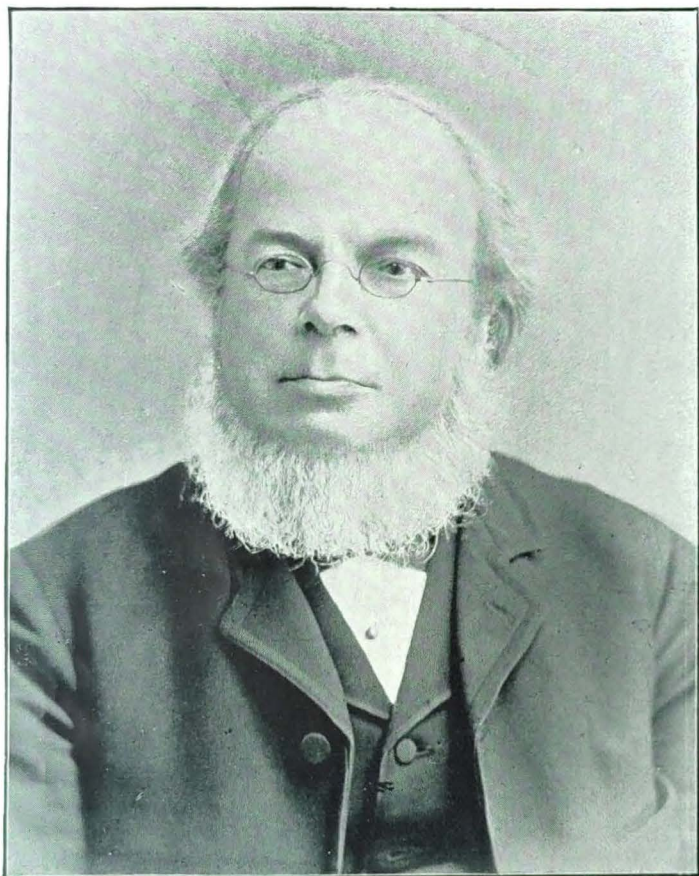
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MR. T. HULL.

Editor of "The Sorcerer."



THE SOWER.

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

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

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A NEW YEAR'S ADDRESS TO OUR READERS.

DEAR FRIENDS,—As readers of the SOWER, you will expect from us the usual New Year's Address, and we have no wish to depart from the precedent of former years; but we pray that, while we must write briefly, we may be helped to jot down such things as shall be brought home to the hearts and consciences of our readers, and thus be made truly profitable to as many as shall read what we send forth in our short Address. It becomes us at the commencement of the year to make a careful survey of the past, even though it brings to the front as many sins, mistakes, and shortcomings as to cause us to cry out with one of old, "Woe is me! for I am undone"; yet, feeling how greatly we have failed, and how frequently we have gone wrong, while it produces shame and confusion of face before God, who searches the heart, and knows all our ways, may be useful, undone as we feel we are in ourselves, by causing us to remember the mercy of our God in the past, and driving us afresh to the God-given "Fountain opened for sin and uncleanness."

No doubt some of our readers feel as we do, often, when we look on the past, and at the same time turn our eyes upon what is in our own breast. We are compelled, like Mr. Hart, to lift our eyes to the blessed Lamb of God, and exclaim—

"Had I not Thy blood to plead,
Each sight would sink me to despair."

Oh, what a mercy, dear friends, there is still virtue in Christ for feelingly undone ones such as we. Yes, He has blood to cleanse us from *all* our sin, and precious balm to heal all our wounds, and grace sufficient for our help in every time of need. It is "by these things men live," for they are thereby kept "looking unto Jesus," because they cannot do without Him; neither do they wish to, though they often think the way and the means used to bring them to His feet, and to the Fountain, are strange and severe. Still, our heavenly Teacher intends we shall learn this lesson well, namely, that "Salvation is of the Lord," from first to last. Now, have we been gaining instruction in these matters during the past year? If so, however wrong our ways may have been, while we feel ashamed of ourselves on account thereof, may we, yea, *must* we not, say of our Covenant, merciful God, that He has lead us by the right way, to bring us again and again to the Rock of our salvation?

Well now, dear friends, if we believe the blessed fact, that by these ways and means the Holy Ghost has been teaching us not only the depth of our sin, but also the ability of Jesus to save us from all the depths thereof, what shall we say respecting all the

trying dispensations through which we may have been called to pass? Has not the result proved that, "The ways of the Lord are right"? (Hos. xiv. 9,) and have we not been led more into the secret of Paul's wise conclusion, when he said, "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. viii. 32.) Have we not proved that, while He denied us many things we wished, yet, in crossing His hands, He has given us, in goodness and loving-kindness, far beyond our deserts and expectations, according to His own proclaimed name, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth"? (Exod. xxxiv. 6, &c.) And thus while we have been learning "Christ the *power* of God," as being "able to save to the uttermost," have we not also been learning "Christ the *wisdom* of God," in all the mysteries, not only of Covenant grace in the matter of eternal salvation, but also of Divine providence concerning our well-being through all our course in this present life, whereby we have been enabled to realize something of that blessed Word, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called, according to His purpose"? (Rom. viii. 28.)

Thus, amidst all the confusion and apparent contradiction connected with our present warfare, we have, at times, been helped to take our harp and sing—

"Thrice comfortable hope,
Which calms my stormy breast;
My Father's hand prepares my cup,
And what He wills is best."

This brings into our breast the peace of God, through Jesus Christ, so that while we praise Him for all that is past, we are enabled to trust Him for all that is to come, since He is "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever" (Heb. xiii. 8). Yes, He is the incarnate Word which liveth and abideth for ever. Oh, may we for the present year, yea, to the end of our days, remembering His past mercy, loving-kindness, and faithfulness, be enabled to rest in His given promise, "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness." Then, whatever changes and overturnings may take place within or around us, we shall find shelter in Christ our Rock until we see

"Every danger overpast,
Stand every storm, and live at last."

Reader, is it well with thee? art thou in Christ, or art thou without Him? Canst thou say of Him, "Thou hast been my

help," or do you know nothing of His divine mercy? If thou art still a stranger to His dying love and blood, we pray that the Holy Ghost may quicken you into divine life, and bring you with godly sorrow for sin, and real repentance, to the feet of Jesus, who came into the world to save sinners, and who will in no wise cast out any who thus come to Him. Remember, if you turn your back on Christ, you turn your back on the only door of hope God has opened for lost mankind, and if you neglect this great salvation, there is no other remedy or way of mercy open for you. "He that believeth not shall be damned," is the solemn sentence from the Divine lips. Our desire is that the Lord may bless our feeble messages to the salvation of many who are yet dead in sin, and that such as have grown old, hard, self-satisfied, and presumptuous under the letter of truth, may be made to realize their awful guilt in laying their sin at God's door instead of at their own. God never condemned but for sin, and if He is the cause of their sin how can He judge the world, and cause every mouth to be stopped before Him? Sin rendered all men incapable of obeying the Word of God, but that sin is the result of man's free will, therefore God has not lost His right to demand obedience, and is just in condemning for disobedience. Happy are they to whom He gives repentance and the forgiveness of sins. This is a new-covenant, unmerited gift, an act of free and sovereign grace.

Well, dear friends, we hope, by the Lord's help, to still set forth the truth, the *whole* truth, and nothing but the truth of God, as we have been taught it, in accordance with the divine Word; and while we have Bible authority for what we advance, we fear no man, let them be called by what name they may. We hope ever to shun carnal policy, and to humbly rely on the power and grace of the Eternal Spirit, who works all things according to the eternal purpose, and we desire to see the Word and cause of Christ prosper. May every wrong spirit in the Churches be overcome by the Spirit of Christ. This is the great and alone remedy for prevailing evils, such as pride, lordliness, timeserving, and worldly mindedness. The enemies are gathering at our gates, and how shall we resist them if we are spoiled with defilements? James says, "Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double minded." May we give heed to the Word of truth, and call upon the name of the Lord. There are many evils abounding around us, and we know of one only remedy, the Gospel of Christ, and that is sufficient for all. To this, with God's help, we will still cling, and try to spread it abroad. Brethren, pray for us, and come up to our help; the work is the Lord's, and He can make it to prosper. We wish you all a happy New Year.

THE EDITOR.

OUR BELOVED EDITOR.

THE SILVER WEDDING OF HIS PASTORATE.

TWENTY-FIVE years is a sufficient time to test the true union that exists between minister and people, and truly the friends at Hastings have a hearty way of showing that they still love, esteem, and reverence their pastor; but before giving an account of the interesting gathering which was held to memorialize the silver wedding, we would record a few incidents of the earlier period of the pastor's life story.

CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH.

It was on the 16th of August, 1831, that Thomas Hull was born at Foleshill, near Coventry, a spot that was favoured at one time with the ministry of Mr. William Nunn (afterwards of Manchester), whose discourses were greatly valued by Mr. Hull's mother. The father of little Thomas died when the boy was only three years of age. He was known as one of the best ribbon weavers in the county, and when the bread winner was taken away, hard times fell to the lot of the little family at Foleshill. The mother gallantly entered upon the struggle to provide food for her household, but in two years the hard labour so told upon her health that she became an invalid, and continued so for twenty-eight years. When this affliction came, the Union seemed to be the place where the widow would end her days, and relatives were ready to urge it, but the children now took up the struggle. Even little Thomas said he would go to work, so that his dear mother should not go to the Union, and at six years of age, he did go to work in a ribbon weaver's shop, working from six in the morning until nine at night (Fridays ten o'clock). No schooling fell to his lot till about the age of ten, when one of the ribbon weavers, George Smith, who was a local preacher, and one ever ready to do good to others, opened a school for the working boys on Saturday afternoon. To this school Thomas went, and being of a persevering disposition, and having a retentive memory, he soon obtained an elementary knowledge of spelling, writing, and arithmetic. The Bible was the first book he learned to read. As he grew older, he went to a night school, in which he still further improved his knowledge. At meal times he had his books, and would sit up studying till after midnight. Besides the ordinary branches of knowledge, he also obtained lessons in Euclid and land surveying. The latter he so far mastered that his master told him he might go and put a

brass plate upon his door, "Mr. Hull, land surveyor," but the Lord had other work in store for him than either ribbon weaving or land surveying ; and this leads us to speak of his

SPIRITUAL AWAKENING.

Thomas Hull's mother was a godly woman, whose memory he frequently speaks of with tender love and reverence. He believed in the godliness of his mother, and on one occasion, when he had a most difficult piece of work to do, and knew not how, he knelt down and prayed to his mother's God to help him. He then attempted the work, and succeeded in accomplishing it ; he felt this was an answer to prayer. He was twenty-two years of age when the praying mother's petitions were answered, in the conversion of her son. One Sunday, in the year 1853, he was in the singing gallery of the Baptist chapel at Longford, when the minister preached from the words, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve," &c. (Joshua xxiv. 15). The bow drawn at a venture entered between the joints of the harness ; he knew that he had hitherto been choosing self and the things of the world, and not the things of God ; he felt so conscious of his sinfulness and the just judgment of God, that he felt as he sat in the gallery ready to drop into the pit of despair. This anxiety continued, with no comfort, till early in the following year, when a Wesleyan preacher was one day speaking to him and some other young men, and, finding they were anxious about their souls, he said, "Have you ever fell upon your knees and said—

"Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee'?"

Thomas felt his heart respond, "Yes, that I have, and hang upon Him I will, even if I drop into hell."

A few months after, at Easter time, he had been into Coventry, and, returning home, he had proceeded some three hundred yards from the city gate, when his heart went up, "O Lord, give me a word ; say Thou art mine, and I am Thine." Immediately the words dropped with power into his heart, "*Ye are complete in Him.*" Christ was brought nigh ; he felt he was accepted in the Beloved—felt all his sins gone, as if he had never committed one. Then followed the lines, which were very precious—

"But, since my Saviour stands between,
In garments dyed in blood,
'Tis He instead of me is seen,
When I approach to God."

BAPTISM.

In July, 1854, he was baptized in the canal at Longford, his baptism taking place only a few yards from where he once, as a little boy, nearly lost his life. He was playing on the bank, and fell in; but a young woman, being near, missed the child she had seen playing, and saw his hand still visible above the water; she raised the alarm, and a man left his loom and jumped into the water, but had to go down two or three times before he found him. Fortunately, he was not lifeless, and soon came round, spared, for "the Lord had need of him."

HIS FIRST SERMON.

In the autumn of 1854 he was asked by a friend to go with him one Sunday to a village called Sowe, where he was going to conduct services. He went, and gave out the hymns in the afternoon. After the service, his friend said, "Now, my lad, you will have to preach to-night." In vain he protested that he could not; but the friend went away and left him to think the matter over, coming back just in time for the meeting, and having entered the pulpit, he conducted the earlier part of the service, and then came down, and told young Thomas he must go up. In fear and trembling he did so, and spoke from the text, "God *so* loved the world," &c., telling his hearers, among other things, that God's love was like the round "o" in the little word *so*—without beginning and without end. The friends seemed favourably impressed, and wished him to come again.

Mr. George Smith, the friend who had started the Saturday afternoon school, which gave Mr. Hull his first instruction, was sorry that he had not had the first hand in leading his young friend to speak in the Lord's name. So the next Sabbath he would have him go with him to Bedworth, and there he spoke from the words, "The Spirit and the bride say, Come; let him that heareth say, Come; and whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely." He spoke of the Gospel spring being an *open* one, to which the thirsty were free to come and drink. An old man, speaking in prayer afterward, said, "O Lord, we thank Thee the Gospel is an *open* spring, and not shut up and padlocked." In this remark the old man referred to the fact that, owing to water in the neighbourhood of Bedworth being scarce, those who had wells and pumps would shut them up and padlock them at night, lest the precious water should be stolen.

Mr. Hull had a great esteem for his old teacher and friend, George Smith, and remembers how he used to say to those who might be perplexed respecting the doctrine of election, "Seek to

have thy heart right with God, and He will bring thy head right." He also was very fond of quoting the lines—

"No more, my soul, attempt to draw
Thy life and comfort from the Law;
Fly to the hope the Gospel gives,
The man that trusts the promise lives."

BROUGHT INTO CLEARER LIGHT.

Mr. Hull was married on May 25th, 1857, and his beloved partner, the sharer of his many sorrows and joys, is still spared to him. A few months after his marriage he fell ill, and for a time it was feared he would not live. Now was the Lord's sifting time: his mind was so dark that he felt to have lost his hope, and feared he was "twice dead, plucked up by the roots." Presently the words came to him, "By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." He replied, "Lord, I have no part in it." The words came the second time; again he said, "Lord, I have no part in it." The words came again the third time, and such was the power and light that came with them, that he felt lifted clean out of his despondency, and moreover could see now more clearly than he had ever done before, that salvation was alone of free and sovereign grace. Now he began to search the Scriptures respecting Divine sovereignty and man's responsibility, and he wore out his Bible in his anxious search. He at length became so perplexed, that he pushed the Bible away, and said, "It is a mystery no one ever has been able to explain, and no one ever will." Presently an inward voice said, "Who made man a sinner? Did God?" "No," he mentally replied, "sin lies at man's door." "Then," said the inward monitor, "God has still power to command, though man has lost his power to obey." He saw clearly the difference between the covenant of works and the Covenant of life, and that salvation was, and must be, of free and sovereign grace, and his heart was filled with joy.

Hitherto he had been worshipping with, and preaching amongst the General Baptists, now he had to leave them, and moreover he felt his mouth was stopped, and he could preach no more. The next Sunday after his deliverance he stayed at home, and an old lady, a good woman, came to visit his mother, and finding Thomas at home, she began to inquire why he was not out preaching as usual, and by degrees she found out the truth, with which she was so overjoyed that she said, "Come, my lad, let us sing 'Praise God from whom all blessings flow.'"

The next Sabbath he found his way to the little Strict Baptist Chapel at Bedworth. Mr. Doe was preaching, and he felt at

home. After service he found out another old friend of his mother's who lived in an almshouse, and went into her room to eat his dinner, and delighted was the old lady to have his company, and to lend him her frying-pan to hot up his dinner. It is true it had a hole in it, but with a little careful management it cooked the dinner beautifully. He was now a constant hearer at the chapel, and his soul was often refreshed under the Word. After a time he was prevailed upon to speak in prayer at the prayer-meeting, but he did so with much fear and trembling. At length, in 1865 (after six years' silence), he was constrained by the Lord, and by the wishes of the friends, to again go forth in the ministry of the Word, preaching first before the Church and congregation at Bedworth. He was soon actively and acceptably engaged in preaching amongst the Churches the Gospel that he so dearly loved, till at length, in the providence of God, he was settled at Hastings, where for twenty-five years he has laboured amongst a loving people.

THE COMMEMORATION MEETING.

On Wednesday, November 27th, 1895, a large gathering of friends took place at Ebenezer Chapel, Hastings. Nearly two hundred sat down to tea, after which a meeting was held in the chapel, which was well filled. Mr. Hull presided. The opening hymn was 952 (Gadsby's)—

“Beloved Saviour, faithful Friend,
The joy of all Thy blood-bought train,
In mercy to our aid descend,
Or else we worship Thee in vain.”

Psalm xxxii. was then read, a Psalm that had spoken words of guidance to the Pastor twenty-five years ago, respecting his settlement at Hastings. Mr. Hull then engaged in prayer and thanksgiving. The following are a few of the desires given utterance to: “Thy goodness for twenty-five years has kept us in unity and peace. We thank Thee for the comfortable circumstances under which we meet. Many Churches and ministers have been parted, and saints have had to mourn, but we have been preserved. We have had many shakings and tremblings, seasons of barrenness and desolation, at the Land's End in our feelings. Thy promise has helped us, ‘Fear not, I am with thee.’ The secret of our union has been, ‘Our springs are all in Thee.’ We render praise. We thank Thee we ever knew our friends. We pray for one another. Let us ever know what it is to have Christ within the doors.”

Hymn 289 was then sung—

"Thus far my God has led me on,
And made His truth and mercy known;
My hopes and fears alternate rise,
And comforts mingle with my sighs."

MR. HULL'S ADDRESS.

Twenty-five years ago, the 20th of last February, a stranger amongst strangers, I stood in this pulpit for the first time. Mr. Godwin had mentioned my name to the deacons, but I had many tremblings about coming. I was only a poor ribbon weaver, with no education except what I had pulled together after a hard day's work, often sitting up till after midnight, and I felt altogether unfit to come to a fashionable watering-place. I told Mr. Godwin I would rather go into a wood to preach. He replied, "My lad, they are not a fashionable people, but those who love the truth. Thee go, and if you do not find them so, then come and say I was mistaken." The only text I could get to come with was, "No more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints," &c. I felt so at home in preaching, that it seemed as if I must have known the friends for years; indeed, I felt as I used to do at my old home at Bedworth. A few months after this visit I received an invitation to supply for eight weeks, with a view to the pastorate. I had previously received over a dozen invitations to take the pastorates of different Churches, and some of them I would have accepted, could I have felt quite at home, and believed it was the Lord's will I should do so, but I could not. At Hastings I did feel at home, but I wanted to know the Lord's will. I felt tired of the wandering life of a supply. I have slept in eleven different beds in a fortnight. I spread the letter from Hastings before the Lord, and very sweetly He at that time spoke the words, "I will instruct thee and teach thee the way in which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with Mine eye," &c. (Psalm xxxii. 8, 9); and after a time He decided my steps with these words, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

But after my mind was settled as to the Lord's will, I felt a great mountain was before me, as I knew my wife objected to leaving all our friends, and going to live amongst strangers; but when I told her of the Lord's leadings in my mind, I found the mountain had melted, and she at once said, if it was the Lord's will, she would go to Hastings, for she felt that my continued absence from home, when supplying the Churches, was like having a husband and no husband, a home and no home. After this conversation I attempted to write the letter to Hastings, but my hand trembled so that I could not do so. I was obliged to go to the Lord again in prayer, when He graciously spoke home the words,

"Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works" (Ecc. ix. 7).

A minister from London just at this time preached from these words at Hastings, and two of our friends in hearing wished that the Lord would give me this text, to decide my mind to come to Hastings, and He granted their desire, as they afterwards told me.

I began the eight weeks' probation at the beginning of October, 1870, and towards the close of November I received an invitation to take the pastorate. Since that time there have been many ups and downs, thousands of deficiencies, much anxiety, but "Thus far my God has led me on."

MR. ROBINSON FUNNELL'S ADDRESS.

It was sixty years ago last July, in the year 1835, that I first entered this chapel. I loved Mr. Fenner (the former pastor) as a faithful servant of the Lord. Seven years I remained outside the Church, then I felt I must come inside. Thus I have been a member of this Church fifty-three years. Mr. Fenner was afflicted eleven years, and at one time we had forty consecutive Lord's Days without a minister. When Mr. Fenner was removed by death, we began to inquire for a godly minister, and as both Mr. William Freeman and also Mr. Godwin spoke of Mr. Hull, we wrote for him to come. After the first Sabbath, an old man that attended here, who wore a white smock frock, said to me, "He'll do, and if you are a good boy we shall have him," which in due course came about. During Mr. Hull's pastorate, one hundred and thirty-two members have been added to the Church, and for twenty-five years he has served the Church *honourably, usefully, and profitably*. Mr. Robinson Funnell then said that an album was to be presented to Mr. Hull, containing photographs of the chapel, the pastor, and the deacons, and an illuminated address, which he then read.

CONGRATULATORY ADDRESS TO MR. HULL.

The Members of the Church, Congregation, and Sabbath Schools, assembling at Ebenezer Chapel, Hastings,

To our beloved Pastor, THOMAS HULL:

We desire the sweet anointing of the Holy Ghost may warm our hearts in true thanksgiving to our gracious God and Father, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, for the goodness and mercy continued to us these twenty-five years as Pastor and People.

We joyfully followed the Divine leading which brought about

your first settlement amongst us, when our hearts were united in mutual love to walk together in the ordinances of the Lord's house.

And since that auspicious time, when the hand of our Covenant God was so plainly seen, it has been our happy privilege to watch His goings in the sanctuary, in blessing your ministry, lengthening our cords, strengthening our stakes, and causing us to break forth on the right hand and on the left.

Many precious souls have been awakened to eternal life, and seekers brought to rejoice in the knowledge of Jesus Christ our Saviour; and some have seen the pleasure of the Lord prosper in your hand towards our children of the first and second generation, while the Family of Grace, amid many and varied dispensations of sorrow and joy, are living Epistles of your ministry as an Interpreter to lead us to Jesus Christ, our Living Way.

We have also sweet memories of the dying testimonies of dear departed ones, who set their seal to the Truth of God proclaimed among us, while many aged ones continue to find under the preached Word food convenient for them, and the rod and staff of the Good Shepherd still comfort them. Joining in this our desire to acknowledge the Lord's great and continued goodness to us, and our abiding affection towards His servant, are many friends whose names appear on the following pages, who, having reaped spiritual blessings by your ministry, think it a small thing to contribute to the accompanying purse of £128, desiring that it may be made acceptable to you by the Lord, flowing into your soul as precious ointment coming down from our great High Priest, and we, as within the skirts of His garment, may share the heavenly joy, while we unitedly pray that health and strength may be continued to you for many years yet to minister among us the Word of Life, to the ingathering of many more precious souls, and the prevailing of its gracious effects in the hearts and lives of your hearers, while truth and peace and love abound in all our borders.

Thus we commend you to our gracious Lord, who hath said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

Deacons: Mr. R. Funnell, Mr. F. S. Mann, Mr. J. Trimming, Mr. G. Goldsmith, Mr. T. White, Mr. H. T. Floyd, and Mr. J. Glazier.

After the reading of the address*—

Mr. Mann (one of the deacons), with a few loving words, presented the album and the purse, containing £128.

* The beautifully illuminated address was written by Mr. J. Trimming, one of the deacons, who did much to make the memorial meeting a success.

MR. HULL'S REPLY.

Mr. Hull seemed quite overcome with this manifestation of his people's affection. He said, "It is no use attempting to speak. I wish every Church had such deacons, and such a loving people, and no other change may it sustain, save only to increase. Since I have been here, there have been temptations to draw me away, but I have always said, 'The Lord brought me here, and He must remove me.' I have had many tokens of your love, but the last overwhelms me. It is fruit that will not be forgotten by Him. Do accept my humble attempt to thank you from my heart. May the choicest of Heaven's blessing rest upon you each in soul, in body, and in circumstances. May the good will of Him that dwelt in the bush be with you. May we meet in the upper sanctuary, to see His face, and meet with those who have gone before."

The congregation gave expression to their feelings of gratitude to the Lord for His mercies by singing most heartily hymn 959—

"For mercies countless as the sand,
Which daily I receive
From Jesus, my Redeemer's hand,¹
My soul, what canst thou give?"

MR. WILLIAM SMITH'S ADDRESS.

Mr. Smith, pastor of Rehoboth Chapel, Tunbridge Wells, gave an interesting and humorous address. He said, "I have known your pastor longer than any of you, and I knew him when he was not nearly so well off, when he had only sixpence in his pocket to go to market with. We joined the Church at Bedworth together. We have wept together, we prayed together, and when someone presented him with a hare, we dined together. I knew him when he was amongst the Arminians, but they said he was a Calvinist in those days. God likes fruit-bearing trees, and there has been *yellow* fruit to-night. May the Lord's richest blessing rest upon you each."

MR. E. WILMSHURST'S ADDRESS.

Mr. Wilmshurst, pastor of Tamworth Road Chapel, Croydon, said he was reminded of David's words, "Our family hath a sacrifice in the city, and my brother hath commanded me to be there" (1 Sam. xx. 29). He felt this was a meeting of "our family," and his dear friend and brother, Mr. Hull, had commanded him to be there, and his commands were not grievous, for he believed he loved him as much as the Hastings friends did, and that, he knew, was saying a great deal. He

felt that a union of twenty-five years had been long enough to winter and summer one another, and he was glad to see their steadfastness to their pastor and to the truth; he was also glad to see their sympathy and their *practical gratitude*. But he wished to say that Mr. Hull had a larger family circle than was found in Hastings; it not only extended through England, but through all English-speaking lands. It is said the sun never sets on the Queen's Empire; so we might say the sun never sets on the parish in which (through the press) your pastor is called to labour, and therefore on behalf of that world-wide family circle, he spoke to-night, to express, on their behalf as well as his own, an earnest desire that his life might long be spared, and that the richest heavenly blessings might rest upon all his labours.

CONCLUSION.

Mr. Trimming (one of the deacons) expressed very feelingly his affection to the Church at Ebenezer Chapel, and to our beloved pastor.

Mr. Hull then, by way of conclusion, said, "Mr. Smith has said he remembers when I had only sixpence in my pocket to go to market. I can remember when I had not a penny. After the war in the Crimea, a treaty was made with France for the admission of French ribbons into England duty free. This ruined the English ribbon trade, in which I was engaged. I struggled hard to hold my own, often chin deep in difficulties. When I rose in the morning, I feared I might not have my bed to lie on at night; a stranger passing would make me tremble for fear it might be the sheriff's officer. On one occasion I picked up a threepenny piece. Never did a threepenny piece sparkle in my eyes like that one. I felt it was sent by the God of heaven. One Saturday I had no food for the Lord's Day. A person called to ask my advice. After he had left I chided myself for not having asked him to lend me some money, but in a little while back he came, saying that he felt sure I must be in straitened circumstances, and asked if five shillings would be useful to me. This I gratefully accepted, and it gave us needful food for the next day. I came out of all this trouble just by the skin of my teeth, and this has given me a deep sympathy for those whose pathway in providence is full of difficulties."

The Doxology, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow," was then sung, and Mr. Robinson Funnell pronounced the Benediction. Thus closed a red-letter day at Hastings, a day that will ever give pleasant and grateful remembrances to the pastor and his loving people at Hastings.

Blackheath.

E. W.

"AS FOR MAN, HIS DAYS ARE AS GRASS."

(PSALM lkv. 15.)

(WRITTEN AFTER AN AFFLICTION.)

How sometimes the Lord is pleased to separate us for a time from the busy scenes of life; and what solemn but useful lessons are there to be learned under the afflicting and yet consoling hand of God. For it is here we are taught the frailty of this mortal life, our own helplessness, and our entire dependence upon God. And what an unspeakable mercy that He is so mindful of us, as to take that care that we should not be too much taken up with the things of the world; what condescension on His part to take such pains with us. David felt it so, for he says, "Lord, what is man, that Thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that Thou visitest him?" Even if it be in a way of chastening, "When Thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, Thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth; surely every man is vanity." All to teach us what we are, and that our days are as grass.

Moses gives the truth of it ("after taking a retrospective view of the past, in seeing the multitudes of Israel brought up out of Egypt with a high hand and an outstretched arm, and afterwards nearly the whole of them consumed in the wilderness through unbelief"), for he says, "We are like grass, which groweth up; in the morning it flourisheth, and in the evening it is cut down." So we know not what a day nor an hour may bring forth. Isaiah also says, "All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof as the flower of the field." Peter had the same solemn view; his words are, "All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass; the grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away." And not only have there been great and godly men that have had this view of the frailty of this mortal life, but we, too, as poor dying creatures, cannot but have some apprehensions of the same in looking around us, and from what we experience within ourselves; hence our cry, "Lord, teach us the number of our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." How shall we stand in view of a dissolution of this mortality? or, as the poet puts it—

"Let me think, if I were dying
(And I very soon must die),
On what hope am I relying?
To what *refuge* should I fly?"

While the thought of dying to the worldling is a source of terror, to the believer in Jesus there is a source of consolation, which at times is felt and enjoyed: "For we know that if our

earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." For we "know whom we have believed," and are persuaded that He will perfect that which concerneth us.

"On the Rock of Ages founded,
What can shake thy sure repose?
With salvation's walls surrounded,
Thou may'st smile at all Thy foes."

We here find a solid resting-place, amid all the transitory, afflictive scenes of this life, and also in view of death. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me."

We have also a future prospect, "A building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens"; and the Lord God hath said, "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation," upon which the believer is enabled to build, though not in haste; yet very sure are his hopes and prospects for futurity, founded even upon the solid Rock of eternal ages, who has stood the test of sin, Satan, and the world, but has withstood and overcome them, and who has said, "I go to prepare a place for you," a place of rest, a place of peace, for—

"No grief is there, no tears of sorrow flow,
No bitter memory of a world of woe;
No ills, no wrongs immortal joys molest,
The wicked harm not, and the weary rest.

Oh might we bid a last adieu to earth,
And fly exulting to ethereal birth;
Burst the weak bars that hold us prisoners here,
And view the glories of the heav'nly sphere!

Then, wrapt in visions of celestial joy,
Where endless praises every tongue employ,
Our ransomed souls, absorbed in sacred bliss,
Might see the great Redeemer as He is."

Leicester.

J. MARRIOTT.

If you are not born again, it does not matter how far you may go in religion. You may be whitewashed like the scribes and Pharisees of old. Whatever you may do, whatever you may give to the poor, to the cause of God, to build chapels, or help Churches, if you give all your goods to feed the poor, and your body to be burned; yet, if you are not born again, it will all pass for nothing.—*Covell.*

GONE HOME.

WILLIAM GROOM, senior deacon at Temple Street Baptist Chapel, Wolverhampton, died January 29th, 1895, aged seventy-six years. He had been a member of Temple Street Chapel for thirty-eight years, having previously attended the old Baptist Chapel at Bolton, in Lancashire, where God was graciously pleased to bless his soul, through the testimony of one of His servants. William Groom was indeed taught of the Spirit, and was deeply instructed both in Law and Gospel, beyond many professors of the present day. Divine mercy and goodness followed him in all his pathway of trial, and in his latter days, when affliction and adversity were his lot, God put it into the hearts of many of His dear children to minister to his temporal necessities. He was superintendent of the Sunday School for five years, and on retiring, December 1873, he was presented with a family Bible from the scholars and teachers of the school. On account of old age and infirmities increasing, he was prevented filling the offices he had held in the house of the Lord, but he still loved and prayed for Zion. In his case it may truly be said, the spirit was willing, but the flesh was weak. Realizing that he had no righteousness of his own, he often said he wished to be found clothed with the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. The twenty-seventh verse of the thirty-third chapter of Deuteronomy was much blessed to his soul, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." Some of the hymns in Gadsby's hymn-book were also a great comfort to him, in his last days, especially the 1093rd, one of Kent's sweetest productions. I called on one occasion, and he said, "I may not see you again, as I am getting into the valley. It will now soon be over. I hope you will bury me." Truly it may be said that our loss is his gain, therefore we may sing, "Why do we mourn departed friends?" &c. He was interred at Wolverhampton, February 3rd, 1895, where friends gathered round the grave to pay the last tribute of respect to godly W. Groom.

G. AMBROSE.

[We knew Mr. Groom, and had sweet fellowship with him, years ago, when we used to visit the cause at Temple Street, Wolverhampton. He was a tried, but a gracious man, who knew something of that text, "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him," and now he is saved out of all his troubles. Happy finish! Thus "Friend after friend departs." May we, to the end, be followers of them who have finished their course, and have gone to receive the crown.—ED.]

"CARRY MY BURDEN."

"CARRY my burden," O my God!

It seems too much for me,
Although it is no bitter grief
That drives me thus to Thee :
Only the little cares that spring
From the daily bread's ingathering.

They come so thick, Lord, and so fast,
The heart is overborne ;
There seems no time to be with Thee,
Noontide, nor night, nor morn :
I only seem to live and move
For things I rather hate than love.

"Carry my burden," O my God!

Because my strength is small ;
The worldlings wonder at my tears—
Jesus, Thou knowest all :
My fear is, lest these cares of mine
Make me forget that I am Thine.

"Carry my burden, O my God!

It seems too much for me
(If the least hope of being Thine
Should in my bosom be),
That want, or woe, or worldly care,
Should e'er dislodge the triumph there.

"Triumph!" Ah me! 'tis little such

This doubt-worn bosom knows ;
Tell me, O God, is this short life
The measure of my woes ?
Speak with assurance, so will I
Carry earth's burden till I die.

"Carry my burdens, O my God!

Thou knowest them and me ;
How I would love Thee if I could,
And how I long to be
Where care and sorrowing and sin
Vanish as Jesus says, "Come in!"

(MRS.) T. CHAPLIN.

As it is with the needle in the compass, it moves round about, hither and thither, by-and-by it settles down to the north ; so, if there is real love in our hearts to God, there will be such suspicions about the reality of our love. How the child of God wants to put his foot down sure and certain.—*Covell.*

THE SEEKERS' CORNER.

MY DEAR MISS MERES,—I can assure you that no “unfavourable impression” of your feelings towards me was made on my mind by anything which occurred when I was at Leicester; and I am sorry that you should have had any uneasiness from such a supposition. Exercised as you are, I am by no means surprised that you find a reluctance to converse on spiritual things. The fear of presumption, and of appearing in a character which is not truly possessed, is not the less salutary because it occasions uneasiness and distress; and it is far better to “sit alone and keep silence,” bearing the yoke which is laid upon the soul, than to hurry forward with the lamp of a foolish virgin, and to feed upon “bread of deceit.”

It is a source of regret to me that the questions I put to you at Mr. W——’s gave rise to such agitation of mind; and yet, if that agitation has led to more searchings of heart, endeavours to seek the face of the Lord, consciousness of the need of His teaching, desires and sighs for His sure testimony, fears of being wrong, and cries of, “Oh that Thou wouldest bless me indeed!” I may hope that neither you nor I shall hereafter have cause for sorrow on that account. It is well, when, in present trouble, we can “press forward to the things that are before, forgetting the thing that are behind,” in such a sense as not to be prevented by the consideration of them, or by a feeling of the obscurity which rests upon the past, from “following on to know the Lord.” Even as regards this, if the heart be set upon “the blessing of the Lord,” what at present is in the dark shall be brought to light, and what we know not now we shall know hereafter. “It is good that a man should both *hope* and quietly *wait* for the salvation of the Lord,” although it be often suggested by an unseen foe, who too frequently speaks in the thoughts, that to do so is presumption, and to call upon God is hypocrisy, and can result in no benefit.

It is *need* felt that warrants an approach unto God, and that will meet in due season with His manifested regard. “The needy shall not alway be forgotten; the expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever.” Our difficulty often lies in coming unto God exactly as we are. In our attempts so to do, unbelief will suggest our unfitness, deadness, lightness, carelessness, and numerous other reasons to hinder us. It will assume a holy garb for a vile purpose, and will feed a legal spirit, and make us look for righteousness and fitness in the flesh, to veil the glory and sufficiency of the merits of Immanuel. The depth and clearness of first convictions depends entirely upon God’s pleasure. “He giveth no account to any of His matters,” He

will "lead the blind by a way they have not known"; and if through blindness they think the way they are led in is not the right one, in His own time He will "make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight."

When the guilt and burden of sin are so felt as to destroy every hope of salvation in self and the works of the law, and the soul is constrained to look only to Jesus for salvation and righteousness, and where sin is grieved over, and the plague of the heart is known, there the law in its spirituality and exceeding breadth has certainly been revealed, or in other words, there has been "a law work," and also "the work of faith" has had a beginning. This may be far from evident to the subject thereof, but all will be made plain in the appointed time. God does nothing in a hurry. His time cannot be hastened, neither can it be retarded; for "The vision is for an appointed time, and at the end it will speak and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; for it will surely come, and not tarry" beyond God's "set time to favour Zion." Jesus Christ can unravel every entanglement, and it is vain to look to any other. "He is gracious, and full of compassion"; "meek and lowly of spirit," and "will in no wise cast out him that cometh unto Him." May it be His will to keep you close to Himself, looking unto and for Him; and may the Eternal Spirit make Him increasingly precious to you, and the Object of all your desire.

I am, through mercy, well, and purpose to cross the Channel, to preach in Guernsey on Good Friday and on the following Lord's Day. I am sorry to hear that Miss H—— is unwell; may I ask you to give her my affectionate remembrance? and believe me to be, my dear Miss Meres, faithfully yours,

Stoke, March 13th, 1849.

G. S. B. ISBELL.

[The above excellent letter was written to the late Mrs. Joseph Oton, who recently entered into her eternal rest. At the time it was written she was a seeker after Christ Jesus, and now, after having lived a witness of His faithfulness to save, she is with Him in His heavenly kingdom.—ED.]

NOT all the knowledge which the Christian hath of Christ and heavenly things is of a spiritual nature. His discernment of the truth of Evangelical mysteries may be clear and extensive, and yet his spiritual acquaintance with them be very small.—*Brine*.

TRUE riches consist in being blessed with the graces of the Spirit. Faith will carry us into the bosom of the Son of God, hope will hold up our heads in the cold waters of death, and love will abide with us for ever. True beauty consists in holiness, in having the image of Christ stamped upon us.—*Covell*.

LETTER FOR THE YOUNG.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—May the Lord bless you and yours. I hope you are all well; I am very poorly indeed. I felt very sorrowful at home on Monday evening, not being able to meet with the few friends to hear from you the sound of the blessed Gospel, which is so sweet to me; but I wish to be content, for I do feel my Jesus has done all things well, and that for me. When I received your kind and savoury letter my soul was full of heaviness, but oh, what a change I felt when I read its contents. I must say the Lord sent it: you were the penman, but it must be the dear Lord guided you, and put the matter into your mind, or you could not have written to me in such a suitable way: it was just what I wanted, but I did not know what I did want until I saw the contents of your letter. Then came fresh sight and feeling; it kindled fresh sparks of love and union towards you, and it led my soul to the dear Lord for you. Oh that He may stand by you, comfort, refresh, and bless you, and preserve you wherever you go. What poor worms we are when left of God. Daily I feel, when I get so cast down, I have no power to go to God. No, bless His dear name, He must come to me, or I cannot get to Him; and how unexpectedly He comes to us at times, as now with your letter: I had been grieving and mourning for some days, as destitute of a friend in heaven and earth, and that morning I thought I was farther off than ever, but the dear Lord was near, and when the seal of the letter and of my heart were both opened, I could say with David, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name."

I do think at times the Lord is more kind to me than to anyone else, as I am such a poor unworthy creature. Oh, what a merciful God to forgive my innumerable sins! Oh to shed His precious blood for us, and to make us one in Himself. Oh that word, one in Jesus, how sweet it is to me; oh what a Friend. The time is coming when we shall be with His sweet Person: His name is sweet now, what will it be then? Oh to be in the enjoyment of the fountain of all bliss. I hope I shall be able to meet with you when you come again. Pray for me and for us all, and may we be able to cast all our cares upon Jesus; I feel He careth for us.

I must now draw to a close: my head can't bear much; I do seem quite spent. May the dear Lord bless you and yours, which is my prayer for you. From yours sincerely in the Lord, and many thanks for your kind letter.

May 6th, 1865.

MRS. G.

REVIEW.

Loved and Chastened. The Autobiography of ROBERT P. KNILL.
Price 1s., cloth. E. Wilmshurst, Blackheath, London.

"THE memory of the just is blessed," and this little work will help to keep in memory one that, through divine grace, may be counted amongst the just. On opening the book, the first thing that presents itself is the beautiful Portrait, exceedingly life-like, and the venerable and benevolent countenance is delightful to look upon. Then follows a concise and valuable little Preface, written by the esteemed Editor of the SOWER, in which he speaks with affection of his departed friend, and in commendation of the book; at the same time giving a wise hint to those readers who have been more gently led in the divine pathway than was experienced by Mr. Knill, to remember that, "there are diversities of gifts and operations, which the self-same Spirit worketh, dividing to every man severally as He will." We then come to the Autobiography, which is written in a homely style that commends itself, and is moreover interesting and profitable throughout. Truly in Mr. Knill's experience do we find the words of the Psalmist fulfilled, "Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of Thy waterspouts: all Thy waves and Thy billows have gone over me. Yet the Lord will command His lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night His song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life" (Psalm xlii. 7, 8). And be it remembered that these seasons under billows deep occurred over and over again, and lasted for five years at a time, to be followed by seasons of sweet peace, when he could sing, "The time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land."

The following brief extracts will describe one season of severe conflict and the comforting deliverance that followed:—

FIERY DARTS OF SATAN.

"This great indulgence was followed by nearly five years of most distressing affliction of soul. It came quite unlooked for. Had I been walking in a backsliding path, I should not have wondered, but at the back of most sweet communion with the Lord, I was suddenly assailed by the most fearful temptations. At this time I was passing the railings of a church, I was obliged to take hold of them to keep from falling. Upon reaching home my dear wife asked if I had been frightened, I answered, 'Indeed I have.' From that time my daily sorrowful meat was sore buffeting and fiery darts of the wicked one. I had not, as Job said, 'time to swallow down my spit le.' Oh, the miserable

state I was in ! saying in the night, 'Would it were morning, !' and in the morning, 'Would it were night !' My prevailing conviction was that I had committed the unpardonable sin."

"THEN ARE THEY GLAD BECAUSE THEY BE QUIET."

"But a brighter day was to succeed this dark night, in which I experienced the truth of Toplady's lines—

" 'A moment's intercourse with Him
Thy grief shall over-pay.'"

"One Monday morning, about an hour after I got to business, the following words were spoken into my heart, 'He [Christ] shall let go My captives, without price or reward ; He shall build the temple of the Lord ; He shall bear the glory.' I knew the voice in a moment, 'The voice of my Beloved ! behold, He cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills.' I replied, 'Yes, Lord ! Yes, Lord !' The power was so overwhelming, that I had to leave my work and sit down in a chair. I felt like a new man in a new world. My sackcloth was removed and I was girded with gladness. I was longing for business time to come to a close, that I might get home and let my wife know of my happy deliverance, that she, who had shed so many tears over my forlorn condition, might share in my joy. We sat up till midnight—no sleep for me that night, nor did I desire it ; as I lay upon my bed the Holy Spirit took me into the Song of Solomon, and began with the words, 'My Beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away,' &c. I did indeed eat and drink 'a feast of fat things, full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined' "

The letters contained in the book are excellent, and we are sure that all lovers of experimental truth who read this valuable little work will prize it ; and being published at the low price of one shilling, it is brought within reach of most of the Lord's people, who though frequently poor in this world, yet are rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom.

THE BLESSED DEAD.

On October 16th, 1895, Mrs. Salisbury, of Cheerbrook House, near Nantwich, departed to be with Christ. She had long been a longing seeker after the Consolation of Israel, who has promised that they which mourn shall be comforted.

On November 18th, 1895, Mrs. Eleanor Hallaway, for many years a member of the Church at Ebenezer, Hastings, entered into eternal rest, after a long affliction. She was unable to speak at the last, but in her life and walk she adorned her profession of Christ as one who feared God above many, and who loved His people and His cause with a sincere love. She was in her seventy-sixth year.

The Bower, February, 1856.



THE LATE THOMAS HARDY.

THE LATE THOMAS HARDY, OF LEICESTER.

SHORTLY after the decease in 1833 of this extraordinary preacher of the Gospel, the late Henry Fowler, minister of Gower Street Chapel, London, wrote and published his life and thirty of his letters. This life of Mr. Hardy (not the only one published) is so very concise that we will begin his interesting history by giving it almost verbatim.

Mr. Thomas Hardy was born July 22, 1790, at a thatched cottage on the road leading to Kirby-Muxloe, a little obscure village four miles from Leicester, with a twin sister, bearing a striking likeness to each other, not only in features, but in other respects; both enrolled in the Book of Life, and brought to seek salvation from a sense of deep necessity, about the same time. The sovereign Lord has also snatched from the ruins of the Fall several others of the same family. The twin sister is still living, but afflicted at times with nervous affections, as was the case with her brother Thomas for the most part of his life.

The order of election is according to God's sovereign will: "He loved Jacob, and hated Esau" (Mal. i. 2, 3; Rom. ix. 11, 13). Here He loved both, and consequently called both by His grace. How sovereign, how discriminating, is the grace of our God! "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy" (Rom. ix. 16).

One thing I cannot forbear mentioning, being so closely connected with this narrative; it may be useful to the reader. When the twin sister saw evidently that the Lord had called her brother, she was seized with the most awful apprehensions about her own state. She saw herself the Esau that was hated and rejected of God; her case was most deplorable. Her dreadful thoughts of God were such that no language can well describe. This trial lasted a considerable time, but it pleased the God of all grace to shine with sweet mercy into her soul, and she then could love, bless, and praise Him. She related this circumstance to me when I was last at Leicester, but more largely.

At a very early period Mr. Hardy discovered a great thirst for knowledge: whenever his father went from home, he requested him to bring him a book on his return, which was seldom forgotten. When very young he was always the first at church, and at this period his practice was to read the Bible through once, and afterwards twice in the year, besides other books. For a length of time reading and attendance at church was his only employ on the Sabbath. Instead of playing the common games of children of his age, he occupied his attention in making mitres, hats, and other habiliments of the clergy, and wearing them, which was his chief pleasure, saying "He would be a parson."

During the short time he was at school he made great progress, being always intent on learning.

Mr. Hardy was brought up to the trade of a stocking weaver. Close attention to business in the day, and his studies at night (frequently studying the whole night, while the family were at rest), brought on him nervous and hypochondriac complaints, which, indeed, were partly hereditary. When at his meals he always had a book in his hand; and so bent were his thoughts on obtaining knowledge, that he frequently forgot to take his food. When weather permitted, his favourite study was under a large apple-tree, much delighted with being by himself. By close application he obtained a considerable knowledge of both the Hebrew and Greek languages, without any assistance in the first instance except Bailey's dictionary, from which he learned the letters correctly by frequently writing them, and then obtaining grammars, lexicons, &c. But, with all his genius and strength of memory, this must have cost him many painful hours of fruitless labour; for the human mind in search of such knowledge, like hops, requires regulating, and tying up once and again, but not too tight, lest the end in design should be frustrated. Mr. Hardy, however, was neither regulated nor tied up by the care and skill of the able tutor, but had to penetrate a wilderness without a guide. Nor was he confined to one particular subject: he would read books on the most abstruse subject, from the pamphlet to the ponderous folio. Thus he wearied himself for years; nor would he leave the subject of his investigation until he had made himself thoroughly acquainted with it. But he has been heard to say, "If I could have found a friend to guide me, to have pointed out such books as I should have read, what a world of trouble it would have saved me!" And when reading certain books on divinity he would exclaim, "Oh, these muddy, muddy doctors; how contrary to the Word of God!"

In returning again to the early part of the life of Mr. Hardy, we find he was uncommonly zealous in all the forms and duties of religion, though so young; and all he did was done in sincerity, but in spiritual darkness. At this time, the "Whole Duty of Man" was his great favourite; but, at length, he was obliged to quarrel with it, not being able to come up to its demands. In the catechism, and other Church knowledge, he always excelled others, and frequently turned catechist himself, and even chaplain to his own family, and teacher for the household. It was by reading Boston's "Fourfold State," that the Lord first convinced him of his true condition as a fallen, undone sinner. This, Mr. Hardy told me himself; but he did not say that this book was made instrumental in leading him into the liberty of the sons of God; his friends, however, inform me that such

was the case, and that he gained much light and instruction from Boston, as well as much comfort and soul-establishment, after labouring under much distress and sore anguish of soul for a long time. Bunyan's "Law and Grace" was also made very useful to him, in giving him clearer views, and leading him to distinguish between the two covenants. Before this period, he had gone with his twin sister many miles round, and had attended many sects and parties in search after truth ; but after searching in vain, he retired, and attended to his books only.

My informant tells me that about the age of fifteen or sixteen Mr. Hardy was enlightened by the Lord more and more, and at that age attacked the clergyman of Kirby, and pointed out to him his errors in preaching, particularly in one sermon he had preached from these words : "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." The clergyman had said in that discourse that such as were born of religious parents were the only righteous that needed no repentance. Mr. Hardy took the clergyman to task after the sermon, and declared to him that none were righteous in the sight of God by the law. The clergyman took it in good part from his young opponent, and gave him the name of "Bishop," saying, "I must mind what I say, or I shall be examined by the 'Bishop !'" At this time Mr. Hardy, in the honest simplicity of his mind, used to converse frequently with the above clergyman, and many of his examinations were more searching to the clergyman than they would have been by the Bishop of the diocese. Finding the clergyman so very ignorant of the leading doctrines of divine truth, led him to closer enquiry as to Church discipline ; and "Simpson's Plea" furnished Mr. Hardy with ample materials to investigate the contents of the Prayer-book, and oppose the clergyman, and led him at length to leave the Establishment.

The exact time of Mr. Hardy's first convictions cannot be given, nor do I lay any stress of importance on that. It would seem that the Lord began at a very tender age with him, though he knew it not for years. He laboured through clouds of darkness, and sensible bondage ; but he knew not the cause, till the Lord, who is never at a loss for means, afforded him His special grace, and the light of His Holy Spirit to guide him into the knowledge of the Lord Jesus. But before faith came, he was shut up as in a prison-house. And such at one time was the deep distress of his mind, as I have heard more than one of his friends say—without a gleam of hope—that he wished to know the worst ; and that he might hasten the time, visited some of the most malignant cases of fever, that he might take the infection and die ; but infinite Wisdom ordained better things for him, and for the Church through his instrumentality. The Lord often suffers His children to grope in darkness, and by

sorrow of heart the spirit is broken; but He will fulfil His promise unto them: "Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove, covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold" (Psa. lxxviii. 13). Before the Lord appears to turn the "shadows of death into the morning," He suffers His children to try their strength, to prove to them their entire helplessness; yea, sometimes suffers them to lie, in their own apprehension, near the gulf of black despair, especially such as He intends to make useful, in His Church, to His afflicted family—which was the case with Mr. Hardy. But by the deep discovery of human nature's depravity, and by the rich manifestations of sovereign love in raising him up from the horrible pit, he was well qualified to debase the sinner, and exalt the Saviour in all the majesty of His grace; which appears very conspicuously in his letters, as it did in the whole of his discourses and ministry.

Mr. Hardy began to preach that Gospel which he had received, and was sweetly established in, in October, 1816, to a few poor people at Leicester; but his numbers increasing, the people found it necessary to get a larger place. They procured a piece of land near the same spot, and built a chapel in 1818. Mr. Hardy advised that the place should be built so as to be capable, at a small expense, of being converted into dwelling-houses, for he thought he should soon be obliged to give up the work of the ministry. However, his fears were groundless, for in a few years, the chapel becoming too small, it was found necessary to double the size of it, and at length to add a gallery. When Mr. Hardy was at home the place was generally well filled.

Great things are often seen to arise from small beginnings. I have been told that when Mr. Hardy began to preach, many of his brethren were much displeased with him; this, no doubt, was no little trial to him. But neither the opposition of enemies nor the jealousies of mistaken friends can frustrate the counsel of the Lord—that shall stand: our God will make opposition to His servants the blessed means of their instruction, as He did, no doubt, in the case of Mr. Hardy. I met with similar trials at the beginning of my ministry, but this little hint stayed my mind: "Neither did His brethren believe on Him" (John vii. 5). The Lord blessed his ministry much in calling some out of spiritual darkness and death, and by building up and establishing others in the faith of Christ. But Mr. Hardy seemed better calculated for itinerancy, from the constitution of his body and mind, than for a settled pastorate, for he appeared generally most at home when abroad. Perhaps his ministry was more blessed abroad than it was at home; at least, I judge it was more generally esteemed by the people. It was no uncommon thing for the people in Sussex

to go from seven to twelve miles on foot on a week night to hear him, and frequently about twenty vehicles have been noticed with companies from various directions to attend his ministry ; and this continued for several years with increasing interest, up to the last time of his visiting those parts. I grant some allowance must be made for his being an occasional visitor. Had he been settled there some might have said, "We can hear him any time !" such is poor human nature

I first heard Mr. Hardy preach about the year 1818 ; but the several times I heard him convinced me that in future years he would shine much brighter in ministerial talents. I heard him almost every year, since that period, up to almost his last sermon in London, a few times in each year ; and, without the least hesitation, I state it as my full conviction that he shone brighter and brighter every time I heard him. It has often struck me, when hearing him preach, that Luther himself (of blessed memory) never excelled Mr. Hardy in the two great and leading points in divinity—the law and the Gospel. He expounded and showed the nature, demands, extent, and operation of the law most clearly ; what it could do, and what it could not do ; that it could and did condemn the sinner in everything and for everything he thought or did ; but brought no cordials for his fainting heart—held out no promises of grace—never cast a ray of light upon his path : but its one and invariable sound is, "This do, and thou shalt live." I never heard any man so strip and debase Saul the Pharisee, showing that all his piety, devotion, and zeal for God were his greatest abominations ; nor have I ever been favoured to hear a man more magnify the glorious, unsearchable riches of Christ, in bringing the once proud Pharisee to fall down before God, and bless Him that salvation "is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." Indeed, the Holy Ghost specially favoured Mr. Hardy with clear and spiritual views of the sinner's acceptance and everlasting completeness in the Beloved. When in the pulpit and in the heart of his subject, he appeared scarcely like the same man you had seen an hour before. He indeed might well say, in one of his letters, "Preaching is my best medicine : the Lord does favour me indeed in the pulpit."

While Mr. Hardy delighted to dwell on the deep things of God, he was no less concerned in enforcing, on Scriptural grounds, the wise and holy counsels of Zion's King, which are so plainly set forth in the Word of God ; that the saints might walk worthy of their high and holy calling ; not for their justification before God, but "to show forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into His marvellous light." Indeed, this necessary part of a minister's work stood

prominent in his ministry ; for he knew that fleshly indulgences, and looseness in conversation, were dishonouring to God, would procure His soul-cutting rod, and give Satan an advantage over them also. That this is part of a minister's office, appears so plain in the Word of God, that I am astonished any minister should attempt to justify himself in the neglect of it ; or that any disciple of Christ should call it legal. "Reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine"—"Warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom ; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. iv. 2 ; Col. i. 28). If, therefore, there have been characters who sat under the ministry of Mr. Hardy, a sore grief to him and the godly in his Church by their wantonness and sad conduct ; or if such things should occur again (which may God prevent), let no man impute these things to a deficiency in the ministry of His departed servant. Base to a degree must that man's mind be, who would say of Mr. Hardy, or any other minister of Christ, that his ministry was the cause of these disorders. The same reflection bears as hard upon Paul : "It is commonly reported that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles" (1 Cor. v. 1). Was Paul to blame ? Was his ministry defective ?—Shame, shame ! on all calumniators. The fact is, as the farmer with all his vigilance and care cannot prevent noxious weeds springing up amongst his wheat, nor always prevent the feet of men or beasts treading it down, so it is, and so it will be, with the servants of God. All the propriety and good example they may manifest in their conduct, and all the severity and faithfulness they may maintain in their ministry, will not be productive of those salutary effects, to that extent, which they desire and aim at ; they are, therefore, obliged to take their Lord's advice : "Let them both grow together until the day of harvest."

Mr. Hardy had the gift of conveying more matter in a few words than most ministers of Christ. No doubt his great natural gifts were much improved by extensive reading and due reflection, aided by an uncommonly strong memory ; but while he excelled most, he thought himself to be the least. His knowledge of the Word of God was very extensive. He was not content with taking a superficial view of the Holy Scriptures, but would examine the various readings, in order to satisfy himself in obtaining all the information he could, both for his own and the comfort and establishment of the Lord's family.

Mr. Hardy, in his selection of texts, judiciously adhered to the plain declaration of the Holy Ghost ; and every text spoke a doctrine. He avoided allegorical and metaphorical texts—a method rigidly followed by some preachers, to keep up a kind of

novelty better calculated to amuse the trifling hearer, than inform the judgment of the honest child of God, and establish his heart in that which is truly valuable. He sought not popularity, which has been the ruin of many preachers; for knowing the deceit of his own heart, he knew much of all men, and could not feed upon the applause of poor mortals, nor preach so as to please men by flattering them, or nursing their fleshly idols.

(*To be continued.*)

"THOU SHALT REMEMBER ALL THE WAY."

(DEUT. viii. 2.)

THUS far on life's perplexing path,
 Thus far the Lord our steps hath led;
 Safe from the world's pursuing wrath,
 Unharm'd, though floods hung o'er our head
 Here, then, we pause, look back, adore,
 Like ransomed Israel from the shore.

Strangers and pilgrims here below,
 As all our fathers in their day,
 We to a Land of Promise go,
 Lord! by Thine own appointed way:
 Still guide, illumine, cheer our flight,
 In cloud by day, in fire by night.

Protect us through this wilderness,
 From serpent plague and hostile rage;
 With bread from heaven our table bless,
 With living streams our thirst assuage:
 Nor let our rebel hearts repine,
 Or follow any voice but Thine.

When we have numbered all our years,
 And stand, at length, on Jordan's brink,
 Though the flesh fail with human fears,
 Oh, let not then the spirit shrink;
 But strong in faith, and hope, and love,
 Plunge through the stream—to rise above.

OUR religion, then, if it be the religion of the Holy Ghost, will be of this nature. There will be labour in it. And when the Lord out of this labour, out of this ploughing, sowing, harrowing, and reaping, brings forth a blessed harvest, we shall enter into the meaning of those words of the Psalmist, "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Psalm cxxvi. 5, 6).—*J. C. Philpot.*

EXTRACT FROM SERMON BY S. E. PIERCE.

(1 JOHN iv. 8.)

It is possible to be under a profession of the Gospel, and not to know God ; and the true knowledge of God consists in knowing Him as He is revealed in the Scriptures of truth. It may be apprehended that God is infinite, incomprehensible ; that He is self-existent, all-sufficient ; that He is holiness and perfection itself ; that He is a sin-avenging God : yet, whilst all this is most justly true (and it is thus predicated of Him in the Inspired Volume), there is nothing in all this which can possibly endear Him to us. The apprehension of all this may create solemn and awful apprehensions of Deity in our minds ; but none of all these can encourage us to draw near unto Him, neither can we conceive, from any of these, any encouragement to hope in Him. So far from this, that the more we are led to contemplate God in His absolute Godhead and perfection, the more we dread the thoughts of any actual approach to Him. It is an apprehension agreeable with this which Dr. Goodwin hath, and which he expresseth thus : "Thou mayest think too much of the holiness of God, of the wrath of God, of the justice of God, of the majesty of God, but thou canst never think too much of the love of God ; and if thou thinkest so much of it as to be overwhelmed and swallowed up, and lost in it, so much the better." It is this view and knowledge of God which alone can produce those apprehensions of God in our minds, as can give us ground of hope and confidence in the Lord, such as maketh not ashamed. We cannot love God, nor the saints and beloved of God, until we know that God is love. And we are brought to this, as the Holy Spirit is most graciously pleased to enlighten our minds into the revelation the Lord God hath been pleased to make of His nature, Persons, and perfections in the everlasting Gospel of His grace. He proclaims Himself therein to be "The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious" ; and this comprehends all we need to know of Him, either in life or death. The true knowledge of this, received into our renewed minds, from the Word, and by the light and teaching of the Holy Ghost, constitutes the true and Gospel knowledge of God in us ; from hence, we clearly perceive that God is love ; and in the true apprehension of His love to us, and mercy in Christ Jesus, which He hath already been pleased to make known, and to manifest to us, and within us, we see that "love is of God ; and every one that loveth" God, and the children of God, "is born of God, and knoweth God" ; and also, that he, be he who he may, "that loveth not knoweth not God," the reason for which is self-evident, for "God is love."

The knowledge of God and His love must go first; then love to the saints follows, and the one will be always in proportion to the other. If we would love saints aright, we must look off from all, and what they are, or may be found to be in themselves. We must not meddle therewith; we must look on them as the objects and subjects of the love of God, and as viewed and beheld by Him in the Person of Christ as God-Man, their Head, their Representative, their Mediator, their Saviour, their Lord, their Righteousness, their Purifier, their Perfection, their Strength, and their Glory. It is by thus viewing them and our persons in Christ, that we get above and beyond ours, and also all their personal and particular weaknesses and sinful infirmities, and love them in reality and true spiritual affection. We should never forget, it is in this way our Lord expresses His love to us and them. He knows full well that we have our natural infirmities, our sinful infirmities, and our personal and constitutional weaknesses; yet He looks upon us, and presents us to Himself, "a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing": and we should look on ourselves as Christ looks upon us, and upon the whole mystic body of Christ so likewise. This would cement our hearts and affections to each other, so as that, in our measure, we should love one another, as Christ hath loved us; but herein we all fail. It is the case with us all; we undervalue one another; we sometimes make too free with each other; we love to find out each other's infirmities, and too often keep the same in our memories, so as to nourish thoughts in our minds, to the real disparagement of such and such. I should not doubt of this being a truth, were I to lay this to the charge of almost all of the people of God in the present day. I include myself in the charge. It is most certainly the case, it is not good for the children of God to know too much of each other, as it respects their infirmities; nor does it answer any end for ministers of Christ to touch on these in their ministrations, unless the Spirit of the Lord lead them so to do; which, when He does, it should be considered, and then it will be sure to answer its own proper end; and this may be known in the following way: When the minister, without any knowledge of the person, and without any design to him, is led to speak on such a very particular subject and case as comes to the conscience of individuals, and they are thereby convinced, admonished, reproved, and warned against such an evil, be it in temper, disposition, carriage, action, or word, as becometh not the profession which they make of the Lord Jesus Christ. In this way the Word of Christ, in the hands of the Spirit of Christ, most mightily prevails, when and where we least expect.

God's love to us in Christ is free, and always the same; yet

we have our maladies. It becomes us to consider this, and, out of a sense of His love, to love each other, as standing in one and the same relation to Him, and before Him, as His dear children. Nothing we are in ourselves takes off the heart of Christ from us, so this very consideration should influence our love to the members of Christ. The declaration in our text is solemnly striking, "He that loveth not, knoweth not God." Then such an one cannot be a believer or Christian. This is very pointed; it comes home to the point, and touches to the quick. The Apostle meant it should; yet he introduces the whole of the subject as gently as he could: "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love."

LETTER BY THE LATE MR. R. P. KNILL.

MY DEAR FRIENDS, MR. AND MRS. C—,—Before we reached home yesterday afternoon, we heard of the dear boy's removal from a world of sin and sorrow; and having in my first wife's time been called to sustain the loss of three dear little ones, I can truly sympathize with you. I have always considered that young children taken in early years constitute a part of the elect of God, and that although unaccountable of themselves, yet are implicated in Adam's transgression, and their sin atoned for by the Second Adam.

It may be a question with some, At what age do we consider a child accountable? As respects the removal of mine, as above, I have not the shadow of a doubt but they are uniting with those around the throne in singing the praises of the dear Redeemer. It must be a heavy trial for your dear wife in nursing. May you both be enabled to adopt as your own the words of Job, who had lost all his children, and under such painful circumstances. May it please the Lord to grant the event may be sanctified to some of those who remain. We are constantly called to witness the removal of one and another from the circle of our old attached friends, the late James Evans amongst them. And what am I to say of myself? I trust I am learning a little of the words, "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom"; "Those who are most fit to live are most fit to die." The Apostle James speaks of our life as "a vapour, which appeareth for a little while, and then vanisheth away."

I must conclude with our kind love and sympathy; and desiring for you both the comforting influences of the Holy Spirit,

Remain yours affectionately,

Burgess Hill, November 7th, 1890. ROBT. AND M. KNILL,

"ANOTHER PILGRIM SAFELY LANDED."

A BRIEF MEMOIR OF RICHARD BRANSON.

OUR dear father, the subject of this memoir, was born in 1817, and was led at a very early age to consider the doctrines of grace. He was brought up to attend the Established Church, but used occasionally to go to the Strict Baptist Chapel. When very young—only sixteen—he felt there was a great difference between the teaching he was under in church, and that which he heard at chapel; and he was troubled to know which was in accordance with the Word of God. One night, upon retiring to rest, he was particularly led to ask the Lord to show him if the doctrine of election was true. During that same night he dreamed that he saw a hand pointing to the Baptist Chapel, and a voice spoke distinctly to him, saying, "Read the ninth chapter of Romans." The voice was so powerful, that he said, "Yes, Lord, I will"; and when he arose, he read the ninth of Romans—a light shone upon the words, and he was enabled to see that it is sovereign mercy alone that saves a poor lost sinner, and that without creature doings.

From that time he regularly attended the Baptist Chapel, also the Sabbath School; but at this time—from what he told us—there was not much coming out from the world. He has often said, "Oh, if I had been as earnest to know the Lord as my God, as I was to know if the doctrine of election was true, how much better it would have been for me!" He was, at the same time, a constant attendant at the means—seldom absent when the doors were open; but he would often say, "My heart was too much after the things of this world; I had such a desire for worldly prosperity." However, the dear Lord gradually opened his eyes to see himself a poor, vile, needy sinner, and made him to long after the precious blood of Christ, to cleanse him from the guilt and power of sin.

He was baptized by Mr. Corby, who was then pastor of the little cause at Hanslope, in the year 1848, and continued there as a member—also afterwards as deacon—until his death. For many years he was earnestly seeking the Lord, but seemed unable to get any full satisfaction of his sonship.

In the year 1888 he met with a severe accident. While driving to his business, early one morning, he was thrown from his trap and so severely injured that his life was despaired of; however, being some miles from home, he was taken to a cottage hospital. And now the Lord appeared in a special manner, with these words, "For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: I hid Me, and was wroth, and he went on forwardly in the way of his heart. I have seen his ways, and will

heal him : I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners" (Isa. lvii. 17, 18).

He felt the Lord was by this affliction chastening him for his folly and iniquity in seeking so much the things of this world ; he was led in deep humility to confess it ; and while (apparently) in a dying state, and still mourning his heart departures, these words dropped like a cordial from the Lord, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty" (Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7). To use dear father's own words, he looked up and said, "Yes, dear Lord, that is all true, but oh ! is it for me ? Thou knowest what I want." Then came these words, like healing balm to his spirit, "I am the Lord thy God." Oh, what mercy, peace, and joy flowed into his soul, no tongue can describe ! He was so melted down and humbled at the feet of his dear Lord, none but those who have experienced the same can understand !

After this he gradually gained bodily strength, but was not again able to continue his business on account of his eyesight being impaired by the fall. In referring to this period, he would say, "The Lord made that hospital a little Bethel to me—a little heaven below." The savour of this sweet blessing rested with him for many weeks, and the lesson he learned was never forgotten. Often, when writing to his children, he would say, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness ; and all these things shall be added unto you.' Once he said, "Seek ye first, last, and middle. Oh, my child, let this be the one aim in your life, to have the righteousness of Christ. It is worth everything." At another time, "Oh, that I had sought the Lord in my youth !"

Our dear father was unable to take the comfort he needed from past experience, but often wanted the Lord again to speak to him ; for, although the Lord had so fully forgiven him, he could not forgive himself. He would so often refer to his early life, saying, "Oh, that I had been as earnest in seeking the Lord for salvation, as in temporal matters !"

This deep exercise of soul continued more or less until within a few hours of his death. He had much liberty in prayer, and would converse with sweetness upon the blood and righteousness of a precious Christ ; yet he would so often conclude by saying, "Am I one ? that's the question. Oh, to be a living branch !"

Our dear parent's health failed rapidly during the last few months of his life. We at first thought it was merely the result of old age, but we afterwards discovered that he was suffering from a malignant disease ; and, although seldom confined to his

bed, he suffered much pain and sickness, which he bore with great patience, and would often pray the dear Lord to give him patience, and not to allow him to murmur.

The writer well remembers finding him in the garden one day, praying the dear Lord to bless his soul, when he said, "Oh, my child, I'm afraid I weary the Lord with my cries, but I do want Him to assure me once again of my interest in the Redeemer's blood."

A few days before the end, his son-in-law went to hear Mr. Oldfield preach at an anniversary. Afterwards he wrote down some jottings of the sermon, which he gave to dear father to read. This was made so sweet to our dear parent that he wrote down a few thoughts upon the sweet manner in which Mr. Oldfield had been led to speak. The text was Sol. Song iii. 6—"Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke?" Mr. Oldfield said—"Oh, poor weak child of God, the very *desire* of thy soul ascends right up to God—goes before Him like a pillar of smoke. All thy longings, thirstings, pantings after Him ascend through the holy sacrifice of Christ."

Dear father said, "Surely such are born again—made new creatures in Christ Jesus. No creature doings or merits here. I can see that it is all the Lord's doing, from first to last—all Christ and His rich grace; He makes the believer, and takes him home. When I retired to bed that night," he said, "I presented my poor petitions to the Lord, to enable me to see and feel myself to be a real believer; and very early the next morning (two o'clock) the dear Lord broke in upon my soul with these words—

"Begone, unbelief, my Saviour is near,
And for my relief will surely appear;
By prayer let me wrestle, and He will perform—
With Christ in the vessel, I smile at the storm.'

"Never did I feel these words so sweet before. Oh, my dear friends, if any of you are plagued with that sin of unbelief, what I recommend you to do is to wait on the Lord; be of good courage and He will appear for you. This He has done for me, though for a long time I was bound by unbelief—yet He has made me, I hope, a true believer; and if the Son shall make you free, ye are free indeed, but what I have had to feel from unbelief, none but the Lord and my soul know. Oh, that enemy unbelief, it spoils all one's comfort; it is Satan's spawn, for he knows that no *wilful* unbeliever can enter heaven."

The above was written two days before the death of our dear parent. The next day was the Sabbath. His daughter assisted him to dress, and in his great weakness he attended the house of God, which was close to his home. There he read what he had

written the previous day, and part of which we have quoted, telling the friends what a blessing the Lord had bestowed upon him. In the afternoon, the service, which was the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, was held in his own home—there being only very few members, and the friends felt anxious that he should not venture out again in his weakness. He was most sweetly led out in prayer at that time, and all in that little company felt it good to be there.

In the evening he surprised his friends by announcing his intention of again attending service at the chapel, which he did; but was with great difficulty afterwards helped back to his home, and retired to bed in much pain and bodily weakness, but spiritually strong in the Lord.

The next day, Monday, August 5th, he passed away, to be for ever with the Lord, about three o'clock p.m., aged seventy-eight. Just at the last moments, in all his pain and weakness, although not able to speak, his face was lit up with a heavenly smile, which reminded the dear friends watching him of the promise he had received—"With Christ in the vessel, I smile at the storm."

L. W.

"DEMAS HATH FORSAKEN ME, HAVING LOVED THIS PRESENT WORLD."

(2 TIMOTHY iv. 10.)

THESE words, "the world," occur often in the Scriptures, and sometimes refer to the habitable globe, with the things it contains; sometimes it signifies the human race in general, and sometimes that portion of mankind which are chosen and redeemed from among men. John saith, "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 John ii. 16). We find Demas greeting the Colossians, and in Paul's Epistle to Philemon, Demas is put among his fellow-labourers; but to Timothy he says, "Demas hath forsaken me."

From Noah's ark went forth a raven and a dove. The raven could feed on putrid carcases, but the dove found neither food nor rest. When the Lord said to His disciples, "Will ye also go away?" Peter answered, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." Did Demas ever possess that love which glowed in Peter's bosom? Never, we fear; and oh, how many Demases we now have among us, who pass as fellow-members and fellow-labourers! Well, my reader, it would ill become us to try to find *them*; we shall be better employed if we

examine *ourselves*, and make sure we are not of their number, and even then, if we know ourselves, we shall be apt to exclaim—

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

When the Gadarene sat at Jesus' feet, "clothed, and in his right mind," he prayed that he might be with Him—how different from Demas ! No friend, no companion, like Jesus, to the soul that is delivered by Him from sin and Satan's power, and from this present evil world. "Made nigh," made "free indeed," by His precious blood and righteousness.

Not every man who, by his natural ability, energy, and industry, prospers in his worldly pursuits, is necessarily a lover of the world. I have known a few whose diligence in business God has abundantly blessed, and favoured them with earthly riches ; and being also blessed with the love of Christ shed abroad in their hearts, they cheerfully give of their substance to the poor and needy, thus keeping the word of Christ. And if these lines should fall into the hands of any of those who are laying up treasure for themselves, and are not rich towards God, or who are lovers of pleasure, or of worldly honours, more than lovers of God, let them consider Bunyan's words—

" By-ends and silver Demas both agree—
One calls, the other runs, that he may be
A sharer in his lucre, so these do
Take up in this world, and no farther go."

O Demas, whither art thou gone ? In forsaking Paul thou hast forsaken Christ, the Fountain of living waters ; thou hast *made* shipwreck of faith and of a good conscience ; thou hast bid farewell to hope ; thy love is fixed on broken cisterns that can hold no water. I will not cast one stone after thee, for I know too well the proneness of my nature to follow thee ; and knowing this, I would warn all who have a name to live to take heed "lest the light that is in them be darkness." O professor, if Baal be God, serve him, but "if the Lord be God, follow Him."

My dear friends, listen to the divine warnings in the Word of God, which says : "So are the paths of all that forget God ; and the hypocrite's hope shall perish. He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand : he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure" (Job viii. 15). "Then beware lest thou forget the Lord" (Deut. vi. 12).

J. J.

THOUGHTS ON DAILY READINGS.

"God be merciful unto us, and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us," &c. What a suitable and sweet prayer for a burdened and benighted sinner! The first cry is for mercy. Believing the Lord to be "the Lord God, merciful and gracious," and feeling the guilt and burden of sin, the oppressed one looks up toward His holy temple and calle upon the name of the Lord; and, mark, asks for the very thing which he not only feels to need, but which God has before promised—"I will have mercy," &c.; and in Luke i. 72, Zacharias speaks of the Lord God of Israel performing the mercy promised. Thus the Holy Spirit moves the heart of His people to desire and pray for things which God has promised; and the Lord will not deny them when they call, for He says, "I the Lord will hear them," and, "Everyone that asketh, receiveth." What blessed encouragement for those who feel their need of mercy! And when God's mercy comes to such an one, it comes through Christ, and they feel they are indeed blessed of the Lord—then they see Him in the face of His anointed One, Jesus. Here is where God can look upon us, and cause us to look upon Him, veiled in humanity, and not be consumed. Christ says, "I am the Way," "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me." No other way for mercy to come to us; and when it is thus realised, the mercy is sweet, the light divine is clear and blessed, and the saving health of God in Christ is a sure remedy for all our maladies. Thus Daniel Herbert, in one of his hymns prays—

"Lord, look and heal my broken bones,
Oh, look on God the Son."

Acts viii. 35, &c. "And preached unto him Jesus." Just the gospel he needed. The eunuch had been to Jerusalem to worship, and was returning, not having found what he needed—Christ; but the Lord was mindful of him, and led him to that blessed portion in Isaiah, which he was reading when Philip spake to him. How nicely the matter was timed and all made to fit by the master-hand of God, so that when he inquired of Philip who the prophet meant, it was a text for Philip, and he soon set before him Christ crucified. This was living water to that thirsty soul, and he drank of it to the joy of his heart, and soon manifested his faith by obedience, becoming a disciple of Christ. What an encouragement is this to seekers, who feel at times to be disappointed, to still seek on until they find!—Ed.

I CAN honestly say, I would sooner have Christ in my soul in a chimney corner than be in heaven without Him.—*Covell*.

THE SEEKERS' CORNER.

"OH, THAT I KNEW HE PRAYED FOR ME!"

[The following was written on reading the last line of the Answer to Bible Enigma, in *LITTLE GLEANER*, 1878, page 192, to which the writer felt an echo in her heart.—R. F.]

GETHSEMANE! that hallowed place,
Where Jesus often bowed the knee,
What tears ran down His sacred face,
Oh that I knew He prayed for me!

Oh that I knew He prayed for me!
Is this your wish? then let us see
If we an answer true can find,
On which to rest our anxious mind;
Anxious because at times afraid
We're not of those for whom He prayed.

For this we'll search God's blessed Book,
In the seventeenth of John we'll look,
For there we read a wondrous prayer;
And if we find our name is there,
We have in Jesus' prayer a part—
Sure this should cheer our doubting heart.

He prayed for those to whom 'tis given
To know the God of earth and heaven,
And Jesus Christ, whom He has sent
To bear for them sin's punishment,
For those with death and sin at strife,
To whom is given eternal life.

Not for the world He prayed, but those
Who cannot in the world repose,
Its fairest charms will fail to please—
Not of the world are such as these;
And though the world such souls despise,
They're precious in their Saviour's eyes.

They count the things of time but dross,
Compared with Jesus and His cross;
Earth's treasures, when compared with Him,
To them are valueless and dim.
Have we esteemed and loved Him thus?
Then may we hope He prayed for us.

He prayed for His ere time begun
Given by the Father to the Son;
And all thus given will seek His face,
And come to Jesus, drawn by grace.
Have we been drawn to Jesus thus?
Then may we hope He prayed for us.

He prayed for His disciples dear,
 Not only those then standing near,
 But those who should through grace receive
 His truth, and in His name believe.
 Have we received His Gospel thus ?
 Then may we hope He prayed for us.

And His petitions must prevail,
 The answer's sure—He cannot fail.
 With all His glory (thus He prayed)
 His chosen ones should be arrayed ;
 And we shall share His glory thus
 In heaven, if Jesus prayed for us.

R. F.

[We insert this in *THE SOWER*, at the request of an afflicted friend.—ED.]

LETTER FOR THE YOUNG.

MY DEAR —,—Thank you for your kind thoughts of me at Christmas, and your nice little letter. It is all through grace if one is kept walking in the good old way, and I am glad you are found seeking after durable riches and righteousness. The good old promise of Jesus stands true to-day, "Seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Therefore,

"Still knock on and wait awhile,
 He will relieve the poor."

Yes, all poor knockers are heard and answered, sooner or later, but Satan will try hard to prevent them knocking. Oh that you may find the door of mercy open all day to your poor feeble cries. What you speak of in your letter, dear, is the family feature—a fear of saying or writing too much, but hope you will sometimes feel free to open your mind to me. If our religion is but little, dear, it is a mercy if that little is right. Those are solemn words, "Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom." How those words tried me once when our dear pastor spoke from them ; but it is well to be searched and tried, dear, and if it leads us to the Lord for fresh testimonies and further confirmation, it will work well indeed. God's work is for eternity ; therefore He founds His building upon a Rock. All sandy foundations will give way some day, and how great will be the fall ! The adversary came against this Rock, but could not overthrow it ; storms beat upon it, but it stands firm, and the building on this Rock must and will stand firm also. Oh, it is worth all worlds to be right, dear ! and I can but hope the Lord has in some measure been making you feel this. All of the family do not need exactly the same discipline. Some are sud-

denly cut down and convinced of their state, and perhaps have deep convictions, a heavy law work, and bitter fears, and then are as suddenly brought into liberty, and rejoice in pardon and mercy. Others have real convictions of sin, and are real seekers, yet the work is gradual, and not so deep; but we can set no limit to the Holy Spirit's work. Nevertheless, all must be brought to one point—a Nothing-to-Pay sinner, and such only are fit subjects for mercy. I often think the substance of true religion is expressed in that beautiful verse—

“ A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,
On Thy kind arms I fall;
Be Thou my Strength and Righteousness,
My Jesus and my all.”

No sinner praying that prayer from their heart will ever die without Christ. What! a guilty worm, feelingly—a weak worm, feeling its strength all gone; a helpless worm, unable to help itself—made by grace to fall on Jesus' strong arm, and then perish No, never!

“ That tried Almighty arm
Is raised for their defence;
Where is the power can reach them there?
Or what can force them thence?”

With kind love and best wishes for the New Year,

I remain, yours sincerely,
Brighton, December 28th, 1893. L. N.

MINISTERS AND OPEN-AIR PREACHING.

To the Editor of the Sower.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—By opening the pages of your valuable periodical to questions affecting the cause of God and truth, the state and condition of our Churches, you are doing a needful and useful service to the cause of Zion, which, in consequence of their scattered and isolated position, our Churches have no other means or organization for bringing under general notice these important subjects.

With your permission I would like to bring forward a subject connected with the sacred and most important work of the ministry, and to ask the following questions:—

1. Are the ministers of our Churches, by confining their labours and ministry to causes of truth alone, acting in obedience to the general command of the Master, who said, “Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature”?
2. Is it not their duty, as often as opportunity and circum-

stances will allow, to have an open-air service and preaching, so that others who never hear the whole truth of the Gospel may have the blessed privilege of doing so? Surely they have not forgotten that the Master was not ashamed to preach by the wayside, or the sea-shore, or on the mountain-top, as well as in the synagogue; and that he went through the villages, towns, and cities of turbulent Galilee, as well as preaching at Jerusalem in the temple to Jews and proselytes, assembled from all countries on the great feast-days?

In the Acts of the Apostles we see recorded the missionary zeal, the love of, and desire for, the salvation of never-dying souls; and how the burning desire to preach the everlasting Gospel fired the souls of the apostles, and of the very disciples also. Further, can anyone read the history of the Christian Church, such as Wylie's "History of Protestantism," and see the heroic efforts of bold and earnest men of God to proclaim and spread the Gospel at the cost of life and liberty, braving even royal and imperial authority, as well as unruly mobs of mockers, in preaching the same.

And now, in our own beloved country, where the law of the land gives us every liberty and privilege to have either in-door or out-door services or preaching, we have become either too ashamed or indifferent to take advantage of the same.

We have, as a body, forgotten altogether our duty to foreign nations, and are almost forgetting our duty as to home mission work; and as a consequence our Churches are for the most part in a dwindling state, and places of error are covering the land, without proper efforts being made by us to spread the truth.

Oh, that God would arise and scatter the darkness, and make again His ministers a flame of fire, and His Church terrible as an army with banners!

I remain, yours, &c.,

Lancashire, Dec. 11th, 1895.

A LOVER OF ZION.

IN the days of Nebuchadnezzar they had all sorts of music to call the people to fall down to his god, but we do not want music now to call people to serve the world. "What shall I eat? What shall I drink? Wherewithal shall I be clothed? How can I heap up riches! What will be profitable?" But it is a poor god to serve, while those that serve the Lord, He will come forth at last and serve them, and say, "Come in, ye blessed of the Lord; wherefore stand ye without?" He will "lead them to fountains of living waters, and will wipe away all tears from their eyes."—*Covell*.

REVIEWS.

Chronicles of a Chequered Pathway. An Autobiography. By Edward Carr. Price 1s. paper; 1s. 6d. cloth. London: E. Wilmshurst, Blackheath, S.E.

WE hope all that know the author of this interesting record of a chequered life will buy this little work, that they may learn more fully the way the Lord has led him; and we hope many who do not know Mr. Carr personally will seek to become acquainted with him through the medium of this little work. We need not tell those who have read Mr. Carr's writings in the *SOWER* that he wields a facile pen, is very orderly in arranging his matter, and brings forth sound and gracious truths, such as he has tasted, handled, and felt. We should like to have seen a portrait of the author at the commencement of the book—we like to look upon the countenances of those whose lives we read. Possibly, had it been inserted, some might have thought it egotistical on the part of the author; perhaps some may even think this respecting the publication of the autobiography during the author's life-time; but we feel there is no real objection when a godly man thus gives to the world his experiences, even as we do not feel it is out of place when a minister relates portions of his experience from the pulpit. Moreover, the author has many good and gracious men to keep him company, who have, like him, been led in their life-time to publish the record of their lives, amongst whom we might mention Dr. Doudney, John Newton, William Huntington, John Bunyan, and many others.

The author was born in 1841, and with his parents attended the ministry of the late Mr. James Wells, under whose ministry in early childhood he was convinced of sin. From this time his anxiety about his eternal welfare began and continued. Many painful exercises were passed through, and many hand-fuls of purpose were received. This portion of the book will be found helpful reading for seekers inquiring their way to Zion, with their faces thitherward. At length "the coming of the King" brought peace to the troubled conscience. He was passing through the graveyard of St. Nicholas Church, Brighton, in deep despair, when the suggestion came to his mind, "Try the throne of grace once more, though it be for the last time."

Straightway a cry for mercy broke from my distracted spirit. It was indeed the hour of extremity. Immediately, like a flash of light, there came a "whisper from the skies"—"Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty." "What! mine, Lord?" "Yes, thine." My soul was raised from the pit of despair. The precious promise

allayed my fears instantaneously. I went on my way rejoicing in the hope that I should some day see the King in the beauty of His pardoning grace and infinite love and mercy.

This deliverance was sorely tried by the enemy ; but on the following Sabbath he went to hear Mr. J. Warburton, of Southill, who preached from Zechariah ix. 9 : " Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion ; shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem : behold, thy King cometh unto thee : He is just, and having salvation."

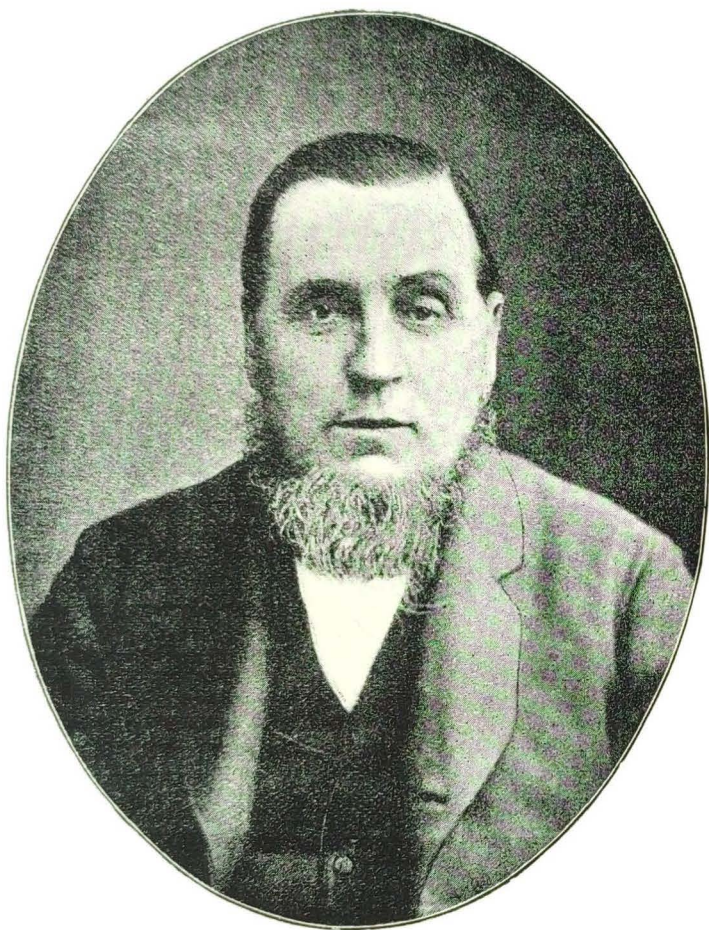
He began by describing the character ; and, to my astonishment, he described—me ! Yes, he went into my peculiar path, showed me my sins, turned me inside out, and then wound up his message, as far as I was concerned, by shouting out at the top of his voice, " I tell thee, sinner, that over those mountains and hills of sin and guilt thy King cometh to thee, and He does not come empty-handed either ; both hands are full, having salvation for thee." He spoke as though he wanted " heaven and earth to hear "—and well he might ! It was a glorious Gospel sermon, and was the means of bringing peace to a poor, miserable, despairing sinner ; for surely the King did then come with the Word, riding in the chariot of the Gospel, and delivered me at once from the power of the enemy—from all my sins, fears, follies, and darkness, and broke the chains with which for so long I had been bound and held fast.

The author gives many interesting details of his call to the ministry, and his experiences since entering upon the solemn work ; but for these we must refer our readers to the book, which, being published at a very reasonable price, we hope they will obtain.

James Burn ; a Trophy of Invincible Grace. By his Father. Price Sixpence. London : F. Kirby, 17, Bouverie Street.

ONE of the most striking instances of " sovereign grace o'er sin abounding " that we have ever read. Parents will thereby be encouraged still to pray for their wayward children ; seekers will find handfuls of purpose ; believers will find solid cause for rejoicing ; careless and backsliding souls will find something to warn them of their danger ; the sick or dying will find truths set forth which, if realized by them, will cheer them in sickness and comfort them in dying. To young and old we say, Without fail, get this book ; and if you once begin the narrative you will want to go on till you have finished it ; and when read, pass it on to your friends and neighbours, and, under the Lord's blessing, you will be doing a useful piece of missionary work, never more needed than now. Mr. Popham writes an excellent little preface, well worthy of careful perusal.

The Sower, March, 1896.



THE LATE MR. ELI PAGE.

THE LATE MR. ELI PAGE,

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL.

ONE more standard bearer has been removed from the walls of Zion, one that will be greatly missed, not only by the Church at Mayfield, over which he has been pastor for thirty years, but also by many Churches in Sussex and other counties where his savory testimony to experimental religion has given him a place in the affections of hundreds of the Lord's family.

HIS CONVERSION.

For the first nineteen years of his life, Eli Page followed the course of this world. He has described his youthful days as being rough and wild, revelling in the most filthy conversation, but when he lost his father by death, as he stood by his grave the arrow of conviction entered his soul. He often told his hearers that he knew nothing about the dreadful terrors under the law that many speak of, for so graciously did the Lord deal with him that, within half an hour of his being convinced of sin he felt a hope spring up within his heart that the Lord would be gracious unto him. This occurred about the year 1837, on the 12th day of February, a date that he always looked upon as memorable in his life, for it was on the 12th of February that he married his first wife, and he also buried her on the same date of the month.

Mr. Page was living at the Dicker when first called by grace, and he often used to mention a circumstance that happened at that period. He told an old Christian of his exercises and desires; this man replied, "You have life in your soul, what more do you want?" Mr. Page said this remark had a very bad effect upon him, and settled him down in a careless state, and very strongly did he warn his hearers against such false and unscriptural teaching.

HIS MINISTRY.

Mr. Page's first impressions in respect of engaging in the work of the ministry were felt while attending the ministry of the late Mr. John Grace. After his death he attended the ministry of the late Mr. Blanchard at Bolney, and although he kept his exercises about the ministry to himself, yet Mr. Blanchard became so convinced that the Lord designed him for the ministry that he spoke to him on the subject, and prevailed upon him to preach one week evening at Handcross, where his testimony was acceptable to the people, so that a life-long friendship was formed between him and the little flock at Handcross, and every year since he has paid regular visits to the place where the Lord first opened his mouth. In due time the pillar

of cloud guided him to settle as pastor over the Church at Mayfield, where his ministry has been greatly blessed by the Lord. During the last years of Mr. Page's ministry there was a marked change in his manner of setting forth the truth: while still setting forth clearly man's fallen nature, and the plague felt within, yet as he gained a closer personal acquaintance with the Lord Jesus Christ, so he laboured to encourage his hearers to go on to seek for closer communion and fellowship with the Lord, and earnestly warned them of the solemn effects of resting on a bare head knowledge either of the malady or the remedy. He warned them also against trusting too much to frames and feelings; he continually brought forth the precepts of the Word, and most earnestly warned his hearers against the Antinomian tendencies of the present day. Another thing was also very marked, namely, how he encouraged his hearers to take more heed to the Word of God, and he spoke strongly against the way some professing Christians set aside the Scriptures with the remark, "It is only the letter."

HIS LAST ILLNESS.

Some year or two ago, Mr. Page's health seemed to break up, and occasioned great anxiety to his family and friends, but he was still able to continue his ministry, and he often spoke as a man on the verge of eternity, looking forward to his eternal rest.

The following letter, written to Mr. James Boorne, of Wallington, in December last, will show the comfortable state of his mind:—

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—Yours to hand. D.V., I quite hope to be with you on next Lord's Day, and on the morning of 25th. Oh, may the dear Lord come with His poor old servant, who feels deeply the infirmities of old age, coupled with disease, but I have been graciously helped hitherto. I hope I may say with the beloved Apostle, 'As the outward man decays, the inward man is renewed from day to day.' I cannot attempt to pen what a view I have of that blessed state there is for *us* beyond the river death, through our *precious Redeemer*, washed in His blood, clothed in His spotless robe of righteousness, of which my poor soul by faith has had a precious sight. But oh, the body of death makes me sigh and groan. Oh, how painfully do I travel in Paul's path of the law in the members which wars against the law of the spiritual mind, which would indeed live holy; and I do hope I can follow him in the deliverance.

"Give my love to your brother deacons, and accept the same yourself."

"Yours sincerely,

ELI PAGE."

To another friend Mr. Page wrote, "I certainly feel to get weaker; as to the future, I often feel 'it is well.' I had a sweet sight to my soul on Monday last. This body of death is such a plague to me, but then I saw it go down in death, *and to rise no more.* Oh, how sweet!"

Mr. Page preached his last sermon at Mayfield in the early part of January, from Philippians iv. 6, 7, "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." What text could have been more suitable for a pastor's dying benediction to his beloved people?

During his last illness he was sweetly supported. When visited by Mr. Popham, he said to him on leaving, "Good-bye: farewell, brother, I can say all is well. I am like one going on a long journey, all is ready packed: I have not the clear shining, but I know it is all right. Oh, there is not a thing between the Lord and me. Perfectly justified, the truths I have preached will do for me to die by."

As he drew near his end he said four times, "*Jesus only, Jesus only, Jesus only, Jesus only.*" "Tell Mr. Popham he is not to exalt the creature, but Jesus only. Nothing wanting to His title."

The last words he was heard to utter were, "*Exalt Him.*" He peacefully fell asleep on Sunday, January 26th, at 5.15 p.m.

THE FUNERAL OF A SUSSEX PASTOR.

From "The Sussex Daily News."

There was a most impressive scene at the little village of Edburton on Saturday afternoon, February 1st, 1896, on the occasion of the funeral of Mr. Eli Page, who for forty-three years has been in the occupation of Perching Manor Farm, Edburton. As a farmer, Mr. Page was well known throughout the county, but as the pastor of the Baptist Chapel, Mayfield, for thirty years and over, he was more widely known, particularly in East Sussex, and the high respect and esteem in which he was held was plainly manifest by the hundreds who attended the funeral obsequies on Saturday. He had reached a ripe old age, and for the last thirty years it had been his practice to leave his home on Saturday, and journey to Mayfield to conduct the services there on Sunday, returning home on the following day. As he preached at Mayfield on the 12th January, the news of his death, which took place just a fortnight later, came with painful suddenness to his many friends in the eastern portion of the county. Not in the recollection of the oldest inhabitant of Edburton or the neighbouring villages has there been seen such a large crowd of people as poured into the village on Saturday—on foot from the Dyke Station, in cabs

and carriages from Brighton, Hurstpierpoint, Henfield, Hassocks, Burgess Hill, and Haywards Heath. The great majority, perhaps, came from Brighton, where those who were anxious to pay a last tribute of respect to the deceased were joined by between thirty and forty members of the Chapel at Mayfield, among whom were the three deacons (Messrs. Robert Lusted, Henry Holder, and Thomas Ovenden), representing a congregation of between five and six hundred people. By half past one, when the cortège left the late residence of the deceased, there must have been between five and six hundred people present. The coffin, which was of polished elm, with massive brass furniture, was conveyed along the road towards Edburton Church in a closed hearse, quite a score of carriages and cabs, and a very large number of people following.

SERVICE IN EDBURTON SCHOOL.

A halt was made at Edburton School, which is about half a mile from the house and about equi-distant between the house and Edburton Church. The coffin was allowed to remain in the hearse, and as many as could gained admission to the school, where a service was held. It commenced with the singing of the hymn, "Why do we mourn departed friends?" Mr. J. K. Popham, of Gloucester Road Chapel, Brighton, read a part of the fifteenth chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, and a part of the seventh chapter of Revelation. Then, addressing the gathering, Mr. Popham said he was there to do that last office for their departed brother at the special request made by the deceased seven years ago. The deceased, he continued, was a great man, if greatness consisted in possessing the grace of God in his soul, and he was likewise a good minister of Jesus Christ. He was a pastor as well. It was not given to every preacher to be a pastor, but Mr. Page was a pastor in every sense of the word, not a pastor by the choosing of the people, but by the Lord setting him over them. The family had sustained a great loss; they had lost their head, the bond that had held them together for so many years had been broken. He wished every blessing bestowed upon them, and he prayed that they would try as a family to hang together and do what they knew would have been the wishes of the departed. The congregation at the chapel at Mayfield, too, were also greatly bereaved, and he prayed God would raise up a pastor after the deceased's own heart. The workmen on the farm had lost a good master; they would soon know it if they did not know it then; and the neighbourhood was poorer by Mr. Page's removal to heaven. Mr. Popham concluded his remarks with prayer, the singing of the hymn, "While souls that trust in Christ rejoice," closing the service in the school. The procession to Edburton Church extended nearly from the school to the churchyard. The coffin was lowered into the grave by eight workmen on deceased's farm. Mr. Popham then gave a short address and offered up prayer, and the service ended. The inscription on the coffin was: "Eli Page, died 26th January, 1896, aged 78 years." On the memorial card issued announcing Mr. Page's death, we find the words:

"A sinner saved by sovereign grace."

"Then shall I wake with sweet surprise,
And meet my Saviour in the skies."

Mr. Page leaves a widow and several children and grandchildren to mourn his loss.

FUNERAL SERMONS.

On Lord's Day, February 2nd, the day after the funeral, a large concourse of friends assembled at the chapel at Mayfield. Mr. Popham occupied the pulpit in the morning, and spoke from Rev. xiv. 13, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord," &c. He spoke very solemnly upon the nature of true religion, that would enable a soul to die in the Lord. The new birth must be experienced; souls that live will pray; the soul born again must beg his way to heaven. Those who have this good root will die in union with the Lord, "And" (said Mr. Popham), "so died your pastor."

In the afternoon Mr. Popham administered the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, and also gave some seasonable advice to the Church. He said: "There is no complete Church without a pastor. The letters to the Seven Churches were addressed to the angel or pastor. May your eyes be up to the Lord, that you may be kept from sliding into the Supply system, so hurtful to a cause, but now so general. If the Lord sends a man among you that He intends for your pastor, you will find his word will be with authority. The blessing of a pastor to a Church is very great, and in losing your pastor you do not yet know how much you have lost." He then spoke affectionately to the deacons and said, "It will indeed be well with you as a Church, if the deacons do most of their work on their knees." He then gave some excellent advice to the members of the Church, entreating them to put away all bitterness, to be kind one to another, and the strong should bear the infirmities of the weak. "Do not as a Church put perplexities in the path of your deacons, but be friends to them in secret prayer."

Mr. Miles preached in the evening, from Isaiah xxv. 7-9. The record of this late dear servant of God is but brief, but will, we feel sure, be interesting to his many friends; and we trust a complete record of his useful life may in due course be published.

Blackheath,

E. W.

It is a lying vanity to say that God does not chastise His people for sin, and that sin will do a child of God no harm.—
Covell,

A BRIEF MEMOIR OF JOHN BOORNE.

[The following brief account of our late friend and brother, John Boorne, has been abstracted from a small manuscript which he wrote after a partial deliverance from a deep mental affliction.—ED.]

I WAS born on the 7th of October, 1838. My parents, who were godly people, sought the spiritual welfare of their children, training them in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. I heard the truth at home and in the house of God, which gave me in early days a reverence for God's Name, His Word, and His ways. Like Timothy, from a child I knew the Holy Scriptures. I was thus kept from the grosser acts of sin, feeling within me an abhorrence of many evils in which other youths delighted. As an instance of God's preserving care over my life, when about eleven years of age, I was sent on an errand which took me by the River Ravensbourne: walking incautiously along a dangerous bank, I fell in up to my neck, but safely reached the path without human assistance. I have often looked back, and thought, "How would it have been with me then, if left to die?"

In early years I had convictions of sin, which caused me sleepless nights, fearing I might awake in hell. I tried to amend my ways, knowing how unfit I was to appear before God. These good resolutions were soon broken, but I was not left here; the fear of God began to work in my heart, my conscience was made tender, and the things of eternity weighed upon my mind. The death of my godly mother was the means of deepening the work of grace in my soul. My earnest desire was that an arrow of conviction might enter my heart, so that I might be rightly convinced of sin. I could appeal to Him who is the Searcher of hearts, to teach and guide me in the right way. My language was—

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

I could not sing those hymns which contained the language of assurance, but Mr. Hart's were especially blessed to me, for I felt concerned for heart-work.

"Gracious God, Thy children keep;
Jesus, guide Thy silly sheep;
Fix, oh! fix our fickle souls:
Lord, direct us; we are fools,"

was a very favourite hymn, also that of Newton's, "'Tis a point I

long to know." One Sunday evening, on returning to my home at Woolwich, the hymn—

" We pray to be new-born,
But know not what we mean ;
We think it something very great,
Something that's undiscovered yet,"

dropped into my mind and my understanding seemed enlightened. I felt persuaded that was just my case ; to me it was as yet undiscovered, but the cry of my heart was, as Bunyan puts it, " Life ! life ! eternal life ! " I willingly put my fingers in my ears against the attractions of the world, and I felt strengthened in the things of God, but could not call God " My Father." I felt enabled to wait, and this Scripture was suited to me, " Though the vision tarry, wait for it." And the hymn, " Tarry His leisure then," &c. Faith was in my heart, although I could not then perceive it, for I had a sweet persuasion that—

" The time of love would come,
When I should clearly see,
Not only that He shed His blood,
But that 'twas shed for me."

How blessed to feel that the Spirit of promise which God puts into the hearts of His people, and keeps them pressing on amidst many difficulties, for " The Christian often cannot see his faith, and yet believes." I was shown more and more the evils of my own heart, which caused me to exclaim, " Can ever God dwell here ? " I did indeed prove that " the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," which brought me to feel more the need of the remedy—Christ Jesus. I was favoured at times in hearing the Word, one time in particular, under the late Mr. Abrahams, from these words, " Thou shalt call thy walls salvation, and thy gates praise." Being engaged in business, I had but little time for reading, but the Word of God was my companion. I felt continually my need of the Holy Spirit to illuminate the sacred page, and when He did so, I read with new eyes. I felt encouraged in hearing Mr. John Clark, from these words, " Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." I trust I was receiving that teaching which cometh from above—" Wisdom, which is first pure, then peaceable, full of good fruits, without partiality." I received the greatest blessing at home, or about my business, and I felt it came from the Fountain Head, for the sweet effects it produced on my soul were such that I was drawn heavenwards ; my soul seemed like a bird trying to be freed from its cage ; I looked forward with sweet anticipation when I should

drop mortality, and join the ransomed hosts above, and I felt the force of the words of Hart—

“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.”

The desire of my soul was to know more and more of the blessed secret which is with them that fear the Lord. What longing desires I found spring up for His presence, and the sweet fruits of the Spirit, and I longed to have the witness of the Spirit in my heart, testifying of Christ to my soul. I hoped I was seeking the Lord with all my heart, though I found it drawn aside, at times, to other things, but when the Lord was absent I was troubled, and felt an aching void which nothing of an earthly nature could fill.

I found Hawker's “Visits to and from Jesus” very sweet, and much enjoyed Searle's “Christian Remembranced,” also Huntington's “Bank of Faith,” and Mr. James Bourne's letters, and I felt a kindred spirit to the writers.

During this time of exercise I had many conversations with my brother, who was more advanced in years, and in the spiritual life, and many times we mingled our petitions at a throne of grace. In attending the means of grace, it was the secret desire of my soul to feel the power of Sun of Righteousness warming my heart, and unless I could in some measure feel it, I went away disappointed, for my desire was that my religion might not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

“What is all the house to me
Unless the Master I can see”?

If I heard of any who had made a profession of the name of Christ falling away, it caused a trembling of heart lest I should be found among such characters, for the living soul will lay these things to heart. I wished to follow the Lord closely, in such a spirit as Joseph, and Nehemiah, who said, “So did not I, because of the fear of God”; also Obadiah, who feared the Lord greatly.

(To be continued.)

FAITH is coming with a beggar's hand to the Son of God. Faith sees nothing at home, so she goes to heaven for what she wants.—*Correll.*

THE LATE THOMAS HARDY, OF LEICESTER.

(Continued from page 33.)

I NEVER heard Mr. Hardy speak contemptuously of any minister of Christ; but if anything was related to him against another, I have seen sorrow and pity marked in his countenance, and more forcibly expressed in his words. No man was ever more tender of the character of others, and angry contentions among the saints grieved him exceedingly. He was any man's servant to render him a service in any way he possibly could, and pleaded the cause of the poor and helpless, especially the aged, but would not have any master on earth dictate to him in spiritual matters. Here the best friend he had was to him the same as the most avowed enemy. Mr. Hardy was the same plain man in the elegant drawing-room as he was in the humble cottage; but of the two he preferred the latter. He would not obtrude so as intentionally to wound the feelings of those who in the providence of God were placed in a sphere of life a little higher, but flatter the rich he would not.

He was free to communicate, though not foremost in conversation; nor ever wished to make a pompous boast of that extensive information which he certainly possessed; yet, when questions were asked him in company, he appeared quite in his element, and would sometimes run on for an hour, giving a most interesting account of countries, customs, religion, &c. If the questions were of such a nature to demand it, intermixing many pertinent observations, and witty original remarks, not a little interesting to the company, whether old or young. Indeed, many of the young will remember his name, and his witty, moral and spiritual remarks, as long as they are in possession of that great blessing, memory. He was anxious to communicate whatever appeared to be useful. It was highly gratifying to him to see young persons anxious for information on moral or spiritual subjects, and he would spare no pains to obtain books for them. Always being fond of books, he would seldom pass an old book shop without a look, and would sometimes purchase some little cheap book as a present for his young friends,* for he was remarkably fond of children. But his chief work was that of preaching and expounding the Scriptures, and as an expositor he greatly excelled, keeping close to the Word, and giving the sense of the Holy Ghost. The only prose writings that I have seen of Mr. Hardy's are, the Preface to the Life of Mr. Wills of Dover; Preface to Kent's Hymns; and the Life

* For a remarkable instance of this, see the *Life of Henry Fowler*, in the *Sower* for September, 1894, p. 198.

and Preface to Arthur Dent's "Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven." Though he had a very mean opinion of himself as a writer, it is evident by the above Prefaces that Mr. Hardy had no common abilities as a writer.

Mr. Hardy was no party man; for though he was what is called a Particular Baptist (a phrase by which that body distinguish themselves from General Baptists, who are Arminians), yet he manifested the same respect to others, whether Churchmen or Independents, if they loved the Lord. Neither did he seek to make proselytes to his opinions, by the little arts of private insinuation, nor by preaching declamatory discourses on the subject of baptism, which tend to stir contention, and separate those who should be closely united.

He was a man mighty in prayer, and the deepest sense of humility and self-abasement was manifested in his addresses to the Lord. He had, indeed, at times blessed nearness to the Lord; but then no wild raptures, no over-familiar expressions, which carry to the hearer's mind the idea of presumption, were permitted to escape his lips; but he spoke like one who was speaking to his Maker and Redeemer, and felt himself a poor, needy, worthless sinner.

As a Christian, he was, in the family, in the Church, and in the world, most conscientious. In any little money matters, he would wrong himself sooner than labour under the least apprehension that he had not paid his due. He once sent to me at Devonport to pay a person the postage of a letter which he thought he forgot to pay. The person said she had every reason to believe that he had paid it; nevertheless, I knew he would not be satisfied unless I paid it, which he carefully inquired of me about, and paid me again. This may be thought by some a trifling circumstance, scarcely worth recording, but such should remember, that as thieves who are brought to the gallows begin with little pilferings, so little neglects, especially by public men, may beget such indifference as ultimately to ruin their reputation. This uniform conduct of Mr. Hardy was not put on to gain the applause of mortals, nor to appear singular, but from real conscientious motives; for he had a high regard for the fear of God and an honest conscience, and showed to the world that "The grace of God which appeared unto all men" (in the public testimony) "teaches us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world."

Mr. Hardy was a close observer of the Providence of God, and had more opportunities for so doing than many of the servants of God; for his salary was very small at Leicester: the most that he received from his Church in one year was *fifteen pounds!*

but his extensive field of labour, and numerous friends in various quarters, supplied their lack of service. I think it right, however, to observe, that his salary might have been much larger at Leicester had he confined himself always at home, but that was out of the question. His constitutional infirmities, and the evident calls of Divine Providence, directed his steps to a variety of places, and it is evident that he had God's approbation in his undertakings.

I have been credibly informed, that for many years he found at the close but very little variation in his income, though the greater part came in a way without previous arrangement; but when the whole was summed up, I doubt not but his clear income was small, deducting travelling expenses and wear and tear, for he travelled several thousand miles a year, and preached more times than most ministers do or can do. He was charitable to the poor and needy brethren, to the astonishment of many, and some of his friends have thought imprudently so, considering his limited means; but his living was very plain and simple, and in his attire he was quite as plain—indeed, not at all in the style of ministers generally. He could not bear anything that carried an air of priestly dignity in appearance; and though when a child he was, as you have read, very fond of *parsonic furniture*, he was determined in after times to put away such *childish things*.

With respect to the trials, conflicts, and various exercises of Mr. Hardy, my reader may gather them from his letters, better than from anything I can write; for it is evident that his whole life was made up of many *fiery trials*, and still upheld, and often comforted and blessed by the sweet presence of the Lord Jesus. No doubt, Satan took many advantages of his shattered nerves, if possible, to drive him to black despair, and that is the devil's master-piece, as he says in one of his letters; but the Lord "will keep the feet of His saints," and none that trust in Him shall be confounded, and he proved the truth of the Lord's promise to the last.

Coming to the last year of his life, it appears that he was first taken with giddiness in his head, at Deal, about the 29th of May, 1832; but through ignorance of his complaint "he laboured on," until he got home. About the 7th of that month it was that he left home for his last journey into Kent and Sussex; he returned to Leicester about the 24th June. He had visited Deal twice in the year for more than fourteen years, and Sussex about five years; but this last journey thither was, perhaps, the most laborious he ever took, and he seemed as if determined to die in the field, for the honour of the Lord and the comfort of His people. I judge he could not have preached much less than fifty

times during that journey, and his expounding and sermon were generally two hours! Reason would say, it was very wrong for such a useful servant of God thus to wear himself out, but reason here must bow down. His work he must do, and no man else could do it.

Mr. Hardy was obliged to be bled at Dunstable before he got home, but he gradually became worse. He, however, continued to preach as long as strength would allow. I heard some of his friends say, that in several of his last discourses he seemed as if he had been in the third heavens; his enjoyment when speaking of the saints' glorious immortality, was almost too much for his feeble frame to bear. Reader, Christ in the heart, the hope of glory, makes a poor sinner full of joy when heart and flesh fails.

During his long illness, he was generally very much favoured of the Lord. When laid aside from the ministry, a work in which his whole soul delighted, he had at times some very keen sensations, but he was graciously helped to cast that and all other concerns on his covenant God with humble submission. That his mind was much occupied during his illness with spiritual and heavenly things, was evident to all near him; to whom he would often speak of the future glory with holy pleasure.

In September, 1832, he thus writes to me: "Oh, how different must the saints in light be from our miserable imprisonment! The Word says, 'Rejoice in the Lord always'; and what hinders, but carnal reason, this sinful carcase, and the tempting devil? The Lord bless our clogs and crosses, that they may make His love-tokens more precious."

On the subject of preaching he says, in a letter to me in December, "I am willing and desirous, but must learn to halt, as well as march. The Lord is gracious, His truths are precious, all is chaff beside. The Lord bless my poor barren heart with His power and blessing, and bless and guide you, and feed you with the finest of the wheat."

In the same month he thus writes to me: "The Lord deals very gently with me in all things. Satan often harasses and plagues my very heart, but Christ and His cross are indeed my precious hope. I pray, Lord, ever make and keep my weak and wicked heart right in Thy sight. I have not strength to write much, but my love to you and yours and all the brethren with you. Yours very truly in the love of Christ."

In general, during his illness, when any friends would express their fears that he would not recover, he would check them, and say "Many have been brought lower than myself, and raised up again"; and I believe it was only on one occasion that he ex-

pressed himself as expecting he should not recover, and that was but a short time before his death, to a friend, at whose house he was on a visit for a change of air.

On May 6th, 1833, he left his friend's house for Stamford. On the journey Mrs. Hardy perceived an alteration in his countenance, and asked him if he would return, but he only said, "Go forward." He arrived at Stamford, and was immediately put to bed, and early in the morning of the 7th he breathed his last. He died of a fit of apoplexy, which, no doubt, had seized him soon after he left the friend before mentioned. He was taken from Stamford, and interred in the church burying ground of Kirby-Muxloe, near Leicester, in the presence of a great number of people of different denominations. For he was much respected (even by those who despised his doctrines), for his simplicity, uprightness, and integrity in all his deportment. He had no issue, but left a widow, and numerous attached friends to sorrow, but not as those without hope, knowing that "them that sleep in Jesus God will bring with Him."

Thus I have gathered up a few particulars concerning my much esteemed brother and fellow-labourer, Thomas Hardy; and, without wishing to disparage others of God's dear servants, I must say I know of *no man like-minded*. But he is now at the fountain-head, and "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

London, December, 1833.

HENRY FOWLER.

Shortly after the above was published, another Life of Mr. Hardy appeared, which was published in two volumes, by the late Mr. M. Hutchinson, a merchant of the City of London, who was a deacon in the late James Harrington Evans's Church, John Street, Gray's Inn Lane, and for many years one of Mr. Hardy's closest companions. This life of Mr. Hardy is just as prolix as Mr. Fowler's is concise. It is, however, accompanied by upwards of two hundred and seventy of Mr. Hardy's letters; and from these volumes the following further interesting particulars of Mr. Hardy's life and ministry are extracted:—

The cottage in which Mr. Hardy was born was built by his grandfather on the waste in Kirby Lane. His parents were stocking weavers; they had thirteen children, Thomas was the fifth son. His twin sister settled in Leicester, and was married to Mr. Voss. They were both united to Mr. Hardy in closer ties than those of flesh and blood.* His family connections were

* Mrs. Voss outlived Mr. Hardy for many years. For a most interesting obituary of her, see the *Gospel Standard* for May, 1862.

sunk in ignorance and superstition. The parson of Kirby was little better than a blind guide. Thomas Hardy lived according to the course of this world. He used to say, "I was Hardy by name, and hardness itself by nature." At thirteen years of age he was occupied, with others, in a hay-field, when a violent thunderstorm arose, and he took refuge from it under a hay-stack with a cousin, who remarked to him, "Surely, Thomas, this is the handy work of the Almighty." But this remark had no other effect upon Thomas than to excite a loud burst of laughter. The storm, however, raged with such violence and continued so long that, becoming alarmed, they took a horse, and both mounting it, rode home as fast as possible. This proved to be the first time Thomas Hardy ever had any sense of fear, any awe of God, and the least dread or reverence of His Blessed Majesty.

Before he was visited with God's salvation, in the joys and comforts of it, he waded through many seas of affliction, distress, and temptation. He has often been heard to say, "No tongue could express the pain and anguish I suffered for many long years; I may say, I was utterly consumed with terrors." The fountains of the great deep of man's fallen state and his ruined, helpless condition were broken up to his view by many painful exercises and cutting convictions. As his ministry was to be more especially among the poor, he was made to feel many grinding oppressions, and tasted the severity of Egyptian task-masters while employed at the stocking frame. After the greatest industry and carefulness in his work, what prayers and supplications has he been compelled to put up, that God would give him favour with his employers, and that his work might be approved. Thus he could enter into the providential trials and exercises of many of his hearers, in a way others could not.

Having attained much literary knowledge, and being eminently qualified for teaching, Mr. Hardy quitted the stocking frame, and commenced schoolmaster in Kirby. Many from the surrounding villages and in Kirby became his scholars, and he soon had a numerous and flourishing school for so thin a population. He kept up a rigid discipline with those under his tuition and care, mustering them all on the Lord's Day morning, observing religious duties, and taking them to church, until he attended Mr. Varley's ministry, and at length became a preacher himself of the everlasting Gospel. He had not given up his school when he took his first journey to Deal, but at that time the black fever so prevailed in Kirby scarcely any children came to his school, and in that visitation he lost a sister.

(To be continued.)

THOUGHTS ON DAILY READINGS.

"By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country," &c. (Heb. xi. 9). When God called Abraham from his native land and kindred, He promised to show him a land which should be possessed by his seed, in after days; and he went forth to go into the land of Canaan, and into the land of Canaan he came; at which time, it is said, "The Canaanite was then in the land." Yet this was the very land which God promised him He would give to his seed; and he erected an altar to the Lord, believing His word to be true (see Gen. xii., &c.) In this land he sojourned; it was not possessed by him, but by the Canaanites; yet it was to him the land of promise, and God gave him in it earnest of the promise. Nevertheless, he was as a stranger in a strange land, for God, we read (Acts vii. 5), "Gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on." Here he was in the midst of the good things promised, and yet it was to him as a strange land. What a lively figure of many seeking souls, who, being led forth out of the world by the Spirit of God, and having a hope in their hearts of the things He has given them a desire for, yet while they read the promises made to the seed of Christ, they feel to be strangers to the good things promised; they walk about Zion, and feel she is beautiful for situation, they pass through the land and confess it to be a good land, full of springs of living water, and flowing with milk and honey, yet to them it seems a strange land, and, like Ruth, they say, "I am but a stranger," and "not like unto one of thine handmaidens." Thus while they are walking in the midst of Gospel promises, like Abraham they feel to have no inheritance, no, not so much as to set their foot on. They see the good things which others are in possession of, and their hearts are set toward them, but will they ever enjoy them? How can they hope, they say, that ever it will be their lot to possess them? their case is so dissimilar to others, and there are such seeming impossibilities in the way. Well, was it not so with Abraham? There were a people in possession of the land, and though the land was promised it was to his seed for possession; but he then had no child. Oh, how unlikely, speaking after the manner of men, it seemed that the thing could ever come to pass, but the things which are impossible with men are possible with God. So it proved in the case of Abraham; for though he and Sarah tried to hasten the Lord's promise, and realized a miserable failure, yet, even when it seemed a natural impossibility, God gave Abraham an heir, and his seed came into possession of the promise. Oh, what ground for encouragement this gives to seeking souls, even though they came to a conclusion, like Abraham

and Sarah, that it is too late to hope such a thing will ever come to pass (see Gen. xviii.) "Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid" (Rom. iii. 3, 4). Does not His Word declare, "If we believe not, yet He abideth faithful; He cannot deny Himself" (2 Tim. ii. 13). May He ever help us to cast ourselves upon His covenant promises, which are all Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus, unto the glory of God *by us* (2 Cor. i. 20), since their being fulfilled to and in us brings glory to the God of covenant grace, whose ability (Eph. iii. 20) and faithfulness (1 Thess. v. 24) are placed beyond dispute. Well might the Psalmist say to waiting souls, "Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord" (Psalm xxvii. 14). THE EDITOR.

"THERE IS A BLESSING IN IT."

THE inspired Word of Truth says, by the Apostle, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience" (James i. 2, 3). The Lord sees fit that His children should be exercised with temptation. God Himself does not tempt them, for "He cannot tempt any man" (James i. 13), but He suffers them to be tempted. He deals with them as with Job of old. Satan, we read, said to the Lord, "Hast not Thou made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side?" (Job i. 10.) God had set a hedge around His servant, and Satan could not shoot through it. But God could, without being the author of sin, remove the hedge. He might and could withdraw His restraining power over the Prince of Darkness; and when He withdrew this restraining power, then Satan could tempt him, but only by the permission of God. So the Lord sees fit that His people should have to labour under temptation. And oh, what severe temptations many of God's children have to conflict with! Sometimes they have to labour under the temptation that there is no God; at other times, all kinds of infidel thoughts and suspicions as to the truth and inspiration of the Scriptures fill and distress their minds. The most subtle arguments and the most daring reasonings work up in their hearts, to which they can give no satisfactory answer. A thousand other suspicions rush through the mind at times, and the soul gets the blessing that comes from it. The heavings of an anxious bosom, the various exercises of the mind, how sweet they make the blessing when the blessing comes!—*J. C. Philpot.*

OPEN-AIR WORK.

BY ONE WHO HAS TRIED IT.

DEAR MR. HULL,—It was with a thankful heart I read in February SOWER the letter of "A Lover of Zion." Ever since I could judge for myself, it has seemed strange that evangelistic work should be so sadly neglected by us as a body of Baptists. Well might we take up the cry of the Prophet Haggai, "Is it time for ye [Strict Baptists] to dwell in your ceiled houses?" And if the earthly courts of the Lord do not lie waste, there is much, very much, to be done that lieth undone. The fact of so many sowing error by the wayside should make those who do know the truth to be up and doing.

For the last two summers it has been my privilege to engage in open-air work, after the usual services on Sunday evening, and I therefore seek to give just a brief outline of the movement.

Many were the earnest prayers before starting the work, and many difficulties presented themselves, but only to melt away through the weapon of All-prayer. I tried hard to feel it was not for me, but I could not read God's Word without finding some unmistakable directions to go forward, and, while memory lasts, I shall always believe God divinely instructed me in the matter.

Never shall I forget giving out for the first time a hymn under the starry heavens. Soon a goodly number had gathered round our little company, and although my voice trembled as I began to speak, yet God was helping, and I took courage. The fear of man faded away before the solemn fact that perishing souls were listening, and it was ours to point to them their danger if Christ had no part in their affections.

Since that first meeting all sorts of people have stood around us. Infidels have listened, and the most depraved men, with the lowest women of the town, have kept meeting with us, a fact which often brought the thought that our Lord and Master mingled with publicans and harlots, receiving sinners and eating with them. Many of us can testify, whatever others may say, that we were blessed in the deed. True, we were often weary, after being twice at Sunday School, and attending morning and evening services in the chapel, then engaged in open-air work till 10 p.m., but days of work and sorrow, nights of prayer and anguish, were the lot of Christ, and shall we, who profess to be His followers, shrink from any path of duty? No, let us rather,

"Work with all our power,
And grieve that we can do no more."

In writing these few lines we earnestly hope God may stir up some others to "go and do likewise," not only because it is right, but from real love to the souls of their fellow-creatures, praying earnestly and working with all their powers, yet remembering that, after all, we are but unprofitable servants, having only done our duty, and that but very imperfectly.

Yours sincerely,

H. C. D.

THE SEEKERS' CORNER.

To the Editor of the Sower.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—The portion which was quoted by you, "This Man receiveth sinners," last evening, when at the Lord's table, dropped very sweetly upon my mind, and truly did me good, but was, I hope, especially felt after I got home and was alone in my room. Oh, I felt that this dear "Man" was everything to my needy soul; I could not describe my feelings if I tried to do so, and could not praise Him as I wished for receiving *me*. Oh, how sweet is His blessed witness in the heart! How sorry I felt this morning that the Sabbath was over, and things of the world must have my time and attention; and I came downstairs so reluctantly to attend to them, fearing to lose the Lord's presence, for I indeed felt I had had a Sabbath of rest. These sweet seasons give one to feel fresh courage to press on, even though the way be rough and mysterious, and yet, with such a Friend, what is there to fear? May you, dear sir, still be helped and strengthened, is the desire of your affectionate young friend,

February 3rd, 1896.

A.

THE richest saint must be (and is) a humble beggar at grace's door all his days; and Christ is the Lord of the house, and the dispenser of the alms: and as the alms is too good not to be patiently waited for, so the Lord is too good and too great to be quarrelled with; and never did a believer get any good by complaining of Him. Complain to Him and pray and ask largely, but still with faith and patience. Knock at His door, but stay; and bless Him that ever He gave you any crumbs of His grace; mix your prayers for new wanted grace with praises for His old dispensed grace. Christ loveth you, and hath proved it. Believe it, and bless Him for it, and wait for His renewing His love to you; and in due time you will find that He will not only answer, but out-do your desires to Him, and all your expectations from Him.—*Trail*.

ANSWER TO INQUIRY.

To G. B.—There is quite sufficient in the Word of God to solve all our anxious thoughts and questionings, if the blessed Enlightener and Teacher—the Holy Spirit—does but anoint our eyes with His precious eye-salve, as He did in the case of the Psalmist (Psalm lxxiii.), who was sorely perplexed by seeing the prosperity and ease enjoyed by the wicked and mere professors of his day, so that they were compassed about with pride, and were exalted in their own eyes and esteem. They were not in trouble nor plagued as other men (the saints of God), therefore they grew fat, strong, bold, and daring in their lives and conduct, and reproached and persecuted the Lord's afflicted ones (see verses 3 to 12). Concerning these latter ones, he says, "His people return hither: and waters of a full cup are wrung out to them,"—by the ungodly, who prosper in the world. And he also says, "All the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning" (verses 10-14). These things, so, apparently, contrary to the promise that it *shall* be well with the righteous, for whom *all* things are declared to work together for good, staggered this godly-exercised man, as they did Job (xvi. 7-18), and the wise man (Ecc. viii. 11, 14) speaks of the same thing. So also does Jeremiah (see xii. 1-3). Yet they all followed these characters to their end, and when the Psalmist went into the sanctuary and understood what their end was, he felt how foolish and ignorant he had been to envy these people, and have hard thoughts of God, and at last he exclaims before Him, "Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." The way there, however, is *through* tribulation (Acts xiv. 22).

So we find in Psalm cvii., in the case of Hezekiah and of Paul, they all found the way of affliction and trial to be conducive to their spiritual good and profit, and were brought to approve the thorn in the flesh and the way of tribulation, as being wisely and graciously ordered by God, to make and keep them fruitful in divine things, and to teach them the sufficiency of Christ. So Paul says, "Most gladly, therefore, will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (2 Cor. xii. 7-10). May this be the blessed experience gained by us in walking through trials, afflictions, and temptations, then we shall be able to say of the great Captain of our salvation, "He hath done all things well." He was tried and tempted, too.

We are sorry you have had to wait so long for this brief reply to your question, but illness and pressure of work delayed us.

THE EDITOR.

LETTER FOR THE YOUNG.

MY KIND AND MUCH-RESPECTED FRIEND,—I will, by the help of the dear Lord, write you a few lines as you wished me to. Words cannot express the happy frame of soul I am in: I feel full of love to the dear Lord and His dear people, especially the few I know. You described my exercises exactly, and then said you were sure the dear Lord would save such. Oh, what a feeling that brought upon me—it came with power, nor could I put it away, fearful as I am of taking anything to myself; but fear all flew away then, and is not yet come back. For weeks I had been begging that the dear Lord would send you, full of food for my poor hungry soul, and give me a hearing ear and an understanding heart, and faith to mix with the word; and blessed be His dear name for answering my poor prayers, for often I could only say, “Lord, Thou knowest the blessed promises: do so discharge their sweetness into my soul that I praise God all the day long.” Christ says, “I love them that love Me.” Oh, how sweet is His love to my heart! oh, how sweet is His mercy! oh, to have mercy upon such hell-deserving sinners as we are! Oh, that the dear Lord will have mercy upon all that are near and dear to us. In thinking upon them my heart is ready to break at times, but I try to commit them to the Lord; I know He is merciful and gracious. We shall be happy to see you again on Christmas day: a fortnight will soon slip away. When I wrote to you before, I was sinking in deep mire where there was no standing; now I feel safe on the Rock. I hope I am not getting too high, but I write out of the abundance of my heart. I could not thank you for your kind letter as I wanted to; there are some things in it so dear to me I shed floods of tears over it. When I wrote to you before, I felt wretched and undone, but what a change! oh, what peace I feel—all sins subdued, no anger, no malice, nor hatred; oh, how I do hope the dear Lord will keep me in this frame, it is so comfortable; and may He bring more along after us. There must be bitters as well as sweets. This has been such a year as I never witnessed before, but I would not have been without it for the world. I can see the goodness of the Lord in everything; blessed and praised be His most Holy Name for bringing me where I am. May He be our constant Guide.

Yours affectionately,

Childlingly, Dec. 8th, 1863.

MRS. G——.

THERE is matter of thanks to be drawn from all God's dealings with His children.—*Romaine.*

REVIEWS.

Lambs Safely Folded. Price 1s. 6d., cloth. London: William Wileman, 27, Bouverie Street.

THIS valuable little work contains several authentic records of the power of Divine grace in the hearts of children early called home. Many years ago "Janeway's Tokens" was published, containing some sweet "tokens" of grace manifested in the young. This book was made very useful, and is, no doubt, well remembered by some of our older readers, but it has been long out of print; and, moreover, the ancient style in which it was written is not calculated to attract the young readers of the present day, therefore we are thankful to find in "*Lambs Safely Folded*" a book as gracious in its experiences as "*Janeway's Tokens*," and, moreover, it is written, printed, and bound in every way calculated to attract the attention and sustain the interest of youthful readers of the present day. It has been said that all these memoirs of young people are all of those that die young, but we rejoice to know that there are many cases where grace has entered the hearts of the young, where the subjects have been spared to a ripe age, but the lives of such, if published, do not as a rule record the experiences of quite early days, many incidents being forgotten by lapse of time, or crowded out by events in later life.

None are too young to die, and none are too young to be subjects of the gracious work of the Spirit, as the fourteen narratives in the book we are recommending to our readers clearly show, and we are forcibly reminded of the Saviour's words, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings have I perfected praise." Very touching are some of the narratives. We give a brief extract from one that was only seven years of age when she fell asleep:—

"I wish," said the dear child, "I might die, and go to be with Jesus."

"Have you," inquired her mother, "prayed to Jesus to wash away your sins?"—"Yes."

"What do you pray?"—"Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.' How glad I shall be when I am whiter than snow. I should like to be with Jesus. I should like to see Jesus so much. I love Jesus."

"Why do you love Him?" was asked.—"Because He forgives all our [or my] sins."

"Why do you think so?"—"I have prayed so many times I wish I could die, and go to heaven. No more bad heads in heaven. I do want to see Jesus, but I feel too naughty to go. I have had such naughty tempers. Dear Lord, make me a good girl, and forgive all my wicked sins. O Lord, make me patient."

This book, we feel sure, will encourage praying parents. It will also be a word in season to teachers in our Sabbath Schools, whose hands hang down because of seeing no results from their labours, but its chief value consists in its being a most suitable work for the young to read. If they are wayward and careless, it may be to them a word of warning. If they are anxious seekers, they are likely to find here many encouraging handfuls of purpose. We hope every Sunday School library will contain a copy, and that it will be frequently given to the scholars as one of their prizes. Parents will also do well to remember it when they want a birthday present for their children, or a suitable book for their Sunday reading.

Taken Home. Second Edition. Price 6d., cloth. London : E. Wilmshurst, Blackheath, S.E.

ANOTHER book that young people will read, one of the sort that if a boy or girl once begin they will not be likely to rest till it is finished. The fact that it is in its *second* edition proves that it has already proved an acceptable work. The dear youth left his native land for Tasmania, seeking there to recruit his health, but all in vain. He returned home just in time to die in the midst of his dear ones at home. The account of his voyages, and life in Tasmania is most interesting reading, and these are interspersed with a record of his anxious seeking for salvation, and his being raised to a comfortable hope. His letter to his parents recording this is sweet reading, as also his happy departure to be with Jesus. Any of our readers who have not seen it would do well to secure a copy.

Gospel Magazine. Sixpence monthly. London : W. H. and L. Collingridge, 148 and 149, Aldersgate Street, E.C.

THIS valuable magazine still maintains its ground as an exponent of evangelical and experimental truth, under the able Editorship of Mr. James Ormiston, who loves to walk in the *old paths*, in which dear George Cowell, Dr. Doudney, and other gracious Editors of this magazine have walked before him. We know the price, sixpence a month, is more than many of our readers can afford, but we hope that all who can afford to subscribe for it monthly will do so, and after reading it themselves, lend it to some one of the Lord's poor tried family, and we know they will value its contents, and find much therein to cheer them on their way.

How few you will find who are crying out, "Lord, I would be holy;" and who are more concerned about being holy than they are about getting rich.—*Covell.*

The Sower, April, 1898.



You in best bonds

George Jewell

THE LATE MR. GEORGE COWELL.

"MEMORIALS OF A GRACIOUS LIFE." BY HIS DAUGHTER RUTH.

(A REVIEW.)

THE "Wayside Notes" that for nearly fifty years appeared so regularly in the *Gospel Magazine* contained such sweet morsels for the household of faith, that spiritual readers looked forward with delight month by month for these Notes respecting the pilgrim's way. But now the hand that wrote them is still, and the immortal spirit has entered into the higher service of praise.

The memorials of Mr. Cowell's gracious life have recently been published in a very handsome-looking volume, and we are thankful that his daughter Ruth has gone gleaming amongst the sheaves, and has been enabled to present us with such sweet handfuls of purpose from the life and writings of this dear servant of the Lord; by this means we come to know more intimately the inner life, and the Lord's gracious dealings with His servant.

The benevolent and happy-looking countenance which presents itself as we open the book, forms a beautiful frontispiece, and we feel that the expression of his face clearly revealed the inward peace and comfort which true religion had brought to his soul, and which he realized even to the end, as his last words abundantly show:—

I am satisfied with Jesus as my Saviour, and I know He has saved me; I am satisfied with the religion I have professed; I am satisfied with all the Lord has done for me; I die satisfied with the Lord's leadings and dealings, and can now say, "Come, Lord Jesus, O come and take me home."

Mr. George Cowell was born at Camberwell, on November 13th, 1822. He lost his mother when only two-and-a-half years old, but she left him a rich legacy of prayers laid up before the Throne, abundantly answered in the after life of her dear child. An elder sister acted the mother's part, and under her care and that of his godly father, the child grew up as a tender plant, manifesting even as a child a desire after spiritual things. He had three very narrow escapes from sudden death, which are very graphically related in the account of his life, and prove the truth of Ryland's well-known lines—

"Plagues and deaths around me fly,
Till He bids, I cannot die;
Not a single shaft can hit
Till the God of love sees fit."

After his school-days were passed he was apprenticed to a firm in the neighbourhood of London, and while diligent in business,

he utilized his spare hours in obtaining useful instruction for his mind, and in hearing various godly ministers, seeking a blessing upon his soul. He went frequently to hear the late Rev. J. J. West, Vicar of Winchelsea, when he preached in London. Referring to one occasion he writes :—

Never shall I forget his exclaiming in vehement language, “ ‘ Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect ? ’ Who are *they*, Lord. ‘ Those that cry day and night unto Me.’ ” I was in a hidden corner in the gallery, but could hardly help exclaiming audibly, “ That’s me, that’s me. I am crying day and night unto God ; He knows it. Can it be possible that this is a proof of my being one of the elect ? ” I wept that night like a child.

Interesting accounts are given of his hearing Dr. Hewlett, of Astley ; George Doudney, of Plymouth ; A. B. Taylor, of Manchester ; James Wells, of the Surrey Tabernacle ; and Charles Haddon Spurgeon, at New Park Street Chapel. But Joseph Irons, of Camberwell, was to him the minister of all ministers, and his ministry was greatly blessed to his establishment in the truth.

But that favoured spot, Grove Chapel, was really my spiritual birthplace. Yes, in No. 5 pew the Lord met and melted me, through the Word preached by dear Joseph Irons, from Solomon’s Song vi. 11, “ I went down into the garden of nuts to see the fruits of the valley, and to see whether the vine flourished and the pomegranates budded.” In that sermon, and under the expression “ *the pomegranates budded*,” I became sensibly affected, and wept like a child. The dear man of God seemed to turn out my heart, and tell of all I had been realizing as a seeker after Jesus. On the following Sabbath evening Mr. Irons preached from “ *Babes in grace*.” This broke me down altogether ; joy and peace followed, and afterwards doubts and fears lest it was all a delusion. Thank God, it was no deception ; and as I write these words, forty years after, I can say the God of my salvation has kept me and blessed me abundantly.

A most interesting account is given of the close friendship that existed between Mr. George Cowell and Dr. Doudney for forty-nine years, undisturbed by any jarring note. Fellow-helpers in the work of the *Gospel Magazine*, each esteemed the other better than himself, and many testimonies did they have that their labours were owned of God. It seemed according to the right order of things that Mr. Cowell should succeed to the post of Editor, after the Lord had called His other servant home ; but while we rejoice that Dr. Doudney retained this position for over half a century, we can but feel sorry that the Editorship of George Cowell was so brief ; but His work was done, and the Lord had need of Him.

Mr. Cowell was a most acceptable minister of the Gospel, and some very interesting circumstances are recorded in respect to his ministrations in various places, and especially interesting is the account of his preaching at Grove Chapel, the spot rendered sacred to him by reason of the blessings enjoyed in days gone by :—

After the morning service I went into No. 5 pew, and sat down upon the second seat, a little group having gathered around me. I said, "Now I sit on the spot where the Lord first revealed Himself to me as my Saviour; I must speak about it in the evening," and so I did; and, under the words "He found me," I recounted to a breathless congregation the precious fact, referring to the passage dear Joseph Irons preached from on that occasion, and then desired to glorify the God of my salvation with all the powers of my mind and soul. I am sure it was a memorable occasion.

Very striking are the accounts given of the blessing that rested upon George Cowell's writings, sometimes as tracts distributed broadcast, at other times through the *Gospel Magazine*.

Once when on a visit to a large Midland town to preach the Gospel, he received a visitor at the hotel where he was staying. The stranger introduced himself as a reader of the *Gospel Magazine*, and he told Mr. Cowell that, many years before, he was suffering from fearful temptations to take the life of a devoted daughter; but one morning, when the enemy's power seemed the greatest, his eye caught sight of a *Gospel Magazine* lying on the table; he opened it and paused at the article of "Wayside Notes," "*Kept*"; he read on, "*Kept by the mighty power of God.*" That word "*kept*" was sealed home by the Holy Spirit; he became melted down before the Lord; he was delivered from the temptation, and made to go on rejoicing in his Saviour.

The end of this dear servant of the Lord, brought on by an attack of paralysis, was the calm of the summer sunset; even the very clouds that hovered over the valley were illumined by the rays of the Sun of Righteousness.

Let me lean on Thy strong arm, Lord Jesus. Be with me in the valley even unto the end. Lift up the blinds, dear, and let it be sunshine all the way. Lord, I have loved Thee so! Thou wilt not forsake me now. God bless you, my dear (to his daughter). May there be union and communion with me, my dear ones, and the Lord.

A little before his end, he roused suddenly and said, "*All is well,*" and with upraised eyes, as though he desired to pray, he commenced, "O God," and paused. "You will soon be beyond all need of prayer, you will see the Lord face to face; and you have loved Him so," was said to him, to which he responded,

"Yes, *I have*," so joyously. The end, yea, I would rather say the beginning of life, came at a quarter to eleven that night, and then—Victory.

The mortal remains of this dear servant of God were laid to rest in the Burton-on-Trent Cemetery, on the 21st of December, 1894. The resting-place had been but nineteen months before chosen as the resting-place of his beloved wife, and there together their bodies rest till the resurrection morn.

In this volume of 330 pages are given some choice letters, extracts from Mr. Cowell's Diary, outlines of discourses, as well as the life history of which we have only given our readers a brief taste, but, we hope, sufficient to incline many of them to secure a copy. The price is five shillings, and copies can be had direct from Miss Ruth Cowell, 4, West Shrubbery, Redlands, Bristol, to whom our best thanks are due for the use of the beautiful portrait that accompanies this review; and we cannot close our remarks without expressing our approval at the excellent manner in which Miss Cowell has edited the book, and most heartily do we wish it a large sale.

"HE WAS KNOWN IN THE BREAKING OF BREAD."

'Twas a wearisome journey the brothers took,
 For the world seemed dark as a world can be;
 They read as they went from a good old Book,
 But the comfort they needed they could not see.
 They had listened to Him whom the prophets foretold;
 They had hung on His teachings night and day;
 But now in a sepulchre gloomy and cold
 He was hidden away.

They were two of a nation taunted oft,
 As without a city, without a king;
 And their hearts beat piteously and soft,
 As they pondered o'er Judah's withering.
 They had read of a Root whose sap should rise
 And force into beauty the blighted tree;
 And they said, with hearts breaking and brimming eyes,
 "We had thought it was *He*."

"Oh, why are you saddened?" a sweet voice said,
 But they thought it was only a stranger's tongue;
 'Twas the glorious King they were mourning as dead,
 And He meant they should know it too ere long.
 He told them how Jesus must rise again,
 From the promises of the good old Book;
 And their hearts grew light, and they lost their pain,
 As their way He took.

And the toilsome journey was o'er full soon,
 And the night came sooner than was desired;
 And the Stranger with whom they had talked since noon,
 To their lightened eyes looked worn and tired.
 "Stay with us, Master, the day is spent,
 And your home is distant," the brothers said.
 He stayed, and ate, and the veil was rent,
 "In the breaking of bread."

And oh, methought, there is one as yet
 Wandering over the world alone,
 Wretched and dying, I cannot forget
 How my hope darted after the saving One.
 Full many an hour did He with me stay,
 And I walked by His side without a fear,
 Till, tired of His teaching, I took my own way,
 And He came not there.

I have sought Him since with heaving breast,
 Fearing I never should find Him more;
 And never since has my hand been pressed
 By His promise of love, as it was before.
 Oh, a toilsome journey indeed is mine!
 For I know not when I shall see Him again:
 Yet 'twill seem all light if He will but shine
 In death's withering pain.

Were I free with Him now as I was of old,
 I would fling my prayer towards the "golden vial";
 He should hear me say that I seek the fold
 In the ever-green fields for His own sweet smile.
 But I know 'tis His wont to be coming down
 Where the feet of those who love Him tread;
 And it may be that I shall find Him soon,
 "In the breaking of bread."

Galleywood.

M. A. CHAPLIN.

UNLESS a man has passed through the labour of guilt in his soul, and learnt he is a sinner by the Spirit's work upon his conscience, all the notions he may lay hold of in his judgment, and the talk he may get upon his tongue, will leave him at last destitute of those riches that are communicated to the poor and needy out of Christ's fulness.

A MAN may talk of his own corruption and depravity from a natural acquaintance with it, and be convinced of his being a sinner by falling headlong time after time into sin. But there is no *labour* here, no groans and sighs, no guilt of conscience, no distress of mind, no crying to the Lord for deliverance. It is but mere talk; and emptiness and starvation will be the result of such idle chatter.—*J. C. Philpot.*

THE LATE THOMAS HARDY, OF LEICESTER.

(Continued from page 64.)

Mr. HARDY'S movements at the commencement of his ministry were noted by him in a memorandum book, as follows :—

"October 20th, 1816.—I first began to expound the Scriptures at the house of John Spriggs, a poor shoemaker, of York Street, London Road, Leicester."

This continued above a year, till at length the place was too strait, and he had to look out for a larger room.

"November 30th, 1817.—Removed to the school-room next the meeting house, in Milstone Street."

In 1818, it appears the Lord opened doors for his preaching in other places.

"First went to Coleshill (Warwickshire) at Easter, 1818."

"First went to Birmingham by Coleshill."

"At Wissundine * the same year, being then a schoolmaster at Kirby-Muxloe."

"First went to London, April 7th, 1818. Embarked on the Deal hoy, the 8th, for Deal. Slept on the Thames, near Greenhithe, that night. 9th, had a squally voyage to Herne Bay, landed there that night, and slept at Mr. Pegden's, of Sandwich."

"April 10th.—Preached at Deal, for Martell."

"April 11th.—Went to Dover and back—12th, preached at Ramsgate for E. Goldsmith—13th, Margate and Deal—14th, preached at Deal again—15th, slept at Ospringe—16th, London—19th, preached in London—20th, came to Leicester—21st, Kirby Lane."

"June 8th, 1818.—After much entreaty from Deal, gave up my school; cast myself on God's kind and wonderful providence; got to London that night. 12th, by steam to Margate—13th, reached Deal."

Then follows a list of places where he preached, from that day to the 26th January, 1833, involving altogether about two thousand eight hundred journeyings to various cities, towns, and villages, most of which he regularly and often visited during every year, till the close of his ministry, nearly fifteen years. In the early years of that period he frequently walked ten, twenty, or thirty miles, out and home, to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, for which he often received no more than a few shillings, sometimes as little as two shillings or half-a-crown. In two or three years the number of those places

* Now spelt Whissendine.

multiplied so rapidly that they amounted to eighty, and so continued to increase till they amounted to more than one hundred and twenty. Having been brought up in the Church of England, it was a customary thing with him to give the names of rectories, vicarages, and curacies to many of those places, saying, "A living has devolved upon me"; or, "I am going to be inducted into a living" at such and such a place; or, "I must visit my curacy at —, for I have been absent from them too long." And he often referred to Stamford as "one of my richest livings." He was very minute in some things. In his book already referred to there was an account of the places where he slept, from April 1st, 1818, to October 25th, 1832. It is headed, "*The Son of Man hath not where to lay His head.*" "I have slept on the after named beds since the 1st of April, 1818." Then follows a list of the places, amounting in all to 428!

During Mr. Hardy's first journey into Kent, the workings of his unbelief, fears, and carnal reasonings, together with the temptations of Satan, were very great. He often said it was no use his going such a distance, and that he had no business there whatever. On his return from Deal, he stayed in London and preached in Curtain Road, in a small place originally built for Mr. Garnet Terry, an engraver in the Bank of England. His audience consisted of about thirty persons; the text was from 1 Tim. vi. 12. After the introduction, and noticing the context, verses 3, 4, 5, and particularly verse 11, he gave a most minute and able description of faith—not like that of a novice—but like one long and deeply engaged on the field of battle; pointing out also what was intended by laying hold on eternal life; the nature of effectual calling; and the profession and confession of Christ before the Church and the world. The friends asked him to accept some payment for preaching to them, but he refused, saying, he was sure it was not worth anything. They then asked if he would object to receive some provision for his journey? he said, "By no means"; he would thankfully accept it. A parcel was put into his hands, which he was not to open till he had got some distance from London. When he opened the parcel, to his great surprise he found it contained three sovereigns, besides the provision. This was a most seasonable supply, and put his unbelief completely to the blush; for he owed £2 14s. 6d., and had not known how to discharge the debt.

After his first journey to Deal he had immediate pressing invitations to go there again. On June 6th he wrote, "I have to communicate, that the mysterious wheel of God's providence has just turned up another order for me to return to Deal. Two letters of invitation, and a third promised, which my answer to the first prevented, have determined me to oblige

them with another visit at least. My future destinies seem about to be developed. I am sometimes flushed with hope, and at other times racked with tormenting doubts. The Holy Ghost is all my comfort. I am in general entirely resigned to the good pleasure of my gracious Master. I feel myself the least and the worst of the household of faith. It is favour indeed if I am to be the bearer of glad tidings to others. To be at Leicester, or Deal, or anywhere else, in that office, or to sink into my native obscurity, till I go home to be no more seen, is one to me. I can do nothing but distress myself: God in Christ must bear and deliver me; He is my only strength, consolation, and helper, in every time of trouble." Ultimately Mr. Hardy agreed to visit the friends at Deal twice a year, and preach to them five Lord's Days each time.

His journeyings to Deal naturally took him through London; but for several years, so shy and reserved was he that his friends had the greatest difficulty in getting him away from the obscurity of Curtain Road and finding a suitable pulpit for him. Indeed, so little was he desirous of obtaining notoriety in London, he often said, he should be glad if there was a way through Essex, that he might cross the Thames at Gravesend, and avoid London altogether. An attempt was made to introduce him to the Huntingtonians at Conway Street, but in reply to their inquiries at Leicester, they received such a malignant report as quite shut the door of that place against him. It was said he had been in the stocking trade, and became a bankrupt; afterwards he set up a school, and failed in that. He did not preach from texts, and embraced the strange notions and absurdities of Garnet Terry (the Onesimus Mr. Huntington had put into the scales and found wanting). These charges had not one word of truth in them. In this matter, however, Mr. Hardy inherited the blessing pronounced by Christ on His disciples (Matt. v. 11, 12). Mr. Fowler was one of the first to take the young standard-bearer by the hand, and through his instrumentality he afterwards frequently preached at Gower Street.

Mr. Hardy's meeting at Leicester—to which he gave the name of Zoar Chapel—was opened 13th September, 1818. As already stated, he was conscientiously a Baptist, but by no means a bigoted one. When his Church was formed, he wished it to be on Open Communion principles; but that being opposed by his friends, and not wishing to agitate the question, he gave way. Amongst his numerous friends in Kent and Sussex, however, there were very few Baptists.

Through all his youth and early manhood Mr. Hardy never paid the slightest attention to any female, and rarely conversed with any woman outside his own family circle. An exception,

of course, must be made in the case of her who became a true and affectionate partner in his joys and sorrows. This godly woman—Mrs. Ann Griffin—to whom he was united in April, 1820, was brought into the liberty of the Gospel under a sermon preached by Mr. Rees at Spa Fields Chapel. Shortly after their marriage Mr. Hardy writes to a friend: "Be assured, it is not with me as with him whom our Lord accuses of making light of the Gospel, 'I have married a wife, and therefore cannot come.' My wife is no clog to my soul, nor impediment to my work; she is truly an help meet for me—a real comfort, and a precious gift of God: she is a willing servant to my necessities, but never expresses the least inclination to hinder my labours in the service of the Gospel, nor have I at all diminished them on her account." Mrs. Hardy, by her first husband, had two children, John and Phœbe. To them Mr. Hardy became a most faithful and affectionate parent, as shown by the following epistle, written from Deal, in May, 1826:—

"MY DEAREST CHILDREN,—The Lord God of your father hath made me a father to you, and requires you to obey and follow me as your best earthly friend (Eph. vi. 1). I send you the tenderest love of my heart, and many, many prayers, that my God would save you from pride and stubbornness, and the awful wickedness of youth, and incline your hearts to remember Him in the days of your youth; to remember that you must die, and stand before His righteous judgment seat, to answer for what you have done in the body; and that there will be no escaping the eternal torments of hell, but by being born again, repenting of your sins, and trusting to the blood and righteousness of Christ for all your salvation.

"Oh, read your Bibles; flee all bad company; beware of Sabbath-breaking and despising true religion; read Proverbs i., Psalm cxxix., Matthew iii. to vii., John iii., Romans iii. and v., and Revelation xx., especially verses 11-15.

"I wish my dear children would also read the history of Joseph, in the thirty-seventh and thirty-ninth to forty-eighth chapters of Genesis. What a beautiful piece of family affliction! I have read it this morning with tears.

"I should like part of a letter from you both; and will do what I can to oblige you when I come back,"

Mr. Hardy would have no storehouse or barns in which to lay up treasures for future days. His soul abhorred fixed stipends and large salaries to the end of his career, and he never once gave a hint for having them. He lived on the free-will offerings of God's Israel. Writing on these matters, he says, "I declare, as before God, that under the constraining power of His mercy

and love in Christ Jesus to my own soul, I do most freely give myself to His Church and cause on earth, wheresoever His providence doth command me, desiring only food and raiment of the plainest quality for my services, and those only when I am incapacitated for working with my hands to obtain them."

"Conscience declares that I have never laid a plan to deceive those I minister to, nor acquired by my own endeavours or solicitations, any of the numerous opportunities of preaching to which I am called, nor have I ever sought their possessions or goods to whom I minister. The Lord is my witness, that it is one of the hardest parts of my calling to be necessitated to receive any man's gold, silver, or apparel, and whatsoever is against me, conscience is not if it was, access to the throne of grace would be barred. As to circumstances, I am a gentleman-commoner on the bounties of Providence; never penny-less, nor necessitated to beg. I have no wages, nothing to calculate upon, which saves me much care, and keeps my faith from growing rusty. My remittances are as sure and as essential to my comfort as those of the Emperor of China." And the man who wrote thus, was never inattentive to the calls of suffering humanity, but was always ready to do good unto all men, to the utmost extent of his means, if not beyond them.

In 1823 he had so many places to attend, that in order to avoid most wearisome walks and expensive coach-hire, his friends pressed on him, and bought for his use, a strong Welsh pony. At first he found this a great convenience and help, and after riding a few months to many places in the country, he rode it to London. He was in good health on arrival, but after preaching a few times began to feel very unwell; particularly so at Bartholomew Close, while preaching from 1 Corinthians xv. 55-57. After the service he told Mr. B—— how ill he felt; Mr. B—— said, "You should not have preached so long," when he instantly replied, "I was preaching about the destruction of death, and what would it have mattered if I had died in the preaching?" The next morning he had the pony brought to him to set off for Deal, but he became so ill that he could not attempt the journey. Then followed a most severe bilious attack; during the four days he was confined to his bed his sufferings were very severe. Referring in a letter to this illness, he says, "My strength was exceedingly brought down; the doctor assigned excessive labour as the cause of it. I seriously intend to lessen my work, and stay more at home. I had reason to fear that riding so much operated unfavourably on my health, I therefore sold my horse soon after I got into Kent, and intend in future to travel no farther than I can go on foot in easy stages, or by coach."

In 1824 Mr. Hardy was invited to preach before Mr. Evans's

large congregation at John street, Gray's Inn Lane. Before doing so he was warned by an anxious friend that he might injure his reputation as an honest servant of God, in consequence of Mr. Evans having formerly promulgated certain Anti-Trinitarian errors and Sabellian heresies in that pulpit. But Mr. Hardy, in concluding a long argumentative reply to that friend, said, "If I had a clear call from the Lord to preach in the Pope's shop at Moorfields, I would contentedly and cheerfully go even there, not to preach Popery—mind that—but the Gospel of Jesus Christ." Whether or not he had a clear call to preach at John Street, this is certain, that in the following year the pulpit at John Street was closed against him. Mr. Evans, however, greatly admired his gifts, and said of one of his sermons, "It contained matter for twenty; where we have one idea, he has a hundred." Perhaps these were exaggerations.

His labours having gradually extended in Kent, he preached at the house of John Butler, at Cranbrook. He also preached at Wadhurst (for Mr. Crouch), Benenden, Frittenden; then in Sussex, at Frant, Mayfield, Maresfield, Upper and Lower Dicker, Hailsham, Eastbourne, Lewes, and Brighton. He also entered into the most friendly and profitable intercourse and correspondence with most of the ministers and people at those places. In his visits to various places—says his biographer—many have had in a single sermon, a path of tribulation, a scene of unceasing trials for months, entered into, opened up, and made straight, and have been cheered with beams of glory, neither faint nor few, shining upon them from the gates of the celestial city, with a full assurance of an abundant entrance into that city at the last. He often referred to what was said of John Dod, of Cambridge, who was repeatedly accused of getting information about the conduct and character of his hearers from their neighbours, so pointedly did he enter into their cases and expose the secrets of their hearts and lives. He told them it was not so, and that if they were to confine him in a dark cell, and suffer no living creature to come near him, only give him the Bible and a light to read it, he should nevertheless find them all out. When the truth has been sealed home to the hearts of Mr. Hardy's hearers, and they have been filled with joy and comfort, and it has been related to him, he has cautioned such not to say much before men, but rather tell it to the Lord than the minister; saying, "They were surrounded by enemies on every side, ready to take advantage of them, and spoil them of their comforts. Satan is a great thief and pick-pocket, he may waylay and rob you, take away all your spending money, though he cannot steal your jewels: they are in better keeping and safer custody than yours; hid with Christ in God."

John Berridge was a great favourite with Mr. Hardy. Being frequently called to preach at Potton, on one occasion "he went," to use his own words, "on a pilgrimage to Everton, to see his tomb," from which he gathered some moss, which he carried in his pocket-book. He remarked that Berridge was so attached to the doctrine of regeneration, and felt its importance to be so great, that he was determined to have it on his tombstone. He once heard Watts Wilkinson, chaplain of Aske's Hospital, Hoxton, and Tuesday morning lecturer at St. Bartholomew's, near the Bank of England. He was highly delighted with the truth he preached, his simplicity and gentleness, and said he was the preacher that would exactly suit him and his nervous infirmities. In 1824, he wrote to a friend concerning Dr. Hawker thus: "After being at Godmanchester the two first Sabbaths in July, I went to Devonport (formerly Plymouth Dock) for two Sabbaths in August, a journey of 550 miles; preached generally to about eight hundred people (with strength enough and none to spare). Had about an hour's talk with Dr. Hawker; he was very plain, talkative, and affectionate—quite the Christian (I hope he leaps over the steeple, and takes the Dissenters in his bosom). I had also a very pleasant interview with his curate, Mr. Courtney." Thus the steeple was not too high for Thomas Hardy to surmount, provided God and His truth were within the building. Yet he considered it no small proof of the folly of our ancestors, that they should have expended a million or two of money in making nests or harbours for birds.

Wherever Mr. Hardy went he carried the healing and loving spirit of the Gospel with him. From the beginning to the close of his ministry, he never entered into the contentions of sects and parties, or the disputes of any body of people about non-essential things, though he continually visited places where those evils greatly prevailed. In the early part of his ministry he wrote: "I would rather feel the love of Christ, and the peace of God by Him, than minister to the rage and bigotry of any party. But I can get no favour at the hands of any of the regular sections of this day. I have scarcely any acquaintance with any preacher of any account; am conscious of unmerited ill-treatment from several, and forbear to seek it. I have had no training, but hard self-application to books, sore temptations, and the teachings of the Holy Ghost—things not at all respectable in the present day. I have no respectability, no patronage, no stipend; live by faith for daily bread: seldom minister to any but the poor of this world; am like old Berridge, a travelling pedlar, and serve almost thirty shops in the country, and generally go on foot. I do exceedingly lament the shameful disunion and want of that love which is the best evidence of being born of

God, among those that seem to acknowledge the truth, and this evil is more to be lamented in the preachers than in the people. Pride, self, jealousy, actuate the former, and they the latter: as saith the proverb, 'The fish stinks first at the head.'"

But union without truth for its basis, Thomas Hardy ever regarded as treason against Christ. He loved union, peace, and concord amongst brethren, as he loved his own soul, but would not give up one atom of Divine truth, or abridge one distinguishing feature in the glorious Gospel of salvation to promote them. Towards the latter part of his ministry, he would often say with regret, that there were four ministers in Leicester, Mr. Paget, Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Varley, and himself, who loved and preached the same blessed truths, yet were as far distant from each other as they well could be, like the four corners of a room. The two who in station and external distinctions were the most remote, Mr. Paget, the Church minister, and himself, approximated the nearest, for whenever they met in the street they spoke to each other.

Writing further on this subject to Mrs. S——, he says: "Oh, how I do at times sigh over the sad slumbering and sleeping, wherewith in these evil days all the wise, as well as foolish, virgins seem overcome; but the lethargy has me in its silken cords, as firmly bound, I fear, as most; and though the raps of godly fear do sometimes open my drowsy eyes, and heave my leaden head for a moment, yet in an instant I am down on the pillow of forgetfulness again, and dream and snore as if the Bridegroom would never come, and the hope of heaven was the land of poppies. . . . With bitter lamentation, I survey the breaches of Zion, the discord amongst brethren, which I everywhere behold. Oh, how all seek their own authority, honour, and profit. Silly as babes, we differ about our toys; and wicked as devils, we abhor reconciliation. This alone makes me desirous of preaching no more, except it be where simplicity and poverty have handcuffed this dividing devil. But amid all this (which is no new thing in the Church) I would and must take comfort; I enjoy some blessed tokens for good within, and see them often without. I am like a foolish and a froward child, upon which the parent must not smile, for fear of giving it unwarrantable liberties, and yet partakes as deeply of parental love as any of its fellows, only it is dealt to him in the forms most distasteful to its wishes—those of restraint and chastening. I have some faint views of the preciousness of Christ, but fear so good as He, and so bad as I, cannot belong to each other. But these are the scuffles of sense and reason; yet, though I ride such a rough sea, my anchor has been grounded here for many years."

(To be continued.)

A BRIEF MEMOIR OF JOHN BOORNE.

(Concluded from page 58.)

At the age of twenty-one I obtained a situation in London, and found myself exposed to many temptations and fresh trials, but the Lord gave me favour in the eyes of my employer. Having to take my meals at a dining-room or coffee-room, I used to see the newspaper, and other things, which I felt to be a snare to me, as those spare moments might have been more profitably spent. "To him that thinketh a thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean," and if the Lord were to deal with us as we deserve, who could stand? But God is faithful to His Word, "If My people forsake My law, then will I visit their transgressions with a rod, and their iniquity with stripes."

I felt my mind led to cast in my lot with the people of God who then assembled at Ebenezer Chapel, Deptford (now no longer in existence), and was baptized by Mr. Hazlerigg, at Gower Street. I saw the ordinance of believers' baptism as inseparably connected with the Lord's Supper, and I had many sweet seasons in hearing the Word, and many passages of Scripture were good to me, so that during business hours I have felt my heart quite softened under His goodness. During the four and a-half years I lived in London, I used to visit a good woman, a widow living in an almshouse, and found a pleasure and profit in so doing; the time was spent in reading God's Word. During my summer holiday I visited Ramsgate, and at that time was introduced to my future wife. My desire was to be united to one who feared God, and I have through my married life been persuaded that I was led aright, and took that step in the fear of the Lord. I was now solicited to take the management of a business at Woolwich, and in December, 1864, we moved there. This brought a fresh trial, as the air did not agree with my wife, and she was obliged to go away for change. This affliction, accompanied with my own personal trials, gave me many errands to a throne of grace; the hidden evils of my heart began more and more to open up. I inwardly sighed after holiness, and I was led to feel the necessity of the remedy, the precious blood of Christ, to cleanse me from sin. Many cries went up to the Lord under the load: the Word of God was precious to me, and I felt a great desire that this dispensation might be sanctified to me.

One morning, when in prayer, pouring out my heart before the Lord, and complaining of my state, and feeling the need of Him who is the Helper of the helpless, these words came, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." Oh, the divine compassion of our covenant-keeping God in Christ Jesus! I was

like a little child. Oh, how unworthy I felt to receive such a blessing, for it was a blessing indeed, which *only* God can give, for it was by His sweet Spirit I received it into my heart. I wondered at the Lord's goodness; I felt my sins were pardoned; it was a sealing time in my soul's experience. I shed many tears, feeling the Lord's goodness to one so unworthy to receive such a mark of the divine favour of Heaven. I have many times looked back to it as one of the hill Mizars; it gave me fresh strength to run in the ways of the Lord. We know not what we shall require in our path, but it is known to our God. When we are brought into dark places, and feel no present help, these special visits of God's love are in some sweet measure a help to us. The testimonies of the Lord are very sure, therefore my soul loves them. I began to know a little of that "peace which passeth all understanding," and nothing so endears the Lord to us as the peace of God felt and enjoyed in the heart.

My family began to increase; we lost our first—a fine boy—and it touched me closely when I heard from the nurse that the child was dead, though only just born. I found my heart and mind engaged respecting its safety, when those words of Malachi came, "And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels." I found the Lord faithful to His promise, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him. He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust." The Word of God is a sweet cordial in trouble; is it not often made the bread of life sent down from heaven, so that we "find the Word and eat it"? and nothing is so establishing and confirming, when we can in any measure realize that our souls are established upon the unalterable Word of God. How secure we feel our salvation to be: "Chosen in Christ from before the foundation of the world," redeemed by His precious blood, and quickened by the Holy Ghost into life. I had further discoveries of my own heart, and many sighs went up to the Lord for more communion; I learned, like Paul, "that in me (that is, in my flesh) there dwelleth no good thing."

My soul was often bowed down within me through domestic affliction, but I was led to the fountain of living waters, to seek for that supply my soul needed; I found the dear Lord's words true, "In Me ye shall have peace." Oh, how my soul has been favoured at times to drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem! it cheered my heart, and fitted me for business. I well remember one morning, before rising from my bed, I awoke under the sweet influence of the Lord the Spirit, and how precious I felt the bread of life to my soul. This was a short time before the death of my dear father. It is the virtue that flows

from the Covenant Head to His members which endears Christ to the soul as the Beloved, and the more we receive from Him the more shall we desire.

The latter days of our brother were embittered with a severe relapse to mental suffering. He became the subject of extreme depression, through physical weakness. In the early part of 1895 he took a chill, which developed into acute bronchitis, and after a few days' illness, he peacefully entered into rest, February 23rd, 1895. He greatly recovered from the sad depression he had been labouring under, and desired those who visited him to give his love to the friends whom he loved in the Lord.

His mortal remains were interred at Nunhead Cemetery. Mr. J. Whittome officiated on the occasion.

Mr. Greenwood, of Halifax, who was supplying the pulpit at Devonshire Road Chapel, Greenwich (where Mr. J. Boorne was a member), on the Sunday after the interment preached a very suitable and excellent discourse from the words, "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb"; and in the course of his remarks he made special reference to the departed, whom he felt confident was now among the redeemed and overcomers referred to in the text.

On the day of the funeral, our friend, Mr. C. Self, who had for years walked in fellowship with Mr. Boorne, was almost suddenly removed by death. He, like Mr. John Boorne, was one of the few members who first formed the Baptist Church at Counter Hill, previous to the removal to Devonshire Road, Greenwich, particulars of which are recorded in the "Memorials of the late Mr. James Boorne." Mr. Self sat for many hours with his friend above referred to, during the last mental affliction preceding his death. S. B.

How often has the poor labourer in the field had to toil among the heavy clods! What work has he had to plough, sow, and harrow the land; and how, when he has had to ply the sickle, and gather in the harvest, has the sweat run down his face! But how sweet is the bread when it is put upon the table, and he can sit down and eat the fruit of his toils! And so spiritually; when a man by exercise has laboured hard in his soul to make his calling and election sure; and when the Lord drops some precious testimony into his conscience, how sweet is the bread that comes out of this previous labour, how precious the comfort that comes out of this foregoing toil!—*J. C. Philpot.*

THE SEEKERS' CORNER.

"A broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise."—

PSALM li. 17.

Oh for the cool, refreshing shade,
Lord Jesus, of Thy cross;
Here for my weary soul to rest,
I'd count all else but dross—

To fall beneath Thy wounds and blood,
And prostrate at Thy feet,
Express in sighs, and groans, and tears,
The words I cannot speak.

Dear, precious, sympathizing Christ,
'Tis only Thou canst know
The language of a broken heart,
Bowed down with sin and woe.

Just such a heart I now would bring,
Most gracious Lord, to Thee;
O Thou who art the sinner's Friend,
Wilt Thou remember me?

Oh, wash me in Thy precious blood,
And purge from sin and dross
The tempted, tried, afflicted one
Now trembling at Thy cross.

All through Thy sojourn here below,
Thy grace Thou didst display;
Not one who for Thy mercy cried
Was ever spurned away.

And thus encouraged, dearest Lord,
My soul would cling to Thee;
And though of sinners I'm the chief,
Be merciful to me.

P. 1

LET unwounded professors talk as they please, not to know our own corruption is to know nothing. This is the grand, the indispensable preparation of heart to receive mercy and truth; this lies at the threshold of the strait gate. To cast this aside is to put ourselves out of the pale of all the promises, and to proclaim with a loud voice, "The Gospel is not for me; for Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, and I do not yet know that I am one." For want of this ballast, how many gallant ships have made shipwreck, and been tossed upon the shoals of presumption or despair!—*J. C. Philpot.*

THOUGHTS ON DAILY READINGS.

"He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made Him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son."—1 JOHN v. 10.

WHAT is it to thus savingly believe on the Son of God? This is a most important question, because there are many who believe as to the Person and work of Jesus, as did Simon the sorcerer (Acts viii. 13). And even the devils believe and tremble (James ii. 19); but that is not saving faith, it is merely an assent to truth, not a receiving the love of it in the heart. This faith, by which they who are effectually called believe on the Son of God, is the gift of God; and those who thus believe on Him, receive Him in their hearts, and they have the witness in themselves that He is the Son and gift of God. They also have witness of their need of Him, and of His suitability to their lost condition, that nothing but His blood can take away their sin and guilt, and nothing but His righteousness can fit them to stand acceptable before God; and every part of the doctrine of Christ, as made known to them by the Holy Spirit, carries its own evidence into their heart, that it proceeds from Him who is "the Truth."

Thus they know the truth, and it makes them free. They have the anointing, which "is truth, and is no lie," and which teaches them of all things in such a way, that they can only receive such teaching as accords with the testimony of the Spirit in them, according to the Divine Word. All who have this blessed unction believe with the heart God's testimony concerning His Son, not only in a general sense, as to His coming into the world to save sinners, but also in a personal way, for they can only be satisfied with the firm belief that He came to seek and save *me*; and when that witness is felt within, they can then rejoicingly exclaim, "Who loved *me* and gave Himself for *me*."

For this true witness all real seekers are encouraged to wait, for the promise is, "He will fulfil the desire of them that fear Him" (Psalm cxlv. 19; Matt. v. 6, &c.). The vision may seem to tarry, but in the end it will speak, therefore the Lord says, "Wait for it." These waiters are in a far better condition than those who reject the testimony of God concerning His Son, for, "He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John iii. 18), and, in this sense, such a rejecter is said here to make or treat God as "a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son." The rejecters of God's testimony of His Son are in a worse position than those who hear and

acknowledge it to be truth, but do not believe with the heart unto righteousness, as the Lord Jesus declared concerning Chorazin, &c., that it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for those cities which had rejected Him and His ministry. For while those who simply *neglect* this great salvation have no way of escape open to them, and therefore must perish, yet the reward of condemnation awaiting the rejecters will be far more terrible, according to the evidences and light they were surrounded with (see Luke xii. 47, 48).

What a mercy not to be found among those who fight against God and His people (Acts v. 38, 39), but to have an ear to hear and a heart to receive the record God has given of His Son. This disposing of heart and opening of the ear is of the Lord. All such hearers are receivers, because the Spirit comes and works with the Word, and makes it effectual to salvation (1 Thess. ii. 13). The Gospel is proclaimed openly, but the gift to savingly receive it is not bestowed on all who hear it. The Lord Jesus spoke the same words often in the hearing of many whom He knew would not receive them, but there were some to whom it was given to know the Gospel mysteries, while the others were left in their inability produced by transgression; and thus it is at this present time many gather to hear the Gospel, and, even like the young man (Matt. xix. 16, 22), seem anxious to know the way of life; but, as in his case, where the Word may be plainly put before them, unaccompanied by Divine power, they will prefer something else before Christ, and refuse to follow Him. The Lord Jesus knew the young man and the Jews (John vi. 65) could not come, being destitute of both power and desire, yet He said, "*Ye will not come unto Me,*" thus charging the want of will upon the unbelieving Jews as their guilt. Happy are they to whom the will and power are given with the Word! Such receive God's record of His Son, and have the witness in themselves, that "*salvation is of the Lord,*" from first to last, and gladly confess—

"If ever my poor soul be saved,
'Tis Christ must be the Way."

EDITOR.

In the margin of 2 Timothy ii. 6, we read, "The husbandman labouring first, must be a partaker of the fruits;" that is, he must labour first, and then sit down to partake of the fruit of his labours. There is nothing valuable without labour. The sermon is worth nothing, if it has not come out of the labour of a minister's heart; if he has not laboured in soul for the things brought forth, it will never profit God's people.—*J. C. Philpot.*

OPEN-AIR PREACHING.

DEAR MR. HULL.—We can say with "H. O. D." it was with a very thankful heart we read the letter of "A Lover of Zion," in February SOWER, also that by "H. O. D." in the March number, and we sincerely hope that the Lord will use such letters to stir up many a band of earnest workers to go out into the highways and speak to poor lost sinners of the doing and dying of the precious Lord Jesus, the only name given under heaven whereby we must be saved. How often do we find, according to the testimony of the Word of God, that the Lord used to speak to the people by the wayside, as well as teach in the synagogue. We were lately thinking of those words of Jesus who, when He saw much people, was moved with compassion toward them, and began to teach them many things, how, as we pass through the streets of a large town like ours, it makes one think of the people as sheep not having a shepherd; we believe that Word still holds good, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel unto every creature." We remember the first time we went out with some of the Lord's people, how fearful we felt, but when one of the speakers gave out that hymn, "I'm not ashamed to own my Lord," and then went on to tell of the wonderful love of Christ, our own heart began to glow, and we felt it good to be there, and so we have many times since. We were encouraged by seeing some come to hear week after week, and we quite believe that the Lord does bless those who have a desire to be made a blessing to others; and we pray that He may own every effort that is put forth for the spread of His Gospel, and that many may be constrained by the love of Christ and the love of souls to go forth, and those who cannot speak can, perhaps, help to sing, and those who cannot sing can help and encourage by their prayers. The Lord grant that when He makes up His jewels, it may be found that many were won at the open-air meetings. May the Lord strengthen you and bless you, and make you a blessing, is the earnest prayer of yours sincerely,
A. K.

[We have thought that, if party strifes did not forbid concerted action, the Churches in different districts might unite in laudable and scriptural efforts to carry the Gospel of the grace of God into many villages and places where Ritualism and Rationalism are the only religion the people hear of. Surely it becomes us, as professors of truth, to obey the Lord's command to carry that truth wherever we can. There are evangelists who could help in this work, if Churches would unite and take it up. Dear friends, think of this.—ED.]

ANSWER TO INQUIRY.

TO A LITTLE ONE.—Your inquiry as to family worship being neglected and objected to by members of Churches of truth, especially by ministers, is certainly a most grievous complaint. Surely, except in cases of great weakness, affliction, or other unavoidable hindrances, any child of God, especially ministers, would strive to bow with the household at the family altar. We have heard of those who stand to minister the Word of God objecting even to ask a blessing on the food they eat, calling such a becoming acknowledgment of God a piece of legal formality; but we have often found it sweet to bless the Hand that has given and savoured our food with covenant loving-kindness, and we hope ever to acknowledge our gracious God, while we live, as the source of all providential good. We quite think with you that the Word of God forcibly shows the propriety of family worship, which, except prevented by such hindrances as before alluded to, godly persons, at the least, should endeavour to daily attend to, and a gracious reward would no doubt be realized. We have no wish to harshly censure those who through weakness or bodily infirmity cannot regularly perform such service, as we ourselves often are compelled to take such rest as interferes with the performance of some of our daily duties. Still, as a practical rule in the home, it is a thing we hold to be essential to family order and to the answer of a good conscience toward God. The passages you name, Gen. xviii. 19; Deut. iv. 9, 10; vi. 7; Josh. xxiv. 15; Psalm lxxviii. 4, 5; Prov. xlii. 6; Jer. x. 25; Eph. vi. 4; 1 Tim. iii. 4, 5—all, no doubt, have a bearing on the subject. We hope your notice of this subject will be productive of good. We are sorry we could not notice your request sooner.

THE EDITOR.

To learn election right is to have it ratified and sealed by the Spirit of God upon our conscience. For the exhortation is not to make the doctrine sure; that is sure enough; but to make *your own* election sure; that is, to make it sure in your conscience, and to come to a settlement and establishment in your own heart by Divine teaching and revelation, not of the truth merely of the doctrine of election (that is supposed to be known), but of the truth of your own election, the blessed reality of your own soul being included in that everlasting Covenant of mercy and grace. And the Apostle bids us give "*all* diligence" to it. It is not a thing to be had in a day; to be done lightly, hastily, and smoothly; but we are to give "*all* diligence," as though it required very much diligence to make this calling and election sure.—*J. C. Philpot.*

LETTER FOR THE YOUNG.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—I received the card of your mother's death, but was not surprised, as I thought, when I was last at L —, that she was likely to go very suddenly. I like the texts you have put on the card. They will afford me something to press upon the minds of those who are concerned in the visitation God has brought upon you. This event will remind you of the death of your dear father, as now breach upon breach has been made upon you as a family. This makes those words more personally important, "Be ye therefore ready also." None of us can be exempt from death, so we ought not to be careless or undecided, but to make it our chief concern, our personal work, to consider whether we are ready. Remember, no one can be ready who is out of Christ. Our poet says truly,

"Out of Christ, Almighty power
Can do nothing but devour."

And the Word saith, "If any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creature," gathered out of an ungodly world, gathered to the truth of Christ, and into the ways of Christ, and to the people of Christ; and brought to hunger, pant, and breathe after Christ. Such souls will say, "Give me Christ, or else I die."

The uncertainty of life, and the certainty of death, will act as a spur to quicken such souls in seeking the Lord, and calling upon his Name. May it do so for all your souls. Whatever you feel to want, God hath encouraged you to ask for it, in Christ's Name. "Seek," He says, "and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

My dear friend has very delicate health, which will make this affliction seem the heavier; but God can give strength according to your day. I know what seeking souls have to feel and labour under, and how often they are ready to faint. The Word saith, "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, the Author and Finisher of our faith." And of Christ it is said that, "being in an agony, He prayed the more earnestly."

The Scriptures encourage us also to a more diligent seeking of His face, and to a calling upon Him with all the heart. The Lord draw you of the family that are left to Himself in holiness and righteousness, that you may glorify Him upon earth.

Do give my love to all friends at L —; and believe me,

Your ever affectionate friend in the truth of Christ,

Cranleigh, December, 1862.

GEO. HOLDEN.



JOSEPH SWAIN.

JOSEPH SWAIN.

THE CENTENARY OF HIS DEATH.

THIS useful and worthy Baptist minister died very young, like the immortal Toplady, but the work of many years was pressed into a few, and the Lord used and honoured his instrumentality to the conversion of many souls; and though a century has elapsed since his death, his seraphic poem on "Redemption," with many of his precious, animating hymns of praise, with other works, serve to keep his memory fresh in the minds of God's people. He was born at Birmingham in 1761, and left an orphan at an early age. He was apprenticed to an engraver in his native place, but before he had finished his term he left and removed to London, where he had a brother in the same business. Here he became acquainted with a circle of gay and thoughtless youths, and being himself naturally of a lively, cheerful disposition, his company was much sought, and he was led into many follies and excesses. In the midst of these vanities it occurred to his mind that he was neglecting the Holy Scriptures, that he was on the road to destruction, and that his end would be miserable. He therefore purchased a Bible, his conviction of sin increased, and his conscience was greatly alarmed with apprehensions of eternal ruin. When twenty-one years of age, he writes thus in his diary:—"I was followed for about six months or more with dreadful ideas of eternal torments, and particularly in the night season, fearing lest by fire or sickness, or some other means, I might be removed into the endless fire of hell. These things, however, were not effectual to cause me to leave my worldly acquaintances and sinful practices. For I still found that I loved my sins and was not able to give them up, though I feared the punishment due to them. After a long succession of these things, together with many legal workings and various attempts to make my own peace with God, on April 2nd, 1782, as I was going with my companions in sin to a place of entertainment, I felt my heart gradually melted into love. I then attempted to seek God by prayer, and was assisted with such a spirit of supplication, as till then I was a stranger to. I then had many passages of Scripture brought to my remembrance, wherein I saw myself as a sinner, and Christ as a Saviour. Yea, I saw and believed that He died for me, and that I should soon be with Him in glory at the right hand of God. And oh, how did my enraptured soul rejoice in this great salvation at this time! So great were the peace and satisfaction I enjoyed, that I thought I could bear to be confined in the darkest dungeon for ever, provided I might always feel what I then felt of the presence of God in my soul. But ah! the heavenly vision was not to continue always, as I

soon found by experience ; for some time afterwards a kind of coldness seized my frame, and almost on a sudden the heavenly scene was snatched away, and I was left with little more than the remembrance of it."

He had been used to compose songs, but now he began to compose hymns for his own use. When he was singing one of these, a person who had been used to attend an evangelical ministry took notice of it, and asked him whose hymn it was, to which he replied, "It is one of my own." The person invited him to go with him to Spa Fields Chapel, where he heard Mr. Wills, which was the first evangelical sermon he had ever heard. On being asked how he approved the sermon, he replied, "I am sure what the preacher said is true, for he hath described my feelings better than I can myself." He was advised to hear Mr. J. Rippon, and found his ministry much blessed to his edification. After having attended a considerable time and formed a friendly acquaintance among the people, he was desirous of being baptised and of joining the Church. He publicly professed his faith in Christ, and was baptised on May 11th, 1783. Once after hearing dear old John Berridge preach about this time he was so filled with the love of Christ that he said to his wife, "My dear, I do think I shall die with joy."

IN HIS DIARY HE THUS WRITES:—

"October, 1783, a very exceeding sweet and powerful manifestation to my soul in private, having this good word for my encouragement, 'Resist the devil, and he will flee from you : draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you.' I think if ever I tasted solid satisfaction of soul in God, it was at this time—almost as full as an earthen vessel could hold. I scarce knew how to leave the throne of grace. I was constrained to cry out, 'What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits?' and here I am sure I did desire to take the cup of salvation, and with redoubled ardour call on the name of the Lord. Yea, it was my desire to commit soul, body, spirit, with all that appertains thereunto, into the hand of my faithful God and Father, for time and for eternity. My assurance of the eternal enjoyment of Jesus my Redeemer in heaven, with all the redeemed, was almost, I think, as clear as though I had seen the celestial gates stand open, and all the glorious spirits waiting to receive and welcome me home to my Father's house."

In the beginning of 1784 he began meeting with friends at his own house for prayer, and for the mutual communication of Christian experience. The opportunities thence arising were edifying to many, who remember with pleasure those useful and solemn seasons. At length the Church to which he belonged,

believing him to have gifts for the ministry, gave him a call to preach the Gospel, which call was attended with an extraordinary prayer-meeting on his account, in the month of June, 1791. He was invited to preach at Walworth; his labours were abundantly owned of God, for in a little time he had many seals to his ministry. The December following a Church was formed of twenty-seven members, he was ordained over them as their pastor on February 8th, 1792. In this new relation he gave himself up to the service of Christ with all his heart, and God was with him, for many believed and were turned unto the Lord. On account of the increased auditory, the meeting-house was enlarged three times, and in the space of four years the number of Church members was upwards of two hundred.

He felt the solemn responsibilities of the ministerial office, as one or two remarks from his diary testify:—1795. “I have been much exercised of late for fear I should get at a distance from God, and so be the means of half starving the flock. Oh, what solemn work is the work of the ministry. Fresh discoveries of my own depravity and infirmities sometimes shake my hopes to the root; yet I must say, if the work of Christ in His vineyard and the enjoyment of His salvation are not my chief concern, I know not what is.” “I was constrained to be earnest in prayer for the Lord’s help, and He enlarged my heart and my steps under me. I think I have tasted more bitter herbs lately than usual, but I have also enjoyed some sweet moments in hoping to reap in due season,” &c.

“This has been a solemn week in visiting the dying. Three brethren are probably near eternity. Lord, enable me to profit myself and others by their experience, and uphold them in sickness. Mr. Romaine, and Mr. Clark of Exeter, are also lately fallen asleep. All these voices call to me, saying, ‘Be thou also ready,’ and yet what a cleaving to earth and earthly things do I still find. Mr. Bently, of Camberwell, is also fallen asleep in Jesus. I hear that he died very happy. Lord, grant that I may live the life and die the death of the righteous. A little while ago Dr. Stennett died, and since their decease the aged Mr. Benjamin Beddome departed, besides many other Gospel ministers, this last summer.

“Heaven draws my spirit towards its blissful shore,
And bids my heart to things eternal soar;
From what strange cause springs this peculiar strife?
I long to die, yet still am fond of life.

“I bless the Lord who lends me vital breath,
Yet leap for joy at thought of certain death;
When I look round, how many objects dear
Fix on my eye and gain upon my ear.

"But when the Lord himself with gracious power
 Displays his glories in some favoured hour;
 When love appears supreme upon the throne,
 And points the soul to its immortal crown;

"Loose fly the strings which hold my heart to earth,
 Up spring the passions of celestial birth;
 And one bright glance of Jesus makes me say,
 'I've none on earth; in heaven I've none but *Thee*.'"

The passages relating to his last illness are taken from his funeral sermon, by Mr. James Upton, of the Baptist Church, Blackfriars Road:—

"He appeared much concerned for and in prayer about the church. Two of Dr. Watts' sermons were read to him, and he expressed great pleasure in hearing them. He said they had been the means of his enjoying some nearness to God in prayer. On Thursday evening he had a violent fit, which left him apparently senseless for some hours; but when he came to himself, on Mrs. Swain entering the room, he said 'Oh, my dear, I have been offering some petitions to God for you, which I am sure will be answered. I am *sure* they will be answered.' On Saturday he said to her, 'I have made a mistake; I thought I was getting better, but I now feel I am very bad. I have been seeking the Lord about my case, and can get no other answer than this, "Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die and not live."' On seeing her much affected, he said, 'Oh, my dear, don't grieve. The Lord can make you a happy widow. You were happy in the Lord before you knew me, and He can make you happy when I am gone.' He then exclaimed, 'Oh, my dear Redeemer! am I coming to Thee so soon? Is my work done? It is just fourteen years since I first knew Thee, Lord! If it were Thy will, I should rejoice to labour a little longer with the dear people. Yet not my will, but Thine be done.'"

After being greatly afflicted for twelve or fourteen days, he was received into the bosom of eternal bliss on April 14th, 1796, aged thirty-six years. Three verses of one of his own hymns express his felicity—

"Oh, how the thought that I shall know
 The Man that suffered here below,
 To manifest His favour
 For me and those whom most I love,
 Or here, or with Himself above,
 Do my delighted passions move
 At that sweet word, *for ever*!

" But how must His celestial voice
 Make my enraptured heart rejoice,
 When I in glory hear Him!
 While I before the heavenly gate
 For everlasting entrance wait,
 And Jesus on His throne of state
 Invites me to come near Him.

" Come in, thou blessed, sit by Me,
 With My own life I ransomed thee;
 Come, taste My perfect favour.
 Come in, thou happy spirit, come;
 Ye blissful mansions, make him room,
 For he must stay for ever."

His remains were deposited in Bunhill Fields burying-ground, his funeral being attended by some thousands of people, who were all greatly affected. Abraham Booth, Dr. Rippon, and James Upton conducted the solemn services and preached the funeral sermons. I believe the Church over which he presided exists at the present time, and still maintains, by God's grace, those distinguishing truths upon which it was at first established
S. Walden. R. F. R.

WHERE there is real love, such as God sheds abroad in the heart, there will be the "labour of love"; and it is in this labour of love that there is the profit. If you love the Lord, you may have a thousand risings of enmity against Him, a thousand suspicions whether He loves you, a thousand blasphemous darts shot through your carnal mind against His glorious Person, atoning blood, and justifying righteousness; and the more you love Him, the more your love will be tried. You know that jealousy is always a close attendant upon love. The Scripture connects them closely: "Love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave; the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame" (Sol. Song viii. 6). But dead love has no jealousy. He that talks of love and does not feel it, is never jealous whether the Lord loves him; never jealous when he sees the smiles and kisses of the Lord given to a more favoured object. Oh, no! dead love has no labour, because it has no jealousy. But living love has a labour. The mother that loves her child—what labour attends her love! If the mother do not love her son, he may grow up a thief or a drunkard; the mother does not care what he is. But if there be love in her bosom, then she will have trials and sorrows that loveless mothers feel not at all.—*J. C. Philpot.*

THE LATE THOMAS HARDY, OF LEICESTER.

(Continued from page 87.)

IN 1831 Mr. Hardy, in writing to a dear and very good friend, says: "I am assured, that in prayer to God, under the pressure of real personal necessity (honours and worldly interest apart), and in real soul-interesting communion, and in matters of life and death, there would be a blessed harmony of pleading, feeling and expression among Abraham, Moses, John the Baptist, Paul, Augustine, Wickliffe, Tindal, Calvin and Luther, Cranmer and Goodwin, Owen, Knox, Rutherford, Gill, Bunyan, the most learned Usher, and the unlettered Tanner, the vehement, flying Whitfield, and the close, retiring Romaine. The selfishness of man would counsel an *undeviating uniformity*; and the national, or papal, or miniature sectary would stamp every profession with his own adopted impress, or pronounce him lost and accursed, and thus promote the domination of Satan, who rules by division, and poisons communion by invidious suspicions. Never were sin and ignorance more completely dominant than when in the dark ages of Popery uniformity attained its frightful meridian! But discord and contention wound our peace and outrage all our comforts. It is true; but the world, as far as mercy affects it, is rather a hospital than a paradise. Contentions and oppositions of blind, selfish mortals do often set the world on fire, and such fire, as a prelude to the eternal one, does often punish the criminality that kindles it, and purges also the scum that it excites, while it, no less, where mercy reigns, effects a blessed trial of the faith and patience of the saints. In these wintry times we must plough and sow in hope, and, like the husbandman, have long patience for the precious fruits of the harvest. All that comes to pass in the world shall prove a display of the deep, adorable wisdom of God. The murder of Christ, the most atrocious act ever committed, opens a way for the most glorious ministrations of the Gospel. The disciples are scattered by cruel persecution at the death of Stephen, but they go everywhere preaching the Gospel. Paul is cruelly persecuted and imprisoned, but it falls out to the furtherance of the Gospel. The ostentation of Hezekiah shows him what is in his heart when left to himself. The abominations of David, and the chastisements wherewith they were followed, may console the miserably fallen when they need the extremes of mercy, and fearfully warn every trifler of the severity of the rod. The loathsome vileness of our common nature makes the weary saint to long for the wings of a dove, that he may fly away and be at rest. The wrath of man shall praise God; He will get Him honour upon the proud contumacy of Pharaoh, and

on the oracular subtlety of Abithophel. The covetous folly of Nabal, and the restless fury of Saul, shall promote the gracious purposes of God to David. The heartless tyranny of Pharaoh shall drive Moses to the ark of bulrushes, and the amiable, but undistinguishing affection of his daughter shall cherish the little outcast in her bosom till he attains a maturity to avenge the wrongs of his brethren, and to blast, as the instrument of his God, the glory and strength of that state which made him the child of its hope and promise.

"How different were the circumstances of Rutherford and Tanner. Learning, wit, distinguished office, and, from education and habit, the zealously inflexible Presbyterian invested the former; while native strength of mind, commanding simplicity, chastened sobriety, humility, and touching affection encircle the jewel of grace in the latter. Tanner had the painful benefit of grievous but sanctified domestic afflictions, labour, and poverty, in all their mortifying extremes; while the wit of Rutherford is quickened by his arduous conflicts with the crafty and the powerful of God's enemies; and the productions of his pen are sweetly scented with that cheering grace that the King of saints bestows on His imprisoned and suffering members. But how much of self-abasement appears in them both! how much of the purest love of God! how much of Gospel holiness, contempt of the world, and dread of sin! Their testimony hath also this invaluable commendation, they wrote under circumstances to which suspicion will not attach. The Lord give you and yours, dear Madam,* many a blessing in reading them."

Mr. Hardy's company was much sought for by those who really knew him and loved him for the truth's sake; he knew how to suit himself to the capacities and tastes of all, and was peculiarly attached and kind to the young. Little children were great favourites with him, and would animate and cheer his natural spirits when scarcely any other human means could avail for that purpose.

Various reports have been circulated with reference to his eccentricities when out of the pulpit—not without truth, perhaps, in several cases. His nervous infirmities often made him so restless that he could not stand, sit, or recline long in one position. A favourite attitude—when he could gain the opportunity—was to sit in front of the fire and place his feet, one at each of the upper corners of the stove or chimney piece. On one occasion, finding a hole in the covering of the seat of a chair in which he was sitting, he unconsciously—while talking to his host—nearly emptied the seat of its horsehair. Mrs. —, who

* The late Lady Lucy Smith.

lived in a certain town to which he was going, hearing these reports, said, "she could not receive such a man in the house." Her husband replied, "My door was never yet shut against any man of God, and certainly Thomas Hardy shall not be the first man it is closed upon." When the time came, the good man was on a journey. On presenting himself, he said to his hostess, "My name is Thomas Hardy, I have travelled so many miles, am very miserable, and now I am come, want to return home again." Refreshment of various kinds was offered, and every effort used to make him comfortable, but he declined all. When supper-time came, he would have nothing but bread-and-cheese. After the meal, the household were gathered, and he consented to read a chapter and to pray. The effect on his hostess was such that her prejudice was entirely removed, her heart opened, and her spirit so united to him, that from that moment a close friendship subsisted between them to the close of his life. No injury was done to her table, nor was the sofa spoiled, as she had been told was sure to be the case. In fact, though much attached to a sofa by reason of infirmity, on that occasion he never used it, plainly perceiving the intent of the new covering provided for it. He publicly and privately rebuked all profusion and extravagance in decorating the person and pampering the appetite. And when he had witnessed any exhibition of sumptuous provisions for the table, he used to say, "You know, as a servant of Christ, I must condemn these things, and in the pulpit cut them up root and branch, though I sit with you, and moderately partake of your bounty."

As a travelling companion Mr. Hardy greatly excelled. He sometimes knew more of the history and remarkable things of the places he visited than those who had long lived in them. He knew, too, something of the family history of the noble and wealthy in many parts of the country, and in passing their mansions or seats would sometimes refer to the birds, beasts of prey, &c., on their coats of arms, drawing some witty comparisons therefrom with the possessors themselves. In going from Maidstone to Canterbury he showed his companion the spot where our Henrys and Edwards descended from their horses and chariots, put off their shoes and stockings, walking barefoot all the way to the cathedral, in their pilgrimage to do penance at the tomb of Thomas à Becket. He was often affected to see in those parts at that period—1830-1—the peaceable inhabitants as soon as darkness came on, parading their streets, and surrounding their habitations, ricks, and granaries, with weapons of death, to prevent the destructive ravages of incendiary fires. While, with a disease deathful as the pestilence, the Russian Empire

was fearfully scourged ; and another kingdom, just opposite our own shores, terribly plagued with all the horrors of civil war, fire, and sword. "Oh," said he—

"May sinners learn to pray,
May saints keep near the throne;
For help in times of deep distress
Is found in God alone!"

Writing on these matters to a friend, he said :—

"The measures of our rulers in the admission of the Catholics to a share of our Government influence lie with peculiar weight upon my heart. I believe we have every reason to calculate on a share in their plagues. The sworn servants of Antichrist we have thus taken by the hand, and will give them influence and emoluments, to strengthen their diabolical interests, and eat out the vital parts of all our national good. Oh, how true is that which is written, 'Their watchmen are dumb dogs, lying down, loving to slumber' ! And our only security is, that Catholics will be hypocrites, and inconsistent with themselves. But I have long been in despair about our national affairs ; the abominations of the national Church ; the crying sins of pride, oppression, injustice, and deceit in dealings ; contempt of God and His Word. The luke-warmness, worldly conformity, carnal affections, and bitterness of the little remnant that know better, are truly alarming. 'Shall I not visit for these things ?' saith the Judge of all the earth. 'Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men.' But 'God will be a Refuge for the afflicted, a Refuge in time of trouble,' and His children shall have a place of refuge. Oh for grace to walk uprightly !

"There is a little tract lately published, called, 'The Signs of the Times.' It is a fine specimen of the old Presbyterian zeal against Popery. I wish we and our children were better read on the subject of Popish persecution—the Reformation, and its now despised blessings—Popish errors and delusions, their discovery and confutation, &c. Some united effort ought to be made by sound Protestants to remove this evil. Would that my purse equalled my wishes and knowledge of books on these subjects. Popish zeal may yet whet Protestant zeal."

Again :—

"I admire your diligence in minding your own business so much, and for rescuing time besides to give ghostly advice to the Steersman of the nation. I wish I had anything like it. The Spirit of Christ inspires deep and kind concern for the best interests of individuals and of the largest communities. Our Lord wept at the contemplation of the certain and tremendous ruin of the Jewish state ; and the

Prophets were what men would call offensively zealous and obtrusive in directing, exhorting, and warning the guilty rulers and incorrigible members of the nation to which they were sent. We can only be sound politicians on Bible principles. 'They have forsaken and rejected the Word of the Lord; and what wisdom is in them?' Jeremiah viii. 7, was the conclusion of unerring Wisdom about the false policy of ancient Israel. The man who regards not deeply the truths of Revelation, may have zeal for the state, but is destitute of knowledge to legislate for its good; he may devise expedients for present help, and such expedients may obtain the applause of the multitude, who, like him, regard not the claims of the Most High on the hearts and lives of His creatures; but the profound and incorruptible policy of God will demonstrate their inefficiency, and involve their author in confusion. It is but filling the breach with untempered mortar, while the rotten and sinking foundation has remained unexamined and untouched. Injustice and oppression, pride, sensuality, and superstition are gangrenes that will eat up the walls and the palaces of Babylon, the monopolies of Tyre, and the pampered millions of Persia—the iron dominion of the Cæsars, and the hellish enormities of the Pope."

In 1827 Mr. Hardy built in Leicester a residence for himself, concerning which he wrote a friend as follows:—

"You allude to my new residence, and the expense of building it. A very strong sensation, arising from a hint in your letter, about a measure which your kindness would adopt for defraying a part of that expense, urges me to make some remarks.

"London has amply acknowledged and repaid my unworthy labours there by very many favours, and I shall be all my life a debtor there, though I receive no more therefrom.

"It is most abhorrent to my feelings as well as most repugnant to my views of Christian moderation and disinterestedness, to be found directly or indirectly seeking to make a gain of my Christian brethren, and especially for the acquisition of substantial property in the world. 'Seek them not' is before my eyes.

"I find nothing act so powerfully against my grievous nervous affections as good air and exercise. I have long had much of them both abroad, and I have long suffered extremely by close apartments at home: prudence, justice, and charity oblige me to live near the buildings which I superintend. A slip of land, adjoining my former house, was to be sold last April, six yards wide and thirty yards long. I was offered it first; a butcher stood next to buy it, to erect a slaughtering house and fasting house upon it (to me very probable nuisances). I took the

offer: and have built at the top of it a house, with its *back to the street*, to save my eyes and ears what my infirmities could not bear. It has but three rooms and a cellar, with one hundred yards of garden ground in front. The land, walls, and writings cost £70; the building, without ornament, £200. I can raise about £100, mortgage this new palace for another £100, and I pawn another year or two's income for the rest. My credit is good, and I am anxious to keep it so; a £10 or £20 note would be of great service to me this Christmas, but I dare not say I have occasion to beg. The loan of it would be enough at legal interest. My last eight years' revenue has been £805. For several years my coach and equipage have cost £30 per year, alms and offerings, £20. Robes, &c., £10. House and payments, from £15 to £20. My wife and daughter have a yearly income of about £15 each; leaving us about £50 per annum to keep house, which we find enough; and though my travels are on an average three thousand miles a year, and my preaching from four to eight times a week, I assure you I often think, like Luther, when he was once in possession of as much as £40, that I may have my portion in this world. Being afraid you might mention my building to my discredit, or that of the Gospel, I have sent you this long account, in which my selfishness has left no room for the poor widow's case with Mr. Carman; but you shall have that in another. I owe your daughter one shilling and sixpence, which I will settle in the hosiery account."

The following month Hr. Hardy writes the same friend:—

"About two years ago, some poor persons, in deep distress and poverty, applied for my assistance; I begged of such as pitied them some money. I could not give them much, but lent them £5. My wife, while I was absent, lent them £10 more of money, which I had got for a debt. I scarcely expected anything again, but by small sums they returned me £10. I knew their wants, pitied, and forgave them the other £5, making God's gracious providence debtor to me that sum. The prompt acknowledgement, and manifold payment of this debt by the grace to which I had transferred it, your late communications will go far to certify. But when I consider my own worthlessness, the general coldness of love, and prevalence of poverty; the grudgings of covetousness, and the contempt of pride, I 'tremble for the ark,' the honour of ministerial disinterestedness, and expect the biting taunt, 'What do ye more than others?'

"If my friends should reproach me with covetousness in the management of my worldly concerns, I would cheerfully part with all, on the single term of justice to all concerned in them, without one penny of advantage to myself, and I am unconscious

of injuring anything committed to my trust. Should I be charged with pride in building my new palace, I offer to exchange it on the above condition for a mud cottage in the country, and was actually in treaty with the Earl of Stamford's steward for a thatched one at £4 per year rent, before I built at all."

(To be continued.)

AS IT SHOULD BE.

THE little cause at Zoar Baptist Chapel, Marlborough, which has existed nearly fifty years, has latterly become much reduced by deaths and removals, until at the present time there remains but one solitary member, Mr. James Chivers, and he has been almost entirely bed-ridden for the last six months, with but little hope of being again restored to his former usefulness. Under these circumstances the services could only be carried on with difficulty, as Mr. Chivers had always, in the absence of a minister, conducted them himself. On one occasion the chapel was shut up on Sunday. At this juncture Mr. Pigott, of Swindon, came to the assistance of the friends, and from his Church members went to Marlborough to conduct the services. Their help was appreciated, and the number of attendants increased somewhat. This was taken as an indication of the Lord's approbation, and further effort was made for the strengthening of the cause. We therefore arranged to hold "Special Services" on Easter Monday, April 6th, 1896, when two sermons were preached by Mr. Pigott, of Swindon, in the afternoon and evening, to very full and attentive congregations. Between the services about ninety persons partook of tea together at the "London Temperance Hotel," where comfortable accommodation was afforded. The chapel had been put in repair, coloured, painted, &c., at a cost of £7 0s. 7d. Kind friends subscribed a sum of £11 4s., and the collections amounted to £4 12s. 10½d., making a total of £15 16s. 10½d.; so that, deducting the expenses (£7 0s. 7d.), there remains a balance of £8 16s. 3½d., to meet current expenses and to help in future need. Altogether a happy day was spent, and the friends had cause to "thank God and take courage."

P. S.

[After reading the above, which is a step in the right direction, we felt that we might say, with true propriety, to some of our stronger causes, respecting helping the weak ones, "Go, and do thou likewise" (Luke x. 37).—ED.]

ASLEEP IN JESUS.

A FEW particulars, written by her husband, respecting the life and death of Mrs. Eliza Wright, who died at Croydon on July 9th, 1895, after a long and painful illness, in which she was enabled to testify to the love, mercy, and support of her gracious Lord.

The subject of this sketch was born into this world on January 7th, 1845, at Clifton, in Bedfordshire. She was brought up in her childhood to attend the Church, this being before the late Mr. Septimus Sears opened his chapel there. After it was opened, she, with the rest of her family, attended, but she was ignorant of her state as a sinner before God, until the Lord was pleased to lay His afflicting hand upon her in September, 1865, when she was stricken down with a violent attack of typhoid fever. In this illness she was brought very near to the gates of death, and she was brought to feel that, if she were then called away, her lot would be one of eternal death, which she knew would be her just reward. On one occasion she called all of the family that were at home into her bedroom, and she said that on the morrow she felt she should be in that state, where she should not have a drop of water to cool her tongue. During the next day Mr. Sears called in to see her, and the portion he read was Job xxxiii., and when he came to the twenty-fourth verse, she felt she could say that was for her, and that the Lord had "delivered her from going down to the pit." She then had this portion given to her from Psalm cxviii., "I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord." These words gave her a great deal of comfort, and her spirit revived. Soon after this a severe bleeding of the nose came on, and lasted for four hours, and during this time the words, "I go to prepare a place for you," comforted her. Before this affliction she was very fond of fine, showy clothes, and a short time before her illness she was thinking of purchasing a new bonnet, and her mother said, "Get one as neat as you can," to which she replied, "I shall get the very smartest one I can." She was not permitted to wear it much, and what she felt respecting it, in her illness, she never could tell. It was such a sting to her conscience, that she ever afterwards was careful to wear those things that were neat and becoming. The gaudy bonnet was soon consigned to the flames, and many have been the admonitions she has given on this point, which have not been without good effect.

When the dear Lord was pleased to grant her restoration from this illness, she attended the house of God with very different feelings to what she had previously done, and it was evident to all who knew her that a great change had taken place.

She did not fully realize what her soul longed for, all at once, but was brought at times very low in her feelings, and the language of her soul was as follows—

“The lowest dust is far too high
For one so vile, so black, as I—
So filled with leprosy;
I merit nought but hopeless pain,
Yet trust, through this, a throne to gain—
Blood has a voice for me!

“Lord! pour through all my struggling life
This oil upon the sea of strife—
This blessing full and free—
Faith in the Lamb, from day to day,
And grace, with melted heart, to say,
‘Blood has a voice for me!’

When Satan tries to stop my way,
When gloomy woes becloud my day,
When war and strife I see,
When fears run high, and faith is low,
Lord! span the cloud with this rich bow,
Blood has a voice for me!

“With this I’d smite death’s gloomy tide,
With this its chilling waves divide,
And make a passage free;
And while I tread the blood-made way,
My sinking voice would rise and say,
‘Blood has a voice for me!’

“And oh, the lowly, lofty joy
That must my wond’ring heart employ,
When I Thy wounds shall see!
Dear Jesus, then, in loftiest song,
With this I’ll roll Thy praise along—
‘Blood has a voice for me!’”

(This hymn is one of Mr. Sears’ own composition.) She heard Mr. Sears with much profit and encouragement, and the Lord brought her to sweetly feel that she could truly say—

“I’m blest, I’m blest, for ever blest;
My rags are gone and I am dressed
In garments white as snow;
I’m married to the Lord the Lamb,
Whose beauties I can ne’er explain,
Nor half His glories show.”

After this, she was called away from Clifton to Croydon. She attended West Street Chapel, and felt much profited under the

ministry of the late Francis Covell. After a time she returned to Clifton. Her mind was then exercised about following the Lord in the ordinances of His house. When she mentioned her exercises to Mr. Sears, he said to her, "Then you cannot stay away any longer"; and in giving her experiences before the Church, her feelings were the language of the Psalmist, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted" (Psalm cxix. 71).

She was much blessed under the sermon Mr. Sears preached, on the occasion of her baptism, from the words, "I made haste, and delayed not to keep Thy commandments" (Psalm cxix. 60). She often spoke of this time, and became greatly attached to Mr. Sears and to his ministry.

She soon left Clifton, and came to Croydon again. She attended Mr. Covell's ministry for about twelve years, and had many "lifts by the way."

When Mr. Willis came to Tamworth Road, she had a desire to hear him. She liked his ministry, and felt with her young family the chapel would be more convenient to attend, as West Street was frequently crowded; and as she felt at home there, she obtained her dismissal from Clifton and joined the Church at Tamworth Road.

After Mr. Willis's death she had many helps under Mr. Nugent's ministry, especially on one occasion from a sermon he preached from the words, "Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase" (Job viii. 7). She was also favoured when hearing Mr. Picknell, from the words in Revelation iv. 3, "And there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald."

She used often to refer, with tears, to the melting of heart she had when Mr. Peet, of Sharnbrook, preached from the words "Let my soul live, and it shall praise Thee" (Psalm cxix. 175). She also had a favoured season when Mr. Henry Haddow preached from the words, "Lord, help me" (Matt. xv. 25).

She was greatly encouraged the first time she heard our pastor, Mr. Wilmshurst, when he came to Tamworth Road as a supply. His text was from Psalm lxxxvi. 17, "Show me a token for good," &c. She had many other sweet seasons under his ministry, both before and after his settlement as pastor, and she became very much attached to him for his work's sake.

About six years ago she was taken suddenly with asthma. As time went on, the attacks became more severe, and oftentimes filled us with alarm. About four years before she died, she sought medical advice, and it was then discovered it was the heart that was much affected, and the doctor said that advice had been sought only just in time. She said, after the interview, she felt as if she had received her death sentence. This made her feel

the solemnity of her position, and gave her many searchings of heart as to whether she was ready for that solemn change.

She was kept a prisoner for the most part during the winter months, and this she felt very keenly. The last time she attended the house of God was on November 18th, 1894. One night after this date she had retired, but she could not sleep; so she took up the hymn-book, and opened at No. 377 (Gadsby's Selection), and her attention was arrested by the lines—

“God through the fight shall thee sustain,
Nor shalt thou seek His face in vain.”

She burst into tears, and said, “What can this mean?” She felt sure a season of trial was before her.

On December 8th she was taken suddenly with her breath in the night, and we all thought the end had come; but she revived, and after it was over she said she felt so comfortable in her mind that, had the summons come then, she was quite prepared. From this time her condition became gradually worse.

On Thursday, January 24th, the doctor examined her, and found that inflammation of the lungs had set in. After the doctor had gone she would not be satisfied until she knew the result. As soon as she knew, she said, “It is just what I thought; this sickness is unto death.” She was, however, brought into a most blessed frame of mind, and she continued the whole of the night conversing about the matters of eternity, and praising the Lord for His goodness unto her.

The doctor, wishing her to obtain a little sleep, sent her a draught, but she was a long time before she would take it, as she felt she might pass away in her sleep, and she wanted to be conscious at the last. She was, however, prevailed upon to take it, but before she did she offered a prayer that, if it were the Lord's will, the means given and taken might do her body good, but, if not, that she might be made conformable to His will. She also repeated two lines often used by the late Mrs. Sears—

“And if I die before I wake,
My sins forgive, my soul, Lord, take.”

She then took the draught, and enjoyed a short sleep, which refreshed her considerably. After she awoke, she continued talking about things of eternity, and she said, “You will be attending to the ordinance of the Lord's Supper on the coming Sunday, but I shall be partaking of the wine of the kingdom.” She expressed a wish to see Mr. Wilmshurst and Mr. James Haddow, and they visited her on the Friday morning, and it was a time long to be remembered by all who were there. She

said, on bidding Mr. Haddow farewell, that she should soon see his father, Mr. Sears, Mr. Covell, and many others in heaven, and she seemed overwhelmed with joy at the thought that she should soon be "shut in with her Jesus for ever to dwell." She expressed a wish that Hymn 580 (Gadsby's Selection) might be sung at chapel the next Sunday morning, which was done. The Lord was pleased to restore her somewhat from this attack, and many were the hopes we had that she might yet be spared to us; but our thoughts were not the Lord's thoughts.

On March 30th she had a relapse, and was brought exceedingly low. The feelings of her mind may be gathered from the following sentences that fell from her lips:—

"For heaven are thy credentials clear?" "What are thy credentials?" she asked; and then replied, "The finished work of Christ. Oh, Lord, do be with me through the dark valley!" "But," she said, "He won't leave me then, will He?" We then said, "He won't leave you half-way." "No," she replied, "it will be right through, for—

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

She was much pleased when we repeated the verse of Henry Fowler's—

"They may on the main of temptation be tossed,
Their troubles may swell as the sea,
But none of the ransomed shall ever be lost,
The righteous shall hold on his way."

She also repeated a verse of a hymn composed by a friend, which on many occasions had been a great source of comfort to her—

"I'll stay with thee until grim death shall sever
Thy soul from its frail tenement of clay;
And shall I leave My chosen then?—no, never!
With Me thou'lt spend a never-ending day."

(To be concluded.)

THE BLESSED DEAD.

MARY ANN RICH, of Bexhill, fell asleep in Jesus April 4th, 1896, aged forty-five years. She was a member of the Church at Ebenezer, Hastings, and was one who in her daily life and walk adorned the doctrine of Christ. She was greatly beloved by the friends, and will be greatly missed in both Church and school.

THE SEEKERS' CORNER.

[The writer of the following lines, which she sent to a friend who was passing through a trial, has just recently departed to be "for ever with the Lord."]

"Rest in the Lord."—PSALM xxxvii.

"Rest in the Lord": thou canst not help,
Nor yet prevent His hand;
Nor canst thou do the thing that's best,
Yet all His Word shall stand.

"Rest in the Lord"; be silent, friend,
Nor ask why that or this;
The sovereign Lord His will will do,
For power and wisdom's His.

"Rest in the Lord": why all these fears?
'Tis Jesus holds the helm;
Since winds and waves must Him obey,
They cannot thee o'erwhelm.

"Rest in the Lord": thy anxious care
Can never guide His hand;
Thou canst not hinder Him, nor haste—
He'll bring thy ship to land.

"Rest in the Lord": why shouldst thou fret?
How vain is all the grief
Of thy poor weak, desponding heart,
Darkened with unbelief.

"Rest in the Lord": 'tis vain to seek
For help, or to depend
On brethren dear, or fleshly arm,
'Tis Jesus is thy Friend.

"Rest in the Lord": still on Him call,
And tell Him all thy case;
In patience wait till He appear,
For thou shalt see His grace.

"Rest in the Lord": I hear Him say,
"Put all thy trust in Me;
Then all My wisdom, skill, and love
Thou presently shall see."

"Rest in the Lord": My precepts hear,
They shall be strength to thee;
For quietness and strength I give
To those who trust in Me.

"Rest in the Lord": I'll bring to pass
My word of promise true;
What shall be for My glory most,
And what is best for you.

"Rest in the Lord": "My glory great
Thy fainting eyes shall see;
My name, My praise, My honour, too,
Is dear to Me and thee."

"Rest in the Lord": when to my heart
Thou speak'st this precept sweet,
I then receive Thy cov'nant Word,
And worship at Thy feet.

Thou knowest, dearest, gracious Lord,
How gladly I would give
To Thee my heart, my soul, my all,
And in Thy Word believe.

I'd render thanks for grace received,
Mercy upholding, free;
Still grant me grace to watch and pray,
And wait alone for Thee.

March 8th, 1895.

M. A. RICH.

OPEN-AIR PREACHING.

DEAR MR. HULL,—“The love of Christ constraineth me” to write a few lines on a subject so cheering to my heart as that of Open-air Preaching. Can it be possible that Strict Baptists are going into the highways and hedges to “tell to sinners round what a dear Saviour they have found”; to warn them to “flee from the wrath to come”; to preach to them repentance, and to tell them “there is no other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved,” but Jesus Christ; and, like good Mr. Whitefield, with outstretched hands and hearts, warmed with the love of Christ, preach to poor guilty sinners reconciliation to God by Jesus Christ? (See 2 Cor. v. 19, 20.) I sincerely hope you may be used of God to bring about this good work of Open-air Preaching.

The practice is of ancient date, as every Bible reader will know. I would commend to those whose minds are exercised about so God-honouring a work the conduct of our Lord and His Apostles.

Your remarks (“there are evangelists who could help in this work,” &c.) lead me to suggest that it is the place of *pastors* to take the lead, and to give evangelists encouragement. But where are the pastors that will do it? The Apostle Paul's parting word to his son Timothy was, “Do the work of an evangelist,” and in 2 Timothy ii. 2, he tells him to seek out others for the same work. Where there are members of Churches and Sunday School

teachers who are willing to go out with a minister into the open air, let them, the next time they have a supply from a *distance*, ask him to go out with them, and so make a beginning.

— It was a happy day for England when Mr. Whitefield began field preaching, and many there will be who will be his joy and crown of rejoicing in the day of Jesus Christ, having been called from the highways and hedges.

Once last summer I preached twice, attended a prayer meeting, addressed the Sunday School, spoke on the village green, and then walked more than four miles of the way home at night. To me it was a day to be remembered. Let us "work while it is day." "Sow beside all waters," seeking by constant prayer the help of the Holy Spirit.

Yours sincerely,

April 9th, 1896.

ONLY A SUPPLY.

Another friend writes :—

I read with much pleasure the Editor's note as to Open-Air Preaching in this month's *SOWER*. May it be commended to those who are at the head of causes of truth, for there are indeed villages and hamlets around our own coast where sound Gospel has for many years never been heard, and probably the Reformation never heard of either, "nothing but uncertain sounds" being heard in these places. It has often been the wish of the writer that the Lord would stir up the hearts of some men of truth to see the need of proclaiming aloud in the open air salvation through free and sovereign grace alone, so that she was not a little struck in reading the first letter that appeared upon the same subject.

With Christian regards,

April 6th, 1896.

A READER.

You that pray at the prayer-meetings, your prayers are only empty talk, which brings penury into the souls of God's children, unless your heart has secretly laboured for the petitions which you utter. Without this labour, you will go through your round like a horse in a mill, in an ever-recurring circle.

WHEREVER there is love, there will be labour attending it; and it is only in this labour that there is profit. Dead love has neither hopes nor fears, neither work nor wages. But living love has an inward labour to obtain some smiles from the Beloved, some glance of His countenance, some token of His dying love making the heart glad.—*J. C. Philpot*.

THOUGHTS ON DAILY READINGS.

"We have thought of Thy loving-kindness, O God."—
PSALM xlviii. 9.

How much better are these thoughts than those anxious ones about the morrow, and as to what we shall eat, drink, or wear (see Matt. vi. 24-34). These latter thoughts are like canker worms in our breasts, eating up our pleasant things, and marring our rest and peace. Oh, these busy cares, these anxious thoughts, what disturbing enemies they are! How sweet the change when we are brought to think of "Thy loving-kindness, O God." Oh, what a balm for our woes and wounds, what a cordial for our fears, and what a sweet in our cup of bitter sorrows! Art thou in trouble, in deep waters? Dost thou feel to be forsaken? are thy comforts all apparently dead? and is the enemy saying, "Where is now thy God?" Does the language of Jesus suit thee? "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Look at the seventy-seventh Psalm, the writer of which felt to be in a similar case, but at last, after all the questionings of unbelief, he confesses, "I said, This is my infirmity; but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High." And in Psalm lxxxix. the writer, after venting his sad complaints about seeming contradictions, exclaims, "Where are Thy former loving-kindnesses, O God?"

What a happy turn when thus we are led, in the midst of trouble and dejection, to think of the loving-kindness of the Lord. Have we not heard Him say, "I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness"? (Jer. ix. 24;) and have we not known something of the displays of His loving-kindness? For instance, He says, "With loving-kindness have I drawn thee" (Jer. xxxi. 3). Cannot we trace those drawings in our first trouble of soul, and in many afflictions and trials since? Were they not the means of bringing our wandering hearts and spirits back to Him? so that we have been compelled to confess, "Thy loving-kindness is good" (Psalm lxix. 16), and the sweet savour of it has caused us to exclaim, "How excellent is Thy loving-kindness, O God!" Yea, as we have realized it time after time, as the grand sweet at the bottom of our cup of troubles, have we not gladly told Him this truth, "Thy loving-kindness is better than life"? (Psalm lxiii. 3,) for without its sweet savour life would be one scene of bitterness and woe.

Lord, grant that we may not forget Thy loving-kindness, but often have sweet thoughts of it; and do Thou still continue Thy loving-kindness unto us, for Thou hast said, "My loving-kindness will I not take from him" (Psalm lxxxix. 33).—ED.

LETTER FOR THE YOUNG.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I have been away lately a good deal, and my much travelling is a great weariness to my flesh; yet I would be willing to do what is right in the Lord's sight. Oh! could I be little and nothing, and be always near to, and leaning upon the Lord. Oh the sweet nearness to, and enjoyment of the Lord I was indulged with in my travel last week, while in the railway carriage, on my way to B. How sweet those moments, rich in blessing! What condescension to such a poor worthless sinner! What matchless love towards such a base thing! What a willing captive I became to the charm of love divine! How emptied of earth and self! How sweet to be surrendered to the Lord! Oh, what a heaven on earth to live under the smiles of our most gracious God! Oh that it might be meet for me, and glorifying to God, thus to walk with Him! I could feelingly, I hope intensely, pray, "Oh that Thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that Thine hand might be with me, and that Thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me." I hope it is the Lord that has made that desire very fervent with me, that my last days may be my best days. Oh, unspeakable mercy and blessedness, to be kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Be this our rejoicing more and more. Oh, the goodness of God!

"Oh, could I know, and love Him more,
And all His wondrous grace explore."

Hymn 991 (Gadsby's) expresses my soul's desire. But the Lord has made me know heaviness is needful for me at seasons and periods eternal wisdom and infinite goodness has fixed; but Oh, the sweet truth, "God is love." And that I should know it, who would not wonder? I believe it, because I cannot help it. "It is the work of God," adored be His holy and blessed name.

Satan suggested I should not live long after that, and that I should, perhaps, meet death on my journey; and this was to prepare me for it. I suspected he sought to rob me, and was enabled to show it the Lord and ask Him to interpose; and it was not permitted to prevail with me.

As you have opportunity, I would be remembered with affection to the circle of friends with whom you meet. Grace be with you.

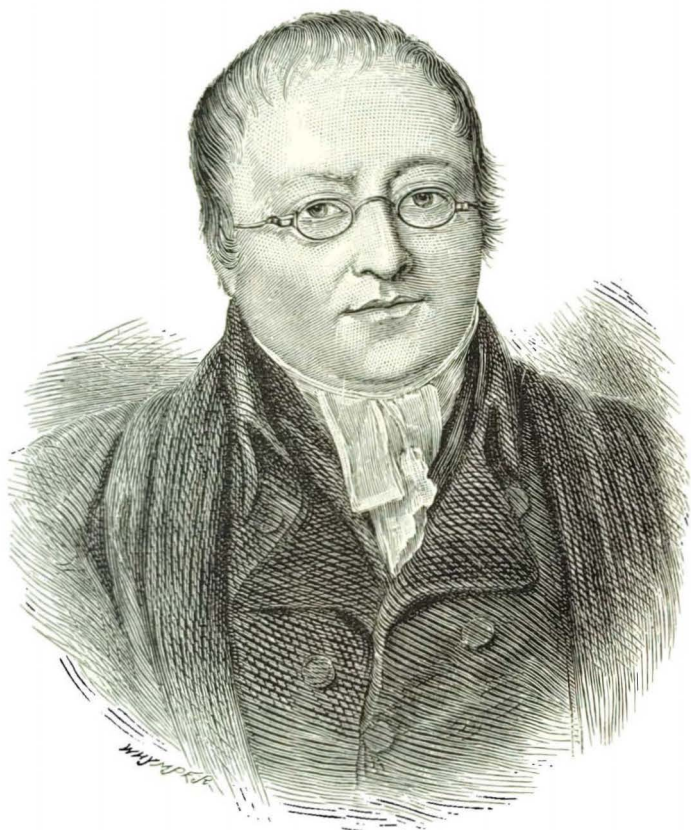
Very sincerely yours,

Walsall, Nov. 19th, 1867.

C. MOUNTFORT.

THE best way to get your graces strengthened, is to exercise them on Christ.—*Romaine.*

The Sower, June, 1896.



LEGH RICHMOND.

LEGH RICHMOND.

LEGH RICHMOND was born at Liverpool, on January 29, 1772, where his father, Dr. Henry Richmond, practised as a physician ; his mother was an estimable woman, of superior mind and acquirements. To the extent of her religious knowledge, she taught him, and she especially encouraged him in reading the Scriptures. Thus was laid the foundation of those clear views of Divine truth which afterwards distinguished him as a minister of Christ. In consequence of an accident in his childhood, which occasioned permanent lameness, he received the rudiments of a classical education from his father. He was entered at Trinity College, Cambridge, when seventeen years of age. His father had designed him for the legal profession, but his own mind was rather inclined to the Church. Consequently he was ordained in the month of June, 1797, to the curacy of Brading and Yaverland, in the Isle of Wight. His marriage with Mary, only daughter of James William Chambers, Esq., of Bath, took place shortly after. By performing his duties in a conscientious manner, he soon acquired the character of a respectable and useful young clergyman. A few months, however, after his residence at Brading, a great change took place in his views and feelings. His own words will best explain the means, &c., by which this took place. He remarks: "I feel it to be a debt of gratitude which I owe to God and man, to take this affecting opportunity of stating that to the unsought and unexpected introduction to Mr. Wilberforce's book on 'Practical Christianity' I owe, through God's mercy, the first sacred impression which I ever received as to the spiritual nature of the Gospel system, the vital character of personal religion, the corruption of the human heart, and the way of salvation by Jesus Christ. As a young minister recently ordained, and just entrusted with the charge of two parishes, I had commenced my labours too much in the spirit of the world, and founded my public instructions on the erroneous notions which prevailed amongst my academical and literary associates. The Scriptural principles stated in the 'Practical View' convinced me of my error—led me to the study of the Scriptures with an earnestness to which I had hitherto been a stranger—humbled my heart, and brought me to seek the love and blessing of that Saviour who alone can afford a peace which the world cannot give."

The change thus wrought in Mr. Richmond had a great effect on his ministry. He became now a faithful teacher of the Gospel in all its simplicity and fulness. His labours were greatly blessed, and numerous converts were the seals of his ministry. Among the first-fruits of his ministry were those characters whose life and experience form the work, "Annals of the Poor," com-

prising the "Dairyman's Daughter," "The Young Cottager," &c., which, from the simplicity and genuineness of their testimony to the grace of God, are scarcely to be equalled, and are known to this day in almost every household. Their circulation has long ago reached many millions, and the Spirit of God has owned them for much good to very many.

Soon after the great change took place in his mind, a grocer in Newport sent him some trifling article wrapped up in a leaf of Bishop Jewell's "Apology." His attention being directed to the leaf by his family, he read it, and immediately set off for Newport to inquire for the remaining pages. The grocer smiling at the anxiety of his customer, replied, "Oh yes, sir, here they are, and I have a whole hogshead of these worthies; they are much at your service for twopence a pound." The purchase was speedily effected, and to this circumstance—trifling as it may appear—Mr. Richmond owed his extensive knowledge of the writings of the reformers, from which he edited selections amounting to eight volumes. As a preacher he excelled, and was greatly blessed. Scriptural, experimental, practical, full of pathos and interest, he was listened to by crowded congregations wherever he went. He had, moreover, a remarkable simplicity of language, and a lively poetical imagination; but, more than all, he spoke *what he knew and felt*.

In the year 1805 he accepted a proposal to assist the Rev. Thomas Fry in his laborious duties as chaplain to the Lock Hospital. Here he stayed but a few months, being appointed, through the recommendation of the excellent Ambrose Serle, to the rectory of Turvey, Bedfordshire. Entering upon his new duties, he established an evening lecture, a cottage lecture among the poor, a weekly service in the workhouse, and, besides his public preaching, he was a constant visitor at the cottages of the poor, seeing to their temporal as well as spiritual needs. His first service amongst the Sunday School children was followed by the conversion of two of them. After the services of the Sabbath were over, it was his practice to meet those who had been newly awakened to spiritual life, with a view to their special direction and encouragement; and, as further showing the spiritual reality of his work, it may be added that his communicants, whom he received with the greatest caution, were for the most part the fruits of his ministry.

The following instance in which God made him a blessing deserves special mention. In the parish of Biddenham, about six miles from Turvey, lived an amiable and conscientious clergyman, whose views of divine truth on his first entrance into the ministry were, as in the case of Mr. Richmond, by no means clear. Not long after his ordination he became anxious and

dissatisfied, and he was thereby led to an earnest inquiry into the nature of the Gospel scheme. For two years his mind was kept in a state of painful conflict. At length, through the perusal of Romaine's "Discourse on the Law and Gospel," and Richmond's Extracts from the Old Divines, his mind was established in the truth, and he sought Mr. Richmond's acquaintance, and invited him to preach for him at Biddenham. The impression produced by the sermon must be stated in his friend's own words: "It was the first time," said he, "that I had ever heard a minister of his sentiments. The impressive manner in which he unfolded the great truths of the Gospel, the earnest and affectionate appeals he made to the conscience, &c., awakened in me a train of solemn reflections, and especially on the value of public preaching, when accompanied with such holy and devout affections. An intense interest and a heavenly fervour seemed to be depicted in every countenance and to be felt in every heart. I shared in the same emotions, but they were accompanied by a great depression of feeling, and a conviction that I was wholly unworthy to enter the same pulpit. Nor shall I ever forget the seasonable remark of a pious old man on the following morning, who, in dwelling on the excellencies of the preceding day's discourse, observed, 'The grace that God has given to him He can give to both you and me, for God is no respecter of persons.'" This clergyman was the Rev. T. Grimshawe.

The death, in 1825, of two of his sons, of great promise, was a great trial and sore affliction to him. For a while he shut himself up in the solitude of his study, and continued in silent communion with God. But at length he came forth, testifying to the power of God in sustaining and comforting his soul. He resumed his ministerial work with increased zeal until his last illness in 1827. The last sermons he preached were in the beginning of March, 1827. The text the first Sunday was Psalm li. 10: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me," which was carried home with power to one who had been a great persecutor, and led to his repentance. The next Sunday his sermons were very solemn, from Colossians iii. 2, and Psalm cxix. 52, 53. This last sermon was a very solemn appeal to unawakened sinners. It was remarked by one going out of the church, "This sounds as if it came from the lips of a dying man."

We should have expected, after such a life spent in the Redeemer's service, a triumphant death, but otherwise it was one of peace, although Satan was several times permitted to harass him as to his standing in Christ. When his old friend, Rev. T. Fry, called on him, and thought it necessary to remind him of his nearness to eternity, his reply was, "I know it, brother;

seven months ago I was well satisfied from whence this cough came, that it was a messenger from above. I knew what it meant." On Mr. Fry resuming the conversation, he told him how Satan had been trying him, but said, "I cast myself on the sovereign free and full grace of God in the Covenant by Christ Jesus, and there, brother (looking at him with a smile of tranquillity quite indescribable, and which he should never forget), there I have found peace."

He was very anxious that one who proclaimed the same truths of sovereign grace and love of God to lost sinners should supply his place, proving that he felt his end to be near. He never kept his bed, but rose every day to the last, only rising a little later and going to bed earlier. The last two weeks he was very silent, and appeared constantly in prayer and meditation, waiting his dismissal and the end of his earthly pilgrimage. Two days before his death he received a letter mentioning the conversion of two persons (one a clergyman) through reading the "Dairyman's Daughter," and exclaimed, "How unworthy of such honour!" The last night he was carried upstairs by his son Henry, and about ten o'clock, in the gentlest whisper, asked all to be sent away and the curtains drawn round him, and about half-past ten he peacefully breathed his last. A few days afterwards he was buried in the same vault in Turvey Churchyard with his two sons, great numbers from far and near being present, his two most attached friends, Grimshaw and Fry, conducting the funeral services.

His services on behalf of the Jews, the Church Missionary Society, and the Bible Society, were most successful, large sums being collected. After a sermon on behalf of the Church Missionary Society, at St. Bride's, Fleet Street, in 1809, the collection amounted to £331 1s., and equally large sums for several years in his annual tours were the result. His memory is fragrant, and his works do follow him.

R. F. R.

It is surprising how some people can lay hold of the doctrine of election with the greatest ease imaginable. Some book falls in their way which treats upon it. Oh, they can see it before they have read it half through. Or perhaps they hear some minister prove it by the Scriptures from the pulpit; before they leave the chapel they are thoroughly satisfied that it is true, and spring up at one leap from the lowest depths of Arminianism to the loftiest heights of Calvinism. Such abortive births do not produce full-grown men; such mushroom growth does not raise an oak or a cedar.—*J. C. Philpot.*

THE CROSS-HANDED BLESSING.

WHEN good old Jacob blessed the seed
 From Joseph's loins who came,
 He crossed his withered hands, we read,
 And God has done the same.

Thou God of Israel's chosen race,
 Whose sins deserve Thy frown,
 Oft Thou hast sent Thy richest grace
 In cross-hand blessings down.

Crosses each day, with trials hot,
 The Christian's path hath been;
 And who has found a happy lot
 Without a cross therein?

In Job's afflictions, who can doubt,
 Though neither small nor few,
 That God there dealt a blessing out,
 And that cross-handed too?

Cross-handed came the blessing down
 On Israel's hoary head,
 When Joseph's bloody coat was shown,
 As numbered with the dead.

"Not so, my Father," oft we say;
 "This pain, this grief, remove";
 Too blind to fathom Wisdom's way,
 Or think 'tis sent in love.

The cov'nant has a smarting rod,
 To make our sonship clear;
 And though 'tis sealed by oath and blood,
 There's cross-hand blessings there.

O God, we fall before Thy feet,
 Adore Thy wondrous ways,
 Who makes our bitter portions sweet,
 And turns our groans to praise.

IN spiritual conversation, so called, the talk of the lips tendeth only to penury, if what is spoken is not brought forth from labour in the heart. All your unravelling of knotty texts, and discussion of doctrines in the mere letter, only tend to penury; there is no real profit nor food in them to a gracious soul. But "in all labour there is profit." The more the heart is exercised, and the more it labours in the good things that God bestows, the more profit there will be to our own souls, and to the souls of others; and the more praise, glory, and honour there will be to the Lord.—
J. C. Philpot.

ASLEEP IN JESUS.

(Concluded from page 115.)

ON April 2nd our usual doctor joined another in consultation, and the result they came to was that nothing could be done for her except as it might be to relieve her. She seemed quite prepared for this, and she said she had been expecting it, but she was in such a calm frame of mind. She turned to me and said, "We shall be parted, but not for long. Give my love to my mother and father, and tell them I shall meet them in heaven."

After this she seemed so anxious to see her mother and father, but it was thought quite impossible for them to come, they being so aged and the journey so difficult. However, the Lord's hand was manifest towards her in this, and they were both enabled to visit her. She seemed quite overcome to think that the Lord granted her this request.

Her favourite chapter was John xiv., and she would often ask for this to be read.

About the middle of May she had a very marked token of the Lord's compassion towards her. It came about in this way. A kind friend had sent her a present of a pot of clotted cream, and she expressed a desire to have some strawberries to eat with it. This being a considerable time before the strawberry season, we thought it was impossible for her to have them. In a little while another friend came and brought the desired strawberries. The moment she saw them she burst into tears, and said, "This is a token from the Lord," and she felt that as He had thus manifested His care for her in this matter, He would not be less mindful of her when she came into the dark valley. This circumstance was so marked, because the before-mentioned friends were strangers to each other, and consequently one did not know what the other had done. She also repeated the verse—

" Oh that I could now adore Him,"

and when she came to the lines—

" Happy songsters,
When shall I your chorus join ?"

she would emphasize these two lines, and say, "It will not be long."

She would often say : " Oh that I could praise Him as I ought ; but I shall soon."

She was very much struck with a verse which was given in the " Little Gleaner " for June, 1895, which was as follows :—

" In the ark, the weary dove
 Found a welcome resting-place ;
 Thus my spirit longs to prove
 Rest in Christ, the Ark of Grace."

She felt this to be her one desire. She sent this message home to her sister, which was as follows :—

" Yes, I shall soon be landed
 On yonder shores of bliss,
 With all my powers expanded,
 To dwell where Jesus is."

On June 2nd she said, " I have been asking the Lord all this week to take me over the river, just as a mother would take her tender babe—in His arms—gently, tenderly, and carefully, and set me safe on the other side." She said she hoped we should all ask the Lord to make us ready for a dying day. She told us we should need all the grace we had for that time, and that we should have none to spare. She felt she had none to spare. She also wished the members of the Church to pray for her ; not that she might get well, but that she might be speedily taken home, and have an abundant entrance into the kingdom.

A portion of one of Mr. Wilmshurst's sermons was read to her on one occasion, and gave her a great deal of comfort. It may not be out of place to insert it here. It was a portion of the sermon he preached on March 3rd, 1895, from Psalm lxxxiv. 11:—

" There are three things that I would ever desire every sermon of mine to contain. I would first of all desire to point out to poor sinners how they need this Sun of Righteousness, and that without it they must be blind, and dead, and lost for ever. And then I would desire ever to point out the way in which the Holy Spirit leads those poor sinners to trust the Sun of Righteousness, to know some of the fulness that resides in Him. And then I would also try to point out, from time to time, what a fulness there is in this Sun of Righteousness always to meet the needs and necessities of the children of God, whether it be for strength to fight in the day of battle, or whether it be for strength to live a life of faith upon the Son of God, or whether it be for strength to die, and to pass through that valley, feeling they are not walking through it in their own strength, but that His rod and staff do comfort them."

She said, " Oh, how nice ! that is just what I want."

She used so to enjoy the visits of Mr. Wilmshurst, and many were the blessed seasons she had when he visited her. She would sometimes say, when he came into her room, " I cannot talk, you must do all the talking, and I will listen." But before long she would break out, and the things she spoke on these occasions

will be long remembered by those who heard her. On one occasion when he (Mr. Wilmshurst) visited her she said, "'Come, cheer up, brother, I feel the bottom, and it is good.'" He repeated to her—

"We too, with yonder sacred throng,
Low at His feet would fall,
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all."

She held up her hands, and looked up with longing expectation, and seemed longing to join in praise. When he had finished, she said, "I can't bring it out."

One Sunday morning, when Mr. Wilmshurst was leaving her, she said, "'Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins.'" She then added, "And I am soon going to receive the 'double.'"

On June 10th she said, "I could not endure the Lord's frown now, for if He frowned it would kill me; but He does not give me His frown, but His smiles, for He is my bright and morning Star."

One day she had this portion, "The everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." The next day she had, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee." On the following day, which was Sunday, "Perfect Peace." She also repeated a great deal the following verse:—

"Oh, that I could closer cleave
To His bleeding, dying breast;
Give me firmly to believe,
And to enter into rest.
Lord, increase, increase my faith,
Make me faithful unto death."

She had this portion given to her on another day, "He brought me into His banqueting house, and His banner over me was love." She repeated the following lines very much, and would invariably emphasize them—

"He'll fetch me from Meshech, and carry me home,
And then all my sorrows will end."

Also—

"Paid was the mighty debt I owed,
Salvation is of grace."

On Thursday, July 4th, her back being so painful that she had to cry out, she repeated the following lines:—

"Take me to love's own country,
And to Immanuel's land."

It was said to her, "There will be no bad larks there."
 "No," she said; "there will not, for it will be—

"Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep,
 From which none ever wake to weep;
 A calm and undisturbed repose,
 Unbroken by the last of foes."

It may be mentioned that she was unable to lie in bed for eight weeks, and had to sit in chairs propped up with pillows, and she would often sit with her head bent forward on her chest, and it may be imagined how trying it was for her, but there was never a word of complaint escaped her lips.

She was unconscious for the most part of the last week of her life, but she would at times speak rationally.

It was quite evident on Monday, the 8th of July, that the end could not be far distant. Early on Monday morning, the last day of her life, we repeated this verse to her—

"Soon the tempest will be over,
 To Thy destined port we sail;
 Jesus, thy eternal Lover,
 Says His word can never fail.
 Storms can never
 Reach thee more within the vail."

She at once took up the words "within the vail," and for two hours she repeated them without cessation. She would break out with "Take me, oh do take me within the vail." About midnight two were watching her, and she muttered something, and by listening very carefully, the following words were caught, which she uttered in broken accents: "Take—loves—country," which was evidently meant for the two lines of Rutherford's she was so fond of—

"Take me to love's own country,
 And to Emmanuel's land."

These were the last words she uttered, and she lapsed into unconsciousness from which she never again came out of, and at twenty minutes past two on Tuesday morning, the 9th of July, she entered into the "inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven" for her.

She expressed a wish, before she died, that on her departure we should sing—

"All hail the power of Jesus' name,
 Let angels prostrate fall;
 Bring forth the royal diadem,
 And crown Him Lord of all."

We did not feel able to sing, but we repeated the lines as soon as she had departed to be for ever with the Lord. J. W.

THINGS GOOD AND PROFITABLE.

THE profit of the soul is, or should be, as solid, as real, tangible, and substantial as the profit of business. The soul trades as well as the body; there is a business, a daily business, carried on in the closet as well as in the counting-house, at the throne of grace as well as behind the counter. The soul has its gains and losses, its receipts and payments, its account books—its waste book, journal, and ledger; the first for wasted time and opportunities, the second for the sins of each day, the third for the transgressions set down in the long debt book of memory during many years. But when the books are opened, a glance at their contents—for we need not sum up the totals or make a balance sheet—shows us our entire insolvency and total bankruptcy. Where then the profit if the whole be loss? Here, as we close the books in despair, and look upward as if without help or hope, a Friend above meets the eye who has beforehand paid every debt, and bearing our sins in His own body on the tree, “blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross” (Col. ii. 14). Is there no profit here? What! No profit in His precious blood which cleanseth from all sin? no profit in His righteousness which justifies from all things from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses? Why, it is all profit. This made David say: “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” (Psalm xxxii. 1, 2). It is this which makes Jesus so suitable, so precious, to those who believe that in Him we are blessed, already blessed, “with all spiritual blessings”; that “in Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace”; that “in Him we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will.” And why? “That we should be to the praise of His glory, who first trusted in Christ”—not in ourselves, not in our good words or good works, not in our account books, but in Christ (Eph. i. 3-12). To set forth, to exalt, and hold up to believing eyes and hearts this glorious Christ, whether by tongue or pen, is to speak to profit, for in Him “are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col. ii. 3); and as these treasures are opened and their precious contents revealed, the believing heart becomes enriched by the communication of them through the blessed Spirit. Now we believe that none but the living family of God know, or care to know, for themselves anything about this spiritual profit. In

fact, none but they have truly learnt that first element of divine teaching which makes us at all concerned about profit or loss. Our blessed Lord said, and His words touch this point to the very core, "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matt. xvi. 26.) Thus there lies a deep and weighty matter at the foundation of the whole question about profit and loss—that I have a soul to be saved or lost. What then shall I give in exchange for my soul? for what am I profited if I gain the whole world and lose that? This deep conviction of a soul to be saved or lost lies at the root of all our religion, if it be of God. Here, on one side, is the world and all its profits and pleasures; its charms, its smiles, its winning ways, its comforts, its luxuries, its honours, to gain which is the grand struggle of human life; there, on the other, is my solitary soul, immortal in a mortal body, to live in death, through death, and after death, aye, for ever and ever, when the world and all its pleasures and profits will sink under the wrath of the Almighty; and this dear soul of mine, my very self, my only self, my all, must be lost or saved. Everything, then, which I gain to the injury of my soul is positive loss; everything which I lose to the benefit of my soul is positive gain. Here is my measure, here my scale of loss and profit. My conscience keeps the account book in which the entries are made. There is a page on each side for debtor and creditor, a "To" and a "By." Against every sin, every idle or foolish word, every wandering glance, every infidel, unbelieving, unchaste, rebellious, fretful, murmuring thought, every proud, selfish, careless, carnal, worldly movement or desire, against all coldness, darkness, deadness, barrenness, prayerlessness, and the whole crop of earthliness, there is a "By." But on the opposite page over against these numerous entries, these long, long sums, there stands a "To." Every gleam and glimpse of divine light, every sweet season in prayer, every visitation of the Lord's presence and power, which preserves the spirit, every gracious promise or encouraging invitation, every soft word or gentle touch, every kind whisper, every rising hope—in a word, everything which warms, cheers, melts, and raises the soul up from earth to heaven is a blessed "To"; for all are placed to our account as so many earnestings and, as it were, prepayments of the infinite riches of the Son of God as "made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."—*J. C. Philpot.*

THAT the thoughts of a natural man are only evil (Gen. vi. 5); that his words are such (James iii. 6, 8); that his works are such (Psalm xiv. 3); and that his thoughts, words, and works are such (Rom. iii. 9).—*Romaine.*

THE LATE THOMAS HARDY, OF LEICESTER.

(Continued from page 110.)

THE following are extracts from Mr. Hardy's correspondence:—

"In doing the generation work which our one Lord hath appointed us with fidelity and diligence, there is always safety and a good conscience. My friends and I in this place (Leicester) seem made one for another in most respects. They bear quietly with my frequent absence and irregularities; and I hope I do in some measure esteem them for it; though of affections I must not say much, for my infirmities often make me feel more like a statue than a man; or like a dull jade that bears the whip and the spur incessantly, but seldom speeds his movements. Oh, how poor a thing is human life, in the fullest possession of its vigour and its enjoyments! We please ourselves by dancing on hollow ground, with an abyss beneath, fathomless and unexplored and into which we may at any moment or anywhere descend. And we esteem those flattering, hollow joys which most divert our minds from our dangers, though not our danger from our minds, as our dearest favours and most welcome comforts!"

"Covet not prosperity and honour; no man can use them aright without special grace, and pampered flesh makes a lean soul. Fear not troubles; they are the Lord's special love-tokens and His messengers; we should therefore prize them, and desire to learn their errand. (Lam. iii. 31-40.) Of friendship I would say, there is none to be depended on where there is no fear of God. The heart of man is deceitful above all things; and among real Christians friendship is a delicate plant, and will want much watering and watching. The true Church is a hospital in which all are diseased; we should ever in pity be aiming to nurse each other. Be kind to all; commit yourself to few. Conformity to the world is spiritual adultery, therefore be separate; creep out of the way like the serpent, be harmless as the dove."

"Sometimes we appoint (witness the case in hand) and the Lord disposes and disappoints, and converts what are sins (as the actions of men) to His own glory, as witness Rebecca and Jacob, the midwives of Egypt, and Rahab the harlot; and while His law condemns the act, and abases the agent, His sovereign policy seizes the former, and makes it a deodand to the honour of His grace, without the least palliation of the guilt of the offender. For me to be urged to a breach of a promise is no light affliction, neither can I for a moment allow that evil may be done that good may come."

"The best Christians I meet with are generally Huntingdonians. I am now lodging at the house of a retired tradesman, who is

subsisting on a small independence which he acquired by industry in earlier life; he is a great admirer of the 'Doctor.' His parlour, in which I am now writing, a neat and well-furnished room, is embellished with the emblematic devices published with his works, and a little party meet every Lord's Day, except when I am here (Deal), for prayer, and reading them in his house. But though most warmly attached to that great man, they are entirely free from those Papal, nonsuch ideas by which others of Mr. Huntington's admirers are subjected to his name alone; they are men sound in faith and experience, and constant and affectionate friends to Gospel truth, and the experienced professors and preachers of it, except where they learn that their favourite teacher has expressed his disapprobation, which, of course, imposes some unpleasant restrictions on those who do not acquiesce in all his views."

"I herewith send a few of my poetical flourishes. But now (1829) the days of rhyming are over with me; and in the melancholy dearth of mental enjoyments, which through disease and infirmity I am doomed to suffer, I look back with a feeling of regret upon the pleasures of warm and excursive imagination, the peculiar treats of inexperienced youth. I would not be deceived, but I would taste the crumbs of common and special providence, as I journey through this hungry wilderness. I have, however, had my day, and 'to every purpose there is a time.' With a lover of poetry, I can still talk from recollection, and languid feeling; for I have loved poetry with strong inbred affection. I love to see genius and mental application in youth, and wish them both direction and encouragement; so managed, they may be a corrective or restraint to vanity and vice. But poetic charms are often only the disguise of poison, and the harlot drapery of the most deathful and seductive errors. Poetry is often the telescope of the imagination, which magnifies its objects in the distance, but adds nothing to their solid worth at hand. Yet oratory and poetry are the gifts of God; His own inspiration exhibits the most glorious specimens of them; Nahum iii. 3 (marg.), Deut. xxxii. 42, with many others from the Book of God, are best remarked with adoring silence."

Space will only allow of two of these "poetical flourishes":—

THE TRAVELLER'S HYMN.

(Composed at the "Plume of Feathers Inn," Bristol, midnight, September 30th, 1823, on a journey to Chard, &c.)

My God, Thy bounties and Thy care,
How kind! how rich! how sure they are!
At home, how bless'd beneath Thy shade!
Abroad, how safe, by Thee conveyed!

'Mid deaths and dangers, in Thy hands;
 'Mid men unknown, in unknown lands;
 My wants but make Thy mercies sweet;
 My waitings prove them ne'er too late.

By day, though toiled, sustained and fed,
 And rest at night my weary head,
 Amid the vigils of Thy grace,
 Nor know a want but thankfulness.

Dear Lord, this earnest suit I urge,
 And own my guilt, 'tis Thine to purge;
 Dwell in my heart, direct my ways,
 And make my life Thy living praise.

Nor here my warm petition ends;
 Oh, bless my near, though distant friends
 And bear me back where'er I move,
 To glad their eyes, and taste their love.

THE CONFIDENCE OF HABAKKUK.

(A Metrical Paraphrase on Habakkuk iii. 17-19.)

ALTHOUGH no more the fig shall bloom,
 Nor more impart the teeming vine
 Her rich, luxuriant clusters, fraught
 With heart-invigorating wine!

Nor more the precious olive give
 Her choice, delicious, unctuous store;
 And yield the once abounding fields
 Their life-sustaining crops no more!

What though within nor fold, nor stall,
 One solitary hoof remain,
 But to the land's remotest bounds
 Appalling famine stretch his reign;

Yet in the Lord will I rejoice;
 Yea, with triumphant rapture, joy
 In my salvation God, in whom
 Th' eternal springs of being lie.

God is my Strength! His truth is pledged,
 His fulness all my wants shall fill:
 Supreme o'er all, of all possess'd,
 His hand shall work His gracious will!

Rich and secure as heaven's blest height,
 Stand His engaged love and care;
 And thither, like the rapid hind,
 He'll make my cheerful hopes repair.

"Well, my brother, I wish you the lash, and a daily cross, heavy enough to squeeze a groan or two an hour out of you. "We groan" is the Christian's motto—groan about *self, self*; that is the upright, and the heaviest part of the cross; the world and the devil are the traverse, or cross-beam of the cross. Now, look well that you have the upright, it is no cross without it. A natural man may have the cross-beam, the Christian has both, which altogether make Christ precious, and the believer glad of all He has to bestow; and a daily supply of His strength will be earnestly sought, and graciously given according to promise, and the precious seed that real necessity draws from Him, under the dew of the Spirit, will bring such trust as the Christian will be ashamed of and God delights in."

"My brethren! if you would keep peace and love, use the Word and prayer much; the one will confound, the other will fright the devil, for 'the Lord is nigh to all that call upon Him in trouble.' Though Satan does not fear you, he will flee from you, for the sake of your weapons and your company: and the Lord give you to flee malice as the fire of hell. You are called to unbounded forgiveness of all trespasses, try to copy it; beware of all sorts of revenge in deed or word, and of all shyness and distance, and evil surmisings—they are Satan's base coin; they look fair and sweet to deceived self, but increase the ungodliness they pretend to mend."

"I am coming to Birmingham for Sunday next, and Oldbury, &c. Should any circumstance forbid my coming, you can inform me at Dudley, the 28th. If my coming might seem to threaten any increase of your unhappy differences, let me, I pray, be far away. My nervous frame has an invincible dread of strife. The Lord grant us a heartfelt understanding of the first Epistle of John, of dwelling in love, and dwelling in God. The Lord grant us hearts to pray for it, and for the prosperity of Jerusalem, its peace, and its holiness: and for more of that religion that is enjoyed on the knees; and that comes in sweet supplies from God, and leads to Him. Grace, grace, be with you."

"The Lord grant us more of the peace that comes from a free pardon, *full and free*, in the blood of Jesus; more of fellowship truly with Him, to satisfy and sanctify our hearts. Then a little of the world will go a great way. I am sure there is no wisdom and no true peace but in truly following Christ. All the fine things of the world can only bewitch us, and strip and torment us, and leave us naked and wounded. One taste of God's love, in the enjoyment of His promises, is worth infinitely more than all the world can bestow; it is a taste of heaven and glory for the present, and a pledge that we shall surely enjoy them hereafter."

"I trust I sympathize with you in your loss, and was warned of its approach by Mr. Gadsby, as he went through Leicester last Thursday. I wish you the God of all comfort to make it up. Great creature comforts are some of our greatest snares and dangers. May you remember we marry to part; we contract in life, to be parted in death: the contract is fulfilled with you. God gave to you a very valuable gift; but only for a time: for that gift, and continuing it so long, He deserves your very hearty thanks; and above all for taking her to Himself. The Christian's sorrows should be very short upon the loss of friends; they are gone where it is far better, and where we hope soon to follow them. Thus we have two motives to joy, and but one to sorrow; but the Lord comfort you, and make your loss your gain."

"You seem in straits and troubles. I would wish you to be a little child, and let the Everlasting Father do all; submit to be carried through. Almighty love hath said, 'Fear not.' And where infinite wisdom can find nothing terrible, reason and unbelief must not be heard, however gloomy their reports may be. The covetous schemes and restless malice of men, like Absalom's hair, shall hang them up an easy prey for divine, justice. All God's enemies scheme to execute His purposes, while they greedily pursue their own. Laban means to be rich by oppression and fraud; and Jacob must smart, till chastening love has done enough for his good; it will then execute judgment for the oppressed, and give Jacob better wages than if Laban had been just. Only wait and watch."

(To be continued.)

IMPORTANT QUESTIONS.

AFTER reverting to the Seven Churches, Dr. Keith asks:—
"What is your labour of love, or wherein do you labour at all for His name's sake by whose name you are called? What trials does your faith patiently endure, what temptations does it triumphantly overcome? Is Christ in you the hope of glory, and is your heart purified through that blessed hope? To a Church we suppose you may belong, but whose is the kingdom within you? What principles ever actuate you which Christ and His Apostles taught? Where, in your affections and life, are the fruits of the Spirit—"love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, temperance"? Turn the precepts of the Gospel into questions, and ask thus, what the Spirit would say unto you, as He said unto the Churches.—*Keith on Prophecy.*

GONE HOME.

DEAR MR. HULL,—I wrote you some time since *re* the little cause at Marlborough. Our dear friend *Joseph* (not James) Chivers has now passed away, and I would just like to mention him, so that your readers, some of whom knew him well, may, in this way, just see the last of him.

Mr. Joseph Chivers, of Marlborough, has just passed away, aged sixty-seven years. He was a native of Devizes, but has lived here nearly fifty years. He has gradually grown weaker the last three months, until about the middle of April, when it became more pronounced, and we could see the end was near. I had called to see him for an hour every Thursday for many weeks, and often we enjoyed those visits together in converse, reading and prayer.

On the 23rd I called, and found him much worse. He was too weak to talk, or to listen to the reading of the Word, but was sensible. Before leaving I spent about one minute in prayer, commending him to God's paternal care. When I ceased he at once took up the theme earnestly and solemnly, concluding with a most hearty Amen. I then took my farewell of him, never expecting to see him again in this world. He had been considerably dark in his mind during his illness, with some sweet intervals of light, and near his end had severe conflict with the great enemy. But on Friday afternoon the Lord appeared, shining into his soul, and filling him with peace, so that he was sufficiently strengthened to raise his shrunken arms and shout, "Victory, victory!" very soon after which he quieted down and passed away as if in sleep.

On Wednesday the 29th, we buried his remains in the cemetery at Marlborough, "in glorious hope of a joyful resurrection," in the midst of a number of friends who loved him for the truth's sake.

We held a service in the chapel in the evening, when a few appropriate observations were made from the text, "And they shall see His face" (Rev. xxii. 4); and thus closed the scene of a dear friend who had stood firm by the truth of God, not only in profession, but in practice, and so adorned the doctrine of God his Saviour. He leaves a widow and family to mourn their loss, but who had the trial wonderfully and graciously softened by the triumphant end vouchsafed to the dear departed.

Swindon, April 30th, 1896.

R. PIGOTT.

CHRIST sits at the right hand of God, to manage all our concerns for us.—*Romaine*.

THE SEEKERS' CORNER.

"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God."—
HEBREWS iv. 9.

WHAT sweet words are these, "A rest yet remains,"
Where saints shall be free from sorrow and pains;
Though cast down and weary, they rest shall obtain,
Though Satan oft says that their hope is but vain.

Ye, tempest-tossed souls, dejected, oppressed,
Who sigh and who groan, for you there is rest;
Your sorrow and sighing to singing shall turn;
Your heart, though oft cold, with love shall yet burn.

As onward you move, a taste of His love
Will make you look up, and soar far above
The vain, empty pleasures of earth and of time,
And help you to dwell on the promise divine.

Your faith is oft weak, your foes they are strong,
Yet soon you shall join yon heav'nly throng.
Thy Lord and Redeemer, Himself has thus spoke,
Nor can He, nor will He, one word e'er revoke:—

"A mansion I go for you to prepare,
That you in My joy and glory may share:
I'll give you for ever a place near My heart,
And from Me, I promise, you ne'er shall depart.

"My face you shall see, My glory behold,
And share in such bliss as never was told;
The song of salvation for ever shall sing.
To Me, thy Redeemer, thy Saviour and King.

"I have seen all thy fears, beheld all thy woes,
How Satan and sin thy way do oppose;
Through Me thou shalt conquer thy foes, then be brave,
For I thy Redeemer am mighty to save.

"Fear not little flock, through Me you shall live,
My Father to you the kingdom will give;
And each seeking sinner who thirsts for My grace
Shall find in My presence a sweet resting place."

Charlbury.

P. E. PARSONS (*slightly altered*).

MY DEAR MR. —,—I could not tell you as I wished this morning of the goodness of the Lord to me, so will try and write a few lines. During the past few weeks I have been passing through some sore trials without, and sin and Satan have sorely plagued me within; so that I have feared all these things were

against me, and often have exclaimed with the Apostle, "When I would do good evil is present with me." Last night I fell on my knees and told the Lord, one more wave, if He did not appear, would sink me into despair. I felt truly wretched and helpless. Unbelief was raging, and Satan told me the Lord would regard my cry no more. It was with these feelings I went to chapel. How I tried to beg of the Lord that some word might be spoken to my case, and after you read your text, and began to speak of those who felt wretched on account of indwelling sin, you described my case far better than I could have done. Oh what a sore plague are sin and unbelief, and how, at times, they appear almost as if they would crush us. I feel it is a mercy that the experiences of the saints of old are left upon record, for it is an encouragement sometimes to read of the low places they went into after being so greatly blessed. It is indeed a conflict, and sometimes it appears as if the old nature will gain the victory; but what a mercy that now and again the Lord gives us to feel that

"He who conquered *for* us once,
Will *in* us conquer too."

I have no other refuge, and am compelled to go to Him and confess my weakness and vileness, and more and more I am persuaded that none but Jesus could do such a helpless sinner good; and when He does me good I want to praise Him. To-day I feel I can praise Him, even for the trials. They have taught me my weakness, and caused me to go to Him for refuge and strength, as my All and in all. I have nowhere else to look, but am compelled to fall before Him, as the poet says—

"A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,
On Thy kind arms I fall;
Be Thou my Strength and Righteousness,
My Jesus and my All."

All my hope is centred there. I do trust, dear Mr. —, the Lord will be gracious unto you, and give you many encouragements, to show that you do not labour in vain, nor spend your strength for nought. Please forgive this scrawl. Believe me to remain,
Your affectionate young friend, E. V.

If there be any union between you and Jesus Christ, however far off you may be; if in the uppermost branch, a twig at the end of that derives its sap from the root; if you can prove there is any communication between Christ and you, how eternally safe you are.—*Covell.*

ANSWERS TO INQUIRIES.

To R. C.—The subject of visions is a very important one, as no doubt some have been favoured by the Lord with a view by faith of Christ crucified for them, as distinctly as though they beheld with their natural eyes; while in the case of others, who have made great professions of such visions, we have little reason to hope, judging by results, that there was anything spiritual and saving connected with them. The former always have a humbling effect upon the soul, while Christ is made very precious, and is greatly loved and adored; and the great secret of personal interest in redeeming grace and dying love is so opened up that the heart is drawn to Christ, and is constrained by love to love Him and to follow Him in return. The great thing, after all, is to be brought to so believe as to rejoice in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh. It is not good to place confidence in visions, as some do, who only have a visionary religion, but it is well, when we can believe with the heart, let the testimony come in what form it may. Of all who receive the Word in their hearts we may say, "Blessed are they," for they believe to the saving of the soul. We hope this is our friend's case.—ED.

To E. F. K.—The discerning of spirits spoken of in 1 Cor. xii. 10, was one of the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost conferred on the Apostles, by which those who received it could discern between the true and false spirits of professors, as Peter did in the cases of Ananias and Sapphira, and Simon Magus, who, although they were with the Apostles in profession, were destitute of the Spirit of Christ, and as such were made manifest before men, as being deceivers. This gift, with the rest of those specially conferred, such as speaking with tongues, working miracles, &c., all ceased with the Apostles, which shows the fallacy of the so much talked of Apostolic succession by proud, boastful men, as there is no power vested in any set of men to confer such gifts now; that has long passed away. The gift of grace in the heart by the Abiding Comforter the Holy Ghost, however, will never be taken away, where it is once bestowed, for it is eternal life, according to the *everlasting* Covenant.—ED.

PERHAPS you are ready to say, "I am afraid I am not a child of God because I am so dull and lifeless, my prayers are so cold and dead, and I am so heavy and careless under ordinances." This is the method God takes to make you discontented with yourself, your duties and performances, and to make you look at Christ as your all.—*Romaine*.

THOUGHTS ON DAILY READINGS.

"From the end of the earth will I cry unto Thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the Rock that is higher than I."—PSALM lxi. 2.

THE end of the earth signifies a place at a great distance, a *most distant* part. Yet even there the Lord has some whom He calls to salvation (see Isaiah xlv. 22). And He is the confidence of others who dwell, or have been driven there. The Psalmist at times knew what it was in soul feeling to be thus far off from God and peace—at an extremity. And at the same time, in overwhelming trouble (see Psalm xlii. 6, 7), where he speaks of being greatly cast down in the midst of trouble; and in Psalm xl. 12, he complains of being encompassed with innumerable evils; and his iniquities also had so taken hold upon him that his heart failed him. Again, in Psalm cxliii. 3, 4, he speaks of being overwhelmed by the persecutions and smittings of the enemy. But in each case his prayer went up and his hands were stretched forth unto the God of his life, who heard him, and delivered him from all his fears (see Psalm xxxiv. 4). Yes, he knew God as his Rock and Refuge (Psalm lxii. 5-7), and in trouble he looked to this strong-hold as his hiding place (Psalm xxxii. 7). And when complaining of the cruel treachery of false friends, he says, "As for me, I will call upon God, and the Lord shall save me" (Psalm lv. 16). Thus he was led to the Rock of his refuge, which never failed him, and, being thus encouraged, he here says, "When I am at the end of the earth, as far off from God, apparently, as I can be, and my heart is overwhelmed with troubles and distress, I will still cry unto Thee, O God, 'Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I,' which can overshadow me; yea, in whose cleft I may hide, until these calamities be overpast." He knew the secret place of the Most High, the Lord Jesus, and the blessedness, safety, and peace which are the result of dwelling under the shadow of the Almighty (Psalm xci. 1, 2). Yes, *He* was the Rock of his refuge and strength. He it was who brought him up from the horrible pit and the miry clay, and set his feet upon a rock, as He said to Peter, "On this rock will I build my Church." Oh, what a mercy to know Christ as a Refuge, to "be found in Him"! And what a mercy to be led to this Rock in times of trouble, and to be brought back to Him after being a wanderer in strange paths, or having been driven to the end of the earth by temptations, adversities, or enemies! David could say, "Thou hast been my help." Therefore he was encouraged to cry unto Him in fresh troubles for help, safety, and rest. O my soul, how often thy

cry has gone up, "Lead *me* to the Rock that is higher than I." And still this blessed Friend is needful to Thee, for still thou art at times "troubled on every side," driven by various contrary winds to the end of the earth, feeling solitary, deserted, and disconsolate. Nevertheless, "Thou hast been my help" encourages thee to look again to His holy temple, Jesus; and is not this the desire of thy heart in every trouble, "Still to this Rock may I be led"?—ED.

LETTER FOR THE YOUNG.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—On reading your note, I find you are walking in the way of those that came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb; and if we are blessed with a good hope in Him who is the way, &c., He will afford us that strength, patience, and resignation that our souls need, and so sanctify our afflictions as shall bring praise to His holy name, and cause us to say it was good for us to be afflicted. May we see His hand in all our trials, seek resignation and submission, and bless the hand that hath appointed them, remembering that in all our afflictions He was afflicted.

Is it not in this way He often reveals His secrets to our souls, and makes Himself precious as the good Physician, and as a Brother born for adversity, seeing that tribulation worketh patience, patience experience, and experience hope, and that hope maketh not ashamed, and all through the love of Jesus coming to our souls, by the power of the Eternal Spirit revealing to our hearts that love is inscribed upon them all? Thus may we come out of tribulation with our souls washed in the Redeemer's blood, and singing, "Salvation unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever."

I hope He will so sanctify your trouble to your soul, as will bring a revenue of praise to His great name.

I have been confined to my house nearly six weeks, and do not know how long it may please the Lord to continue it; yet I want to see His hand and realize His presence in it, that I may be obedient to His will in all things.

Yours in Christian bonds,

G. K.

I TRUST I can say, with all my carnality and worldly-mindedness, I value a smile from God, a hope in His mercy, a touch from Him, a grain of His grace, above all this world calls good or great. "Let me have Thee my God; then others may take what they please."—Covell.



JOHN NEWTON'S STUDY.

JOHN NEWTON'S STUDY.

THE accompanying illustration represents John Newton's study in Olney Vicarage, which is now much as it was more than a century ago, when he resided there for sixteen years, from 1764. The Vicarage was rebuilt and enlarged for him by Lord Dartmouth, and he entered upon this new abode in October, 1767. His reflections upon the occasion are as follow :—

"I am desirous to set this apart as a day of solemn prayer, to ask the Lord to afford us His gracious presence in our new habitation, and I desire to humble myself before Him for my faint sense and poor improvement of all His mercies, and to make a new surrender of myself and my all to His service. I am a poor wretch that once wandered naked and barefoot, without a home, without a friend ; and now for me who once used to lie on the ground and was treated as a dog by all around me, Thou hast prepared a house suitable to the connection Thou hast put me into."

He had painted on a panel over the mantelpiece the two Scriptures : "Since thou wast precious in My sight, thou hast been honourable" (Isaiah xliii. 4). But ! "Thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt, and the Lord thy God redeemed thee" (Deut. xv. 15).

It is an attic on the third floor with a dormer window, and notwithstanding the many changes that have taken place in the occupants of the house during so long a period, this valuable memento of such an honourable and justly esteemed servant of the Lord has been allowed to remain, and bears its silent witness to the power and effects of God's free grace, mercy, and love. The good man evidently wished to keep in mind the two conditions set forth in those two portions of God's Word. Not only to remember what he now was by and through the grace of God, to what an exalted position he had thereby been raised, and that Jesus Christ had claimed him as His own, a son of God and a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that now he was beheld in Christ blameless, without spot or wrinkle, or any other such thing, dear and precious in the sight of God. Yet as the Apostle says, "Lest he should be exalted above measure" in the knowledge and experience of these things—But ! but ! !—"thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt." "Look unto the hole of the pit whence ye were digged, and to the rock whence ye are hewn." "Jacob's acknowledgment," with a little variation, becomes me," he said, for "with my staff I came over Jordan, and now I am become two bands." What a wretch was I in Africa ! And how is it with me now ? It is one of the greatest wonders that such a wretch, such a demoniac as

I once was, should be capable of feeling so strong an attachment to the Lord's people. Well may I say, 'What hath God wrought' !

" Thy people wonder when they see
A wretch like me restored,
And point and say, ' How changed is he
Who once defied the Lord.'

" In my late illness I was enabled to see and to feel that I was not my own, that He had bought me with His blood, has a right to dispose of me and to say, 'Go here,' or 'sit there,' as He sees best; and further, that His sovereign authority is combined with infinite mercy, and that He has promised to choose and manage far better for me than I could choose for myself, if permitted. I aimed, and still aim, to say from my heart, 'What, when, and how Thou wilt.' My sins and follies banished me to the house of bondage in Africa, where I was the scorn and pity of slaves. From thence He redeemed me when I knew Him not, when I defied Him. He has since given me a name and a place among His children. My case is almost as singular as Jonah's. He was the only one delivered, after having been entombed in the belly of the fish, and I, perhaps, am the only one ever brought from bondage and misery in Africa to preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified. 'Oh, magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together' ! I wish to be more thankful for what the Lord has been to me, but I long to rise a step higher still, to be enabled to contemplate His character as displayed by the cross of Christ, so that I may continually admire and adore Him for what He is in Himself. He would have been great and glorious, wise, powerful, holy, and gracious, though I had never been brought into existence, or had been left to perish as I deserved. There would have been a redeemed company though I had never known Him. Here I would so fix my eyes and thoughts as in a manner to forget myself; and then, when my heart was overwhelmed as it were with His majesty, combined with mercy, His glory shining in grace, to bring the matter home, and say, with gratitude and triumph, 'This God'—this great and wonderful God—'is our God' ! Yea, is my God !"

On taking up his abode at Olney, when he had preached six sermons, he thought he had told them his whole stock, and was considerably depressed thereby; but, walking one afternoon by the side of the river Ouse, he says: "I asked myself, How long has this river run? Many hundred years before I was born, and will certainly run on many years after I am gone. Who supplies the fountain from whence this river comes? God. Is not the fund of my sermons equally inexhaustible? The Word of God ?

Yes, surely, I have never been afraid of running out since that time."

Writing from Olney to Mrs. L——, he says: "I seem not cut out for a London situation, and have therefore reason to be thankful that my lot is cast in a retired corner; and though I am glad occasionally to see my friend, yet I am glad to get back out of the noise, smoke, and bustle. However, the path of duty, lead where it will, is always safe, provided we are aware of danger, and are dependent upon the Lord to keep us. He is all-sufficient to His people in every place and circumstance. His presence can make a dungeon pleasant, and without it a palace would prove a dungeon to a soul that has tasted He is gracious. I am surrounded here by the poor lace-makers, and see much of poverty. Most of our serious people are exercised with it; some have little more than bread; some, who are slow workers or used to coarse laces, can hardly get so much as bread without contracting debts, which distresses them. The Lord, notwithstanding, carries them through, and at times gives them meat which the world knows not of. By being placed among such a people, I hope the Lord shows me that I have great reason to be thankful for the necessities and comforts of life."

Mr. Newton was seldom without guests at the Vicarage, being encouraged and aided by his friend, Mr. John Thornton, "to be hospitable and keep an open house for such as are worthy of entertainment, help the poor and needy. I will statedly allow you £200 a year, and readily send whenever you have occasion to draw for more"; and considering the condition of many of his flock, there was ample scope for this liberality, which doubtless proved a very great blessing to them. He established cottage prayer meetings, and frequently in his excursions about Olney and the neighbouring villages, would meet a few poor women, read the Word of God to, and pray with them, and then proceed on his journey. By the kind permission of Lord Dartmouth, he used the Great House, an unoccupied mansion for the same purpose, and exposition of the Scriptures, where himself, with his friends, "Bull," of Newport Pagnell, John Berridge, Rowland Hill, Joshua Symonds, of the Bunyan Meeting, Bedford, and others, as often as he could get them there, gave addresses, singing the Olney hymns, many of which were composed specially for these occasions. On the re-opening of this house for prayer by the river side, the two following hymns were composed; one by John Newton, beginning—

"O Lord, our languid souls inspire,
For here we trust Thou art;
Send down a coal of heavenly fire
To warm each waiting heart," &c.;

the other by Cowper, beginning—

“ Jesus, where’er Thy people meet,
There they behold Thy mercy-seat;
Where’er they seek Thee, Thou art found,
And every place is hallowed ground,” &c.

Cowper here joined with the humble worshippers, pouring forth his heart before God in earnest supplication, with a devotion equally simple and fervent.

Mr. Newton's diary has this record: “*Tuesday*.—Drank tea at Mr. Drake's, minister of the chapel at Olney. Preached at the Great House, from Heb. ii. 18, ‘For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted,’ to which I was led by Mr. Cowper's prayer.”

“*Friday*.—Went to meet the little society at Molly Mole's cottage. The Lord has been pleased to awaken several young persons of late, and to incline their hearts to meet together.”

A list of names exists of those who took part in these hallowed and soul-strengthening seasons. Amongst others are these—R. Stamford Chater; Hull; Jones, Curate of Olifton; Trinder, of Northampton, Kaye, &c., &c.

Mr. Newton was very plain and practical in his addresses, preaching only Jesus Christ as the Saviour of sinners, which he had been led to from the following circumstance coming to his knowledge before he went to Olney. A friend of his was desired to visit a woman in prison. He was informed of her evil habit of life, and therefore spoke strongly of the terrors of the Lord and the curses of the law. She heard him awhile, and then laughed in his face. Upon this he changed his note, and spoke of the Saviour, of what He had done and suffered for sinners. He had not talked long in this strain before he saw a tear or two in her eyes. At length she interrupted him by saying, “Why, sir, do you think there can be any hope of mercy for me?” He answered, “Yes, if you feel your need of it, and are willing to seek it in God's appointed way. I am sure it is as free for you as for myself.” She replied, “Ah! if I had thought so, I should not have been in this prison. I long since settled it in my mind that I was utterly lost, that I had sinned beyond all possibility of forgiveness, and that made me desperate.” He visited her several times, and when she went away (for she was transported) he had good reason to believe she was truly converted. Christ crucified is the wisdom and the power of God.

In this study he composed many of his hymns, 280 in number, which, with those of his friend Cowper, form the well-known and much-valued “Olney Hymns.” Can we not imagine him looking up at those two scriptures, and then writing—

"Amazing grace (how sweet the sound)
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see."—(Hymn 41, Book I.)

or,

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear;
It soothes his sorrow, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear."—(Hymn 57, Book I.)

or,

"The saints Emmanuel's portion are,
Redeemed by price, reclaimed by power;
His special choice and tender care,
Owns them and guards them every hour.

"He finds them in a barren land,
Beset with sins and fears and woes;
He leads and guides them by His hand,
And bears them safe from all their foes."

—(Hymn 99, Book III.)

The letters also, comprising two other of his most valued works, "Omicron" and "Cardiphonia," were written during his residence in this home. Mr. Cowper helped him to the title-page of the last named, which ran as follows: "Cardiphonia; or, the Utterances of the Heart. In a Collection of Letters written in the course of a real Correspondence on a variety of Religious Subjects. By Omicron. 'As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man' (Prov. xxvii. 19)."

After leaving Olney, Mr. Newton thus writes to one of his successors at the Vicarage:—"Methinks I see you sitting in my old corner in the study. I will warn you of one thing—that room (do not start) used to be haunted. I cannot say I ever saw or heard anything with my bodily organs, but I have been sure there were evil spirits in it, and very near me—a spirit of folly, a spirit of indolence, a spirit of unbelief, and many others—indeed, their name is legion. But why should I say they are in your study, when they followed me to London, and still pester me here?"

A most endeared friendship existed between Mr. Newton and Mr. Cowper during the residence at Olney, and on one occasion, while suffering from his well-known malady, Mr. Cowper, with Mrs. Unwin, resided fourteen months, in 1773-4, in Mr. Newton's house, so that we do not wonder at his writing thus after Mr. Newton had left it: "The Vicarage House became a melancholy object as soon as Mr. Newton left it. As I walked in the garden this evening, I saw the smoke issue from the study chimney,

and said to myself, 'That used to be the sign that Mr. Newton was there,' but it is so no longer."

During a visit to Olney many years after his removal to London, being in this little Bethel spot, he says: "The texts over the fireplace are looking at me in the face while I write. A thousand thoughts crowd upon me—what I have seen, what I have known of the Lord's goodness, and of my own evil heart, what sorrow, and what comforts in this house! All is now past; the remembrance only remains, as of a dream when we awake. Ere long we shall have done with changes."

"BEHOLD, HE COMETH!"

HE cometh, He cometh, His coming is nearing,
When they shall be like Him who love His appearing;
When suddenly out of our lives shall be driven
All care, save a care for the favour of Heaven;
When infinite comfort or awful despair
Shall break on the mass of humanity there.

Oh, what will it be to be waked from our slumber,
To see what we've thought upon times without number!
To have—though a multitude surges around us—
No thought save the thought that Jehovah has found us:
He cometh, He cometh; oh, what will it be,
My children, my children, for you and for me?

Popes, nuns, and the priesthood, the dupe, the deceiver,
Shall stand before God with the lowly believer;
And oh, who may speak of that far-reaching sentence,
From which there is given no space for repentance!
All nations, all tribes, in that judgment must share;
Each sinner of Adam's descent will be there.

The critic, the scholar, the bland Unitarian,
Who dares to dethrone the Lord Jesus; the Arian;
The braggart who boldly blasphemes in his revels,
Shall share the beliefs and the trembling of devils;
They see Him, they know Him, the Christ of the Word;
And the Lamb that was slain wears the crown and the sword.

And who will dare say that He comes without warning?
The words are familiar from memory's dawning—
"Behold, I come quickly; watch, watch, and be ready;
Your loins girt about, and your lamps burning steady."
The Church, like the world, seems the fact to ignore,
Though all things betoken the Judge at the door.

O Lord, for Thy name's sake, we ask Thee to waken
The slothful believers; and those who are shaken
With terror and doubt, we beseech Thee to nourish;
Let hope lift her head and expectancy flourish;
So those who have loved Thee and longed for Thy grace
May think without shrinking of seeing Thy face.

We long for Thy coming in sweet revelation,
Then why should we fear Thy return with salvation?
But oh, the dread length of eternity's story!
And we are such sinners to step into glory!
Lord, quiet our fears: *Thou* canst suffer no loss;
Thou comest to gather the fruit of Thy cross.

How strange that our hearts for one moment should wander,
Or cease Thy momentous appearing to ponder;
And strange, if we hope in the world's dissolution
To put off these bodies of sin and pollution,
That sleeping or waking our hearts should not be
O'erflowing with gratitude, Jesus, to Thee.

Galleywood.

M. A. CHAPLIN.

SIN is a wretched master to serve, all the wages he promises is death. If we look at some of his servants that served him well—"Follow after me earnestly, I will give you the damnation of hell." They did follow him, and they got it. What he promised them they have got, and what God threatened them with they have realized. God is as sure to His threatenings as He is to His promises.—*Covell.*

TRUE WISDOM.—Though there be never so many that recant and deny God's Holy Word, either in their living and conversation, or in their words, writing, or preaching; yet as many of us as are entered into the school of that wisdom which is from above, let us be true scholars of the same; and, indeed, let us even enter into the nature and kind thereof, which, as St. James saith (James iii.), "is pure, peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without judging and simulation." Which thing if we do, then shall we follow no filthy doctrine nor counterfeited wisdom; then shall we be no breakers of peace; then shall we be as glad to forgive as we would be forgiven; glad to be reformed; rich and plentiful in the works of mercy and good fruits of the old faith; then shall we be no quarrel-pickers or dissemblers with any man; then shall we not only be found the maintainers of peace and all good order, but peaceably also and in all gentle manner shall we, both in word and deed, sow, spread abroad, and show the fruit of that righteousness which speaketh only of God through Jesus Christ.—*Bishop Coverdale, 1487-1568.*

THE LATE THOMAS HARDY, OF LEICESTER.

(Continued from page 138.)

THE following are additional extracts from Mr. Hardy's correspondence :—

"It is, in my view, the greatest miracle ever wrought by men, through God's power, that they should ever be able in their circumstances to rejoice before God, when a single transgression of His law deserves eternal wrath, and the poor believing sinner has nothing but what is sinful of his own, and, consequently, damning; feeling generally, nothing but the desperate vileness of his own heart, unable to think any thing truly good; in many things continually offending, and living every moment on the overflowings of the mercy and goodness of that righteous God, and rendering such base returns. That such an one should get above black despair, and not only hope, but rejoice before God, feeling in himself the Spirit of power, love, and a sound mind, is the greatest of wonders: it proclaims aloud that the way of salvation in which he walks is the Lord's own way—His best good pleasure, which is equally sovereign, eternal, and unchangeable; it no less loudly proved the preciousness of Christ's blood as more than a satisfaction—it is an infinite honour to God's justice to be pacified at such a price; His righteousness, above all measure infinitely precious, thus to clothe corruption and enmity as with wrought gold, for our whole guilty persons are justified from all things in Him, 'We are complete in Him.'"

"How evident it appears that nothing but the simple good pleasure of God's self-moving will determined His love to the vessels of mercy. This is a doctrine most hateful to carnal reason, and to all who have not been killed by the coming of the commandment, as Paul was. It is sweet to none but those whose faith standeth in the power of God; and it is not sweet to them, but as their busy presumptuous reason is subdued to the teachings and demonstrations of the Holy Ghost."

"God's people have nothing but what He gives, and can only repay Him with His own; the more they receive, the more they pay, and they beg for all; children under good management hold neither purse, cupboard, nor pantry; this is the rule with God. Nothing pleases Him without faith; and faith can live nowhere but among wants, and sins, and troubles. That faith that dwells among full bellies and self-righteous souls, is like a fire in the chimney-top; it makes the neighbours stare, but never warms the house. Where true faith is, prayer follows—as the shadow, the sun. God's children are daily beggars: the command is, 'Pray always,' which is the same as saying, 'You shall always have wants,' for full states only lead

to tongue thrashing and lip labour, and would never set His children upon true praying."

"In the eternal state God must be all in all; the perfection of beauty, and the perfection of glory, in the face of Jesus Christ. There shall be no more sorrow, nor pain, nor fear! Our God, for ever and ever, will there allow us no meaner joys than those of His immediate presence; no object of love or delight but what are immortal and incorruptible. Connubial and parental ties—the sources of unutterable griefs, and trembling, fleeting pleasures, will have no place *there*; though so absolutely necessary *here*, for the propagation of our race, and for training them up to act as our successors, and to answer the future destinations of God concerning them. Riches, honours, sensual gratifications, will there only be remembered to be disregarded, as the playthings of our infant years are in maturer age. The bitters of mortal life far outweigh the sweets; while the sweets make mortality tolerable, the bitters make it truly distasteful to the soul that has tasted the consolations that are in Christ, the blessed hope of incorruptible and eternal glory."

On the 8th May, 1832, Mr. Hardy left home for his last journey into Kent and Sussex. On the 13th he preached three times at Lewes. On the 28th he wrote a friend that he reached Deal the previous evening, and felt wonderfully well in health! The next day, however, he was seized with a kind of palsy at the right side of his face, which his doctor defined as a determination of blood to his head. His right eye became affected, so that two prospects or two persons appeared to his sight when only one was before him. This involved the constant use of spectacles, &c. He nevertheless suffered so much from the nervous motion of his eye and face near it, that in preaching he was frequently obliged to hold his hand before it. Unaware of the serious nature of the attack on the 29th, he laboured on, traversed Kent and Sussex three times, and preached not less than fifty sermons before he reached home on the 23rd June; on which date he had not attained his forty-second year, and had not been in the ministry quite sixteen years.

As already related by Mr. Fowler, he was obliged to be bled at Dunstable before he reached home, and from that time till his decease in the following year he was more or less in failing health; he continued to preach, however, and kept up a very sweet correspondence with his friends, from which the following extracts are made:—

"*Leicester, July 15th, 1832.*—My case seems to myself doubtful, and there appears some danger of paralysis, but I

go to the pulpit, and am most favoured there. It will, I expect, cure till it kills. The Gospel bears my spirits up; it reveals a covenant ordered in all things and sure. I had sweet comfort this morning in public worship. Precious were those fine words, 'When sickness and disease invade,' &c., as sung by the congregation. I preached from Lam. iii. 22, 23. God's faithfulness and unfailing compassions were precious medicines to a sin-sick soul and a sin-sick body. I long to enjoy more of those glorious views of Christ, which eclipse all other things. I long for full conformity to His blessed will—to be quite content with Christ as my all, and to bear all the ills of life without a murmur, for His sake."

"*July 20th.*—These words have been sweet to me in my afflictions, '*Neither faint when thou art rebuked of Him,*' and I have had some great bitterness. I have seen afresh how vain everything is, but the one thing needful, to know and follow Christ wholly. To be with Paul, when he said, 'For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.' Oh! for grace to give all diligence to be found of Him in peace. Lord, grant it me, and my dearest friends."

"*July 24th.*—I hope I am progressing, though slowly, towards a recovery. Rest and quiet seem very essential to my restoration; rest, however, unstrings the nerves, and lets out the phantoms of melancholy to torment me; but I sometimes play truant to the doctor by creeping out a little, by which I hope his credit will not suffer. I am praying from time to time for a visit from the Physician of souls, for a word or a look in love from Him makes all suffering light. There is a way of seeing things in tribulation—I mean all things—things which no time of prosperity can supply; the world then is seen as very vain and delusive indeed, sin intolerably heavy, every creature arm too short to reach the case; yea, its proffered help is a mockery; and then, one word from the Spirit and power of God testifying of the forgiveness of sins, and of interest in Jesus Christ is worth everything besides—is the inexhaustible true treasure, which having, one can neither be poor, nor miserable, nor discouraged. Lord, grant us more of this. A blind girl, organist to a church in Wales, is just come in with a neighbour whom she is visiting, and is entertaining me with Handel's fine strain, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth.'"

"*August 22nd.*—I have been out eighteen days, to a village near Uppingham, for the recovery of my health. My right eye is far recovered from the double sight of which I complained; but I find it difficult to write, from the state of my head. God only must be our portion in this world of woe, delusions, and changes, if we find rest to our souls. In Jesus, He can and will be so.

His justice, power, and wisdom are our pledges, as well as His love and mercies. Christians should not take one step without His word, nor act when they have prayed, till they have waited, till He draws or drives them on. Our desires, passions, and pleasures, the Lord save us from. I have had much darkness and temptation in my affliction ; but had some sweet comforts, and have ever been helped with a little help."

"*Horninghold, September 2nd.*—I received yours of 29th, at this place, where I have been since Monday last, for the sake of rest and quietness, air, exercise, &c.* I am with a friend, a farmer, named Falkner. My medical men seem to think that my complaint will take a long time for its removal. I wish for far more patience and thankfulness. Great is the mercy of God to me ; He is of tender mercy. I find it very hard to give Him credit for any part of His goodness : for I am, as dear old Berridge says—

" ' Very foolish, very base,
Notwithstanding all His grace.' "

But, blessed be God, I do value His smiles above all things and I hate the evils of my nature, which do so hide His love from me, and so oppose and rebel against Him. I wish you faith and patience in your present trials. God's thoughts are not as ours. He often cuts down our quick-growing hopes, and teaches us to wait His time to be blessed."

"*Leicester, September 12th.*—God is gracious, and His gentle dealings in my chastisements call for thankfulness ; and I feel, in some degree, touched with gratitude therefore. My future prospects are all dark as to this world ; I mean, I know not how the Lord means to deal with me. My prayer is that He would make and keep my heart right in His sight ; that I may humbly and confidently trust Him, come what will ; that I may love Him, conscious that He is my portion, however He may afflict me on earth ; and that I may more heartily rejoice in Christ Jesus, and in hope of eternal glory."

"*September 31st.*—I mend very slowly of the complaint in my head. I have not lost an eye, though my sight will not bear a strong light long—have the perfect use of both my eyes, but cannot read or write long. Christ is infinitely and eternally

* The air and exercise were, it appears, all that Mr. H— could wish for : but as for quiet, he was so disappointed that one day, in perfect good humour, he sat down and wrote upwards of one hundred and thirty lines of doggerel poetry, descriptive of the incessant noises which greeted his poor weak nerves from day to day on the farm, and in the village. But neither Mr. H— nor his friends thought these lines worth publishing.

precious! Therefore, amid all my sin and misery, my soul hath hope. Let brotherly love continue among my Deal friends, for Jesus' sake. Never quarrel about little things, nor bear a grudge about anything."

"*December 15th.*—I find my disease a gentle and merciful affliction—a singular captivity of body and mind, with certain tender and gracious limitations. I travel, walk, and preach, but very shortly. There appears great goodness in this. But I long to be melted down—to have more joy in the Lord, more precious feeding on the Word. My exhausted frame, however, will bear nothing great. I have had a letter from Mr. Gorrington to say the books are received, and that thirteen pounds will be offered to you in payment by Mr. Row—Mr. Weston's successor—which I would thank you to send to me when received. Perhaps I am too sanguine about my recovery; my wound may be incurable. Such is the wound of inbred depravity, the healing potion for that malady must be taken in the cup of death! But to the believer—

" 'Though our cup seems filled with gall,
There's something secret sweetens all.'

May crosses give us appetite for comforts, and comforts strengthen our souls for crosses."

"*January 31st, 1833.* My faculties fail; I need much upholding; the Lord be my strength and comforter. My powers have been so jaded for years, that I have been incapable of close mental application. I am cut short indeed; wearied heretofore in the greatness of my way, now cannot go alone; once moved through the land at large, now a prisoner in my own house; once served thousands, now am dumb before a handful. Indeed I have felt it, but would not murmur; God is righteous in all He hath brought upon me."

"*February 12th.*—Thanks be to my God, though chastened, I am not killed. My complaint is long and lingering, but I eat and sleep well, and generally walk about six miles a day. Have laid by preaching and public work for the last month or more; and we have had an acceptable supply in an old day labourer from near Aylesbury. He endures hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ; generally walks his long journeys; it is sixty miles from us to his home, and he comes and goes on foot. He is sixty-six years old, pretty homely in his speech, but sound and sober in his knowledge."

"*February 18th.*—I cannot preach now, so have written to Mr. Fowler to send us a 'free ox' (a 'charity man') if such an one could be had. Whether Pollet could move his friend Challice for a few weeks, I know not. Perhaps Mrs. Reynolds could

speak to Mr. Silver on our behalf. We are now reading 'Charnock on Providence.' We have much to be thankful for."

"*February 22nd.*—Lord, give me a cheering prospect of being set down with Thee on Thy throne. Let my soul long for it with increasing desire. Oh, may my love be felt and mourned for till the Son of Man be come on the throne of His glory, till our full hearts can hold no more of everlasting love: there is not much trouble to make out our lineage and pedigree when that is the case. I should be glad of Mr. Tiptaft's services, if he would truly serve the Lord with all humility of mind. But it never came into my mind to invite him. If he would come unasked I should like him the better; but the Lord direct his way unto us. After another fortnight we have promise of Mr. Bloodworth, from Boddicot, for a few Sabbaths, then perhaps the spring may restore me a little; but the Lord help me to bow, and bless His all-disposing hand. P.S.—Many heartfelt thanks for the gifts from Mr. Butler and the Cranbrook friends."

(*To be concluded.*)

THE LEADING OF THE SPIRIT.

It is stated by the Apostle Paul, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom. viii. 14). His working, though not palpable to any of our bodily senses, is not imperceptible by the mind. The love which He produces to God and Christ; the sense of insufficiency for any good works in ourselves; the conscious dependence of the soul upon the Redeemer's grace; the spirit of supplication, and the spirit of filial affection felt in supplication; the earnest longings of the soul after spiritual things, and after the graces of the Spirit in particular; the drawing of the heart to the Divine Word, and to the ordinances of religion, the house, the people, and the service of God, when these are not for ostentation, nor for the gratification of a self-righteous spirit, but for the honouring of God and the attainment of His blessing—will all contribute to testify that you are "led of the Spirit," and not led to "fulfil the works of the flesh."—*Redford.*

WHEN the children of Israel were bitten by the fiery serpents, they did not look to the tabernacle and the holy things in it, nor even into the Holy of Holies, where stood the cherubim, and where shone the glory of God; for if they had, they would have died; but they looked simply at what God had commanded they should—at the brazen serpent. Just so must we who are bitten by the old serpent, the devil, look simply unto Christ.—*Romaine.*

PRECEPTS AND MAXIMS.

BY THE REV. CHARLES SIMEON.

THE longer I live the more I feel the importance of adhering to the rules which I have laid down for myself in such matters :—

1. To hear as little as possible what is to the prejudice of others.
2. To believe nothing of the kind till I am absolutely forced to it.
3. Never to drink into the spirit of one who circulates an ill report.
4. Always to moderate, as far as I can, the unkindness which is expressed towards others.
5. Always to believe that, if the other side were heard, a very different account would be given of the matter.

I consider love as wealth ; and as I would resist a man who should come to rob my house, so would I a man who would weaken my regard for any human being.

My blessed Lord, "when He was reviled, reviled not again ; when He suffered, He threatened not ; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously." That seems the right thing for me to do, though some, perhaps, may think it better for me to stand up for my rights. But to all the accusations which were brought against Him our Lord made no reply, *insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly*. I delight in that record ; and, God helping me to it, it is the labour of my life so to act that on my account, also, the governor and the spectators may marvel greatly. My experience has been, and I hope will continue to be, a confirmation of that word, "Thou wilt hide me in the secret of Thy presence from the strife of tongues." Insult an angel before the throne, and what would he care about it ? Just such will be my feeling whilst I am hid in the secret of my Redeemer's presence.

Calumny and detraction are sparks which, if you do not blow them, will go out of themselves.

MAXIMS OF BISHOP MIDDLETON.

Persevere against discouragement. Keep your temper. Employ leisure in study, and always have some work in hand. Be punctual and methodical in business, and never procrastinate. Never be in a hurry. Preserve self-possession, and do not be talked out of a conviction. Rise early, and be an economist of time. Maintain dignity without the appearance of pride ;

manner is something with everybody, and everything with some. Be guarded in discourse ; attentive and slow to speak. Never acquiesce in immoral or pernicious opinions. Be not forward to assign reasons to those who have no right to ask. Think nothing in conduct unimportant and indifferent. Rather set than follow examples. Practise strict temperance ; and in all your transactions remember the final account.

TO AN AFFLICTED ONE.

[Letter written to a dear friend who has been confined to her bed for two years with chronic rheumatism.]

My dear sister in Jesus, no doubt by this time
You are thinking it strange we've not written a line ;
We do not forget you, in truth we can say,
As we bow at the footstool of mercy each day.

Your aches and your pains, which no mortal can cure,
The Lord grant you patience and grace to endure ;
He has guided and help'd you and bless'd you till now,
Then trust in His wisdom, and to His will bow.

He knows all your sorrows, afflictions, and tears,
To your groanings in secret He still bows His ears :
His love to you never, no never can cease
Your sorrows will end in the regions of peace.

Your trials are numbered, your burdens are weigh'd,
In the day of His rough wind, His east wind is stayed ;
The wrath of our God in His law against sin
Can never reach those whom Christ died to redeem.

Then cheer up, dear saint, Divine Love has arranged
Those things that at present seem painfully strange ;
It is only thy dross and thy tin to remove,
And flowing from sovereign, immutable love.

The trials and sorrows that now press you sore
Will shortly be over, and then you'll adore
The love and the mercy that brought you safe through,
And made you, through Christ, more than conqueror too.

Then patience, dear saint—the Lord grant you it still,
And all needful grace to suffer His will,
Till He bids you to rise in His glory to dwell,
Prays your brother in Jesus, one JOSEPH FAVELL.

Great Yarmouth, 22nd October, 1895.

THE SEEKERS' CORNER.

MY DEAR AND AFFECTIONATE SISTER,—It has long been on my mind to write a few lines to you. Oh, how often I am writing to you in my mind, but when opportunity offers the willing mind has fled.

My dear sister, I scarce know how to begin. I do not feel it an easy matter to write on the best things. There was a time, I hope, when I felt it a privilege to write, and not a task, but now I feel I must adopt the language of the poet—

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

Oh, what a mercy I am out of a deserved hell !

“ Preserved in Jesus when
My feet made haste to hell ;
And there should I have gone
But Thou dost all things well.
Thy love was great, Thy mercy free,
That from the pit delivered me.”

Oh, how thankful I ought to be for such suitable hymns. My little religion seems nearly all made up of hymns (if I have any worth having). Oh, my dear sister, I would not give up the little I have for a thousand worlds. Neither would you, I am sure. But I am often afraid my religion will not hold out to the end. What an awful thing for me if I am deceived in these things, but I can truthfully say there is a willingness in me to come to the light, that my deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought of God. Who could give this willingness but the dear Lord ? I know my carnal nature never did love God, and never will, but I do hope there is a spirit in me that loves the precious Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. Oh, He is indeed precious, even in the want of Him, and precious in His worth and worthiness—is He not ?

Dear sister, I began this a week ago. I will now try and finish it. Oh, my dear sister, there was a time when I did hate the people of God. I thought, when I grew up I would never be found among that people. It was years ago, when our old friend used to go to Hadlow Down, also O—— D—— and others called at our place and conversed on the best things, but, with shame I write it, I indeed hated them—but now that people I love.

If the Lord will bring things to my remembrance, I will tell you the beginning of the change which I hope the Lord has

made. It was in the year 1874. Mr. Page gave out hymn 447, when my sins were so charged home upon me that I trembled and shook like an aspen leaf, and I was convinced that if I lived and died in such a state I should sink where hope could never come, and I came away a condemned prisoner. Condemnation I felt would be my portion, and the sight of Mr. Page was like swords thrust into me, yet I could not keep away. Oh, my dear sister, it is a time never to be forgotten by me. Thus I was convinced of my sins, and was in great soul trouble until I was raised to a hope in the mercy of God. Oh, it makes

"Mercy sweet, salvation great,
And all God's judgments right."

Oh that it was with me as in months that are past. Oh, how I have longed for the Sabbath to come that I might go and get food for my soul. I do hope I may truthfully say, "I have found Thy Word, and did eat it, to the joy and rejoicing of my heart."

I hope this may find you enjoying the Lord's sweet presence in your soul. Hope you had a good day last Sunday. I must say I hope I found it good while Mr. Page was speaking about God's poor. Hope you are better, and all the rest well.

I remain, with fondest love,

Your affectionate Sister,

June 9th, 1880.

MIRIAM CORNFORD.

LOVE never fails. This made the great Apostle say, "I am persuaded"—and so am I, by the same Spirit, though in a less degree. I am confident, by the Word of God, "that neither height"—all the heights of your pride and ambition; all the heights in which you may open your mouths against God—spit in His face, at times, in murmuring, quarrelling, and desperation; not all the depths of abomination you may see and feel in yourself, and the aboundings of everything that is hateful; nor lengths to which you may run, like Jonah; nor breadths in sin, like David; nor evil angels, with all their infernal workings in your hearts (for it is said, "He sent evil angels also among them," good angels would not wish to separate us from the love of God); "nor things present," which may be perplexing and trying; "nor things to come," trials and other things which you may come into; "nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." "Yea, He loved the people." I would speak it with reverence, God cannot love us more, and, according to His divine nature, He cannot love us less.—*Covell.*

SAFETY IS OF THE LORD.

"As for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped." —PSALM lxxiii. 2.

THESE words signify something more than slipping into a gutter or a ditch. In some parts of the world there are passes over mountains, where, if the traveller's foot slips, he falls over a precipice, hundreds of feet deep, and is dashed to pieces. Doubtless, Asaph had one of these in view. The way the people of God have to travel is like one of these mountain passes, and often they are almost gone, and would be quite gone—their faith, their hope, their love, all would be gone—but God is faithful to His promise, "He will keep the feet of His saints." Job said, "He hath destroyed me on every side, and I am gone, and my hope hath He removed like a tree." But Job was not gone; his flocks and herds were gone, his children were gone, his worldly prosperity, his vain hopes were gone, his fruitless branches were removed. "But though He cause grief, yet will He have compassion." Asaph's faith was very low when he envied the wicked their few hours' basking in the sun, and though his error does not seem very great, and his feet did not slip far, yet on such a narrow path they were "almost gone." When Bunyan's pilgrims were on the Delectable Mountains, the shepherds led them up to the top of a hill called Error, and showed them the bones of some who had been dashed to pieces by falling therefrom. Paul says, "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition" (1 Tim. vi. 9). Again, "They are exalted for a little while, but are gone and brought low" (Job xxiv. 24). O ye who lay up treasure for yourselves, and are not rich toward God, you stand in "slippery places," and beneath you yawns a gulf that hath no bottom. How many, even while I write, stand on the pinnacle of worldly prosperity, on the mountains of influence and esteem among men. They remember to secure themselves against poverty, to have a good deposit at the bank, to build houses and plant vineyards, and to say, "Soul, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry." But while they say in their heart, "To-morrow shall be even as this day, and more abundant," they are "almost gone," their riches take wings and fly away, and they sink in despair, or some ailment which baffles human skill does its worst, and they are "gone." Where? In all their care, skill, and solicitude in earthly things, God was forgotten, and now He "will laugh at their calamity, and mock when their fear cometh."

—Professor, who drawest near to God with thy lips while thy heart is far from Him, His name is often on thy tongue, thou standest

high in thy profession, but where is the broken and contrite heart ? where is thy hunger and thirst after Christ ? "He that receiveth not the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein." There is a way which seemeth right, a religion that consists in barren notions, but is devoid of "faith unfeigned," "hope which maketh not ashamed," and "love without dissimulation." This seemeth right, but the end thereof is eternal death. "Take heed, lest the light that is in thee be darkness." Look ! thou art "almost gone" ; one more false step, one more slip of thy foot, and where wilt thou be then ? What a mercy if we can say, "Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver, in whom we trust that He will yet deliver us." Oh, the mercy of being "kept by the power of God unto salvation" ! J. J.

NO CONDEMNATION.

WHAT is this that falls so sweetly
On my now attentive ear ?
Jesus loves His people greatly,
And their faintest word will hear.

What is this ? "No condemnation"
To the Saviour's chosen flock ;
What a cost, to give redemption
Free to all on Christ the Rock !

Still it says "No condemnation,"
Still the Saviour seeks the lost ;
What a heavenly theme, salvation !
Sing His praise, O heavenly host.

Yes, it echoes now in glory,
Still they sing that lovely theme ;
These have found "no condemnation,"
For they stand complete in Him.

Yes, there is "no condemnation"—
Jesus, teach us what it means.
Death to save His chosen nation,
By His sufferings Christ redeems.

Oh to grasp, "No condemnation" !
He who dwells in heaven above
Came to earth to bring salvation ;
Wonder of redeeming love !

Those who dwell with Christ will grasp it,
There it only can be known ;
Condemnation came to Jesus,
When for sin He did atone.

E. P.

LETTER FOR THE YOUNG.

MY BELOVED SISTER,—Very many thanks for your loving letter, which encouraged me to hope on. I was truly thankful to hear you were still enjoying the presence of your Lord, though you are compassed about with foes within and without. But, my dear sister, what an unspeakable mercy it is to know you are in Him.

“Once in Him, in Him for ever,
Thus the eternal covenant stands.”

I am glad to say I feel brighter to-day, though, after hearing that beautiful sermon on Sunday, which I truly felt was for me, I got very low; and so we go on, up and down, like a vessel in the tempest, which seems every moment as if it must sink to the bottom, and yet there is a secret something which keeps it sailing. I trust by the time you read this you will be numbered amongst your own dear people, and will say in your heart, “This people shall be my people, and their God my God.” May you ever be kept from all danger until the Bridegroom shall come and take you home to Himself, never more to part, is the prayer of

Your loving sister,

Keir, Surrey, May 3rd, 1896.

A. C.

GOD, by various means, purges us from the love of sin, that we may bring forth more fruit.—*Romaine*.

How often you and I have sat in our houses when the rain has poured down in torrents, the lightning has flashed, and the thunder has rolled. “How it rains!” we say, “What a storm!” We sit dry and covered, and smile and talk. So let the Son of God come into our hearts; people may say what they like about us, it will not affect us. If He has made peace by the blood of His cross, you will not be afraid of your sin being your ruin, and the lies of the devil will fall to the ground.—*Covell*.

I BELIEVE that many of God’s children have to labour (and you know labour is no pleasant work), perhaps for years, under doubts and fears, and experience trouble and distress because they cannot make their calling sure, nor be perfectly certain that they have been called by the Lord himself effectually unto life and salvation. We may well be exercised upon this matter, for what a solemn word is that, “Many are called [that is, outwardly] but few chosen”! And who that knows the deceitfulness of the heart has not reason to fear lest it deceive him?—*J. C. Philpot*.

REVIEWS.

Safely Landed. Life of WILLIAM G. MUNNINGS. Price 5d., post free. London: E. Wilmshurst, Blackheath, S.E.; and William Wileman, Bouverie Street, E.C.

THIS little booklet, nicely bound in cloth, contains a good portrait and an interesting sketch of the brief life of a beloved son. Mr. Hazlerigg writes an excellent preface, which alone is sufficient to recommend the record as being worthy of being read, and of being placed in the hands of our young friends. Mr. Hazlerigg says:—

In William Munnings' case, we believe there were present the essentials of a work of grace. He was honest; he would not say of himself what he did not feel warranted to say; he frankly owned what seemed to make against him. He was exercised and had many changes, &c.

His Sunday School teacher also bears his testimony to there being some good thing found in his heart towards the Lord God of Israel:—

I visited him in September, 1894, and, after a little conversation, I found he was anxious about his eternal safety. He told me he had often felt himself a great sinner in the sight of God. On one occasion, while singing Hymn 143 (Gadsby's) in the chapel, he was obliged to come out. He said he could not bear to hear those lines sung—

“ ‘ While I draw this fleeting breath,
When my eye-strings break in death.’ ”

The following Lord's Day I found him cheerful. He said, “I have been asking the Lord to speak some words to me, and these lines came with sweetness in the night—

“ ‘ Since ye have eternal redemption through blood,
Ye cannot but hold on your way.’ ”

His parents add their testimony to grace manifested in their son:—

After this he seemed rather distressed in his mind, saying, “I do want to go to heaven.” “I cannot die like this.” “I do want the Lord to shine.” Then in a little while he broke out, “I shall soon be landed. Happy, happy, happy in the Lord, washed in the Redeemer's blood!” We said to him, “You feel yourself a poor helpless sinner, don't you?” “Yes,” was his reply, “I do.” Then we said, “Can you say—

“ ‘ My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness ’ ? ”

“Yes,” he said, “I can. It's no use fixing it anywhere else, is it?”

We hope the little book will be spread broadcast. Being published at such a low price, it will enable friends to do this.

The Hunted Stag and other Poems. By "ESTHER." Price 1s. cloth; 1s. 6d. cloth, gilt edges, London: Robert Banks and Son, Racquet Court, E.C.

THIS little volume of Poems is elegantly got up, beautifully printed, and contains nothing but pure truth, and the writer has, moreover, the touch and skill of a real poet. The first poem, the "Hunted Stag," is a long one, and gives the title to the book, the true story of a hunted stag being first told, and then used to convey choice spiritual instruction. Then follow several other poems on various subjects, equally good, and will be enjoyed by our spiritual readers who love choice hymns and poems. We give a few verses of one poem, entitled—

JESUS, LOVELY NAME.

O Jesus, loveliest, sweetest name!
 I long to know Thy worth;
 To realize Thy unctuous fame,
 As ointment pourèd forth.
 Revive Thy graces in me, Lord,
 Oh, draw my heart above,
 And make my lisping tongue record
 The sweet effect of love.

O Jesus, loveliest, sweetest name,
 Reveal Thy grace to me!
 I want to feel, dear Lord, the same
 As those whom Thou'st made free;
 I want to feel Thy powerful voice
 My bonds asunder break;
 I want to more in Thee rejoice,
 Who dost exalt the meek.

O Jesus, loveliest, sweetest name!
 More precious far than gold;
 Remember one who, feeling lame,
 Thou drew'st within Thy fold:
 One whom Thou cam'st to seek and save,
 When feeling wholly lost,
 But now Thy watchful care would crave,
 Because she needs it most.

We well know that those who publish volumes of excellent verse frequently do so at a loss; but we hope "Esther" will meet with a more encouraging recognition of her talents, so that she may be encouraged to publish other volumes of similar worth as the present one.

THE more spiritual we are, the more dependence will we have on Christ.—*Romaine.*

The Bower, August, 1896.



RICHARD HALE.

RICHARD HALE.

RICHARD HALE was for many years Vicar of Harewood, Yorkshire. He was a most faithful champion for "the truth as it is in Jesus." He was one of a family of seventeen children, and was early designed for the ministry. In his youthful days of unregeneracy he was associated with the Prince Regent, afterwards George IV., and it was not until he had been some years a preacher that he was brought to a knowledge of the truth. He had a small wen formed on his foot, which baffled the skill of physicians, and made amputation necessary, and during this affliction the Lord opened his eyes, quickened his soul, and made him a new creature in Christ Jesus, so that when after some absence he returned to his flock, it was to testify of what he himself had experienced, what he had tasted, handled, and felt of the Word of life, and he was most faithful in his testimony. He used to say to his people, "I lied to the Holy Ghost when I was ordained to take upon me the office of the ministry, and not 'to serve God for the promoting of His glory and the edifying of His people.'"

On one occasion Lord Harewood entertained at Harewood House some noblemen and high dignitaries of the Church, the frivolities and feasting being kept up until a late hour on Saturday night, or probably early on the Sabbath morning. They were at church on the Sabbath, and Mr. Hale, during his discourse, turned towards the family pew, openly rebuked their sin, and said, "These be they that profess to show unto us the way of salvation." Of course, this was too much for them. A charge of brawling was brought against Mr. Hale, and he was silenced for six months, but it was only to renew his strength for further labours. At the expiration of this time he again stood up before his people, and many came from all parts to hear him.

The Duchess of Kent and the Princess Victoria (now our Queen) were once visitors at Harewood House, and as they were to attend church while there, Mr. Hale had prepared a sermon for the occasion; but the then Archbishop of York, fearing the plain truth might offend, at the last moment, as it were, despatched a message to say that himself would be there to preach the sermon, which was felt as an insult by Mr. Hale. But nevertheless, through much persecution and opposition the Lord supported him until, as a shock of corn fully ripe, he was gathered to the heavenly garner.

From the foregoing account it will be seen that Mr. Hale met with much hatred and persecution for the truth's sake whilst he was Vicar of Harewood, so that in writing as he does in the

following article he knew and had experienced what he wrote about. In his time he published many tracts of intrinsic worth, and wrote many articles and pieces for various publications, particularly the *Gospel Magazine*, where his signature was reversed thus, "Elah." And, blessed be God, the truths he loved and contended for still live, and are the joy of the living in Jerusalem, though hated and despised by those who know not their worth.

R. F. R.

THE WORD GIVEN, AND THE WORLD'S HATRED.

BY RICHARD HALE.

"I have given unto them Thy word ; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."—JOHN xvii. 14.

These words form part of an address from the Lord Jesus Christ to His Divine Father, and it must be obvious that the persons He speaks of are not all men generally. By referring to the first part of this chapter, we shall find that the persons of whom our Lord speaks in the text, and the whole way through the chapter, were the Father's gift to Him. In the second verse He says, "Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him"; and in the sixth verse, "I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world ; Thine they were and Thou gavest them Me." From this we may understand of whom our Lord speaks in the text, when He says, "I have given them Thy Word," &c. Our Lord spoke these words to His disciples, to whom He had preached the Gospel, which is the Word of God, and by which they had been "quickened when dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. ii. 1), regenerated and converted ; and through His grace they had received the Word, "not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God" (1 Thess. ii. 13). And the same effects are produced by the Word faithfully preached by men called or sent by Him at this day. It is the means which God makes use of in quickening dead sinners, enlightening blind sinners, softening hard hearts, and of reconciling His people to Himself, who by nature are enemies to Him. Yea, great things are effected by the Word. Regeneration is effected by the Word ; The Lord's people are, in His own time, "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God" (1 Peter i. 23). Conversion is effected by the Word, and thus three thousand were converted at one time under the the Word preached by the Apostle Peter (Acts ii. 41). The gathering of

Christ's people into His visible Church is by the Word: "They shall hear My voice" (said He); "and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd" (John x. 16). They shall all sooner or later hear His voice in the Gospel, not only externally but internally, and they shall be as sheep gathered into one fold under Him, the great "Shepherd and Bishop of their souls" (1 Peter ii. 25). Spiritual life comes by the Word. "The entrance of Thy Word," says the Psalmist "giveth light" (Psalm cxix. 130); hope comes by the Word (Psalm cxix. 49); joy cometh by the Word (1 Thess. i. 6); spiritual life cometh by the Word (John v. 25); faith cometh by the Word (Rom. x. 17); sanctification is by the Word (John xvii. 17). But then all men do not enjoy these benefits of the Word, those only whose hearts the Lord opens to receive it (Acts xvi. 14); those only to whom it is sent in demonstration of the Spirit and of the power of God (1 Cor. ii. 4); those only who are of God's Covenant people, and His children by adoption, hear His Word with benefit. "He that is of God" (said Christ to the unbelieving Jews) "heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God" (John viii. 47). And is it so, that those whom God the Father loved from everlasting, and gave to His Son to be saved by Him, and whom He united to Himself, and came into the world to save, and hath obtained eternal redemption for them, and whom, in His own good time, He regenerates by His Word, and effectually calls by the power of His grace and Spirit from among the men of the world, to be a peculiar people for Himself, to live to His praise here, and afterwards to live in glory;—is it so, that these people so beloved of God and so highly favoured by Him, are the objects of the world's hatred? Yea, Christ has Himself said, "The world hath hated them because they are not of the world." Worldly men, who are under the influence of Satan, the god of this world, and who are led by the spirit of it, and are taken up with the things of it, and live without God in it—these hate the people whom God hath chosen out of the world, and effectually called by His grace from the men of it; secretly plot against them, rejoice at any evil that befalls them, catch at anything that will reproach them, and scruple not to say all manner of evil of them. "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you." If He, then, who was so much before His people in personal worth and greatness, was hated by the world, His people should not think it strange if they are hated too. If they belonged to the world, walking with the throng in the broad road that leadeth to destruction, courting its applause, grasping its gains, and greedy of its sensualities, the world would love them, for the world loves his own,

and hates those who are separated from the world in election, and who are manifestly so in vocation; nay, not only does our Lord forewarn His people of the hatred and persecution they will always meet with from the *world*, but calls upon them to rejoice at it as a token of belonging to His family, for whom heaven is in reserve. "Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven." See to it then, my friends, that you are indeed in the number of the Lord's people, for whom heaven is in reserve; see to it by that rule which He has given in the text: "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." It is true, indeed, of the best of the Lord's regenerated people, who have made the greatest advance in grace and holiness, they are not so perfect in their walk and conversation in the world or separation from it as He was, for they stand at a great distance from Him, and it will not be till they see Him as He is that they will be exactly like Him, by that transforming and assimilating sight of Him which they will enjoy. Yet even in this world there is some likeness between Him and them, and when compared to the men of the world, whose thoughts, hopes, and happiness are in it, and not beyond it, it may be said they are not of the world, even as He was not of the world. See to it, my friends, that ye are not of the world, nor in friendship with it, nor love it, for "if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." My friends, if indeed you are in the number of God's chosen, called, regenerated people, you will, through the effectual working of the Spirit of grace, become mortified in your affections to those lusts which ruled over you in the time of your ignorance and estrangement from God. You will grow more and more dead to self, with all its false ambitions and grovelling views, and more and more at a distance from the life and spirit of the world, and will tremble to follow its maxims and to mix in its pursuits.

You will be taught, and not only taught, but induced to look upon earth as a strange place, where every object presents a danger, and almost every step a snare, as a region now far from the Sun of Righteousness, where your spiritual nature is exposed to storms, and your new life to deadening cold; in short, as a howling wilderness, where no spiritual herb grows for your souls, but must daily descend from your own country above, and where every kind of enemy, and every species of barrenness, want, and emptiness, must continually be found. Like Israel of old, you will wander in the wilderness, in a solitary way, and find no city

to dwell in. You will be as strangers in a strange land, and must expect to be treated accordingly. Walking in the spirit of your Master, the world will soon perceive the alienation and ridicule you, and, if permitted, persecute you to death, and neither the innocency nor the unselfishness of your lives will screen you from its censure, or save you from its malignity.

But be of good cheer, my Christian friends. Yet a little while, and this world with all its gilded toys, its pomp and pride, shall pass away, and you shall see Him whom your souls love, and shall be like Him. Yet a little while and you shall be delivered from the tabernacle of clay in which you are pent up, and in which you "groan being burdened," and shall be with Christ, and behold His glory. Yet a little while and you shall have addressed to you those transporting words, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." "Well done, good and faithful servants, enter ye into the joy of your Lord."

WONDERFUL LOVE.

My gracious God, Thy love must be
Abiding, faithful, full, and free ;
Such love alone could suit my case,
A sinner ransomed by Thy grace.

It must be free, for I have nought
Wherewith such love could e'er be bought :
Empty I am, or filled with sin ;
Defiled all o'er—without, within.

It must be full, my needs to meet,
Sweeter than all the world calls sweet ;
A measure pressed and flowing o'er,
Beyond the worldling's boasted store.

It must be faithful, or I know
It had been wearied long ago ;
No love but faithful love like Thine
Could bear a wandering heart like mine.

It must abide each changing scene,
And be as it hath ever been—
Unsought, unchanging, full, and free ;
Such love alone can dwell with Thee.

And with thee, Lord, such love is found,
Refreshing all the barren ground :
If such our portion, well may we
Contented lose ourselves in Thee.

GATHERED HOME.

JOHN SAVILLE died at Beddington, on April 15th, 1895, in the eighty-ninth year of his age. My dear father was born at Thundersley, in Essex. I have heard him say that his parents were quite ignorant of salvation by Jesus Christ, and were quite content by occasionally attending the parish church. At the age of twenty-two my father was married to my dear mother, and through that he was first brought under the sound of the Gospel, as her parents were amongst those that love the Lord's house. I do not think there was a cause of truth in Thundersley then, but services were conducted in cottages; but in after years a chapel was built, and I well remember William Collins, Westhorpe, Maddox, and others who preached there. I have heard my dear father say that the first time he heard the Gospel preached he was led to see there was a reality in religion and that he was then a stranger to it; and many times I have heard him speak of dear Kent's hymn, "There is a day, 'tis hastening on," &c., and especially that verse, "How stands the case, my soul, with thee?" seemed to lie with much weight and power on his mind. I can well remember seeing him on his knees in a granary, and other places too, which makes it clear to my mind now, that the blessed Spirit of God had made soul concerns of vital importance to him. He continued to meet with that people for many years, till the Lord in His providence was pleased to remove him from that part of Essex.

I think it was about 1872 he came to reside in Croydon, where he had the privilege of hearing that dear man of God, Mr. Covell, whose ministry was made a great blessing to him. I do not think there was a dearer place on earth to my dear father than West Street Chapel, Croydon. I have often heard him say, "I love to meet among them now," &c., and up till his eighty-fifth year he would get there once on the Sabbath if possible. The last two years of his life he was living near Epsom, and was prevented attending Croydon.

My dear father was, I believe, nearly all his days subject to bondage through the fear of death. When he has heard of anyone being suddenly called away, it seemed almost more than his poor tottering frame could bear. He would sometimes say, "What an awful thing to be deceived at last; to have a name to live, while destitute of the Spirit's work within." Dear Kent's hymn seemed to express his feelings—

"Without the Spirit's work within,
Religion's but unhallowed fire,
A name to live while dead in sin,
Which must in endless night expire."

His prayer for his family would be, "Lord, do bless my dear children with that which the world cannot give or take away." Some few months before his departure I told him of a circumstance which troubled my mind, and he said, "Take it to the throne of grace and leave it with the Lord, for He hath said, 'Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me.'" And remarked, "I have proved the truth of that many times, both in providence and grace." I did not notice any particular difference in him the last few weeks of his long pilgrimage. He was very quiet and of few words. Generally speaking, his nights were very restless. I have often heard him repeating that well-known hymn—

"Come, Thou Fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing Thy praise";

also—

"Dear Name, the Rock on which I build,
My Shield and Hiding-place," &c.

The week preceding my father's death I said to him, "I want to go down into Essex. Would you mind staying with my brother till I return?" to which he consented. Accordingly, we left Ewell on April 13th, and he stayed at Beddington with my brother. I took my journey into Essex, and on Sunday, the 14th, he read and engaged in prayer with them.

On Easter Monday morning he was heard repeating Kent's hymn, "Sovereign grace, o'er sin abounding," &c.; but soon after that a silence ensued, and in going into his room with a cup of tea, they found "he was not, for God had taken him." I am sure if he could have spoken in his last moments, his dying testimony would have been like Joshua's, "Not one good thing hath failed of all the Lord hath promised, all has come to pass." My dear father was always a man of few words about Divine things. He gave many proofs that he was of the earth earthy, but he also gave many infallible proofs that he was born again of "incorruptible seed, by the Word of God."

On the 20th of April, 1895, we laid his mortal remains to rest in Beddington Cemetery. Amongst those at the interment was dear Mr. Boorne, of Wallington, to whom my dear father was warmly attached; also Mr. Wicker and friends from Croydon, who had long known him.

Thus I have gathered up a few threads in connection with a long history, and if what I have written should commend itself to the consciences of God's living family, may He, who has proved Himself to be the Refuge and Strength of His poor tempted, tried, and exercised family in all ages, bear all the glory.

W. SAVILLE.

THE LATE THOMAS HARDY, OF LEICESTER.

(Concluded from page 159.)

THE last letter to his friend and executor, Mr. Hutchinson, contains the following. It was begun on the 6th April, and completed only on the 22nd :—

"MY VERY KIND AND CAREFUL FRIEND,—I have received your last remittance of five pounds. My kind benefactors I do most heartily thank, and would pray the Giver of all good to recompense the givers, and return the gift into their bosom in the favouring hour, when divine succours are most needed. 'He knew my soul in adversity,' was David's blessed time; may it be theirs.

"As yet I am feeble and unable to walk far, and equally unable to write at length. My brain is sadly shattered, and memory grievously impaired. The boisterous and changeable weather affects me much, but a few days may alter that. Truly the word and mercy of the Lord endure continually. I must, therefore, look up to the God of hope, and expect an admixture of small consolations at least.

[Mr. Hardy here gave in a good, clear hand certain directions with regard to his temporal affairs, conscious, no doubt, from their tenor, that his stay in this world was likely to be short.]

"And now to God, who performeth all things for me, I commit all my little affairs. I trust He is my great and Almighty Trustee. May He well and truly keep you, and each of us, to eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. He is the Truth and the Life, and never faileth those that put their trust in Him. His is the glory, and so be it for ever and ever. Amen. My wife's love indeed to you for every favour.—THOMAS HARDY."

The last three times Mr. Hardy spoke in the name of the Lord his text was, Revelation iii. 3, and he closed the last of those solemn addresses with the "Veni Creator," from the Prayer-book, a hymn to which he was particularly attached.

Towards the end of April he removed with his wife to Burton Lazars, near Melton Mowbray, for change of air, by invitation from an old friend, to whom he one day said, when walking with her in the garden, "I now think that I shall never recover from this illness." On the morning of the 5th May, he desired his wife to read Romans viii., from the eighteenth verse; after which he enjoyed much sweet liberty in prayer, dwelling particularly on the last two verses. The following morning he desired his wife to read Hebrews i., when he dwelt much in prayer on the contents of that chapter.

The last-mentioned day, he left Burton for Stamford in Mr. De Merveilleux's carriage. On the road Mrs. Hardy noticed a

great change come over him, and asked if they should go back. He replied, "forward," which was the last word he ever spoke. He arrived at the house of Mr. De Merveilleux, who had long been to him a faithful friend, and was his kind surgeon throughout his last illness. He had every possible attention, but this attack of apoplexy was the messenger of death. He lingered till two o'clock the next morning, when his ransomed spirit was released from its earthly prison, Tuesday, 7th May, 1833.

He desired, that wheresoever he died, there he might be buried. But his relatives and friends wishing his remains to be deposited with others of the family at his native parish church, Kirby-Muxlor, they were removed from Stamford to Leicester; and on Lord's Day, May 12th, they were laid with his fathers in the churchyard of Kirby. At the close of the service his friends and brethren sang that beautiful hymn of Mr. Hart's commencing, "Sons of God by blest adoption."

The funeral was attended by seven or eight hundred persons; an unusual concourse, which so astonished the people of Kirby, that some of them ignorantly exclaimed, "Why and wherefore all this for Thomas Hardy?" It seems that whilst such progress had attended his path, and such blessing had been communicated through his instrumentality far and near, they remained stationary, just where he left them at the commencement of his ministry. Funeral sermons were preached at Leicester, by Mr. Fowler, from Revelation xiv. 13; at Tring, by Mr. Glover, from Nehemiah vii. 2; and at Faversham, by Mr. Beall, from Hebrews xiii. 7, 8.

Mrs. Hardy outlived Mr. Hardy (her second husband) more than forty years, and was also buried at Kirby-Muxloe; but no mention, we are told, is made of her on Mr. Hardy's gravestone; nor has any obituary of her ever been published. After her husband's decease, Mrs. Hardy attended Alfred Street Chapel, Leicester (built by Mr. Harrison), and at the Chapel-house entertained the ministers who formerly preached there, among whom was Mr. Philpot, who highly esteemed her. Mr. Hardy's chapel was converted into a Mission-room; his congregation removing to Newark Street Chapel (the late Mr. Garrard's).

In a conversation with Mr. Popham, of Brighton, a few years before her decease, Mrs. Hardy said, "After my dear husband died, I went into the room where his poor body was lying, and kneeling by the bed-side asked the Lord to *take care of me, and bless me*; when He said to me, 'You have nursed My servant, now I will take care of you'; and soon after Mr. Harrison offered me this Chapel-house, and here I have been ever since. But I am a poor unbelieving believer." Mr. Popham adds,

"Many other good things Mrs. Hardy said to me at the time, but nothing ever fixed itself so on my mind as the above."

The house in St. Mary's Street, Stamford, in which Mr. De Merveilleux lived, and in which Mr. Hardy died, is now occupied by Mr. M. J. Tryon, minister of the chapel in North Street; which chapel formerly belonged to Mr. De Merveilleux. The first time Mr. Hardy was at Stamford (in 1822) he preached in the Town Assembly Rooms. He then described Stamford as a populous town, destitute of a faithful Gospel ministry. The above rooms were once licensed for Mr. Huntington to preach in: and Mr. O—— preached there twice, which appear to be the only faithful proclamation of the Gospel Stamford had been favoured with for many years. The late Mr. Philpot was pastor at North Street Chapel, as well as the chapel at Oakham (eleven miles from Stamford), for twenty-six years. Shortly after he commenced his faithful ministry at those places, Mr. De Merveilleux had the chapel at Stamford enlarged and a gallery added. It now seats about two hundred and fifty persons. Mr. Philpot lived in "The Terrace," a row of neat houses with gardens in front, overlooking a valley, with Burleigh Park, the seat of the Marquis of Exeter, in the near distance. In this park, which was open to the public, the dear man of God (Mr. Philpot) has taken many a stroll away from the busy town, where, as we once heard him say, he often saw prejudice painted in the features of some he met, especially the respectable; which sometimes amused, sometimes annoyed, sometimes stirred up his pride, and sometimes filled him with gratitude that he had been made to differ.

WE should live upon Christ as the life-giving root of all sanctification.—*Romaine*.

A MAN may have plenty of this world's goods, and be a poor man; while others may not have a sovereign, and yet be as proud as the devil can make them. If I should go into the lodging-houses in this town, and gather all the poverty-stricken, destitute of grace, before me, and tell them, "You are sinners; if you live and die as you are, you will be sent to hell, where hope never cometh," I do not believe there is one but would rise up and say, "You are no better than we are. I tell you what, sir, we have got an honest principle, though we are poor." Some would say, "I never cheated my neighbour, though I go begging." Another would say, "I am no drunkard, if I am given to uncleanness." All would have something good to say about themselves, to show their pride.—*Cowell*.

"CONSIDER YOUR WAYS."

A WORD TO ZION'S SONS AND DAUGHTERS.

SOME knowledge of our condition and position physically and financially are often desirable things, in order that we may ascertain how we are and how we stand; this is also true spiritually, both individually and in our united state as Churches. Right perception and true understanding appear to be most needful and desirable favours at the present time.

One question that may be asked is, "What are the signs of the times, with reference particularly to the state of the godly; and who amongst us is endued with wisdom to say to Israel what they should do?" (1 Chron. xii. 32.) This, as it appears to me, would be our mercy and blessing, if the Lord gave us skilful persons able rightly to consider the cause or causes of our disorders, and to say what is wrong and what are our remedies, for the Lord's way frequently is to speak to us thus by His servants.

The messages of God in His Word by His servants have been suitable to those to whom they were sent, and what I think we need at the present time, is the leading of the Spirit of God in godly exercise, and understanding in His Word of the things most suitable to our present condition; and to this end the minds of God's servants should be free and unbiassed to receive the message that He will send by them to His people. The Lord knows our state and what we need. The question may arise, will the Lord really speak to us, or, in a way of judgment for our wrongs, be silent? Is there not good reason that we may fear the latter, and especially if nothing has the effect of causing us to "humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God"?

Whilst not underrating any good remaining amongst us, yet surely there is much more to be desired, and which the Lord might bestow upon us, of power, favour, and blessing, and much instruction that would be for our personal and general good. Whoever does not hear a voice, on every hand almost, calling upon us to "consider," must be more than *rather* deaf.

Is our inward, underlying condition any better than the surface appearance? or is it worse? If the latter, what about the future, unless something bring about a change for the better? A bad state of things usually presents difficulties requiring labour, care, and skill in dealing with them. The Lord said to Israel, "Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord, till He come and rain righteousness upon you" (Hosea x. 12), and afterwards says, "They shall walk after the Lord," which seems to express a condition desirable to be brought into. It is so

good for us to have times when we inwardly go after the Lord, and feel we must find Him and come to Him, though sometimes we find ourselves companions with him who said, "Oh that I knew where I might find Him!" (Job xxiii. 3.)

The question may be asked, "Is some general examination of things truly desirable?" If so, some general agreement among the godly upon this point would be a good step, and if some of the body is diseased to insensibility, let that part act which can. The first thing is not necessarily amputation, this usually takes place when other means fail. A little good leaven might work and spread its effects. Some real agreement felt among us upon the point would encourage the hope in proceeding, for we could then pray and speak together. Let the strong bars of envy and jealousy be broken, and a simple, honest desire for good to ourselves and others be prevalent, and we should then have the sweet light of day dawning upon us.

Again, the thought is, "What are our diseases and defects?" Who can answer so difficult a matter? Perhaps the best reply at present would be, seek that there may be an unreserved waiting upon God for His instruction and conviction, feeling this truth, "In Thy light shall we see light" (Psalm xxxvi. 9); then, "O send out Thy light and Thy truth" (Psalm xliii. 3), will be a most suitable petition.

A very serious point, I fear, is the fact that *something* weakens the hold of Divine things upon us in general. This, perhaps, has always been felt by believers, to some extent, at different times, but I think more especially now. The present general mode of thinking may have much to do with it. It is sometimes difficult to understand from whence the colouring given to our thoughts has originated.

Our profession is not so simple and real. The family and fire-side religion is rather generally defective, possibly as a result of a decline of godliness in our hearts. This is undoubtedly a serious matter, for home influence of a godly character has often been made a blessing to those around. The effects of this must be felt in the Church, though we may sometimes not trace the effects to the cause.

Perhaps the reason of some young persons taking the courses they do does not entirely lie at their own door. It is well if we really prize and value heavenly things because of our faith in, and love to them. This is how it should be. We need contact with the God of truth as well as with truth as a system; and indeed, if matters are right with us, it will be so, for no system can save us. "Salvation belongeth unto God." Paul was instrumental in espousing the Corinthians to Jesus Christ (2 Cor. xi. 2). The glory of the Person of Christ is the centre

of Gospel truth ; and knowledge of Christ is most desirable and needful. The objects that our faith is taken up with will, no doubt, very much affect our faith itself.

Teaching and preaching is serious work, the nature of the spirit thereby communicated being most important. What are the effects and influence of our testimony ? It is the Spirit who preserves us rightly in the limits of sound doctrine, and enables us to perceive the beautiful shadings of truth in the Word. The source from whence we get our understanding and convictions must be "the whole counsel of God," with freedom towards our convictions so obtained upon all spiritual subjects. Some general uniting together, as far as possible, in our views of truth is certainly desirable, and a seeking to avoid those differences whose almost exclusive tendency is self-seeking and confusion. What grace we need in the way of humility and love to preserve us in the right way, with a good spirit. It is well to hear what "God the Lord will speak" (Psalm lxxxv. 8).

The Psalmist says, "With my whole heart have I sought thee" (Psalm cxix. 10). Here is a state to be desired, because of the issue. The Lord is "a rewarder of them who diligently seek Him" (Heb. xi. 6). If we might but drink more deeply into, and be imbued with the truth—the *whole* truth—in its own proper spirit and character, it would greatly enrich our hearts, and its influence is capable of being communicated. There is consolation in Christ, comfort in love, and consolation in brotherly fellowship in the Spirit. In this way our motives, aims, and views are purified. At the same time, these waters from the well of truth spiritualize and energize us, and may be found as fresh and fructifying as ever they have been, enlarging the heart, causing us further to drink in the grace of God from His Word, which gives delight to the mind and affections, and thus helping us with some cheerfulness to run in the ways of God.

Such blessings as these many poor souls are needing, who are entangled in cares, temptations, sorrows, and trials, who find everything dry within and without ; parched by carnality and sin, they are ready to give up, for their spiritual strength and power seem all gone : how blessed if these might be led in the way where they could comfortably adopt the language of the Psalmist, "He restoreth my soul ; He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His Name's sake" (Psalm xxiii. 3). Our heart says, Will the Lord indeed thus turn again our captivity, send us a time of prosperity and rejoicing, and say to us, as to Israel by Haggai, "From this day will I bless you" ?

July, 1896.

JACOB.

[To our kind correspondent, and all who are like minded we answer, the third chapter in Malachi yields abundant en

couragement to all who rightly seek the Lord's return. Oh that now, as then, they that fear the Lord might be inclined to put away all occasions for envy, jealousy, and unseemly contentions, and often meet to confess our sins before God, and to speak together of the things which make for our peace and Zion's welfare. Then when the works of the flesh are put away (Eph. iv. 17-32; Col. iii. 8-17; 1 Peter ii. 1-3), we may have cause for hope that the Holy Dove, The Comforter, will return to bless us.—ED.]

"I SLEEP, BUT MY HEART WAKETH."

(SOLOMON'S SONG v. 2.)

THE following excellent lines, by the late John Kent, once appeared in an old magazine:—

WHEN midnight sleep mine eyelids closed
My heart abode awake,
And hearkened to a soft still voice,
For my Belovèd spake.

"Open, my love," He kindly said,
"And I will enter in;
My locks are filled with purple dew,
My hands are torn by sin."

At first, alas! I made excuse,
And answered to His word:
"My raiment's off, and I'm ashamed,
Because I'm naked, Lord.

"Let me prepare myself," I said,
"And my best presents bring—
Put on my clothes—I'll open then
And wait upon the King."

This said, He waited while I stayed;
I slept, He called no more,
But silently He (grieved) retired,
And left my bolted door.

I woke, but found my Lord was gone;
I cried—I called in vain;
Uncommon terror then I felt,
Nor could from tears refrain.

Like Mary, pressed with strange remorse,
To all I saw I said,
"My All is gone—is gone from me;
Nor know I where He's laid."

Oh, what a weight did I sustain!
What darkness on me fell!
I thought He'd call no more, but I
Must now be sent to hell.

A dark, a solitary way
 In search of Him I trod;
 And sick of love, and faint was I,
 When, lo! appeared my God.

Through faith's bless'd lattice I espied,
 By glimmering light, the Lamb;
 I would have sung, but secret joy
 My happy soul o'ercame.

I thought upon my former sin,
 And like one frightened stood,
 'Till with a smile He cried, "My child!"
 And then I said, "My God!"

THE TRIALS AND DISCIPLINE OF FAITHFUL MINISTERS.

EVERY faithful minister of the Gospel must be truly anxious to answer the end of his high calling of God in Christ Jesus. He regards souls as his hire, and is *not readily satisfied without them*. He can sustain no greater mortification at the beginning of his ministry than that of witnessing no fruits of his labours. When such a calamity befalls him at such a period, he is tempted to doubt the validity of his commission to labour in the Word and doctrine, and to relinquish the ministry altogether.

Isaiah, the prince of the Prophets, met with no tokens of Divine approval—no seals of his Divine commission in the discharge of his prophetic functions. His ministry proved an entire failure, so far as he could judge; and yet he felt it as a bitter trial, and actually complained of it to God, though it was no more than he was bid to expect on his investiture with the prophetic office (Isaiah liii. 1; vi. 8-13).

Jeremiah, also, who was sanctified and ordained a prophet unto the nations from his mother's womb, was sorely grieved when he saw that the people, instead of receiving the Word of the Lord, mocked and derided him daily (Jer. i. 5; xx. 7-10); and he positively resolved to labour no more, and even cursed the day wherein he was born (Jer. xx. 14, &c.), notwithstanding God expressly told him, when He gave him his commission, that all the princes, priests, and people of the land would fight against him (Jer. i. 18, 19). He, however, soon found, by painful experience, that it was impossible for him to find the slightest relief from his troubles by deserting the work to which he had been appointed by God Himself (Jer. xx. 9). Nay, more; he was not long in discovering that it was unspeakably more difficult to remain silent than to preach in the face of

universal opposition. Like the royal Psalmist on some similar occasion, he felt that, while he refrained from publishing the Word of the Lord, his heart was hot within him, and it was pain and grief to him, so he must speak, that he may be refreshed. "While I kept silence," said the Psalmist, "my bones waxed old" (Psalm xxxii. 3), and Jeremiah, in similar circumstances, said, "The Lord's Word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay" (Jer. xx. 9). Poor Jeremiah! he was like a man in a burning fever—uneasy, and in a continual agitation while he remained silent. He could not possibly stifle and suppress the Word of the Lord in his heart, which, like a burning fire shut up in his bones, glowed inwardly, and must have vent, as it could not be smothered.

How striking was the power of the spirit of prophecy in those who were influenced by it! It overcame all their fears and corruptions. How beautifully was this exemplified in Isaiah, David, and Jeremiah. Though strongly tempted by the discouragements they met with to relieve themselves from the onerous burden of proclaiming the Word of the Lord to a rebellious people, yet their convictions soon triumphed over all such temptations, and they felt as Paul did, when he said, "Necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel." Such, I conceive, must be the uniform experience of every faithful minister of the Gospel in like circumstances. It is, however, given to them not to hearken to the temptation of deserting their post, but go on in their duty, notwithstanding all their discouragements, for this is more than worthy or acceptable with God. For the disburdening of their minds and the strengthening of their hands, it is permitted them to pour their complaints into the ears of their God and Father in Christ, saying, "Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" And they shall receive comfort concerning their labours, that they have not been altogether in vain, though the issue of them be hidden from their observation.

As was the case with Christ, their great Exemplar, so shall it be with them; they shall be assured that, though their ministry be in vain, as respects their hearers, yet not as to themselves, for their judgment is with the Lord, who will justify them, and bear them out, though men condemn them, and run them down, making them truly glorious in His sight; and they shall know that, though judgment (the truth) be not brought forth unto victory, nor the works of God to perfection by their instrumentality, yet both are with the Lord, to carry them on, and give them success according to His purpose, in His own way and time. The design of God's dispensations to them is to discipline

their minds, and prepare them for the glory that awaits them at His right hand; and He does this more by mortifying them than by gratifying their humours.

It is some time ere they learn that duty is theirs and events are God's; hence they feel more anxious for the success of their ministry than for its faithful discharge, overlooking the fact that the one is the Spirit's work, and the other theirs. Being under the constant teaching and guidance of the Spirit, they are eventually led to see that it is theirs by the open and unreserved manifestation of the Word of truth, to commend themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God, remembering that God hath said by the mouth of His Prophet Isaiah, "My Word shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isaiah lv. 11); and at last they perceive that, as the Lord's people, after they are called, by the ministry of the Spirit to His eternal kingdom and glory, are also called to live by faith, and walk by faith, and not by sight (Heb. ii. 4; Rom. i. 17; 2 Cor. v. 7). So they are called to exercise faith in the promise of God, that His Word shall prosper in the thing whereto He sends it. Whenever they proclaim it to their fellow-men—and, in the absence of any visible effect, to believe that it has, notwithstanding, subserved Jehovah's purpose, as will be seen at that great day, when the hidden things of darkness will be brought to light, the counsels of all hearts disclosed, and every faithful steward of the divine mysteries receive praise of God (1 Cor. xiv. 5)—then shall every dark and mysterious dispensation be made as clear as noonday, and the truth of the Apostle's declaration be seen by all the faithful, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose (Rom. viii. 28).

Harewood.

JOSHUA LAYCOCK.

WE dishonour the obedience of Christ, His sufferings and glorious victory over sin and death in His resurrection, when we are in bondage to the fear of death.—*Romaine.*

"ONLY believe." You will find it is something above and beyond all creature power. There is no need to fetter the Gospel, or hem it round with conditions or creature performances. This is the Gospel. It is such good news; it looks for nothing but what it brings, it asks for nothing but what it gives. While it asks for faith, it works it; while it commands repentance, it produces it. All that it commands it gives, and all it requires it works.—*Covell.*

THE SEEKERS' CORNER.

TO MY YOUNG SISTER, now in a foreign land, where she is likely to conclude that she is forgotten both by the Lord Himself, who hath said that He hates putting away, and also that He never forgets His blood-bought spouse, though she is apt to forget Him days without number, and to depart in heart and affection far from Him; nor are you altogether forgotten by your brother that attempts to write to you, nor by others of the same highly-favoured family, for distance from each other will never quench the vital spark from the fire of divine love, which was from everlasting, will remain throughout all time, and abide through all eternity; and this is a truth concerning our Father, our Redeemer, and Divine Quickener, who hath brought forth in us this divine principle of love one to another and desire for each other's good, spiritual and temporal, for in hearing a word or two of the trouble you have, and the manifold hindrances that you have from assembling with the saints for worship, and being at a distance from your friend, I felt ready to conclude that you were almost like unto Israel of old, that were carried captive by their enemies into a strange land, so that they could not sing one of the Lord's songs in a strange land. Now, when the way of the Lord's family is thus hedged up, and the world, flesh, and devil make head against us, carnal reason and unbelief unite with that combined force, and we conclude that the Lord hath forgotten us. Yea, worse than that, that we have been deceived, that all we have been exercised with was of ourselves or of Satan, and that it was only from the common illuminations of the Spirit, and not a saving work of that Good Spirit who begins and carries on His work. I have been on this spot, and have concluded that, after all, I was given up to the will of mine enemies, and that they would finally prevail over me.

Now, should my sister be brought in her mind so to conclude, from the various things that may have taken place, yet she shall soon prove that the Lord's thoughts are not as her thoughts, nor His ways as her ways, for He will bring her forth to the light, and she shall acknowledge Him to be wise, almighty, gracious, faithful, and just in all His dispensations, chastisements, losses, disappointments, and hindrances that she may meet with in this life. I have had a longer time to prove the love, faithfulness, wisdom, and care of the Lord our God than my sister has, and I have also been in far worse states of trouble and distress, both temporal and spiritual, when heaven, earth, and hell seemed to be against me—I mean the Lord in anger, men to condemn, and Satan to accuse, and myself covered with the shadow of death; and yet our God hath turned this shadow of death into a morn-

ing of light and joy, so that nothing is too hard for Him in making all things work together for our good ; so you shall find it. I have also had mountains of guilt, floods of temptations, innumerable corruptions, errors, sins, and fears, under which I have sunk, so that it appeared to me as though I had not a spark of grace in me ; but the good and gracious Spirit who began the good work, notwithstanding all these things, has again put forth His power and blown again upon the vital spark, and hath brought forth again the exercises of faith, love, humility, godly fear, heavenly peace, holy joy, and gratitude of heart in that heart that appeared to me before to be the habitation of Satan, with all his hellish seed of sin, enmity, and blasphemy against that God that I would for ever love. I have just mentioned this to show my sister that nothing can stop the springing up of this eternal well of life that is in us, even the eternal Spirit of truth and grace, One with the Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.

I should be glad to hear from you of the way the Lord is leading you, whether prosperous or adverse, feasting on the mount or mourning in the valley, or like a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke, which is often the case under the chastising of the Lord, which, in the end, is to be for our profit.

And now may the good Lord bless you and yours, for His mercy's sake. Amen.

Ely, 1841.

THOMAS PRIGG.*

LORD JESUS, as Thou hast got death, and him that hath the power of death, under Thy feet, even so, Lord, put them under ours!—*Romaine*.

WE are very nice sort of folks if we have our own way, but what a little thing will ruffle our temper, and show us we are not such meek, good-tempered sort of people as sometimes we try to persuade ourselves we are.—*Covell*.

"WE brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out." A little cradle was sufficient for you when you were born ; a little food is all you have required since ; a little drink is all that you have needed ; a little clothing has sufficed you : a little thing may kill you, a little grave will hold you, and a little worm will feed upon you. Then saith the Holy Ghost, "Seekest thou *great* things for thyself? seek them not."—*Covell*.

* See SOWER, July, 1895, p. 155.

LETTER FOR THE YOUNG.

TO A LAMB OF JESUS.

THE following lines were sent to Eunice Rhoda Trimming by the Editor, on his hearing that she was still preserved in life, though apparently dying, and they were made a great comfort to her. We hope to give some account of her most blessed end in a future number of the GLEANER :—

Dear Eunice, I hear that our merciful Lord
Still holds you in life by His will and His word ;
What wonders of grace, and of providence too,
Belong unto Jesus, who all things can do !

Yes, He has abundance of grace and of power,
His children to succour in each trying hour ;
And more than all this, He most kindly has said,
“ I e’er will be with thee ; O be not afraid !

“ No waters nor floods shall e’er thee overwhelm ;
I’ll pilot the vessel and manage the helm ;
No storm shall burst on thee to drive thee to woe ;
I’ll never forsake thee, no, never, O no !

“ With love everlasting I loved thee of old ;
I sought thee and brought thee a lamb to My fold ;
My blood was the price for thy ransom I paid ;
Thou art not forgotten, then be not afraid.

“ I ever am near thee, I know thy desire ;
My arms, spread beneath thee, ne’er weary nor tire ;
Enfolded and sheltered thus close in My breast,
I’ll still give thee peace till I bring thee to rest.

“ Lean hard, My beloved one, I, I am thy Friend ;
Thy labour and weakness shall soon have an end ;
Thy mansion is waiting, and soon thou shalt rise
To the city of peace and of rest in the skies.

“ There I will receive thee, to dwell near My side,
As a lamb of My fold for whom I have died ;
My face thou shalt see, and for ever shalt sing
My love and My praise as thy Saviour and King.”

Yours truly,
T. HULL.

Written when at Croydon, June 20th, 1896.

THE Holy Spirit — that is, the holy-making Spirit, the sanctifying Spirit.—*Romaine.*

REVIEW.

Memorial of Walter R. T. Auld. By his Mother. Oxford : J. C. Pembrey, 164, Walton Street. (Price 6d.)

ANOTHER valuable life history of a dear son taken home at the age of twenty-one. As a babe he gave promise of great intelligence, for at the age of eighteen months he could repeat the Lord's Prayer and a few Bible texts. Truthfulness was a marked feature of his life, so that his mother could feel when moistening his parched lips a few days before he died, "These lips I never knew to tell a lie." He early showed a clear mind in grasping the truths of the Bible, for at four years of age the following incident occurred :—

When reading to him one day, I came to the verse where Christ says, "If I with the finger of God"—Walter stopped me by saying, "The finger of God! what is God's finger?" Then, looking at his own fingers, he said, "My fingers are for doing work with, and God does His work by His power, so it means the power of God. Go on, mamma."

He had a great desire to go with his father, who was a minister of the Presbyterian Church, to a meeting of the Presbytery, so his father took him. It was a time of much controversy.

On coming home Walter was silent as to what he had seen or heard. "What did you think of the Presbytery?" I asked him on the way. "Oh, mamma, I never got such a disappointment. The ministers were not like Christ's servants, for sometimes they talked in loud, angry voices, and sometimes they laughed and joked. I hope I shall never be in a Presbytery again." And he never was.

But as he grew up in life, and entered upon college life, the books he came in contact with seemed to shake his faith in the Bible. But he could never give up private prayer and observance of the Sabbath. This kept him from falling altogether under the power of unbelief; for by prayer he was asking God to lead him into the truth, and by Sabbath keeping he had the privilege of hearing sermons which helped to counteract the doubts of his mind.

A narrow escape from being drowned, when bathing in the sea, seemed to have a gracious effect upon him, and soon he was found seeking for a personal religion, and he sought not in vain.

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A narrow escape from being drowned, when bathing in the sea, seemed to have a gracious effect upon him, and soon he was found seeking for a personal religion, and he sought not in vain.

Since the words of Christ have received entrance into my heart, I am conscious of upward desires, wrought in me by a power ex-

ternal to myself. What power is this? Did not Christ promise that He would send His Holy Spirit to lead souls into the truth? And He also pointed out what the work of His Spirit would be, "The Spirit of truth, whom I shall send unto you of the Father, He shall testify of Me." This I have experienced.

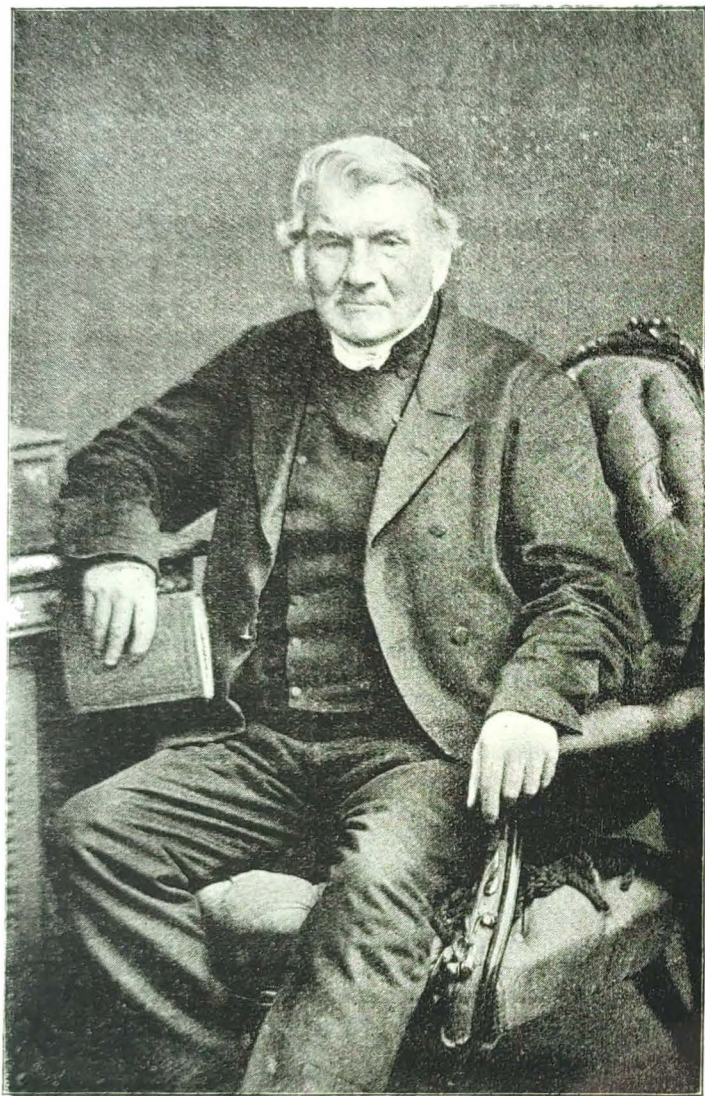
He heard a minister say, when speaking of sceptical temptations, that rather than parley with them he turned aside to the Lord Jesus for deliverance, to which he added, "I can say the same. I have found in the Lord Jesus all that my intellect, my conscience, and my heart require. Truly, living contact with Christ is the best cure for doubt."

To thoughtful minds amongst the young there are many things in this little memoir that might be helpful, and we should be glad if this brief notice led many to peruse, *carefully, prayerfully, and scripturally*, this narrative of Divine dealings in the soul of Walter Auld, who was not permitted to minister as he desired in the Lord's vineyard on earth, but was, at the age of twenty-one, taken to the higher ministry before the Throne.

PROFITABLE EXERCISE.

NEITHER body nor soul can do without exercise. Thus, we find the Apostle speaking to Timothy, "*Exercise thyself rather unto godliness*" (1 Tim. iv. 7). And of himself he said, "Herein do *I exercise myself*, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men" (Acts xxiv. 16). He was not for letting Timothy take things for granted, and sleep satisfied in a profession of truth, without a real work on the conscience. Speaking of affliction, he says, in another place, "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness *unto them which are exercised thereby*" (Heb. xii. 11). You see it is the exercise, the toil, the labour, the tossing up and down, that does the good, and out of these the spiritual profit springs. It is not to fold one's arms, like the fool of whom Solomon speaks (Eccl. iv. 5), and say, "I am satisfied with my religion; I want no more of these exercises; I have got beyond all experience; and now live above the reach of doubt, guilt, and fear." This smooth road to heaven is no more than what Lord Chesterfield said, when he retired from public life, that "he should sleep in his carriage the rest of the way," not knowing that that way would end in a precipice. The end of the profane nobleman, and of the professing Calvinist, may be more similar than many dream of.—*J. C. Philpot.*

The Sower, September, 1896.



DANIEL MATTHEWS.

AN OLD STANDARD BEARER.

THE following is some account of the late Daniel Matthews, who was pastor of the Strict Baptist Church at Rowley Regis over fifty-nine years, and also of one at Willenhall for forty-seven years of that period.

Rowley Regis is in the county of Staffordshire, and is noted for its potteries, stone quarries, and nail and rivet works. The places called Old Hill, Cradley Heath, White Heath, Black Heath, Twidal, and the Knowl, are within its area; fifty years ago its population did not exceed 4,000, but in 1891 it stood at 33,000 souls. The precious and everlasting Gospel appears to have been preached in the Episcopalian Church since about the year 1760; and in 1800 the Lord sent a servant of His, George Barrs, from All Saints, Wareham, in Norfolk, who took the curacy of the parish, with a salary of £40 per annum and surplice fees. The parish, at the commencement of his labours, was in a most deplorable condition—scarcely in a state of common civilization; the lower classes, with few exceptions, were extremely ignorant and wicked, and vice and immorality bore an almost unbounded sway. Instances of the most horrible depravity are found recorded in Mr. Barrs' writings, with which we will not, however, trouble the reader. The horrid practices of bull-baiting, bear-baiting, cock-fighting, and every other species of wickedness formed the popular amusements of the people on Sabbath Days. "In a word," says Mr. Barrs' biographer, "the powers of darkness appeared to reign with unlimited and undisputed sway, and there was nothing to induce a stranger to cast his lot in the place." Such was the state and condition of the place when the Rev. George Barrs became its curate, and when Daniel Matthews was born; and during the younger days of the latter, they in a great measure still prevailed. God, however, knew the place and what was needed, and the kind of instrument He determined to use, and thus the preaching of George Barrs, combined with his indomitable energy and powerful influence (through his marriage), proved the means used by the Lord to civilize and moralize the place.

Mr. Matthews tells us, in his little work called "The Leadings of the Spirit," published by the late John Gadsby in 1845, but which has long been out of print, that he was born on the 12th day of June, 1803. "I remember," says he, "when very young, I and my brother, being left in the house alone, my clothes caught fire. My brother, being older than I, cried, 'Run to thy mother.' I started to go to her, but having an entry to go through, the flames went over my head. The Lord gave me wisdom to turn back, when I was met by a man who had a

leathern apron on ; he wrapped it round me, and put the fire out at once. Though my clothes were all burned to my flannel, my skin was not burned at all, for He that was with the Hebrew children in the fiery furnace preserved me then, though I knew Him not."

After relating a most merciful deliverance from being drowned, Mr. Matthews goes on to say : " As early as my sixth year I thought I would be good, and say my prayers, that I might be sure of going to heaven when I died ; but I did not know then that I was dead in sin, and that my carnal heart was at enmity against God. I thought I could overcome sin by good works ; but when God opened my eyes to see, and softened my heart to feel, I soon found that if the Ethiopian could change his skin, or the leopard his spots, then I might overcome sin by works, and make my nature good. When between thirteen and sixteen years of age, I was convinced by hearing and reading, that unless I was born again, I could not enter the kingdom of heaven, but must be lost for ever. . . . The thought of "for ever" was heavy upon me. Had it been only for a time, I could have borne it ; but for ever was like a mountain upon me, and sunk deeper and deeper into my soul, so that at times it forced out cries and prayers to God and filled me with such terror, that I could not bear to think of eternity. . . . Thus I went on ; and, when I was in horror of soul on account of my sins, I promised and tried to do something to please God ; but when terror was not felt, I broke my promises and neglected my duties."

Mr. Matthews next treats of his conversion to God. He says : " One night I was singing, being in a trifling state of mind, regardless of God and of my own soul—for at times I sang to drive away thoughts of death, of eternity, and of the last day ; but at other times I sang alarming hymns to bring thoughts of good things into my mind, for often I longed to be saved. On the night I speak of, I was singing very thoughtlessly that hymn of Newton's called, 'Alarm to Sinners'—

" ' Stop, poor sinner, stop and think,
Before you further go ;
Will you sport upon the brink
Of everlasting woe ? '

" While I was singing this hymn, the Lord spoke these words to my soul : ' You are the sinner this hymn commands to stay.' The fear and terror that immediately fell upon me I never can forget ; but, awful to say, I summoned up all the courage I had, and was determined not to give way to fear. So off I started to worldly company, that I might drown my fears, as I had often done

before ; but vain was the attempt now, . . . for I could as soon have disputed the existence of God as I could have prevented my fears. The words, 'Stop, poor sinner, stop and think,' ran through me vehemently."

After describing his inability to stop his fears, or to become cheerful, he says: "From that time I began to seek places in which I might pray, without anyone seeing or hearing me, for I was ashamed to let anyone think that I prayed. I had been a great despiser of religion, but now God's arrows stuck fast in me, and His hand pressed me sore. I began to try and draw these arrows out by daily weeping and praying, vowing, fasting, and self-denial. I was now fit company for none, nor was anyone fit company for me. I was as one that is lost—and I was lost—so that I felt, after a time, I had become so miserable that I tried again to join my former companions, but this added fresh terror to my conscience. Then I thought I would seek their company no more ; yet again and again I limped after them, as a lame hound limpeth after the pack. Oh, the goodness of God to me ! Instead of sending me to hell, as I so justly deserved, He restrained me by fears, and forced me to leave the company of the wicked—yea, to leave it for ever."

After describing, on the next page and a-half, the distress under the law, and his blindness to the Gospel, &c., he says : "One Lord's Day, I was going to hear the Word of God" (in all [probability he was going to Rowley Church, to hear Mr. Barra), "and was saying in my heart, as I went, 'O Lord, if Thou hast another sinner in this parish to call by grace, let it be me ! Do call me, Lord ! do call me !' While I was thus praying in my heart, Satan directed my eyes to three young men who were going to the place of worship to which my steps were directed, and he said, 'It is of no use for you to pray to be called, for these young men are better than you, and if any are to be called, it will be one of them.' Oh, how my heart fainted at this, and broke out into cries, 'Oh, that I might be saved ! Lord, do call me ! do call me, Lord !' I then thought, if Christ were on earth, I would know whether He would save me or not. I thought I would follow Him, crying until He told me whether He would save me or not." He then tells us that, after searching the Bible, and finding it speaking so clearly of election—that God had a chosen people—the devil stirred up such hatred in his heart against it, and to such a degree, that he pinned the leaves containing the Epistle to the Romans together, and thought he would not read it at all. "I felt," says he, "that I could have destroyed election, and the God of election too, had I known how to do it. Nor did my madness stop here, for one day my rage was so intense that I thought I would go and cut the Epistle to

leathern apron on ; he wrapped it round me, and put the fire out at once. Though my clothes were all burned to my flannel, my skin was not burned at all, for He that was with the Hebrew children in the fiery furnace preserved me then, though I knew Him not."

After relating a most merciful deliverance from being drowned, Mr. Matthews goes on to say : " As early as my sixth year I thought I would be good, and say my prayers, that I might be sure of going to heaven when I died ; but I did not know then that I was dead in sin, and that my carnal heart was at enmity against God. I thought I could overcome sin by good works ; but when God opened my eyes to see, and softened my heart to feel, I soon found that if the Ethiopian could change his skin, or the leopard his spots, then I might overcome sin by works, and make my nature good. When between thirteen and sixteen years of age, I was convinced by hearing and reading, that unless I was born again, I could not enter the kingdom of heaven, but must be lost for ever. . . . The thought of "for ever" was heavy upon me. Had it been only for a time, I could have borne it ; but for ever was like a mountain upon me, and sunk deeper and deeper into my soul, so that at times it forced out cries and prayers to God and filled me with such terror, that I could not bear to think of eternity. . . . Thus I went on ; and, when I was in horror of soul on account of my sins, I promised and tried to do something to please God ; but when terror was not felt, I broke my promises and neglected my duties."

Mr. Matthews next treats of his conversion to God. He says : " One night I was singing, being in a trifling state of mind, regardless of God and of my own soul—for at times I sang to drive away thoughts of death, of eternity, and of the last day ; but at other times I sang alarming hymns to bring thoughts of good things into my mind, for often I longed to be saved. On the night I speak of, I was singing very thoughtlessly that hymn of Newton's called, 'Alarm to Sinners'—

" 'Stop, poor sinner, stop and think,
Before you further go ;
Will you sport upon the brink
Of everlasting woe ?'

" While I was singing this hymn, the Lord spoke these words to my soul : 'You are the sinner this hymn commands to stay.' The fear and terror that immediately fell upon me I never can forget ; but, awful to say, I summoned up all the courage I had, and was determined not to give way to fear. So off I started to worldly company, that I might drown my fears, as I had often done

before ; but vain was the attempt now, . . . for I could as soon have disputed the existence of God as I could have prevented my fears. The words, 'Stop, poor sinner, stop and think,' ran through me vehemently."

After describing his inability to stop his fears, or to become cheerful, he says: "From that time I began to seek places in which I might pray, without anyone seeing or hearing me, for I was ashamed to let anyone think that I prayed. I had been a great despiser of religion, but now God's arrows stuck fast in me, and His hand pressed me sore. I began to try and draw these arrows out by daily weeping and praying, vowing, fasting, and self-denial. I was now fit company for none, nor was anyone fit company for me. I was as one that is lost—and I was lost—so that I felt, after a time, I had become so miserable that I tried again to join my former companions, but this added fresh terror to my conscience. Then I thought I would seek their company no more ; yet again and again I limped after them, as a lame hound limpeth after the pack. Oh, the goodness of God to me ! Instead of sending me to hell, as I so justly deserved, He restrained me by fears, and forced me to leave the company of the wicked—yea, to leave it for ever."

After describing, on the next page and a-half, the distress under the law, and his blindness to the Gospel, &c., he says : "One Lord's Day, I was going to hear the Word of God" (in all [probability he was going to Rowley Church, to hear Mr. Barrs), "and was saying in my heart, as I went, 'O Lord, if Thou hast another sinner in this parish to call by grace, let it be me ! Do call me, Lord ! do call me !' While I was thus praying in my heart, Satan directed my eyes to three young men who were going to the place of worship to which my steps were directed, and he said, 'It is of no use for you to pray to be called, for these young men are better than you, and if any are to be called, it will be one of them.' Oh, how my heart fainted at this, and broke out into cries, 'Oh, that I might be saved ! Lord, do call me ! do call me, Lord !' I then thought, if Christ were on earth, I would know whether He would save me or not. I thought I would follow Him, crying until He told me whether He would save me or not." He then tells us that, after searching the Bible, and finding it speaking so clearly of election—that God had a chosen people—the devil stirred up such hatred in his heart against it, and to such a degree, that he pinned the leaves containing the Epistle to the Romans together, and thought he would not read it at all. "I felt," says he, "that I could have destroyed election, and the God of election too, had I known how to do it. Nor did my madness stop here, for one day my rage was so intense that I thought I would go and cut the Epistle to

the Romans out of the Bible; and, in my devilish madness against election, I went and laid the Bible open for this purpose. The Epistle to the Romans being joined to the Acts on the one side and to the Corinthians on the other, I could not cut that out without losing some of the Acts and Corinthians, which I thought were holy books, and I durst not cut them out, and this stayed my hand.

"While I write this, my heart trembles within me. Oh, wonder of wonders that the Lord did not cut me down in this devilish, daring, and outrageous act of wickedness! 'O Lord, what is man?' And what sin is there which is not in his heart? And what sin will he not do unless he be kept by Thy almighty power?

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

"Reader, if thou strivest against any part of the Scriptures thou strivest against God."

After describing some dreadful temptations of Satan that he endured, and that "a whole year passed away" (during those temptations) before he could tell God upon his knees what he feared, felt, or desired, he says: "I went regularly to hear preaching, but did not tell my case to anyone. No minister that I had heard described my situation in their sermons. . . . The consequence," he says, "was, I resolved to read the New Testament through, and, should nothing be applied to my soul, to cut the thread of my life. I read till I came to these words, 'Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' I remember looking round me and saying, 'Where art Thou, Lord? and how shall I come to Thee? What must I do to come to Thee? and where shall I go to find Thee? I long to come to Thee, Lord, but I know not how to lay hold of Thee.' I remember saying that I should not mind walking to London, without either eating or drinking, though I died as soon as I got there, if that would be going to Christ. One morning, soon after this, I had to go to Birmingham. I feared I should not live the day out, and thought with terror that before night I should be in eternity. When I had got a few hundred yards from home, I turned myself to look back, and I reflected upon its being my farewell look at home. It was a cutting look for me, for I could see no way in which God could save so great a sinner. All at once, however, these words came with power to my soul—

"The weak grow strong, the strong increase,
And every doubtful soul finds peace."

"I know that I heard them, and that they made my heart leap for joy. I had never seen the words with my eyes, nor heard them from anyone's mouth, but I know that the Lord spake them to me, for they brought hope with them. When I returned home, I read some of Newton's hymns, and came to that beginning—

"Come, my soul, thy suit prepare;
Jesus loves to answer prayer;
He Himself has bid thee pray,
Therefore will not say thee nay."

"While I was reading this verse, the Lord the Spirit took from me the fear of being swallowed up. I then went to tell my feelings to the Lord; I kept nothing back, and speaking refreshed me (Job xxxii. 20). Sometimes when my heart was warm and my eyes were wet, I had hope; but when my heart was cold and my eyes dry, my hope fainted. I often wept over Christ's sufferings. If I only heard the name of Jesus, I wept over His love to sinners, though I could not say He was mine at that time, nor durst I say that He died for me; yet I hoped that He did."

After treating of his deliverance by the Word (James i. 25), he says: "My heart was so often filled with the love of God, that I had not much to do besides letting out this love in blessing and praising Him for having mercy upon me. I could not forbear telling God again and again that He was mine, and that I was His. The dread of death, of judgment, and of hell was all gone. I bought a new Bible, and began to read it, and it appeared to shine with God's mercy. I beheld God's mercy to sinners in every chapter, read where I would. I could see mercy for those who felt their need of Christ, and wondered I had not seen this before."

Mr. Matthews, after treating of being delivered from the temptation relative to taking a public-house which had made several men rich, writes of going to hear the late Henry Fowler, of London, preach, and how sweetly he preached the dealings of God with his soul. "Soon after this," he says, "he came to Birmingham again, and having a great desire to hear him once more, I went. He preached about long darkness of soul after the believer had known the Lord. During the sermon I cut myself off, for at that time I knew nothing of long darkness after liberty. In the evening I went to hear Mr. Fowler again, but found no relief. I was then broken-hearted, not knowing what to do with myself. I cried all the way home, 'O Lord, if I am wrong, make me right!' And, bless the dear Lord, He gave me a melting view of His sin-pardoning love in Christ. Now all was right again, and I felt that I loved the Lord with soul and strength.

"Reader, I loved then, as I do this day, to weep for my sins at the feet of Jesus, and over His pardoning love to me, the vilest of sinners. This work endears Christ more and more to my soul, and fires me afresh against my own sins. A knowledge of Christ and His ways, with the love of God felt in the heart, makes us long to be swallowed up in the love of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and to have a body like Christ's glorious body.

"What I have written, I have written for the poor mourners in Zion, hoping that it may, in the hands of the Holy Spirit, be a means of doing them good.—D. M., 1845."

We should like to have transcribed the whole of the above work, but trust, however, it may, with other things, yet be re-published.

A. D.

"GOLD TRIED IN THE FIRE."

To rest upon a shallow foundation for eternal life, and never be exercised about it, clearly proves that the calling was of nature, not of grace; and that such a one is in the ranks of that band of traitors, of whom it is said, that "a deceived heart hath turned them aside." But when we feel the workings of a vile heart of unbelief that calls everything in question, are plagued with a thousand doubts and fears, are harassed with a thousand suspicions, tormented with a thousand fiery darts of blasphemy and obscenity, and find infidelity doubting every thing, from the being of God down to His testimony in our conscience; to have all that the Lord has done sifted backwards and forwards in the heart, and all that has been going on from first to last to be tried as by fire, I warrant you, there will be some labour here. But "in all labour there is profit." And shall this be without? How it cuts up false evidences! How it throws down rotten props! How it winnows away the chaff and dust of natural religion; and oh, when the Lord does reveal Himself, when He does apply His atoning blood, and does speak home to the conscience, what a profit is there in the labour that the soul has gone through, in order to make its calling and election sure! Where do we find, generally speaking, most life in the soul? Who are the best hearers in a congregation? Who are the most humble, God-fearing, and consistent members in a Church? Is it not those who are exercised in their souls, labouring under and burdened with a vile heart of unbelief, to make their calling and election sure?—*J. C. Philpot.*

MEMORIALS OF CHARLOTTE SMITH, OF SAFFRON WALDEN.

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

CHARLOTTE SMITH, the subject of this brief sketch, was born at Saffron Walden, in the year 1830; her parents were both God-fearing people, and members of the little Church under the pastoral care of the late beloved J. D. Player, whose ministry was valued by them. From various conversations we have had with Charlotte, she has informed us that her father was naturally of a hasty temper, whilst her mother was the reverse, a quiet, gentle, unobtrusive person, but they were each earnest in their endeavours to train their children in a path of strictly moral rectitude. Charlotte, the youngest, of her father's disposition, and with the vivacity of youth, she would gladly have mingled in all the pleasures and vain pursuits which are the delight of an unregenerate mind; and to use her own words, "I hated the restraint of my dear parents, and when I saw other girls of my own age enjoying themselves with the pleasures of the world, I felt vexed that I was not allowed to do the same." Yet, amidst all this, the wise counsel of her parents had some effect upon her, though she tried to stifle the conviction of truth, and much as she disliked listening to her father's prayers, they were often a check upon her gay and careless mind. Oh the inestimable value of real praying parents! She has told us, upon one occasion she was induced to go to a fair, and whilst there, in the height of her enjoyment, a solemn thought arrested her mind in such a way as it had never before done. "Oh, if I should die now, what would become of my poor soul?" She tried to shake off the impression, but in vain. She returned home unhappy, and could not resume her former cheerfulness. This was evidently an arrow from God, which marred her former pleasure. How true are the words—

"'Tis thus the eternal counsel run,
'Almighty power, arrest that one.'"

Also dear old John Kent's precious lines—

"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."

She was not the subject of such deep distress of soul as some of the Lord's children, neither did she experience so clear a deliverance into Gospel liberty, but she bore marks of one whom the Holy Ghost had quickened into divine life. She felt she

was a needy sinner, and valued the precious work and worth of Christ, as her only hope of acceptance with God ; as she would often say—

“ Without Thy graces and Thyself,
I were a wretch undone.”

After the circumstance mentioned, she was led in the providence of God to reside for a time in London, when she attended Zoar Chapel, and heard ministers of truth, whose teaching was helpful. Eventually she returned to Saffron Walden, and her soul was greatly blessed under the ministry of that faithful servant of God, the late Mr. Charles Norris, who was then pastor of the Church at London Road. After relating some of her exercises, she was encouraged to bear a public testimony of her love to the Lord Jesus, and in the year 1862 was baptized, and added to the Church, and she has told us it was to both a mutually happy time. Dear Mr. Norris expressed the pleasure he felt on the occasion, and Charlotte felt happy in the Lord, and her subsequent life proved the work was of God, she being preserved separate in life and spirit from the world, and she loved those words of Kent's sweet hymn—

“ Preserved in Jesus when
My feet made haste to hell,
And there I should have gone,
But Thou dost all things well;
Thy love was great, Thy mercy free,
Which from the pit delivered me.”

She never rambled about to other places where the truth was not preached, but was constant in her attendance amongst her own people, and could, I believe, say from her heart—

“ Here would I find a settled rest,
While others go and come ;
No more a stranger or a guest,
But like a child at home.”

Charlotte did indeed love the truths of the Gospel, and would very soon resent any departure from the same. She felt she was a poor undone sinner, whose only hope of escape from the wrath to come was by the justifying merits of a precious Christ ; therefore she could not endure hearing the dear Redeemer's honour defamed by the false smattering of free-will and creature merit ; and, the more closely we became acquainted with her, we observed an increasing spirit of perception in these divine realities, which the Holy Spirit stamps upon the heart of every heaven-born soul. Many happy moments we have spent in her little cottage, speaking of the Lord's dealings with us. In the

year 1887 she lost her dear sister Ruth, with whom she had lived from the time of her parents' death. An account of Ruth, entitled, "Safe Home at Last," appeared in the *SOWER* for April, 1887. Charlotte much felt the loss, as they were so closely united in a twofold sense, Ruth being a gracious, humble, though much afflicted child of God; and when referring to her decease she would say, "The dear Lord has so comforted and sustained me that, though I am personally alone, I never feel lonely. She ever spoke most gratefully of the Lord's goodness to her in a providential way, having frequent occasion to "observe these things," as she was one of the poor of the Lord's flock. Being often straitened for means to pay her rent, she has said, "I hope you will remember me at a throne of grace. I am so exercised, yet I believe the Lord will appear for me." And when we have called later on, and inquired how matters were, she has told us of deliverance at the last extremity. One time we especially remember; she said, "It has come in the most unexpected way. I received a letter from my niece (who was a widow with a family, and had to work for a living), and what was my great surprise when I opened it to find a post-office order for five shillings. She said I had been so laid upon her mind, and she feared I was in straitened circumstances. "Oh, my dear," she said, "the goodness of the Lord! it was just the amount I needed."

We could relate many such instances of the Lord's kind interposition on her behalf. We merely mention this for the encouragement of His dear tried ones who may peruse the same. Oh, how blessedly true are the Psalmist's words, "The young lions do lack and suffer hunger, but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing."

In the winter of 1889, Charlotte was laid aside with an illness which, we believe, was the first breaking up of her constitution, as she never regained her usual health, but was sufficiently restored to get to the house of God, and had many sweet seasons in hearing the Gospel. She much valued the sound and savoury truths preached by the late Mr. Gordelier, and since his decease has specially looked forward to the Sabbaths when Mr. Woodgate supplied, as the sweet covenant verities advanced by him were precious food for her soul. During the winter of 1893 and spring following, we perceived a great change in her appearance. There were evident marks of gradual decay, and she would say, "I feel the dear Lord is taking down my poor tabernacle, and I do long to go home to be with Him for ever." She had a most blessed confirmation of the glory that was awaiting her, in hearing Mr. Mitchell at the anniversary in July, 1894, from the words, "And they shall see His face" (Rev. xxii. 4).

She seemed to drink in the precious truths with sacred pleasure, and at the close of the service said, "Oh, I have had a sweet feast; my soul feels full. I hope soon to realize the fulfilment." The last time she ever went to the house of God was in the early autumn of the same year the late Mr. Maycock was preaching Harvest Thanksgiving sermons. The text on the occasion was, "All are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." It was a faithful and encouraging discourse, in which the good old man spoke of the foundation laid by a Triune God, ratified by a precious Christ, and revealed by the Holy Spirit in a sinner's heart. Dear Charlotte was much blessed in hearing the same, though quite exhausted in body, and afterwards remarked to us, "I believe this is the last time I shall ever go to chapel, but I feel such a sweet savour from these grand and glorious truths, and they are the same words which Mr. Norris preached from, the last time dear Ruth (meaning her departed sister) heard him." Her impression proved correct, for she never again entered the earthly courts, and from that time continued to get weaker. We called one evening about the end of October, 1894, when she said, "I don't know what the Lord's will is concerning me. I feel I can leave everything. I've had a sweet verse applied to my soul—

"I could renounce my all below,
If my Creator bid;
And run, if I were called to go,
And die as Moses did."

This she spoke with much feeling. In the early part of December she related another very blessed manifestation she had of the Lord's love: when alone during the night, as she drank some cold water, she thought of the sufferings of Christ for her sins, and said, "I might even now have been in hell, where I could not have a drop of water; but I shall not go there. No! Satan will not have me: through the riches of His grace, I shall go to be with my precious Saviour;" and the verse followed so sweetly—

"Upon my leaf, when parched with heat,
Refreshing dew shall drop;
The plant which Thy right hand hath set,
Shall ne'er be rooted up."

Her bodily weakness increasing, made it a great effort for her to converse, and the disease caused much suffering and restlessness of body; but her niece, who nursed her during the last few months of her life, said she never murmured, but was always most grateful for any attention, and the Lord's goodness

in constraining many friends to administer those temporal necessities which her case needed was truly marvellous.

One day when we visited her, in the early part of January, 1895, she seemed in a very blessed state of mind, and tried to converse upon the security of those who were sheltered in the eternal covenant of grace, and the precious value of being clothed in the righteousness of Christ. With much emphasis she quoted the sweet verse of Watts—

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

At another time when we found her much worse, we said, “You can say as the poet, ‘I feel the mud-walled cottage shake.’” She fervently replied, “ ‘And long to see it fall.’ ”

She was taken much worse on March 23rd. We asked her how it was with her soul, “Do you feel you are upon the Rock?” She grasped our hand and said, “O yes!—built there.” Then we said, “It is well with you.” She said, “Yes! I want—oh, I want to praise Him. I feel Him so precious. Death is only a shadow.” She seemed then quite exhausted; but again opening her eyes, she said—

“ ‘There with my Saviour, Brother, Friend,
A blest eternity I’ll spend,
Triumphant in His grace,’ ” &c.

She lingered on until March 25th, when her immortal spirit fled to join the glorified company above. As we looked at her coffin in the grave, we thought of Mr. Tiptaft’s words, “What a mercy to be well laid in the grave.” Chosen of God, redeemed by Christ, and quickened by the Holy Spirit, she now stands spotless before the throne of His glory. “The end of that man is peace.”

S. E. B.

FOR my own part, since first my unbelief was felt, I have been praying fifteen years for faith, and praying with some earnestness, and yet am not yet possessed of more than half a grain. You smile, sir, I perceive, at the smallness of the quantity, but you would not if you knew its efficacy. Jesus, who knew it well, assures you that a single grain, and a grain as small as a mustard seed, would remove a mountain, remove a mountain-load of guilt from the conscience, a mountain-load of trouble from the mind, a mountain-load from the heart.—*J. Berridge.*

THE GRACE OF GOD,

AS MANIFESTED IN ONE WHO WAS SEVENTY-EIGHT YEARS OF AGE.

MY VERY DEAR MR. HULL,—Will you kindly find room in the SOWER for the call by grace and most happy death of John Matten, of Cricket Hill, Yateley, Hants, of whom it may be truly said, "Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?"

The writer was supplying at Cricket Hill, July, 1894, and a dear friend suggested to me on the Monday that we should go and visit poor old Mr. Matten, as he was too lame to get to the house of God, where he had attended so many years. Accordingly we set out, and on our arrival found him in his garden. We sat down, and after a little chat upon generalities, I commenced to speak to him about eternal realities. He seemed quite astonished, but yet there was a manifest desire in his mind that I should proceed, and I felt quite at liberty to do so. I spoke plainly to him, for the Lord had again fulfilled His own promise in my experience, "I will put a word in thy mouth." I talked to him of God, and His great love to poor helpless sinners, and also noticed how various are the ways and means the Lord employs to bring His people to Himself. The poor old man seemed to listen most attentively to what I said, until the time had come when I must leave him; but on leaving he said, "The next time you come to supply at Cricket Hill, I will try to come and hear you."

When I went again, however, he was not able to leave his home, so I visited him again, and found in him the same spirit to listen, as I talked, read, and prayed with him. I went to Cricket Hill again in June, 1895, but previous to that I had a letter from my friend, asking me to write to Mr. Matten, as he seemed very anxious about his soul. I asked the Lord to guide my thoughts and bless the the words, and set his soul at liberty. And so I sent it forth, trusting the Lord would bless His own word. The letter was as follows:—

"83, Oakfield Road, East Ham, June 25th, 1895.

"MY DEAR FRIEND MATTEN,—I hope you will pardon the liberty that I take in writing to you, but I have thought very much about you since I saw you on the 2nd June, and do pray for you, and hope that this heavy affliction may be the means the Lord is using to bring you like one of old to say, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth.'

"My dear friend, I feel sure by what I feel in my own soul, and from what I saw in your looks, and from what you gave expression to, that you are one of the Lord's redeemed, and before you leave this world will be constrained to say from your

heart, 'Sweet affliction that has brought me to my blessed Saviour.'

"I was thinking to-day, while at work, that the dear Saviour is just as kind and loving now as He was when His blessed feet walked this earth, for when here He proved how ardently He loved His own dear ones. Get some kind friend to read the first ten verses of the Gospel according to Mark, and you will see a little of His lovely form. This resembles what He was before time began, as we read in John xvii. 5. My dear friend Matten, this is something like heaven. And is it really true that you and I, your dear wife and my dear sister, that came with me to see you, and all the redeemed are to be like Him? Yes, it is true, for the beloved Apostle John tells us that we shall be like Him. Just look at those precious words in 1 John iii. 1, 2. The poet says—

"'There is a heaven of perfect peace,
The eternal throne is there;
But what that tearless region is
It doth not yet appear.

"'And there are ransomed spirits, too,
Who once were pilgrims here;
But how the Saviour's face they view
It doth not yet appear.

"'Then oh, my soul, with patience wait,
The happy hour is near,
When thou shalt pass the pearly gates,
And it will all appear.'

"My dear beloved friend, the Lord bless these words to you, and lead you to His blessed feet for mercy, and may He give you patience to suffer a little longer, and then you shall see Him as He is, and be like Him. Oh, my dear friend, is it true that your poor body, that is now marred with pain, will be raised like unto His glorious body? Look at Him as He appeared to John, in Revelation i. 13 to 16. Yes, it is true. Also hear from those dear and precious lips of His what He said in prayer for us, in John's Gospel, xvii. 21 to 24. I hope to see you soon, that is, on July 28th, if the Lord will.

"With love to you and your dear wife, Miss Matten, and my dear sister, Miss Lucy Parker,

"I remain, yours for Christ's sake,

"WILLIAM GULL."

In the July following I visited him again, and never shall I forget the sight as I entered the dear old man's room. As soon as he saw me he burst into tears, and putting his arms out he

drew me closely to him, and told me what the Lord had done for him. My dear brother Hull, you know something of the joy that runs through our souls at such a time.

I visited him all that week, and on August the 5th, 1895, when I was leaving him, I said, "Well, brother Matten, the next time we meet it will be at home. There will be no suffering there"; and he replied, "I am now looking and waiting for the Lord to come and take me home." His dear wife told me that after that he spoke but little, as he was so unconscious; but he said to a dear friend on the 18th, "Lucy, dear, you can do me no more good. I want the Lord to come and take me home." And thus he lay until the 20th, when, at one o'clock, he passed away from earth to the house of many mansions, aged seventy-eight years, of which time he lived seventy-seven years and nine months a stranger to grace, although an attendant at the house of God.

"Oh, for such love let rocks and hills
Their lasting silence break,
And all harmonious human tongues
The Saviour's praises speak."

I remain, yours for Christ's sake,
East Ham, Essex. WILLIAM GULL.

SEASONS OF REFRESHING.

MY DEAR PASTOR,—Please accept my best thanks for your kind communication last night. I feel it to be a privilege to have so soon a remembrancer of your pastoral care and kindness.

Through the tender mercy of our loving Lord, I am thankful to tell you that my dear wife and babe are doing well.

In respect of the little book you kindly sent, no doubt you were directed of the Lord. My dear wife was melted to tears in reading it. Indeed, I never saw her so deeply affected. I remember reading it about twelve months ago, when it was peculiarly sweet. How greatly favoured you have been many ways. Well may you wish to sing—

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

I hope your dear daughter is favoured with much of the Lord's sweet presence, making glad her way. I was enabled

to remember her just lately at a throne of grace, and trust she may be kept blameless to the coming of the Lord.

I thank you much for the card memorialising my union to the Church. Indeed, I wish to have my baptism in lively remembrance. It seems too great a favour for such an unworthy sinner, but our God is very merciful; and it is of Him, I firmly believe, that we now stand in Church communion. I cannot tell you, my dear friend, what I felt and enjoyed when going under the water; but it was as if I sensibly there and then died with Christ, and rose from death with Him. The words since applied were, "As many of you as were baptized into Christ, were baptized into His death. Never may I forget the blessed season at the table of our Lord, and at the prayer meeting on Monday night. How such seasons endear a precious Christ! And what a mercy that these are but the beginning of days. Dear Toplady's lines will help me here—

"If such the sweetness of the stream,
What must the fountain be."

I desire to express my heartfelt gratitude to you and the beloved deacons for the great kindness shown me. The Lord Himself grant you each and all a sweet reward in heavenly blessing, and unite our hearts continually in love, blessing, and praise.

Our dear friend Miss T—— paid us a visit yesterday. She told me of the sweet text you took on Thursday night, and gave me the various headings of the discourse and a little of the sermon. I wish I had been there to have heard it, but I am now as one weaned from the breasts of Zion's consolation.

God has so blessed your ministry to me, that I regret having to miss one opportunity of hearing you. That dear Friend, who sticketh closer than a brother, has indeed passed me by, and said unto me, "Live!" He has caused the north wind to awake, and the south to blow, so that I can say, He has given me the upper and the nether springs, and favoured me to go up by the winding staircase to the middle chamber of communion and rest with my Beloved. He has favoured me to ride in His Gospel chariot, paved with love, so that if asked, what of Jesus I think, I say, He is altogether fair; He has made this leprous soul of mine clean; and my occupation, through His grace, now is to give thanks unto Him, which is a "sacrifice" He delights to receive, and which our "brother" David hath commanded us to render.

From the foregoing you may know that the blessed Spirit has sealed the sermons I have heard from your lips upon my heart.

And now I must close by saying that my prayer is, May the

Holy Ghost help you still, help you to-morrow, and bless you, and His Word by you, to His dear saints, and graciously use you for the gathering together of His hidden ones.

Kindly excuse all defects. With my Christian love to you and yours, in which my wife joins, I subscribe myself,

Yours gratefully and affectionately,

Croydon, December 7th, 1895.

A. S.

LETTER FROM DR. CONYERS TO MR. ROMAINE.

"STRAIT is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth to life," saith the Lord, and I am enabled to set to my seal that this is true. I stand before God, in myself, poor, and naked, and wretched, and miserable; but this makes mercy the sweeter. The more we know of our ruin, and the mystery of iniquity that is within us, the greater value shall we necessarily set on our Saviour and His salvation. I am, in Christ, superior to all that is in me. There is more in Him to deliver me than there can be in myself to condemn me. But here the matter lies, sir. When I look at the Word of God, and see there to what I am called—when I see my privileges as a child of God, and what arises from such an endearing relation—when I see that I am called to a fellowship with the Father and the Son, to a peace with God which passeth understanding, to a love that casteth out fear, to a life of faith in the Son of God, nay, to "joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have received the atonement"—when I see that I am called to be a temple of God through His Spirit dwelling in me, to be a worshipper in His spiritual house, an inhabitant of spiritual Zion, that city of the living God—to a hope full of immortality, to be an heir of God Himself, and a joint heir with His beloved Son,—when I consider these things, sir, I can hardly believe for joy and wonder. I look at myself, and smile to see such an insignificant wretch so exalted. I look on things around me, the world and all its vanities, and can count them but dross and dung in comparison of the excellency of the knowledge of God in Christ Jesus the Lord. But oh, sir, this is not always the case. Nay, it is very often otherwise. I want always to live like a man who is sensible that all the blessings of the everlasting covenant are His own. I would walk and talk, and feel my hope and fears and joys, like a creature that knows and believes that all things are his, for he is Christ's, and Christ is God's, &c.

WHEREVER there is really the work of God, there the devil is always working hardest. —*Romaine.*

RELIGION.

RELIGION without feeling is like a dead carcase. Feeling without truth is only nature warmed by fancy. Those are the only precious feelings which are caused by the Word of God. This is a joyful feeling when we can say, "I rejoice at Thy Word, as one that findeth great spoil" (Psalm cxix. 162). Why such exceeding great joy? Because the Word of God testifies of the immutable nature and unchangeable love of a Covenant God to poor sinners. "I am the Lord," Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit. "I change not." There is the believer's security from destruction. In this consists his safety unto salvation; for, alas! we are poor changeable creatures. Now our souls are strong in confidence, warm with love, joyful through hope, enlarged in prayer, with Christ and glory in our eye. Anon a cloud arises in the horizon of our hearts—unbelief prevails—lust rages—corruptions roar—all nature is in ferment, and the soul is in distress. Then what has it to look to for hope, and turn to for comfort? An unchangeable God, who is of one mind, with whom is no variable-ness, neither shadow of turning (Job xviii. 13; James i. 17). A precious Jesus, who is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever" (Heb. xiii. 8). "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; He will save, He will joy over thee with joy; He will rest in His love; He will joy over thee with singing" (Zeph. iii. 17). The different frames and feelings which distress us do not affect God, nor cause any change in His love to us. A changeable God must be an unhappy being, like ourselves; but God never changes in His love, purposes, and grace to us. For, 1st, He did not love us, choose us, and set His heart upon us, on account of what He saw in us; but He viewed us in the Son of His love. We are unrighteous sinners in ourselves. But He sees in Christ an everlasting righteousness to justify us; therefore He is ever pleased with us in Christ; ever of one mind concerning us; ever rests in His love to us, and joy over us. Change in us can never affect His mind, His love, or His joy. Hence learn, 1st, not to live upon your frames and feelings, nor upon anything you are in yourself. Bless God for lively frames, and comfortable feelings; but know these are not Christ; they do not make you acceptable to God. But, 2nd, look to, and live upon what you are in Christ. That is your glory. God so views and loves you. Look here, live here, and rejoice. So you will, 3rd, be like God, of one mind unto Jesus; live upon Him, and walk to the glory of your God and Father in Him.

THE principal thing in Christianity is to receive Christ.—*Romaine.*

ANSWER TO INQUIRY.

To E. F. K.

THE exhortation, "Quench not the Spirit," is needful, or it would not have been given. Then it becomes us to seek to know the mind of the Lord in this, as well as in all other portions of His Word. The Spirit of God is Almighty, and His work in beginning and carrying on salvation in the souls of His people cannot be quenched, whoever may withstand or oppose it. "I will work, and who shall let [or hinder] it?" is His divine declaration. When Stephen said to the unbelieving Jews, "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost," he did not refer to any strivings of the Spirit within them, for they were destitute of His grace and power, but to their resistance of the word and testimony of Christ and His servants. Their enmity was not slain, as it is in the case of all into whose heart He comes to bring them to Christ. Of all such it is declared, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power."

Yet, although the work of the Spirit in the heart cannot be destroyed, it may be damped by cold neglect, or by encouraging such things as are contrary to His gracious breathings and motions in the heart. Thus we are advised by the Lord in His Word what to forsake and what to follow (see Eph. iv. 20-32; Col. iii. 5-17; 1 Peter ii. 1-5, &c.). If we, as individuals or Churches, neglect or go contrary to these admonitions, we walk contrary to the dictates of the Holy Spirit, and may expect Him to show that He is grieved, by His withholding His sweet fruitifying graces and operations, which must result in dearth and barrenness of soul and life, both in a personal respect and also in the case of Churches.

There is good reason for believing that the worldly mindedness of members, and the carnal policy of leaders, in Churches, have become so hateful to the Holy Spirit, and have so damped His sweet influences, that the charges preferred against the people of old (see Isaiah lix. 1, 2; Jer. v. 25-29; Amos iv. 7) may be applied to the present time as being the cause of the sad spiritual dearth and lack of increase in the Churches of Christ. God has said, If ye walk contrary to Me, I also will walk contrary to you (see Lev. xxvi. 23-42). Therefore it becomes us to be careful not to walk in or encourage those things which bring on declinings in grace by damping the lively motions of the Spirit in our hearts or in the Churches of Christ.

We cannot write more on this subject now, but hope what we have written may prove useful to you and to other of our readers, under the blessing of the Lord whom we desire to serve.

THE EDITOR.

THE SEEKERS' CORNER.

To the Editor of the Sower.

MY DEAR PASTOR,—Since hearing you last evening I have felt I must write a line or two to say how I felt the Lord directed you to speak as you did, and to trace out the exercises of the tried and tempted ones.

After reaching home on Sunday evening, Satan came in like a flood, and truly I felt I had no power to withstand his temptations, as he told me I was deceived altogether, and my dying hour would prove it, if I was not made manifest as a hypocrite before. This continued till twelve o'clock on Monday, when the Lord was graciously pleased to grant relief by that verse—

“Ye tempted souls, reflect
Whose name 'tis ye profess;
Your Master's lot you must expect,
Temptation more or less,”

with much more of the same hymn. Oh, how it calmed my troubled breast, and gave me again to hope that as the great Captain stood the fiery test, I should stand through Him. I had been begging of the Lord all day that though you knew nothing of my case, He would lead you to speak of these things, and truly He did regard my simple request, for every word you spoke seemed for me. I had been longing all day to get there, to hear what the Lord would say unto me, for I felt it must come from Himself alone, to satisfy my longing soul.

These things create an appetite for the Word of God. I had felt so hard and careless for some days past that prayer and the Word of God seemed to have no attraction for me, and I began to fear and tremble, knowing that I was not in the right place, and yet I had no power to rise above it; but though the exercise was painful, it has been profitable, for it has again drawn my wandering heart to the throne of grace and to Himself. Oh, what could I do without His gracious revivings! I feel that He, in mercy, permitted Satan thus to try me, to stir me up to seek Him by prayer and supplication. Surely, if He did not love me, He would allow me to go on to my own destruction. Oh for grace to live nearer to Him, and never stray from the true and safe path! What peace it would bring! How true that

“His Spirit can the dross refine,
And melt and move this heart of mine.”

I trust that this poor scribble may be of some encouragement

to you, if the Lord's will, though it be such a feeble testimony of His mercy.

I remain, your affectionate young friend,
August 6th, 1896.

AGNES.

MY DEAR MR. —,—Had you known my case this evening, you could not have spoken differently. Of late I have been in a sad place, and had to prove that "to be carnally minded is death." I seemed to have come to the end of my religion, and at times it seemed mockery to ask the Lord to revive His work within, for it seemed as though it had never been begun. But what a mercy the Lord did not leave me there. Although the means have been painful, yet they were profitable. Oh, how I rebelled against God for permitting that trial, but—

"He sees me often overcome,
And pities my distress,
And bids afflictions drive me home,
To anchor on His grace."

It is, as you said this evening, "of the Lord's mercies we are not consumed," or long ere now He would have banished me from His presence. Instead of this, He broke down the rebellion of my proud, naughty heart, and drew me to His dear feet, crying for pardon, and longing to feel His love shed abroad in my heart. In this state I came to chapel, and your text truly described my case. While you were speaking, I wished I could get into a corner by myself; and I could say with the poet—

"Finish, dear Lord, what is begun;
Choose Thou the way, but still lead on."

Oh that I could always keep at His dear feet, and not so often stray from the God that I desire to love. I want Him to dethrone every idol, and take full possession of my breast, turning out everything that is contrary to His will. What a change I felt when I came out of chapel. I trust I felt like a wandering child returning to its home and friends. Oh that I might never sin against Him again! Yes, I would be as holy as God is holy.

Please forgive all wrong. May the Lord still go on to bless your soul, and strengthen you in body, and give you many seals to your ministry and souls for your hire.

Believe me to remain, your affectionate young friend,
August 5th, 1896.

E. V.

If the whole law were to be summed up in one word, it would be Love—love to God, and love to man for God's sake.—*Romaine.*

LETTER FOR THE YOUNG.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I do indeed think it very kind of you to write me such a nice letter, and I only wondered at your thinking of such a poor silly creature as I am. It came to me as the south wind in the midst of winter, and it has cheered me many a time since on reading and re-reading it.

I feel more and more at variance with the Church and its teachings. In a sermon, a few Sundays ago, we were told anyone could go to heaven, if they would only take Christ as their Saviour, and keep the Church rules and commandments, be confirmed, attend the sacrament, &c., &c.* And I thought, as you said, "Where is truth?" But although I am *with* those who call that their religion, I shrink from the thought of being *of* them; which they plainly seeing, look upon me as "a speckled bird." They wished me to return next term, which I only consented to do on condition that I should go to chapel once every week. Last Wednesday evening Mr. Knill preached, also on Sunday, and I was allowed to be out all day; it really was like Sunday. A week ago, Wednesday, Mr. Mattan preached, and it seemed as though he knew how I felt, as he said so many things that expressed my feelings.

Perhaps you will only smile and think it a notion I have in my head, when I tell you I long to place my hand in the hand of Him who can guide me in the narrow way to life eternal; but then I fear that will never be, as I fear I have not the humility God's people speak of. Then sometimes I think this can only be a notion. I did not mean to tell you this, but could not help doing so. I feel what a solemn thing it would be for me to die, and not know what would become of my soul after death.

I thank you for your good wishes, and the kindly interest you show for me. I am glad there is a good attendance at Bound's Cross, and I should so like to be there at the anniversary; but I shall have to return about the 5th of May, so I shall have to give up the thought. Again thanking you for your letter, and with love to all, believe me,

Yours sincerely,

West Croydon, March 25th, 1881.

M. DAY.

WHEN God brings Paradise Restored unto a man's heart, He brings him into the deep valley of humiliation.—*Romaine.*

* Alas! it is sad that such stuff should be called Gospel, and that in the National Church, and among general Nonconformists too, the new birth is banished, for the most part, from their pulpits.—ED.

REVIEW.

A Glimpse at Cranbrook. Price Sixpence. By W. Stanley Martin.
Cranbrook: E. J. Holmes, High Street.

MANY of our readers will doubtless like to know more of the town near which William Huntington was born, and in which he often preached, as did also those esteemed servants of Christ, Isaac Beeman, Henry Birch, and Daniel Smart. This little work contains many beautiful pictures of this old-world town and its picturesque neighbourhood, and the letterpress, which is well put together, points out in detail the many spots of interest around the locality, and which may induce many who peruse its pages to visit the rural glades and forests of pine wood in this beautiful part of the Garden of Kent.

This little work also gives an interesting survey of the history of the town, which in the time of Queen Elizabeth, and for years before, was a town of some importance, through the excellent manufactures which the Flemings established in the neighbourhood, and thus helped to found England's commercial greatness, and probably the godliness of some of these refugees may have left its mark in the town, where there are still many that fear God.

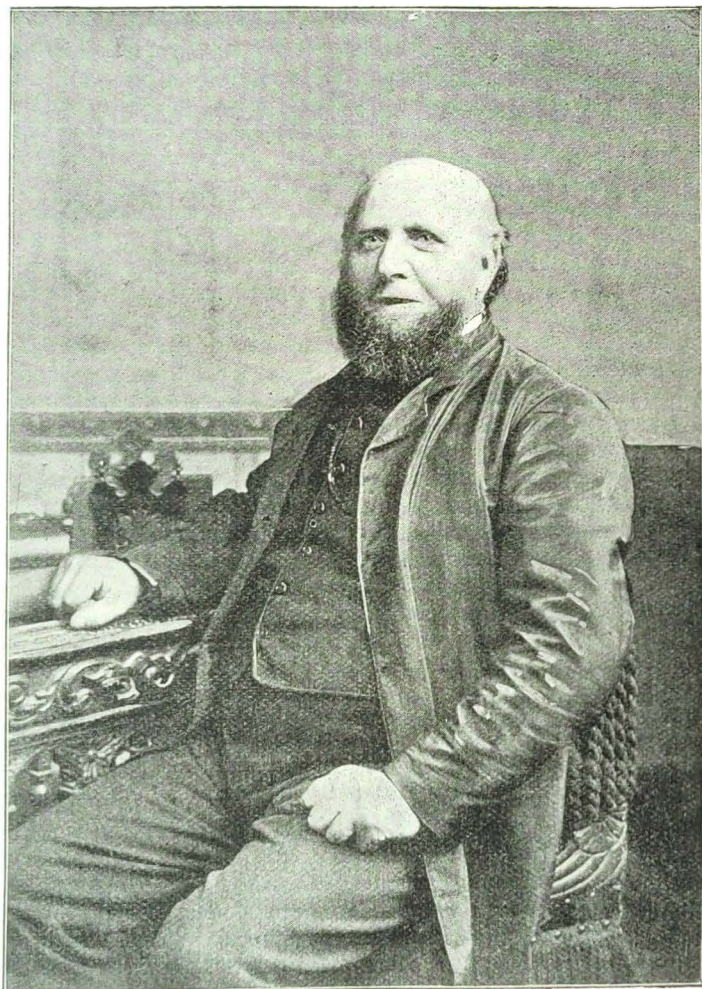
Reference is also made to the persecutions endured during Mary's reign, through the activity of one of her emissaries known as Bloody Baker, who resided near the town. William Huntington was in after years born near to the former residence of this great persecutor. The following reference is made to him in the book:—

Another celebrity was the Rev. W. Huntington, S.S., who could boast of no higher parentage than a farm labourer; he was an earnest evangelical preacher of ultra-Calvinistic tendencies. In reply to an inquiry as to the meaning of S.S. after his name, he replied, "As I cannot get D.D. for want of cash, neither can I get M.A. for want of learning, therefore I am compelled to fly for refuge to S.S., by which I mean, sinner saved." He desired to have the following characteristic epitaph by way of memorial on his tablet:—

"Here lies the Coalheaver, beloved of his God, but abhorred by man. The Omniscient Judge at the Great Assize shall ratify and confirm this to the confusion of many thousands. For England and the Metropolis shall know that there hath been a prophet amongst them."

He lived in a time when in theological controversy quarter to an opponent was neither given nor expected, hence he made many enemies and also many friends. His followers in considerable numbers are to be found in Cranbrook to-day. He married as his second wife, Lady Sanderson, the widow of a Lord Mayor of London, and her remains are buried in the garden of My Lady's cottage, about two miles from Cranbrook.

The Sower, October, 1886.



From a Portrait by E. WILLIAMS, Photographer, Hawkhurst.

THE LATE MR. ISAAC LEWIS.

THE LATE MR. ISAAC LEWIS,

PASTOR OF PROVIDENCE CHAPEL, STAPLEHURST.

ANOTHER standard bearer has been taken home to his eternal rest; one that will be greatly missed by his widow, his Church and congregation (to whom he ministered for nearly twenty-one years), and by his many friends scattered about the country.

When William Burch, the former pastor, was taken home, many were ready to wonder if the loss so keenly felt would ever be repaired; but the Lord prepared an instrument fitted for the work, which in due time was made manifest, and his ministry made useful to the household of faith. We trust the remembrance of what God did for them in days gone by may lead the Church and congregation, in their present bereavement, to earnestly wrestle with the Master of assemblies to again appoint them an under shepherd, endowed with like grace and gifts as their former pastor.

Mr. Lewis was born at Burnham, in Essex, on August 13th, 1823, of gracious parents, his mother dying when he was eight years old. In his young days his life was several times preserved in times of danger, but he grew up, as he said, "like a wild ass's colt," hardened to everything that was good, and greedily running after evil; and eventually, with two other boys, he ran away from home and took to a seafaring life on board a man-of-war, where he continued for nearly four years. After he was paid off from the ship he gave full bent to the propensities of his evil heart, much to the grief of his godly father, who adopted the language of David, "Oh, Isaac, my son, my son Isaac! oh that God would stop thee in thy mad career and downward course to hell." His father's prayers were heard, but he did not live to see them answered. At the age of twenty-two Mr. Lewis married, as might have been thought, improvidently, as after he had paid for his wedding dinner he had only one half-crown left, and no furniture, so had to go into lodgings; but his marriage proved a great blessing, for his wife proved a most excellent helpmeet, and they soon had a comfortable home. His wife also prevailed upon him to attend his father's chapel. One Sunday evening the minister was speaking of sin, righteousness, and judgment, when the Holy Ghost convinced him that he was a sinner, and brought him into great anguish of soul, in which he cried and begged for mercy. He felt a little secret hope that the Lord would be gracious, by which he was sometimes encouraged, but only soon to be cast down again; but after many risings and sinkings the day of deliverance came. One Lord's Day morning he awoke feeling dark and cold, and told his wife

that he would have no more to do with religion ; she replied, " Let us go to-day." His feelings became softened, and he accompanied her to chapel. Mr. Westhorp spoke from Psalm cxxx., which Mr. Lewis had some time before had a sweet season in meditating upon. He listened to the discourse with much comfort and satisfaction, and he went home with a sacred calm upon his mind. About five o'clock in the evening the words came into his mind with much softness and feeling, "The blood of Jesus Christ God's Son cleanseth thee from all sin." This brought a feeling of pardon home to his soul, but, Gideon like, he said, "Lord, this is a blessed portion, but do give me another token ;" and he wrestled with the Lord till his strength was spent, and the Lord spoke home to his soul Job xix. 25-27, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth : and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God : whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another." And now for a time his heart was filled with rejoicing. After a time he felt a loving desire to walk in the ordinances of the Lord's house. He went before the Church, and having given in his testimony, he was unanimously received by the minister and the Church.

In the month of January, 1866, while he was out in his boat fishing, he nearly lost his life. He went forward to handle the sail ; it was very cold and a heavy sea running, when the strop of the foresheet broke, and threw him violently overboard, head first, and he sank under the vessel. The thought of eternity flashed through his mind, and the enemy said, "Where is your hope ? it is all over with you now ;" but these words came again to him with power, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." The enemy fled, and hope sprang up in his breast. Almost at the same time he rose to the surface of the water, when he saw the little boat, which was being dragged after the larger one, and he knew that his only hope of being saved would be if he was enabled to grasp the boat before she went by, which he was enabled to do. His brother, who was on board the fishing boat, said that he rose out of the water like a man who had his feet upon something solid, and who gave a spring to reach his object. Mr. Lewis felt his feet were upon something solid, for he realized his standing upon the Rock of eternal ages. This is only one of the many narrow escapes and deliverances from death that Mr. Lewis experienced during his seafaring life.

When Mr. Lewis went on one of his voyages to West Hartlepool, he sought out a few of the Lord's people who met for worship in an upper room, where he joined them at a prayer-meeting one Sunday afternoon. After it was over he was pressed to speak to them in the evening ; this occasioned him much anxiety of mind,

but he was constrained to go, and was enabled to speak to them from Romans v. 9, and the Lord so helped him that the people rejoiced and were glad. He had previous to this had much exercise of mind respecting the ministry, and having been helped in his first attempt, he felt constrained to speak again to them as opportunity offered. He had many straits and trials, out of which the Lord delivered him, and in which he learnt many lessons which made his ministry profitable. For several years he laboured hard six days in the week for the bread that perisheth, and then on the Sabbath would travel several miles, conduct three services, return home at night, and found a weary body to commence his Monday's work. This led him to pray to the Lord that He might make a way for him, where he might preach the Gospel without so much labouring and travelling. A minister that he was acquainted with had several engagements at Staplehurst in Kent, but finding through illness that he was unable to fulfil his engagements, he recommended Mr. Lewis to the friends in his stead; this led to his going there to preach to the people, and his testimony being acceptable he was asked there repeatedly. On the occasion of his third visit he was so favoured in his soul early on the Monday morning, that it seemed to draw his affections to the people and to the place; and moreover he felt a firm persuasion that the Lord intended him to settle amongst the people as their pastor. And so it came to pass, for in due course he received a unanimous call, which he accepted; and here he continued to labour in season and out of season for nearly twenty-one years, and now the labourer has entered into his rest.

His summons home was somewhat sudden. He has recently been much favoured in preaching and in private, and a few Sundays ago he spoke of the sweetness that he had felt from the Lord in his meditations, and remarked, "I don't know what the Lord is about to do with me." He preached at Mayfield on Lord's Day, August 23rd, where he seemed much favoured, and spoke three times from Psalm xxiii., in which portion of Divine truth he saw so much fulness that he felt he could have spoken from it, as he observed, three times three. He returned home on the Monday morning feeling very poorly, and did not seem to improve as the week went on. To some of his friends who saw him on the Wednesday evening he spoke of Medley's death, and what a hard struggle it seemed for him (Medley) to part with his Church and people, little thinking that within fifty-four hours he would be in bliss with the glorified hymn writer.

He arose on Thursday as usual, but was taken after breakfast with excruciating pain, which rapidly brought his strength down. He remained unconscious during most of the time, so

that little converse could be held with him, and in spite of the skill and attention of his medical adviser, the severe inflammation prevailed and stopped the heart's action, and he passed away calmly and peacefully at five o'clock on Saturday morning, August 29th, 1896, aged seventy-three, to be for ever with the Lord.

The funeral service was conducted by Mr. George Frost, of Jarvis Brook, and the solemnity of the time will not soon be forgotten. A service was held in the chapel at half-past two, before proceeding to the churchyard. About three hundred people attended the services and followed the hearse, and each seemed to realize in some measure that Staplehurst had lost a good man and a useful minister of Christ. The following ministers were present—Mr. Lush, Marden; Mr. Penfold, Tonbridge; Mr. Thomas, Oulcombe; Mr. Boorman, Lamberhurst; Mr. Parish, Abingdon; Mr. Miles, Mayfield; Mr. Butler, Fritton; and Mr. Thatcher, the minister of the Congregational Church, Staplehurst, who also sent a very sympathetic letter on behalf of his Church. This act of courtesy was in direct contrast to the uncourteous action of the Rector of Staplehurst, who positively refused that the bell should be tolled on the occasion, although some Nonconformists had subscribed to the purchase of the new bells some years since, when it was understood that a bell should be tolled when a Dissenting funeral took place; but this the Rector refused to allow at the funeral of the Baptist minister, whose memory is held dear by hundreds, both for his ministry and moral worth. We believe other particulars of Mr. Lewis's life and ministry will presently be published.

Blackheath.

E. W.

A LOVING TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF MR. ISAAC LEWIS.

BENEATH the conqu'ring hand of death
The faithful champion lay;
Bright angels watch the expiring breath,
Then waft the soul away.

Away from earth, away from sin
And body racked with pain,
He heav'nly mansions entered in,
Ne'er to go out again.

How oft, when favoured here below,
He'd mount on faith's strong wings,
And to the gates of glory go,
Above terrestrial things.

'Twas then his soul would seem to view
Her seat in Paradise,
And scan the pleasures, ever new,
That rose before her eyes.

'Twas then death's dark and gloomy stream
(Though fraught with gloomy ill)
Would glisten 'neath the heavenly beam
As but a rippling rill.

Yes, then when warm with heav'nly fire,
His God was all his theme;
And heart and tongue would both conspire
To tell of none but Him.

He'd tell how when upon that shore
He would his Saviour see,
How he unbounded praise would pour
Through all eternity;

And how he'd cast his blood-bought crown
Low at His Saviour's feet,
And lay his highest honours down
Before the mercy seat.

We drape the pulpit now in black,
And mourn the vacant seat,
But can we wish to call him back
From bliss so full and sweet?

We'd rather bow beneath the rod—
Subdued by mighty grace,
Trusting our all-sufficient God,
In love, may fill his place.

Staplehurst.

E. P.

"THERE WERE THEY IN GREAT FEAR, WHERE NO FEAR WAS."

IN my business transactions at Bury St. Edmund's, in 1859, I was fortunate to have in Edward Greeve, Esq., M.P., a Christian gentleman, kind and benevolent, esteemed by all who had the privilege of knowing him, and one who encouraged me in works of faith and labours of love. One event in connection with Mr. Greeve's kind consideration for others is worthy of notice. He one morning happened to meet a tradesman of his town who was in evident perplexity in connection with trade worry and business anxieties. "I wish you would go and visit J——, Mr. Cowell, for I think he is either out of health, or in monetary trouble. If the latter is the case," added Mr. Greeve, "tell him that I am ready to back him at the bank, having so great a confidence in his character and business habits." He was at the time under contract for the erection of a large public building.

In consequence of Mr. Greeve's request, I at once went and sought an interview. Knowing him to be a child of God, after alluding to the wish of his friend that he should call upon him, I said, "Now, before we go into matters, let us have a word of prayer." Closing the little office door, we then bowed the knee together. Under the prayer the poor builder was deeply affected, and afterwards stated that such was the pressure upon his mind, and such his fears that he should be a loser by the contract he had undertaken, that he had resolved to destroy himself that very day; in fact, he had made arrangements for so doing. He not being an adept at figures, I requested him to let me personally examine his books. I did so, and, to our mutual joy and gratification, found a large and most important item of stock had been omitted in the poor builder's calculations, so that instead of his being insolvent, he had ample to meet his liabilities.

The simple facts proved that this was one of the ten thousand deliverances of the Lord, and that, in the simplest and most gracious way, He works for His people. Humanly speaking, had not Mr. Greeve casually (as men say) met the poor builder, had he not been impressed with his appearance, conferred with me, and requested me to visit him, and that, too, with so noble a message, the fatal step (already planned and purposed) would have been taken. One thing I might add. In the poor builder's distress, he told me he had had a fearful dream, and felt therein that a man's hand grasped each shoulder with great violence, so that he shook like an aspen leaf. I bade him observe it was, after all, *man's hand*, not God's, and now God's hand would be manifest in his deliverance. And so it was. Oh, how many times afterwards, on meeting, we praised the Lord together.—From "*Memorials of a Gracious Life*," by Miss Ruth Cowell.

"THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD."

(PSALM **xxiii** 1.)

THIS is an ode which for beauty of sentiment is not to be matched in the circuit of all literature. In its way down through three thousand years or more, this Psalm has penetrated to the depths of millions of hearts; it has gladdened homes of destitution and discomfort; it has whispered hope and joy amid tears to the utterly solitary and forsaken, whose only refuge was in heaven. Beyond all range of probable calculation, have these dozen lines imparted a power of endurance under suffering, and strength in feebleness, and have kept alive the flickering flame of religious feeling in hearts that were nigh to despair.—*Isaac Taylor*.

AN OLD STANDARD BEARER.

(Concluded from page 200.)

WE now give a few extracts from Mr. Matthews' Autobiography. Respecting his exercises about the ministry, he says:—

"The minister of the Church at Rowley preached very warmly in defence of infant baptism. Those sermons of his led me to read what the New Testament says on the subject of baptism for myself, and I soon found that baptism was the answer of a good conscience towards God (1 Peter iii. 21), and I saw that infants had not such an exercise of conscience. This untied me from the Church, and the chapel being a General Baptist place, I could not hear the truth there, so I had to stand alone by myself. For as I began to go about to different places, oh, what emptiness I found on every side!"

The minister at Rowley Church was the Rev. George Barrs, who, although a good man and firm in the doctrines of grace, by strongly advocating in his sermons the baptism of infants, was, singularly enough, the means of not only opening the eyes of Daniel Matthews as to the true mode of, and the proper characters for, baptism, but it also had the same effect upon others; and the late Joseph Smith, who was pastor of the Strict Baptist Church, Spring Meadow, Old Hill, for forty years, was one of the number thus affected: thus, indirectly, good Mr. Barrs' zeal for infant sprinkling laid the foundation of two Strict Baptist causes in the parish of Rowley Regis. In fact, almost the only persons in this large and populous parish that yet adhere to the glorious Gospel doctrines which Mr. Barrs preached are the Strict Baptists.

But we return to the narrative. Mr. Matthews says:—

"I saw the need of ministers of the Spirit, who were born of God, and sent by Him to preach—men that had the honour of God laid to their heart—men that would not sell Him for their own honour, &c.—men that did not court the smiles of mortals nor fear their frowns, but would preach the whole Word of God, and separate the precious from the vile, and fleshly religion from spiritual, and Law from Gospel, and works from grace; who would preach Christ and not themselves, and describe the kingdom of heaven *in* men."

"I thought, how solemn is the work of the ministry, how it calls for a single eye; and though the preacher is worthy of bread, he must not preach *for* bread, but for the honour of God and the welfare of souls; and that he must endure hardness, yet be gentle unto all, apt to teach."

He then speaks of the cry that sprang up in his heart that God would raise up men; also of a vision he had of being set to work to clear a yard of unclean beasts, &c.; and while thinking

of this, after he awoke, he tells us these words fell upon him, "See, I have this day set thee to root out, to pull down, and to destroy; also to build and to plant." He says, "I got up and sat by the fire, not knowing what to do. I counted seventeen preachers in the parish. I said to myself, they all pretend to preach, but I will not add to their number. But I could not shake it off." He questioned them. The first he asked about it told him "election was a bitter thing;" the next that he asked told him he was fool enough once to try and preach, "but," said he, "I shall never try again;" and the third man began to deny God altogether, and to show himself out of the secret of true religion, so Mr. Matthews had to give them all up.

"I now began (he says) to pray to the Lord to take the thoughts of the ministry from me. This I followed up for some time, and the burden of it seemed to get lighter and lighter. One day I thought I felt it go from me. I am sure that I was as glad as when I felt the burden of guilt taken off my conscience. I thought, what a mercy it was that it had left me. I could not help rejoicing, and the joy lasted for the day. But on the morrow, while I was rejoicing that it was gone from me, these words were spoken to me, 'Jonah rejoiced when he went to Tarshish.' Oh, never shall I forget how these words cut me down. I fell into tears, and said, 'What can I do? what can I do? I cannot go, neither can I get from the burden of going.'"

It appears that the burden of the ministry was very heavy upon him for a long time, but while in prayer in an empty house, where he went for that purpose, he, for the first time, felt willing to go, and begged of the Lord to open the way. He says:—

"A few days after this, in a night vision, I saw myself preaching in the General Baptist Chapel at Rowley, where I have since been the minister so long. I thought the congregation was all in confusion, some going out and others coming in, and when the service was over, one locked the door and gave the key to me.

"A few weeks after this, one Lord's Day, in the morning, I started to go to Birmingham to hear the Gospel, and it fell suddenly upon me to go to the chapel at Rowley and see if they had altered, and whether they had got the Gospel among them. I first thought I would go, then again I thought I would not, and turned backwards and forwards several times, until I thought I should be taken up for a madman, for I had been told more than once, that I should go mad about religion. So I turned and went home and waited until service time, and then went to the chapel. When I got there the man appointed for the day had not come, and after a time one asked me to preach.

I refused, but, in a little time I was again asked, and pressed very hard to stand up. At last I thought I would try, for I should never be free from the burden until I proved whether the Lord was in it or not. So I went into the pulpit, confused as I was, without a text. While they sang I took hold of the Bible to go down on my knees and pray over it, and ask the Lord for a text. Oh, the trembling I felt while sighing for a text, and when they were singing the last two lines, I caught sight of the first verse in the 16th chapter of Proverbs, 'The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord.' I got up full of trembling, and held myself up by taking hold of the candlesticks on the sides of the pulpit. I read the text and then read it a second time, still keeping hold of the candlesticks, and in a moment all my fears and confusion fled, and I had preaching matter given for an hour, and it came as fast as I could give it out. This taught me where to look for preaching matter, nor have I ever taken a sermon into the pulpit. I like to study the Bible six days every week, and in the pulpit to have such as is given me by the Spirit.

"I began to lay the axe to the root of man's fallen condition, and to show the need of the new birth. I soon saw the people in the same state as I had seen in the night vision, they fled like birds fly when they are shot at. The chapel was the private property of a gentleman, and he was a preacher. When he was told that I had preached election, he said he would not have that doctrine preached there. But I knew that God would close the doors for him, for I had seen that in the night vision before I preached there. They went on for a time but got weaker and weaker, until they were forced to close the door, and a month afterwards the landlord sent me word that I might have the chapel, so I sent for the key. This was in October, 1828."

It appears that Mr. Matthews paid the landlord rent for the use of the chapel, and at last bought it and gave his services free for many years. We are compelled, for want of space, to pass over some very interesting exercises related by Mr. Matthews, and give a short account of the prosperity of the cause:—

"The old chapel was paid for in 1849, and was made over to the Church and trustees, made as safe as the laws of the land could make it, and from that time unto this has been governed by the trustees and Church."

Mr. Matthews afterwards says:—"Some years ago" (that is, some years previous to 1877), "it was earnestly proposed by members of the Church to build a new chapel. To this I reluctantly consented, remembering the burden I had upon me with the one we then met in; but more room was loudly called for, so the Church and congregation pulled together, and what with money

raised for the land and the chapel, £1,370 was collected before the building was commenced; at laying of the stone £92; at the opening of the chapel in February, 1876, after one sermon, there was collected £152, and in all—with what was gathered afterwards—nearly £1,800 was raised,” and that entirely among Mr. Matthews’ hearers, and these a comparatively poor people. No wonder the good man says in this little book, “Oh that you and I may praise Him for His wonderful works to us.”

A WORD RESPECTING WILLENHALL,

Mr. Matthews says:—“It seems needful to say a few words about Willenhall. In the year 1824 or 1825 I opened a little business there, which lasted for many years. This led me to hear what they said about religion, for they would be talking. I thought fairness in dealing was enough to say in business.

“I never heard one of them drop a hint about the new birth, and this led me to pity them; and every time I saw them or thought of them, my pity was moved for them. In 1834 or 1835, one day when I left the town I stopped my horse to look back upon it, and while I was looking I broke into tears over the people, and the feeling increased. As soon as I could find a place, I dismounted and tied my horse to a gate, and went behind a hayrick to give vent to my feelings by praying for them. . . . A few nights after this I saw in a night vision that I had done my business at Willenhall earlier than usual. I thought I would walk about until dinner time. I had not gone far before I came to some water which ran across the road. I thought I would follow it and see where it went. I had not gone far before I stood to consider, and while I was musing, a grave man said to me, ‘*See, I give you charge over these waters.*’ I knew that waters signified people, and whilst I was wondering I awoke; but these things I did not disclose to any one for nearly twenty years. Some time after this I received an invitation from the people there to preach one sermon. I did so, and they never rested until they had from me what they now for a long time have had.”

Mr. Matthews took the charge over them, preaching at Rowley on the Lord’s Days, morning and afternoon, and Wednesday evenings, and at Willenhall, Sabbath evenings and Tuesday evenings. His custom was to work at home every Tuesday till dinner time, and then walk to Willenhall (nine miles), preach in the evening, and return after breakfast the next day. This he did, before the railways were built, for seven years, and he continued to go there until he died.

Before he took the pastorate at Willenhall he used to go out to distant places preaching, and great power attended his

ministry, but this itinerating he, in order to fulfil his charge at Rowley and Willenhall, was obliged to give up.

It appears that when he took the charge at Willenhall they were in debt to the Treasurer £30. The chapel was copyhold, with a heavy mortgage on it. He had the chapel franchised and made over to the Church, and enlarged it twice. At length, in 1879 a new chapel at Willenhall was erected, after the same fashion as the one at Rowley, but not so large, costing about £1,600, and all paid for.

Mr. Matthews was no ordinary man, and judging from what writings he has left, and from what one hears of him, he was truly a man sent of God—a plain, bold, able preacher of God's Word. He says in his little book that "it was once falsely said by some that I was ordained by men; when this came to my ears I condemned it from the pulpit. I had my Gospel in the same manner as Paul had his, and from the same source—it was given me by the same Spirit. I never asked man to countenance me, nor to countenance my preaching, for I know of whom I had it; and though I never sought the approbation of man, I have had the approbation of such men of renown as Mr. H. Fowler, Mr. W. Gadsby, Mr. John Kershaw, Mr. Abrahams, and others, freely given."

The late George Abrahams—for whom Mr. Matthews at one time rather frequently preached, and who, as we are aware, was not a Baptist—in conversation one day with Mr. Matthews said, "Brother Matthews, which baptism are you for—the water or the Spirit?" The prompt answer was, "BOTH." Mr. Matthews was understood by his friends to say that the ablest and most searching minister he ever heard was the late Thomas Hardy, of Leicester. Mr. Matthews was a strong man physically, and had a good constitution, and laboured hard and long with his hands as well as in the preaching of the Word. It appears that some years before he died he had a stroke, which, although not affecting his intellect, rendered him, at his advanced age, and being somewhat corpulent, a burden to himself, so that it was with difficulty he was taken in and out of the pulpit, nor could he speak many minutes at a time; and for several years he had to sit while preaching; yet he stuck to his beloved work at both chapels, and spake at Rowley the last Sabbath in March, 1888, from the words, "And even to your old age I am He and even to hoar hairs will I carry you; I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry and will deliver you" (Isaiah xlv. 4). Many of his friends concluded it was his last sermon, and so it proved; for the next Lord's Day, after a long and laborious life, in which he bore the burden and heat of the day, he fell asleep, within two months of eighty-five years of age, and within six months of sixty years in the ministry.

We are compelled to pass over some very remarkable and interesting incidents in the life of Mr. Matthews, and close this brief account of him by giving a few extracts.

In a local paper, *The Advertiser*, on Saturday, April 14th, 1888, we find the following :—

“THE DEATH OF A WELL-KNOWN ROWLEY CHARACTER.

“On Saturday afternoon last, between Rowley Station and Rowley village, the present writer saw a large concourse of people gathered near a building, evidently a chapel, while from all directions large numbers could be seen moving towards the same spot and augmenting the crowd. ‘What is the cause of this crowd?’ he asked a man at the corner of the road. ‘They’m burying Dan’l Matthers,’ was the reply. The man from his tone evidently thought that everyone ought to know ‘Dan’l Matthers,’ and that for anyone not to know him was to argue himself unknown. The writer had to confess that he had never heard of Daniel Matthews, but seeing in many houses in Rowley that the blinds were drawn, and that no small portion of the adult population was moving towards the place of interment at the above chapel, he concluded there must have been something notable about this man, and accordingly made inquiries.”

We however omit much of the gathered information, because it contains in substance things which have already been related. The concluding remarks, however, are so much to the point that we cannot forbear transcribing them. The writer says :—

“From what we have quoted it will be gathered that Daniel Matthews was a unique man, true to what he believed to be the truth, and fearless in avowing and advocating it. At the bottom he was a man of great moral courage, with a boundless capacity for work, and a faculty of concentrating all the energies of his nature on that which his hand found to do. Devoid of what is known as culture, he was endowed with a character of singular strength and intensity.”

“His thoughts did not run in modern currents, and his form of Christianity was cast in the mould of the seventeenth century. He is said to have been a Calvinist of the most stern and uncompromising type; but in the confession of his faith which he gives in his Autobiography, what are known as peculiarly Calvinistic doctrines have no place—at least, they are at most matters of inference rather than of direct categorical statement. To many the Autobiography from which we have quoted might only be considered good for furnishing matter for mocking, laughter, or ribald jest; but those who read with more of wisdom and insight will discern that to Daniel Matthews life and the right ending of it were matters of the most serious moment, and

burdened with momentous issues. Many excrescences have grown upon pure and undefiled religion, and one or more less in the faith of a man is neither here nor there, so long as the central purpose is sincere and pure, and illumined by high moral enthusiasm. Depend upon it, two thousand people would not gather in sorrow around the grave of any man of the condition of Daniel Matthews unless it was felt that in all essential points he lived and adorned the doctrines he preached. Sneers at fanaticism are cheap and ready, they can be had any day and anywhere; but a courageous grappling with evil, a stern and resolute battling with the great problems of life and duty, are not so plentiful nor so easy. When we find a man like Daniel Matthews, through a long and arduous life, listens to the voice of duty—that ‘stern daughter of the voice of God in the human soul’—we can make great allowances. Through the adventitious environments of a small and narrow sect, we can discern the lineaments of one who at the core was a true man. He trod a narrow stage, but he made his individuality felt, and having, according to his light, served his day and generation, ‘after life’s fitful fever he sleeps well.’ ”

The above being written by a man who was evidently not one of the narrow sect of Strict Baptists, his words are weighty and full of wisdom, conspiring beautifully to the glory of Jehovah’s grace, as manifest in the eccentric but honest Daniel Matthews. He had his faults, and his infirmities grew with his years; yet, to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, the writer feels it was one of the greatest honours that ever was conferred on him when, more than eight years ago, the Church and congregation that had so many years sat under such a man unanimously invited him to the pastorate; and, taking all things into consideration, Daniel Matthews’ people keep together well at Providence Chapel, Rowley Regis.

Unfortunately, however, although there stands the nice new chapel at Willenhall, no pure Gospel has been preached in it for near seven years. The consequence is, poor souls who have an appetite for the precious Gospel have either to go to Wolverhampton or Walsall on the Sabbath Days, or to a room in the town on week evenings, where we, with two brethren in the Lord, speak alternately.

A. D.

BELIEVING will always bring joy and peace.—*Romaine.*

WHAT is opposite to Christ Jesus in us, we should seek to crucify daily; and what is agreeable to Him, we should pray that it may work more and more by love.

ON PREACHING TO THE UNGODLY.

To the Editor of the Sower.

DEAR MR. HULL.—For some time the matter of writing to you has laid upon my mind, but hitherto I have waited and hesitated; especially have I waited because we are strangers in the flesh, and also because I have felt the momentous importance of the above subject.

It was my favoured lot to be born of godly, praying parents, who often tried to tell us of our state as sinners before God, and also of the way of salvation. Also such periodicals as the *Little Gleaner*, and occasionally the *SOWER*, were placed in our hands, and in fact I can say that the *Little Gleaner* from very early years has been a general favourite with us.

In later years, after the Lord had, we trust, met with us by His grace, we were favoured to visit the scene of the late beloved editor's work (Mr. Septimus Sears, of Clifton, in Bedfordshire), and, indeed, very interested were we in the *Gleaner* and *Sower* Almshouses and also in the widows' dwellings. How it seemed almost to bring this dear man of God back again, as it were, to our side, and we felt constrained to admire the grace of God in raising up such an instrument as the late Mr. Septimus Sears must have been.

On one occasion one of the dear friends living at Clifton very kindly presented us with a copy of the *Memoir* of the late Septimus Sears, which we read with the greatest of interest, and also, I trust, with great profit. Especially so in reading not only the *Memoir* itself, but also the very clear and excellent introduction to that *Memoir*. I feel I can say that that throughout has been as cold waters to a thirsty soul, and chiefly for this reason:—

I had been for some long time—I think I may say for a year or two—deeply exercised as to whether or no I, as a proacher (although, indeed, one of the least, but yet, a preacher, and one who fully believes that salvation from first to last is altogether of the Lord, and that the election of grace must of necessity be saved), yet still the doubt would come as to whether I was quite right in passing over the ungodly, time after time, in almost the same way that one passes over the seats they sit upon; or whether it would not be more scriptural, and likely to be more profitable, to speak also to these characters, many of whom sometimes frequent our places of worship.* The burden—for

* The Gospel is to be preached to every creature. It will be salvation to some and a witness against others, who will be without excuse, because they have heard God's testimony against sin, and concerning His Son.

such it was—brought me to the Lord in prayer, and also to a closer study of the Scriptures for an understanding of this very subject, and there I can see where the dear Redeemer Himself, when on earth, spoke about their state, and about the place where “the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.” In the Acts of the Apostles also I read of how the Apostles spoke of repentance, and of their being clear of the blood of all men, whilst further on still I read of Paul speaking of warning every man, and these, with many other passages, caused me to ask whether we had not been somewhat lax on this point. Yet to teach that poor fallen man has any power to rescue himself, or that his own endeavours can save him, or that he has any power whatever to savingly believe, all such teachings as these my soul loathes as poisonous error. Oh how I longed to know if there ever had been a real believer in the doctrines of God’s own free and sovereign grace, who repudiated the human merit and the free-will system, and yet who at the same time would speak to the ungodly. I looked many ways and at many men, but when the above Memoir was put into my hands I believed I had an instance of just such a preacher as I would like to meet with.

And now, dear Mr. Editor, I must say that in many cases I think this matter is not enough laid to heart nor looked at in that serious light in which it stands in the Divine Word. There seems to be much confusion in some minds about the subject, while others seem still to think it would be decidedly wrong to speak in the same way as did our Lord and His Apostles.* Yet, ought we not all of us to prayerfully consider their example, and bring all such disputed cases to the infallible standard of the Divine Word, and then go from the Word to the pulpit fully determined, by the help of the Lord, to be clear from the blood of all men, even as the Apostles of old were thus determined, and so say to the wicked, “it shall be ill with him,” as well as declaring to the righteous, “it shall be well with him.”

I have not written this with any intention of raising controversy on the subject, but rather because it lay weightily on my mind. And again, I thought that perhaps some other young preacher might be similarly exercised and worried about this important subject; and also, dear Mr. Editor, I felt a desire to write for your own encouragement, as I believe you published the introduction in the above-mentioned Memoir. If others have

* When our Lord and His Apostles spake the words of life to the mixed multitudes, none of them implied that the creature had any power to receive and obey Gospel commands, neither did God when He bid Ezekiel prophecy upon the dry bones. Yet the Word was made the savour of life unto life to some to whom it was given to receive it, and thus Christ said, “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.”

not read it, let them who can purchase it; if unable to do that, borrow a copy; who can tell but it may be blessed to them also?

Should you see fit to insert this in the SOWER, well and good; if, on the other hand, you for any reason think it ought not to be inserted, I will not at all complain. I feel the matter is an important one, and may the Lord's own will be done in this and in all other matters.

Yours in the Lord,

Wattisham.

J. H.

THE EXERCISE OF FAITH.

"A principle active and young,
That lives under pressure and load;
That makes out of weakness more strong,
And draws the soul upwards to God."—*Hart.*

WHEREVER there is faith in the soul, there will be many conflicts and trials, as well as sharp and severe exercises attending it, in order to try it; we therefore read, "*That the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold which perisheth, though it be tried with fire*" (1 Peter i. 7). So the Lord said to the Laodicean Church, "I counsel thee to buy of me *gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich*" (Rev. iii. 18). And the Apostle says, "*After that ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you*" (1 Peter v. 10.). A dead faith has no trials, labours, exercises, temptations, or conflicts. But where there is a living faith in the conscience, it will have to labour; as Hart says,

"It lives and labours under load;
Though damped, it never dies."

This labour of faith is a very different thing from the legal workings of a self-righteous heart, trying to please God by internal or external acts of natural obedience. The work of faith with power is begun and carried on by God Himself, and is altogether spiritual and supernatural. This is its main work—to believe on the Son of God, and receive, embrace, and submit to the truth as it is in Jesus. As the Lord said to the Jews when they asked Him, "What shall we do that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent" (John vi. 28, 29). But oh, what opposition there is to this work of faith! How unbelief will work up against every act of faith in the soul! What difficulties, impediments, obstacles, and afflictions lie in a man's path when he sets out in faith! There is sin perpetually working; there is the

devil tempting or harassing him ; sometimes the world snaring or persecuting him ; and often his own heart deceiving and entangling him. If faith be a living grace brought forth by the operation of God the Spirit in the conscience, it will not lie dead, like a stone upon the road. No ; faith has to labour under these exercises and in these conflicts, that it may embrace the truth of God in spite of them. But our text still holds good. In this "work of faith" there is profit ; because the more faith is exercised, the stronger it becomes. If I may use a familiar figure, it is like the blacksmith's arm. What brings up the muscles so strongly, and gives his arm the vigour it possesses ? The labour of the sledge-hammer. And what the labour of the sledge-hammer is to the arm of the smith, so is spiritual labour to faith. It becomes stronger by its exercises. If I were to tie up my arm or my leg, as we read is sometimes done by the Hindoo Pilgrims, it would soon shrink and wither, and I should become a cripple. So were faith to have no conflicts, labours, or exercises, it would become weak and flaccid, its sinews would shrink, and it would fade away out of the heart. Not that faith can strengthen itself. I mean not that. But the Lord mercifully strengthening it, and supplying it out of Christ's fulness to fight ; the more difficulties, exercises, and trials it has to conflict with, the more it becomes invigorated instead of weakened. So that the very things that seemed as if they would destroy it, are overruled to strengthen it. You that fear the Lord, have you not found it so ? You have had illness perhaps to bear, or depths of poverty to wade in, heavy afflictions in your family, and much darkness and distress of soul. You thought that these weights and burdens would crush your faith. Did you find it so ? Was not your faith stronger then under these trials than it is now ? Was it not strengthened in proportion to the loads it had to carry ? Like the children of Israel, the more they were afflicted, the more they multiplied and grew. But if you are at ease in Zion, with no difficulties, no personal or family troubles, no spiritual exercises, no tempting world, no plaguing devil, you may fancy how wonderfully strong your faith is, yet it is but as the dream of some invalid lying on his bed, and in his sleep fancying he is hard at work, when, awake, the poor creature could scarcely rise without fainting.—*J. C. Philpot.*

I KNOW what the Psalmist says is true, "I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon me." I never get so near to Him, and never find Him so near to me ; I never find my heart more opened, I never find His heart more open, than when I come to Him in poverty.—*Covell.*

THE SEEKERS' CORNER.

MY DEAREST FATHER AND MOTHER,—The Lord was pleased to put a concern in my mind at the early age of eleven or twelve years, under these words, "Time is short, and oh to be fitted for eternity!" I thought, "I know not how short my time may be, that perhaps another day may find me in eternity. And if not prepared," I thought, "oh, how I should like to be a Christian! But ah! that's too good a thing for me to wish for, it is so hard to be good."

But these impressions would wear away, and I become as careless as before, yet having a strong desire to be a Christian; but did not then see the evil and corruption of my heart, nor the necessity of being brought in guilty before God, till two years afterwards—say at fourteen years of age—"Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast ordained praise," when I was more fully awakened to a sense of my misery. Then I saw what a sinner I was, and that I deserved to be for ever banished from His presence. I knew myself to be in a lost and ruined state, yet felt myself entirely incapable of doing anything to save myself or rescue myself from the lost condition I was in. Then I cried unto the Lord in the bitterness of my soul, "Lord, have mercy upon me: according to Thy loving-kindness and tender mercies, blot out my transgressions, for sorrow, pain, and grief oppress my gloomy mind." I looked around me for relief, but no relief could I find. I thought, "No sorrow was like my sorrow," and no man seemed to "care for my soul." Then my chiefest prayer was, "Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that Thou bearest unto Thy people; oh, visit me with Thy salvation." Oh, I shall never forget the burden of sin and sorrow I felt. I continued in this anxious state of mind for more than two years, then I began to despair, thinking if the Lord intended to pardon my sin, He would have done so before now, therefore I must give up all hope of ever being a Christian. I thought, "I may as well abandon prayer, for God will not hear nor listen to such a sinful creature as I am. But oh, what shall I do?"

"Did I a world possess,
That world I'd now resign,
To feel His sovereign grace,
And victory over sin;
To find my Jesus in my heart,
And find my every sin depart."

The same night, as I was retiring to rest, I thought, "I'll pray to-night, and I will not let Him go except He bless me." So I prayed, with tears and groans, from my inmost soul, that He would not cast me off, but take possession of my sinful heart, till

I was almost exhausted. Then falling into a slight slumber, I thought myself in a beautiful mansion ; the room almost dazzled my eyes as I entered, the inhabitants being saints or angels, clothed in white raiment, singing praises to God and the Lamb. But I saw One amongst them whose countenance shone like the sun, and appeared more glorious than either of the others, and as I was standing in the corner weeping—for I felt myself unworthy to be there and ashamed to look up—but as I was standing there alone, covering my face with my hands, that Glorious One approached me, and as He came near, I advanced, gazing at His smiling countenance, hoping He would speak a word to me, which, to my great joy, He did, saying, “Daughter, why weepest thou? What is the cause of thy grief?” Then, with trembling words and tearful eyes, I exclaimed, “Oh that I may know the joy of Thy salvation!” To which He answered, “Fear not, for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine,” immediately wiping away the tears and clothing me like one of the others. I then joined their society with great delight, and commenced singing, “I love the Lord because He hath heard the voice of my supplication; for He is my strength and my song; He also is become my salvation.” And being in such rapturous joys and delight, I awoke myself with shouting, “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, and forget not all His benefits.” Oh, what a blessed change I felt it to be. I saw new beauty in Jesus, and everything about me seemed delightful, for I attributed everything to the mercy and goodness of God.

“Soon as the sun the light revealed,
His praises tuned my tongue;
And when the evening shades prevailed,
His love was all my song.

“In prayer my soul drew near the Lord,
And saw His glory shine;
And when I read His Holy Word,
I called each promise mine.”

But, alas! I did not remain in this delightful state of mind long before cares, perplexities, and unbelief began to rush in upon my mind, and rob me of my joy and peace, and left doubts and fears in their stead. I began to be afraid

“To call Him mine,
My springs of comfort seem'd to fail,
And all my hopes decline.”

Then the Lord would graciously manifest Himself again in some measure, and renew the sweet feeling of my soul, but not so abundantly as before; but oh the sweet influence I often enjoyed!

and the blessed assurance I feel that He is mine fills me with wonder, love and praise.

The blessed Lord Jesus was not only very near and precious to my soul, but I was also favoured with such a sense of His nearness to me, and of my own accessibility to Him, that I had, as it were, not only a desiring it, but to get away from all about me down-stairs, and go up to the top rooms above—as Moses left the people below to go up into the mount—to meet and enjoy communion with GOD. So does my soul, to seek and find again the blessed Lord, if but a few minutes, to the joy of my soul. Oh how near is He to all His dear, loved people at all times! Or, if about my work, I wanted something which I could not just lay my hand upon, oh, it was as if the Lord Jesus would find it for me, He was so near, and was everything to me—

“Where’er I turn, where’er I rove,
I meet the object of my love”—

so that I cannot describe the joy at times—looking upward with a wishful eye and longing desire to

“Leave this world of sin behind,
And every bliss in glory find.”

Oh that I could now embrace Him, and see Him face to face, is the desire of your dutiful daughter,

Gravesend, July 1st, 1854.

JEMIMA TOPPS.

A FRAGMENT FROM TOPLADY.

“*That no flesh should glory in His presence.*”—1 CORINTHIANS
i. 29.

FALLEN man has not the least room for boasting. By his original weakness and depravity he is cut off from all natural right to it; and whatever accession of Divine grace he may receive of God, it still leaves him no room to glory. All is of God's mere bounty, and the talents with which he may be endued, so far from giving him occasion to be lifted up, do but lay him under accumulated obligation to the unseen Hand whose gift they are. The Apostle Paul, though so great an instrument in turning multitudes from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, dared not value himself on what the Lord did by him. “Not I,” is his declaration, “but the grace of God which was with me.” His labours in Christ's vineyard were indefatigable. His preaching of the everlasting Gospel was crowned with unequalled success. Yet after all the suffering he had sustained, and all the works he had performed for the sake of Jesus his Lord, he proclaims that, as a saint, he was less than the least; but, as a sinner, he was the chief. Hence see

that a consciousness of his utter unworthiness swept away every hope of justification by his own righteousness. Sovereign grace revealed in Jesus Christ was the only hope of his soul. All his acquisitions and privileges he made no account of. In reckoning up his advantages he says, "If any man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: circumcised on the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the Church: touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless." His birth privileges were the greatest that could be enjoyed, even by any of that favoured people the Jews. His observance of the law of God was most exemplary, and his zeal for His glory, and for the proselyting of converts to His religion, was so ardent as to put him on persecuting those who would not come within that circumference. But all these advantageous particulars which he then counted gain he afterwards rejoiced to esteem as loss and dross and dung for Christ, that he might be found in Him. Thrice wise and thrice happy Paul! adored be that Divine grace which led thee, and is still leading many more of its sons and daughters, to despise all, yea, all for Christ, and to desire with thee to be found in Him, not having their own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, that gift of God which is received and enjoyed by faith, even the righteousness of God, which is unto all and upon all them that believe (Phil. iii. 4; Rom. iii. 22).

The demands of the holy law of God, and the infinite purity of God the Lawgiver, together with the helplessness and depravity of mankind, appeared to Paul with such clearness, that he could acquiesce in no doctrine as solid and comfortable which did not set forth how these seemingly incompatible things could all be brought to agree; that the rights of an holy law might accord with the riches of abounding grace, and the inflexible justice of an holy God coincide with the rich exertions of His free and tender mercy. In the obedience, sufferings, and death, resurrection, exaltation, and intercession of Jesus see every seemingly jarring attribute most harmoniously accord! The sinner is accepted, pardoned, justified, sanctified and saved, and all to the glory and praise of free grace, while also every other attribute of the glorious God is preserved inviolate. Here then we will glory. To boast in this matchless work of the Three-one God is our privilege and our highest gain. While we dwell below, it shall be our sublimest delight; and when we remove to our blood-bought thrones, the work and grace of Jesus shall be the topics of eternal converse, our eternal admiration, and our eternal praise.

LETTER FOR THE YOUNG.

Reay Free Manse, Scotland, 1844.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I expect a visit from you at this time. I am here in a lonely part of the vineyard, but I have a large house [Free Church Manse] and a good many rooms in it. The first room I have is, "Who can tell?" This is a very large room, but not a very warm one, and I would not advise my friends to stay long in it. The second room I have is, "Good hope through grace." This is a very fine room, and I like to sit in it; but through my neglect the robbers come in and put the furniture out of order. The third room is, "Love." This is a beautiful room, and there is always a fire in it; but I can seldom get access to it. The fourth room I have is, "The secret chamber." The King Himself sits here, and we cannot get in till He opens the door, and brings us in, and makes His banner over us to be "love." Grace be with you all.

Yours affectionately,

To Mrs. Taylor.

FINDLAY COOK.

DEEP WATERS.

THE waters, O God, are come into my soul,
 Below me, above me, all round me they roll;
 Distressing and painful, most bitter and sore,
 And down I am sinking still lower and lower.

No standing there seemeth, no bottom I find,
 Thy waves they go o'er me and dark is my mind;
 No way of escape now appeareth at hand—
 Oh that Thou would'st save me, and bring me to land.

My fears are increasing, my strength is all gone,
 My foes are rejoicing that I'm left alone;
 Let not the floods drown me, I hope in Thy blood,
 Though enemies mock me with, "Where is thy God?"

They watch for my halting, expecting my fall,
 But little they know that Thou still art my all;
 Though in the deep quagmire of trials and grief,
 I look to Thee only to give me relief.

Oh, let not my foes rejoice over me, Lord,
 For still I am hoping, Thou know'st, on Thy Word;
 Which says, "I'll instruct thee and teach thee to know,
 Yea, guide and direct in the way thou shalt go."

These words with what sweetness and power they once came,
 As magnified by Thee above Thy great name;
 And though from deep waters my soul doth now cry,
 I yet shall have succour and aid from on high.

Cardiff.

J. T. P.

The Sower, November, 1896,



From a Portrait by F. T. PALMER, Photographer, Croydon.

MR. C. HEMINGTON.

MR. C. HEMINGTON.

THE SILVER WEDDING OF HIS PASTORATE.

MR. HEMINGTON has recently completed the twenty-fifth year of his pastorate at Devizes, and this, added to fifteen years as pastor of Corpus Christi Chapel, at Plymouth, and previous labours in various counties, makes a long ministerial life, which, through the Lord's blessing, has been very useful amongst the Churches.

He was baptized when a young man, and united to a Gospel Church, the deacons of which soon came to the conclusion that the Lord designed him for the ministry; therefore one Lord's Day, when they had no minister, the senior deacon asked Mr. Hemington to read a chapter and make a few remarks upon it. This he was enabled to do, and spoke for about half-an-hour upon the prodigal son. Previous to this he had been useful in the Sunday School, but now he was called to go forth and speak to children of riper years.

From the time of starting forth in the ministry, the Lord helped him to act upon the Apostle's counsel to Timothy, to "give attendance to reading," for he felt the ministry required close study, *meditation*, and *preparation*, so that he has not given to the ministry that which cost him nothing, but has used every means that might tend to his usefulness, and yet humbly depending for strength and blessing upon the Spirit of God.

After supplying at various Churches, he was pressed by the late Dr. Marston to occupy the pulpit for six weeks, at Corpus Christi Chapel, Plymouth. To this he consented somewhat unwillingly, but at the end of six weeks the people would not hear of his leaving them, so he stayed with them three months longer, then another three months, and then a longer period, till at length fifteen years rolled away; during which time he was virtually their pastor, though never formally recognized as such. At the end of this period, although the bond of attachment between him and the people was as strong as ever, yet he could but feel that the finger of God was pointing him to seek another field of labour in His service. And soon he received two unanimous calls—one to the pastorate at Gower Street, London, and the other to the pastorate at Devizes, Wilts. For some months he occupied the pulpit in London, and many were the hopes and prayers that he might abide there; but at length he decided to settle over the Church at Devizes, a Church that has been in existence for about two hundred and fifty years. Here his ministry has been blessed to many; and it is a remarkable instance of the Lord's goodness, that one with so frail a tabernacle should have

been enabled to be so abundant in ministerial labours, at home and abroad. It is very pleasing to know that, although for many years two chapels existed in Devizes where the doctrines of grace were preached, during Mr. Hemington's pastorate, the two causes have become one, and the amalgamation has turned out well; a feeling of true unity, concord, and love having been abundantly manifested to each other and to their pastor.

On Wednesday, July 26th, a large gathering of the Church, congregation, and friends of the pastor took place, to commemorate the silver wedding of Mr. Hemington's pastorate. During the evening an address was read, in which expression was given by the Church of their thankfulness to God for having sent their pastor amongst them in answer to prayer; also of the value they put upon his ministry and of their continued deep affection for him. A presentation of a handsome writing-table was then made, the silver plate of which bears the following inscription: "Presented to Mr. Charles Hemington, by the Church and congregation of the Old Baptist Chapel, Devizes, in affectionate remembrance of twenty-five years' ministerial love and labour."

Very kind references were also made to both Mrs. and Miss Hemington, and their services in assisting the work of the Church in many ways; and as an expression of affectionate esteem, a presentation was made to them jointly of a silver tea service, and a handsome inlaid tray.

Mr. Hemington, in reply, accepted the presentation as a sincere and hearty expression of their good feeling to their minister, and of their mutual love and affection. He said he could say with Jacob, few and evil had been the days of his life, and he could not attach an iota of merit to whatever service he had rendered. Looking back upon his ministry, he had with deeper shame than ever before to say, "I am an unprofitable servant." He then gave some little account of the Lord's leading, to which we have already referred, and concluded by testifying to the kindness he had always received from the deacons and the members, and by speaking encouragingly of the present position of the Church.

Mr. Hemington not only spreads the truth by his voice, when with his distinct and powerful voice he proclaims the Gospel that he loves, but he also uses his pen as a ready scribe, and has thereby sought, by the power of the press, to expose error by a clear statement of truth. Once, when laid aside from preaching for a little while, he used his enforced leisure to write a little pamphlet concerning the teaching of Scripture in regard to the eternity of future punishment; this little work has had a large

sale, and is one of the clearest and simplest statements of the truth upon this subject that can be obtained.

We most sincerely desire that Mr. Hemington may long be spared to his beloved people at Devizes, and to the Church of God generally, and that his latter years of service may be even richer in blessing than any that have preceded them. E. W.

PRECIOUS BLOOD.

THE precious blood of Christ,
The Lamb for sinners slain;
There's nothing else that will suffice
To wash away my stain.

The precious blood of Christ,
My only hope and plea;
I feel my heart and soul uprise
When it's applied to me.

The precious blood of Christ,
Soul cleansing, healing stream;
This one tremendous sacrifice
Can wash the foulest clean.

The precious blood of Christ;
The only way to God;
We ne'er shall reach sweet Paradise
But through that precious blood.

The precious blood of Christ;
Nought else, dear Lord, but this
Can make the dying pillow soft,
And whisper perfect peace.

The precious blood of Christ,
The spotless Son of God;
No tongue can e'er express its worth,
'Tis *precious*, PRECIOUS BLOOD.

The precious blood of Christ,
On earth shall be my theme;
And through the realms of endless bliss,
Of Jesus' blood I'll sing.

P.

THE more we depend on Christ, the more humble shall we be.
—*Romaine*.

THERE is not a soul, but if God were to let them see the holiness of the law, it would either drive them to despair or else to Christ.—*Romaine*,

A BRIEF MEMOIR OF MY DEAR MOTHER.

THE following is a short account of Mary Keevill, of Corsham, who died May 9th, 1896.

My dear mother was born on the 3rd of May, 1823. She was born into this world of sin and folly like all others of Adam's race, and in her young days was very fond of worldly pleasures, yet she had, I believe, godly parents, and they tried to bring her up in the fear of the Lord. But as time rolled on and years of maturity came, the dear Lord was pleased to show her that she was a sinner, and that unless washed in the blood and clothed in the righteousness of Christ, she was lost. This, I believe, caused her many prayers and cries to know her interest in the Lord Jesus. She could not speak of so clear a deliverance as can many of the Lord's people, but she was one of His poor, fearing ones. Often this verse would escape her lips—

“Poor and afflicted, Lord, are thine,
Among the great unfit to shine;
But though the world may think it strange,
They would not with the world exchange.”

I know this was the feeling of her soul. She was baptized in the year 1842, and was a consistent member for fifty-four years. She was of a meek and quiet spirit, not given to gossip or busying herself in other people's affairs, and always found at home with her children. While my father was away preaching the Word of life to many sinners, she would gather the children around her and teach them portions of the Bible or hymns, and so wait for her husband's return home. Many anxious hours has she passed in fear and trembling, always glad to hear his footstep and welcome him home, after his day's labour and a walk of ten miles (five in and five out), from Chippenham to Corsham. All her anxious fears and cares are now past, and she is where she longed to be.

In the year 1891 she was left much alone, which seemed to be the beginning of the end. I had to leave my situation and come home to see to her, and was not able to leave her again. She gradually got better and went out again. She liked to go to her chapel, for there dwelt her best friends, her kindred, and “there God my Saviour reigns,” she used to often say. Also—

“I love to meet among them now,
Before Thy gracious feet to bow.”

She was particularly fond of St. John's Gospel, 14th chapter, and would often say to me, “I hope I am one of the prepared ones.

“‘My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus’ blood and righteousness.’”

I have said to her many times, “You wouldn’t like to give up your hope, would you, mother?” She would say, “No; I have nowhere else to trust. I can do nothing in and of myself.”

Now to come nearer her latter end. In November, 1895, she was very weak and low, and we called in the doctor. He pronounced her very weak, and could do but little for her. However, with care and attention she got a little better, but at times was very weak and low, and would look at herself and say, “There won’t be much for the worms to feed upon,” and at times would be quite resigned to leave all below, to depart and be with Christ which would be far better.

During the summer of 1895 she went out fairly in a chair for a change and air, but it all seemed as nothing and vanity to her, and I could see she did not enjoy it as she formerly had.

In 1896, February 18th, she was taken much worse. I again called in the doctor. My father being from home, I had to call in a friend, as the doctor thought she could not live through the night, and in the morning telegraphed for my father and eldest sister. They came, quite expecting that a few days would end her career here; and at this time she was quite willing to leave all things here below, and earth exchange for heaven. My father read and had family prayers in her bedroom, and she seemed at these times lit up with heavenly raptures, and seemed to know every word before my father could get it out, and we thought every day would be her last, but the Lord spared her yet a little longer. Still she kept saying, “It won’t be long,” and repeating this verse—

“There I shall see His face,
And never, never sin;
There from the rivers of His grace
Drink endless pleasures in,”

and would lift up both hands at “endless pleasures.”

On the 24th of February she was very low, and crying. I asked her why she was crying. She said, “I am afraid I shan’t go to heaven,” this being the only time she so feared.

On the 25th was brighter and longed to go, saying, “Oh that the happy hour were come.” She still kept up and about—sometimes up for two or three days, then in bed for a day or two.

March 8th was very low and weak, but such a sweet resignation. A friend called to see her: she said to him, “I hope I am right,” and repeated that verse, “There I shall see His face” and hoped my father would be home. One day she had not had much sleep; I said to her, “Try and go to sleep a little.” She said, “I must not sleep; I must watch unto prayer.”

One day, after she had had a nice sleep, she awoke, looked at me, and said, "I am so disappointed, I thought I was going home. I did not want to come back here again, nor go down-stairs any more."

May the 2nd was the last time she came down-stairs; she had a very restless night, and we thought she never could see the light of another morning.

May 3rd was her seventy-third birthday, which was the last Sabbath she spent on earth. She was very sadly all the early morning, but got brighter as the day wore on, and still felt a sweet resignation, saying, "Oh that the happy hour were come." She had four very restless nights, but on the fifth the doctor pronounced her better, and on the 6th my father left home for the North. She wished him good-bye, and said, "If we never meet on earth again, I hope we shall meet in heaven."

During the nights of Thursday and Friday she appeared to be much in prayer, and said, very slowly, two or three times during the night, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

Friday morning I could not keep her in bed; she would be set up in her chair for about an hour, and was very quiet, but so resigned. It was quite a pleasure to be with her. In the afternoon she tried to read from her hymn-book some of her favourite hymns, but I had to hold the book for her. She repeated many of them through with me, and when I closed the book she took it and put it under her pillow. She had a favourable night, and on Saturday morning she said, "'Oh that the happy hour were come'; it will not be long now." I did not think her end was quite so near, but after dinner she repeated that verse—

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

and she lay quite quiet until her happy spirit took its flight, at a quarter to four o'clock in the afternoon of May the 9th, 1896. Her "happy hour" had now come. She's "gone in endless bliss to dwell," after a marriage union with our dear father of forty-six years' duration.

MARTHA KEEVILL.

THERE is much said in the world about friendship, even by infidels and the most abandoned part of mankind; but while deluded thousands are grasping at a shadow, the Christian only possesses the substance. He alone it is that loves the persons, feels the calamities, and prays for the present and eternal good of his fellow-creatures.—*J. P.*

LETTER OF SYMPATHY, BY THE LATE MR. JOHN
WARBURTON.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—It has pleased the Lord to take from your midst by death an old esteemed friend, well known to us, Harriet Dilley. Her days of sorrowing and suffering are ended. She, in life, was made a partaker of the cross, now she has the crown. She suffered, now she reigns with Christ. That is a blessed, soul-comforting truth, "Unto Him shall the gathering of the people be." The Saviour is the blessed New Testament Shiloh, the Sent of God, the Apostle, the Peace, the Abundance. To Him our departed friend was gathered by regeneration, grafted into Him by the Spirit of life, truth, and meekness, to receive out of His fulness that measure of grace her needs required; and gathered unto Him in taking up her cross, publicly putting on the Lord Jesus Christ in an open profession of her love to the Lord in being baptized in His name; thus choosing the reproach of Christ in preference to all the world called good or great. This choice of hers was not of nature, but of grace; she chose the Lord because He first chose her, and manifested Himself unto her, and many years she walked in the ways and commandments of the Lord blameless. The house of God, when opportunity allowed, she frequented; her soul was there, and so her body was often present in His courts. Great was her delight at times in listening to the trumpet of the Gospel, as it sounded out full and free the note of rich, free, sovereign mercy. Grace is the foundation, and grace is the coping of the eternal thoughts of God in the well-ordered Covenant, and in Jesus Christ it all rests and centres.

Our departed friend was well acquainted with her sinnership; it was her constant complaint; she mourned because of the evils in her; it was her burden. This was the preparation of her heart to receive the tidings of the Gospel. If the Gospel is received into the heart, the heart must be made sensible to the nature, principle, and doctrine of the Gospel. The Gospel is glad tidings, because it publishes a Saviour. So the angel sang, "I bring you good tidings of great joy, for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." To thousands He is "as a root out of a dry ground," because there is no felt necessity in the heart to receive Him, and until that is the case, there is no room for Him. He Himself, by an emptying process of trials, must make room for Himself. This our old friend had undergone, and to her the report of the Saviour was the sweet music of her soul. She is now in the spirit, gathered into the bosom of her Lord; and how blessed it is for such. The voice from heaven says, "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." And what of the poor body ? Dust it is, and unto dust it must return. And now, says the Apostle, " Behold, I show you a mystery ; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump : for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible." Then will her sleeping dust, together with the whole election of grace, be gathered unto the great Shiloh, and so " for ever to be with the Lord." Her name was in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world, and it is this which gives a right and title to the blessings laid up in store for the redeemed, and death opens the storehouse.

If the Lord permits, I shall be at Evington June 24th. My love to those who love our Lord Jesus most precious. " He is the chief among ten thousand." My soul pants after Him, for I am dead, ignorant, foolish, lost ; without Him everything is a blank. He is the seal of love, peace of conscience, the hope of faith, the song of joy, the crown of life, the delight of life. His presence felt seasons trouble, reconciles crosses, humbles the soul, and gives strength, power, and will to do what the Gospel commands. To Him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Yours in love,

Southill, February 20th, 1890.

J. WARBURTON.

THE SHEEP AND THE LAMBS OF THE FLOCK.

To the Editor of the Sower.

DEAR SIR,—My mind has been greatly exercised for some length of time, regarding the difference in experience between the younger and elder of God's living family, but to-day, as I was returning home, I met a mixed flock of lambs and sheep—principally lambs. And I thought of the various causes of Truth throughout this and other lands—how the causes seemed to be going down, according to our way of thinking. Some of the younger members and supplies of our Churches pushing presumptuously forward, and some of those who are older, more staid, rooted and grounded, retiring, grieved in spirit, many of whom we should prefer to see in the pulpit, and to hear, from or through them, of the way in which the Lord leads His people in the wilderness. Well, the meeting of a mixed flock of lambs and sheep upon the road seemed instrumental in opening up to my mind how wisely the Good Shepherd orders for, feeds, and nourishes His flock. First of all, I met a quantity of lambs, full

of life and activity; then, intermingled among them at the rear, a few sheep. I said to the shepherd, "What is the reason there are so few sheep among a number of lambs?" To which he made answer, "The lambs are being weaned, and the sheep fattened, so they are fed together." Well, I thought, if they can converse together, I don't suppose the lambs would be able to enter into the experience of the sheep, nor the sheep be able to recall minutely their own experience when they were lambs. Yet they are one flock, and partake of the same food. The sheep are being fattened, and will soon have to retire; the lambs are being weaned, and will soon become sheep to take their place. And it is thus the Lord preserveth "a seed to serve Him: it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. They shall come, and shall declare His righteousness unto a people that shall be born that He hath done this" (Psalm xxii. 30, 31).

So it is; the Lord, in spite of our fears and distresses concerning the removal here and there of old sheep—and old shepherds, too—who are often succeeded by such as set before God's people that which has been trodden and fouled with their feet (Ezekiel xxxiv. 19)—yet He still has those who are being weaned from all dependence upon the creature, however near and dear by ties of relationship, that shall stand to separate between the tried but precious, and the vile and professing. Truly Berridge could say the same to-day, were he with us, as when he wrote those lines—

"The righteous are removed home,
And scorners rise up in their room."

Yet the Keeper of Israel neither slumbers or sleeps, and all the needs of the sheep shall be supplied in the wilderness pastures by the Good Shepherd, whose paths drop fatness, for the satiating of those who are troubled with leanness.

Yours in the best bonds,

October 10th, 1896.

W. J. SMITH.

GOD the Father's love would not save us sinners without His Son's sufferings and death. Though God the Son hath saved us, yet we cannot enjoy it without God the Spirit's operation and influence upon our souls.—*W. Mason.*

It is a common saying of some sort of professors, that they can and do trust God for pardon, heaven, and eternal life, can trust Him with their souls, but can't trust Him for things of time respecting their bodies. This is a common mistake. For the true Christian, when faith is in act and exercise, can and doth trust in and depend upon his God for his daily bread, as much as for heaven and happiness.

ASSURANCE.

THE following extracts from well-known writers are calculated, under the help of the Holy Spirit, to encourage anxious souls who are seeking for the assurance of faith.—ED.

After the Lord had called Mr. Brooks by His grace, and given him some tokens of His favour, he was led through a fiery ordeal of experience, of which he afterwards wrote as follows :—

"About eighteen years ago I fell into a deep and dreadful depression of spirits, the very remembrance of which is ready to make me shudder even to this day. I often wondered to see people afflict themselves about the common calamities of life. They appeared mere trifles—infirmities that might be easily borne—and mine was a wounded spirit, torn with the clearest apprehensions of the malignity of sin, and the displeasure of an Almighty God. I sought the Lord by prayer, and other means of grace, day and night, but still He hid His face from me. Now and then a glimpse of hope would break in upon me, but it was of short continuance. The Bible seemed as a sealed book, in which I could meet with no comfort, though often much to aggravate my distress and increase my terrors. I endeavoured to examine myself, and search for the evidence of renewing grace in my heart, but all in vain. The more I searched the more dark, and confounded, and distressed I grew. I continued to preach to others, but very often with this heart-sinking conclusion that I myself was a castaway. Sometimes, even in the midst of my work, the melancholy darkness would rush in upon my soul, so that I was ready to sink down in the pulpit. Thus I continued for more than twelve months, enjoying scarcely two comfortable days together."

I can but remark, as I copy these extracts, very possibly much of this painful depression arose from physical causes, and of course much from a perverted and mistaken view of Scripture, and of Mr. Brooks's own and real case; and the great enemy, transformed into an angel of light, was allowed to assault and have much power over him. Still the Lord allowed all this, as in Job's case, and used all as wholesome and blessed discipline, to fit him for, and indirectly to bring him more fully into, the glorious liberty of the Gospel, and the full assurance of faith.

"At length," adds Mr. Brooks, "I came to this resolution, namely, to give up the point of proving myself a child of God already, which was what I had been labouring at all along as a necessary medium of my comfort, and grant that I was a vile, sinful, and every way unworthy creature, admit the whole charge brought against me, and seek my remedy in Christ, for, I argued, there was forgiveness with God for the chief of sinners.

The blood of Christ could cleanse from all sin, and therefore from mine. He 'came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance'—sinners without distinction of degrees—sinners as such, and because they were such. It was said that whoever would, might come and take of the water of life freely, and that He would in no wise cast them out. Hence I was led to observe that, if I could not go to Him as a saint, I might go as a sinner. I resolved, therefore, to lay aside my inquiries after the evidence of my interest in Him, as one of His people, and to look entirely to Him from whom all renewing grace, and the evidences of it, must come—to look to Him as a guilty, polluted, and perishing creature, that had no hope, no succour, but in the pure mercy of God through Him—and thus I was led to such views of the all-sufficiency of the great Redeemer, and His willingness to save even the worst of sinners, such as I concluded myself to be, as silenced all my doubts, scattered my fears, and gave the most delightful peace and joy to my conscience. I now learnt, indeed, what I thought I had, and perhaps really had, learnt before, namely, to live by faith alone upon the Son of God, to make His sacrifice and righteousness my constant refuge, and draw all my consolations thence. I found I had, unawares, laid too great stress upon evidences of grace, and looked too much to them for my comfort, and too little to Christ. I plainly saw that, with all the brightest evidences of grace about me, I was still a sinner, and must apply to my Saviour as such, in order to give life and vigour to my consolations and hopes, and that the spiritual life in me must be perpetually supplied from the same fountain whence I had derived what I had already experienced. I found that the seasons of darkness were not the proper seasons for seeking after evidences, but that the immediate and leading duty was, trusting in the name of the Lord—that God never rejected any that seriously and in earnest applied to Him, because they were more guilty and unworthy than others, or accepted others because they were less so; and, in a word, that, as the best must, so the worst may, come to Him, through a penitent faith in the precious blood and righteousness of His Son, with equal assurance of a gracious welcome; and from that time to this, I bless God for His great mercy, I have never had any long-continued doubt of my interest in His saving love. Whenever darkness and distress assault me, I am enabled to look to Him who is the light and consolation of Israel, and to remember that His grace is as free to me as to another, and that He is as willing as able to 'save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him.'"

The teaching of the Holy Ghost in the heart of Mrs. Anne Dutton was the same in the final issue as to assurance of faith,

though the medium and exact experience were different. She says, after the Lord had given her some taste of His love:—

“Babe-like, I rather lived upon promises given, than upon Christ in those promises. I knew not how to believe without sight. So long as God’s love flowed into my soul, and my love flowed out to Him again, just so long I could believe; but, when the sweet sensation abated, my faith began to sink with it. I too much lived upon enjoyments. I delighted to have my interest in Christ tried by all the marks and signs of a believer which were continually laid down in the ministry. When I could find them, my heart was filled with joy; but if there were any I did not clearly discern, I sunk down in sorrow. So foolish was I, that I looked for the effects of faith when faith was not in exercise—just as if a person should look for the beauty of the spring in the winter season, or seek to know what o’clock it is by the sun-dial when the sun does not shine on it—and while I went this way to work, I never attained to settled assurance. No; the soul that enters into rest by faith must have somewhat more firm and stable than fleeting frames to lean upon. At length it pleased the Lord to take me by the arms, and teach me to go in the way of faith when I had not spiritual sense. I had been once, I remember, at a meeting of prayer, but not meeting with God in it, I returned very sad; and as I was lamenting my case, that word was brought to my mind, ‘Rejoice in the Lord alway; and again I say, Rejoice.’ But my heart straightway replied, ‘I have not enjoyed God to-night, and how can I rejoice?’ Then the word broke in again upon my heart with such a ray of glorious light, that directed my soul to the true and proper Object of its joy, even the Lord Himself. I was pointed hereto as with a finger ☞ ‘In the Lord, not in your frames—in the Lord, not in what you enjoy from Him, but in what you are in Him’; and the Lord sealed my instruction, and filled my heart brimful of joy in the faith of my eternal interest and unchangeable standing in Him, and of His being an infinite Fountain of blessedness for me to rejoice in alway, even when the streams of sensible enjoyments failed. But yet I was often ready to stagger through unbelief, and at such times and seasons I was for putting forth my hand to lay hold on past experiences, the remembrance of which at times had been precious to my soul. But when I sought for my satisfaction from hence, instead of deriving all my life and comfort from Christ by fresh acts of faith, the Lord, in great mercy, was pleased to draw a veil over His work upon my soul, and direct me to stay myself upon my God, even when I walked in the dark as to present enjoyments, and had not the light of past experience; and this was to make me die unto a life of sense, in

order to raise me up to a higher life of faith upon the Son of God. The Holy Spirit showed me my everlasting standing in Christ's Person, grace, and righteousness, and gave me to see my security in His unchangeableness under all the changes which passed over me, and then I began to rejoice in my dear Lord Jesus as always the same, even when my frames altered. Thus the Lord began to establish me, and settle my faith upon its proper basis."

In speaking of this experience, Mrs. Dutton subsequently says :—"To such of God's people as have not as yet a full persuasion of a special work of grace in their hearts : You have heard what the Lord has done for me ; and I know you are apt to listen how it has been with others whom you judge are believers, and to compare your experience with theirs, in order to form a judgment whether the work of God upon your own soul be indeed genuine and saving. But, dear hearts, be not too critical herein, for know this, that the experience of the saints in many particulars may vary, though in the general it agrees. Do not say, then, upon the reading of this narrative, 'I have not been in all respects thus, therefore, I fear I am not right.' Hast thou been convinced of the misery of thy natural estate—that thou wast in a perishing condition without Christ ? Hast thou had a discovery of Christ's beauty, excellency, and suitability to thee in all thy wants, so as to draw out thy soul into earnest desires after an interest in this precious Jesus ? And, under a deep sense of thy perishing condition, hast thou been encouraged by God's free grace in Christ to cast thyself at His feet, in hope of finding mercy, committing thyself into the arms of His grace and power for all life and salvation with an holy venture, saying, "'I will go in unto the King, and if I perish, I perish !'" I see there is no other way of salvation. Here, therefore, I will wait as an undone sinner. It may be free grace will save me ; if not, I can but die, and if I perish, it shall be at the foot of God's free mercy ; Christ ?' Hast thou, I say, at any time, experienced such resolutions wrought in thy soul ? Thou art, then, exceedingly safe, and thy state eternally secure, though thou mayest not have so much comfort in it, or satisfaction about it, as some of God's children enjoy. What though thy Father may not have indulged thee with such love-feasts—such sensible mirth and rejoicing—as some of thy brethren, poor prodigals, have met with at their return, yet thou art ever with Him, and all that He hath is thine. Thou hast Christ, and in Him, hast all. Be content, then, that Infinite Wisdom should carve out thy time-portion of comfort. The Lord leads thee in a right way—a way that is best for thee now. Thou shalt see it to be so ere long. It is but a little while, and the sun shall rise upon thee, and no

more go down, for night and darkness shall be swallowed up in eternal day. In the meantime go on trusting thy soul in the hands of Christ, taking Him at His word—counting Him faithful that has promised—thus glorifying of Him in the dark, until taken up to be glorified with Him in the enjoyment of thy inheritance in light."

I hear the words of love,
I gaze upon the blood,
I see the mighty Sacrifice,
And I have peace with God.

'Tis everlasting peace,
Sure as Jehovah's name;
'Tis stable as His steadfast throne,
For evermore the same.

The clouds may go and come,
And storms may sweep my sky,
This blood-sealed friendship changes not;
My Christ is ever nigh.

My love is oftentimes low;
My joy still ebbs and flows;
My peace with Him remains the same;
No change Jehovah knows.

I change, He changes not;
The Christ can never die;
His love, not mine, the resting-place;
His truth, not mine, the tie.

—From the "*Gospel Magazine*."

THE glory, life and power of Christian religion as Christian religion, and as seated in the souls of men, with all the acts and duties which properly belong thereunto, and are therefore peculiarly Christian, and all the benefits and privileges we receive by it, or by virtue of it, with the whole of the honour and glory that arise unto God thereby, have all of them their formal nature and reason from their respect and relation unto the Person of Christ; nor is he a Christian that is otherwise minded.—*Dr. Owen*.

WE are as much beholden to the Holy Ghost for the application of salvation in regeneration, conversion, and sanctification, as we are to the Divine Father for the contrivance of the glorious scheme, and to the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, for executing the grand and noble plan; for all that the Father and Son had done would have profited us nothing if the Divine Spirit did not come into our hearts, and make application of all to us; so that as Christ was the Fulfiller of the law, the Holy Ghost is the great Fulfiller of all the Gospel.—*Dr. Goodwin*.

"BLESSED ARE THE DEAD WHICH DIE IN THE
LORD."

DEAR MR. HULL,—As you did not personally know my dear departed brother, I think it my duty to send you a few particulars respecting him. I know I shall be pressed by many that knew him to send you a more enlarged account for insertion, but I cannot say at present whether I shall do so or not.

Benjamin Taylor was a deacon of Old Hill Baptist Chapel, aged sixty-two years. He passed "from death unto life," spiritually, more than forty years ago; and on July 3rd, 1896, he passed *through* death *into* life eternal. He needeth no "epistles of commendation," for he was a "living epistle, known and read of all men," and was manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ. He was very much favoured of the Lord during his long illness, and often expressed a desire to "depart and to be with Christ, which is far better." Very shortly before he departed he said with great emphasis, "Come, Lord, and fetch my longing spirit home," which desire was soon granted. He was buried on July 8th, in Old Hill Chapel-yard, by Mr. Keevil and Mr. Clack.

From his early childhood he attended the Church of England and the Sunday School in connection therewith, until after the Lord called him by His grace; but finding no food for his quickened soul, he was drawn, for the love of the Gospel, and by persecution, to settle down under the ministry of the late Joseph Smith, of Old Hill, where he was received, and remained a constant member, and gave out the hymns for more than thirty years. I will only now add an extract from a note sent to me by him on May 22nd, 1896:—

"DEAR SISTER,—I have again been so swallowed up in sweet communion with my Lord, and a sweet realization of my interest in the atoning blood and righteousness of Christ, and the blessings flowing therefrom, which have produced such quietness and peace in my soul, that I feel, come life or come death, 'tis all right; having during the last two days had such a sight of the glory of the Father shining forth in the face of Jesus Christ—yea, I have so seen Him, by faith, at the right hand of God as my Intercessor, that I have longed to be with Him, to see Him face to face, and no longer through a glass darkly. At the same time, I am willing to stay in the valley of Baca a little longer, if such be His will, feeling sure that, after I have suffered awhile here, He will come and take me to Himself, where there will be no sin, no pain, nor any evil heart; and the thought of being there, to

"'Bathe my weary soul
In seas of heavenly rest,'"

so fires my heart that I long for the time to come, and say, 'Why tarry the wheels of His chariot?'

"May I still enjoy this feeling,
In all need to Jesus go;
Prove His wounds each day more healing,
And Himself more deeply know.'

Here is peace, quietness, and assurance for ever.

"Your affectionate brother,
"BENJAMIN TAYLOR."

I trust the extract will be sufficient to satisfy you respecting the departed.

May the dear Lord strengthen you and long spare you in your loving and highly-valued labours among the Church of God, both in pulpit and press, and still make you bold to declare His whole truth, is the desire of

Yours affectionately for the truth's sake,
Old Hill, July 17th, 1896. A. A.

"IT IS I; BE NOT AFRAID."

(MATT. xiv. 27.)

LOVING Master, come to me,
O'er the billows strong;
When the waves are rolling high,
Then help me along.
Come and whisper words like these,
"Be thou not afraid,
I am very near to thee,
Near to give My aid."

Storms of unbelief and sin
Now sometimes arise;
Then they take Thee from our view,
Hide Thee from our eyes.
We, like Peter, often look
At the troubled sea;
Then we soon begin to sink,
When we look from Thee.

Help me, Lord, to look to Thee,
Take me by the hand;
Pull me, Master, to Thyself,
Give me strength to stand:
Then it matters not how rough
Earthly seas may be,
If the eye of faith is kept
Looking unto Thee.

A. C.

RECOGNITION SERVICES AT ZION CHAPEL,
TROWBRIDGE.

TUESDAY, September 8th, being the eightieth anniversary of the above chapel, the usual services were held, and also a service in recognition of Mr. Peet's (of Sharnbrook) acceptance of the pastorate of this Church.

Mr. Hemington, of Devizes, in the morning, preached a very impressive sermon, from the words, "What time I am afraid I will trust in Thee" (Psalm lvi. 4), to a large and attentive congregation, many friends from other Churches being present. Luncheon was provided in the schoolroom. In the afternoon, Mr. Moxon, of Bury, preached. His text was Isaiah lxi. 1. The tea meeting at the close of the afternoon service was well attended, the schoolroom and two of the class-rooms being crowded. The recognition service in the evening was held in the chapel, the platform being extended for the occasion. The senior deacon, Mr. Applegate, took the chair, supported by Mr. Hemington, Mr. Moxon, and Mr. Peet. There were also present on the platform ministers and deacons from Halifax and Bradford, in Yorkshire, Cardiff, Devizes, Bournemouth, Bath, Calne, Hayward's Heath, and other places. Mr. Peet's son, from London, was also present. The service was opened by the singing of a hymn, after which Mr. Farmer, of Cardiff, read 2 Corinthians iv., and Mr. Steadman engaged in prayer.

Mr. Applegate, in his introductory remarks, spoke of his own long connection with the Church, which he joined in 1850. He also, in a very feeling manner, stated the facts relative to Mr. Peet, from the time he first supplied at Trowbridge, to his acceptance of the pastorate, to which he was invited by an unanimous vote of the Church.

Mr. Peet then gave a brief account of his call by grace, and call to the ministry, which took place when he was very young. For some time he was superintendent of a Ragged School, and a teacher in the Sunday-School. At this time it was laid upon his mind, with continually-increasing power, that the Lord intended him for the work of the ministry. Having no inclination for this work, he did his utmost to shake off the feeling, and when asked to preach by different friends, he positively refused. At last matters reached such a crisis, that he felt he dared not resist any longer, and he consented to preach an evening sermon at a small place. He was only nineteen years of age at this time, and after supplying at different places for several months, he received a call from the Church at Sharnbrook, where the present chapel was built for him, and where he has laboured for the past thirty-one years. He also related some of the circum-

stances, and leadings of God, both in providence and grace, which led to his leaving Sharnbrook, and accepting the call from the Church at Trowbridge. Mr. Applegate then gave to Mr. Peet, on behalf of the Church, the right hand of fellowship. The 373rd hymn (Gadsby's selection) was given out by Mr. Smith, of Devizes, after which Mr. Hemington spoke. He referred in appropriate terms to Mr. Peet's call by grace and to the ministry, and said that while he would refrain from giving him the advice he might have given to a younger man, he would direct his attention to the words of St. Paul, "Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord," and he impressed upon the people that the ministry is the first thing to be considered. He then spoke in very cordial terms of his own long connection with the Church at Trowbridge, and of his esteem for the people, and concluded by expressing his heartfelt desire for the good of both pastor and people, and assuring them of his continued help and sympathy.

Mr. Moxon, who has visited Trowbridge annually for many years, reminded the people that they must support Mr. Peet by the constant use of three P's—their Purses, their Prayers, and their Presence. He hoped the union formed that day would be lasting and strong, and he sincerely prayed for the blessing of God upon it, and upon Mr. Peet's ministry.

Mr. John Smith, of Halifax, gave a short but interesting address. He said perhaps some people would think it strange that a man should travel two or three hundred miles to attend a meeting of this sort, but he believed that "a man who hath friends must show himself friendly." He stated that he knew Mr. Peet well, and that his ministry had been a great blessing to him; and knowing something of the trials through which Mr. Peet had passed, he felt that having tasted of the grace of God through his ministry, his love for Mr. Peet was such, that he was impelled to come to Trowbridge to testify to it before his new Church and congregation.

Mr. Hawkins, of Bradford, next spoke of having known Mr. Peet for many years, and said that both he and his wife were baptized by Mr. Peet, at Sharnbrook, twenty-eight years ago. He said that since he removed to Bradford, he had kept up a close intercourse with Mr. Peet, and had many times derived great spiritual benefit from his letters. He concluded by expressing his heartfelt wishes for the good of the cause, and his enjoyment of the day's services.

Mr. Knight, of Hayward's Heath, said that he felt amply repaid for his visit. He was not a stranger to the people, having preached several times in the chapel, and he could honestly say that he came to the services out of real love to the

friends at Zion and to his friend Mr. Peet, whom he felt to be a man after God's own heart. He believed that they were meeting together that day to the glory and honour of the Three-One God, and he prayed that Mr. Peet might be a blessing to the people, and that Zion's cords might be lengthened, and her stakes strengthened, and such be added to the Church as shall be eternally saved.

Mr. Ford, of Bath, made a few remarks, expressing his pleasure at being present, and his good wishes for both Church and pastor.

Another hymn was sung, after which the pastor pronounced the Benediction, and the meeting was closed by the singing of the Doxology. The collections amounted to £20 3s. 4d.

ANSWER TO INQUIRY.

TO E. F. K.

LOVE to the brethren is a true mark of the new birth, as given in 1 John iii. 14. For only those can truly love the brethren who have the Spirit of Christ. Where that Spirit dwells in the heart, it will manifest itself in love to those who are Christ's, for "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit." There may be many defects among them, but grace will overcome them, and when we see them subdued and put off we can but love and admire the image of Christ, even in some of His crooked members. When, however, an inconsistent and un-Christ-like spirit is indulged, and the subject even becomes proud of it, as manifesting honesty and jealousy for the truth, it is an evidence that, if there, the grace, love, and Spirit of Christ are at least covered with the rubbish of pride, self-conceit, and crudities, which ought not to rule in professing Christians. Jesus says, "Blessed are the meek," and He exhorts us to learn of Him, who is meek and lowly in heart. Kingly ministers, lordly deacons, and hard-spirited members do not manifest the grace and tenderness of Him who will neither "break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax." We advise you to seek His company and fellowship, and not to be discouraged by the unkind and uncourteous behaviour of one who should be a nursing father among the lambs of Christ. May you never fall into the same snare. The Word says, "Better is a poor and a wise child than an old and foolish king" (Ecc. iv. 13).

THE EDITOR.

HERE is the exercise of Christ's grace: "I will pardon their sins through My blood, I will conquer them through My power."
—*Romaine*.

THE SEEKERS' CORNER.

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN A FATHER AND A SON.

MY DEAR FATHER,—Although I have not seen or heard from you for a long time, I can assure you I have often been present with you, believing also that I was not forgotten of you. The contents of yours gave me much satisfaction, for which I desire to be thankful; but how shall I answer it? If I were an equal, or had the like experience of deliverances and mercy too, I would gladly shout Victory also. You will perhaps say, "My warfare is not over yet." True; but I believe my father can at times rejoice in the certain prospect of being at last more than a conqueror. Most gladly would I say so too, but I fear to presume (Psalm l. 16). This follows me closely; so much so that I dare not open my mouth. I know, at least I so believe, that the hand of a kind Providence has followed me all my days, and has appeared repeatedly on my behalf, and, as I hope, in answer to prayer, although I have not been long, nor am I now, without some obstacles in this matter, and often subject to dreadful anticipations of the future; yet feeling daily, more or less, that anything short of hell is a mercy to me, I am constrained to offer my poor tribute of praise; and the constraint is powerful at times, because you experience "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion and fellowship of God the Holy Ghost," now and for ever. Amen.

Yours affectionately,
J. B.

MY DEAR SON,—In answer to your letter, I believe there is hope in Israel concerning these things. As to what you say of Psalm l. 16, I believe an enemy has done this, because he has not referred you to the preceding verses, and the verses that follow after, which I think you will do well to consider; and may it please God to show you the difference between those that fear the Lord and those that fear Him not, so that you may be enabled to offer Him praise who has made the difference; that your conversation may be ordered aright by your mouth being in the dust, and the Lord's name alone being exalted for showing you the salvation of God. You acknowledge the kind providence of God towards you and your unworthiness of it, for which you are sometimes constrained to offer a poor tribute of praise; and I am happy to see your earnest desire is for covenant mercies. What is recorded in Genesis xv. 2, is an earnest desire in Abraham, and the Lord granted it to him, though he kept him long in suspense; and it is written for our encouragement. The Lord never did say to any of the seeking

seed of Jacob, Seek ye my face in vain, and for our encouragement to pray it is recorded in Luke xi. 1-14.

You say you are persuaded of the reality of these things, and seek for them; but they are covenant blessings. Then comes Psalm l. 16, as before mentioned. I tell you again, I believe an enemy hath done this, for an earnest seeking of these things is a covenant blessing; and I believe none but those that are in the covenant ever do seek the Lord with all their heart. I know by experience that when a sensible sinner is earnestly seeking his interest in the Lord Jesus Christ, the devil will muster all his forces against him; but, nevertheless, He that has begun the good work will carry it on through all opposition. You say, however, though faint, you hope to pursue; and may the Lord help you to be a wrestling Jacob and a prevailing Israel. Amen.

It is written: "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, even he shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty;" and it is likewise written: "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him; and He will show them His covenant." Now I believe the secret place of the Most High is the covenant of grace, and this is the stability of my soul, the everlasting love of God in Christ Jesus, chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, and revealed to me in time by the blessed Spirit taking of the things of the Father and the Son, and revealing them unto me, namely, the Father's love, and the Son's redemption; and if thy heart is set upon this, and thou art seeking earnestly after it, this is a covenant mercy, and thou wilt surely prevail; for it is written: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."

Now, my dear son, may it please the Lord to bless you and yours, if it be His blessed will, with a saving knowledge of an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen and Amen.

Your very affectionate Father,

J. BRIANT.

THE stronger the believer grows in grace, the less he goes either alone, or upon the crutches of the creature; and having a less opinion of himself, sees a greater need of Christ; he looks to Him and depends upon Him for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

"THE first month." The beginning of their years (the Israelites) is henceforth to be dated from their going out of Egypt. Intimating thereby that the beginning of our years (or of life) is to be dated from our call out of Egypt. We never truly begin to live till we begin to move towards Canaan.—*Berridge.*

LETTER FOR THE YOUNG.

DEAR SIR,—I received your kind letter, and thank you for it. You want nothing but an opened eye to see the glory of Christ's redemption ; and He must give it, and will bestow it when it is most for His glory and your advantage. Had you Daniel's holiness, Paul's zeal, John's love, Magdalen's repentance (and I wish you had them all), yet, altogether, they would give you no title to a pardon. You must at last receive it as a ruined sinner, even as the cross-thief received it.

No graces or services of your own can give you a right to pardon ; you must come to Jesus for it, weary and heavy-laden ; and, if you are afflicted for sin, and desirous of being delivered from its guilt and power, no past iniquities in your life, nor present corruptions of your heart, will be a bar to pardoning mercy. If we are truly seeking salvation by Jesus, we shall be disposed, as we are really bound, to seek after holiness.

But remember, though holiness is the walk to heaven, Christ is the way to God ; and, when you seek for pardon, you must go wholly out of your walk, be it good or bad, and look only to Him who is the Way. You must look to Him as a miserable sinner, justly condemned by His law, a proper brand for hell, and look to be plucked from the fire by rich and sovereign grace. You have just as much worthiness for a pardon as the cross-thief had, which is none at all ; and, in your best estate, you will never have any more. A pardon was freely given to him upon asking for it freely, and given instantly, because no room was left for delays ; and a pardon is as ready for you as for him when you ask for it as he did, with self-loathing and condemnation ; but the proper *seasons* of bestowing the pardon are kept in Jesus' own hand. He makes His mercy manifest to the heart when it will most glorify His grace and benefit the sinner. Only continue asking for mercy, and seek it only through the blood of the cross, without any eye to your own worthiness, and that blood in due time will be sprinkled on your conscience, and you shall cry, "Abba, Father."

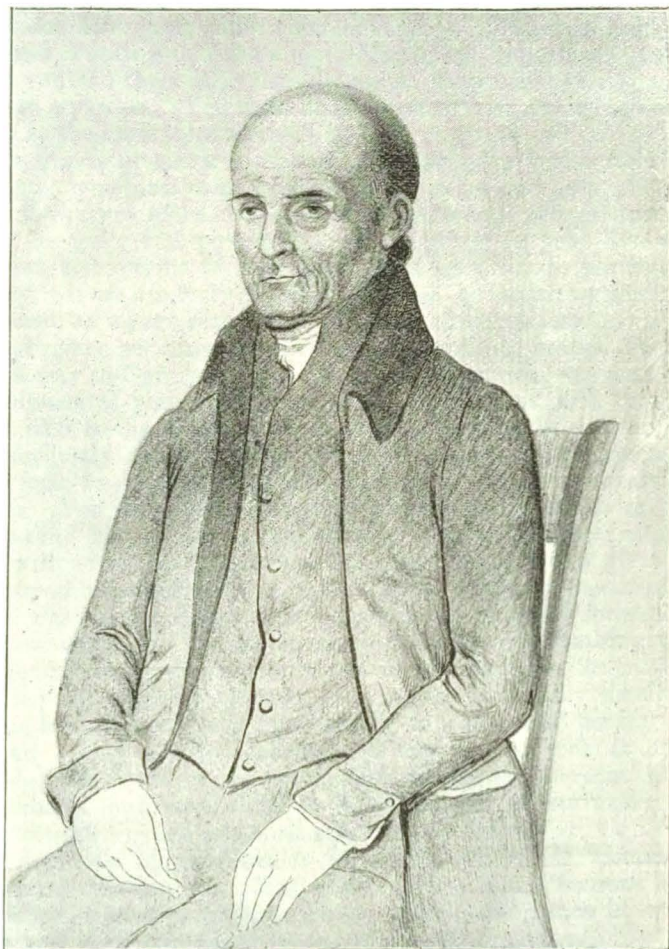
Present my kindest love to my dear brother, Mr. Romaine. The Lord continue his life and usefulness. Kind respects and Christian salutation to Mrs. Olney. Grace and peace be with both, and with your affectionate and obliged servant,

Everton, September 14th, 1773.

J. BERRIDGE.

THOUGH a believer in Jesus is not afraid that God will damn his soul to hell for his sins ; yet he dreads being sent from his Father's throne of grace with a heavy heart.—*W. Mason.*

The Sower, December, 1896.



JOHN KENT.

JOHN KENT.

JOHN KENT, though not a preacher of the Gospel, was one who had a rich and gracious experience of the power of the truth as it is in Jesus, and was able by his pen to write most gloriously of the grand distinguishing truths of God's electing love, Covenant favour, sovereign grace, the safety and security of God's chosen. He loved to set them forth in opposition to error, as picking up the lost, guilty, ruined sons of Adam from the lowest depths of the Fall, and placing them among the beloved sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty. The atoning blood and justifying obedience of Christ were themes on which he delighted to dwell.

He is chiefly known amongst us now by his many precious hymns and poems which live in our midst. He numbered amongst his most attached and bosom friends Dr. Hawker, Henry Fowler, Thomas Hardy, John Andrew Jones, and many others of a kindred spirit, whose names and memory carry a sweet savour with them. Some of these wrote highly commendatory prefaces to his hymns, and assisted in their publication, as his means did not allow him to do it himself, moving as he did in a humble sphere of life; and he in his turn honoured those whom he survived, such as Dr. Hawker and Henry Fowler, with poetic elegies on their deaths.

He was born at Bideford, in Devonshire, December, 1766. His parents, though poor, were of the household of faith, and for many years enjoyed the holy ministrations of Samuel Lavington, a true Gospel pastor. They had a large family, for whom they had to labour hard for the bread that perisheth, and also laboured in prayer and instruction that their offspring might be manifested as children of God; and they were happy in receiving gracious answers to their prayers, as several of them were early called to know the Lord, amongst them John, the youngest, the subject of this sketch. His father being a shipwright by trade, and obtaining employment in the Royal Arsenal at Plymouth Dock, necessitated the removal of the family there. And soon after, when John was about fourteen years of age, he was apprenticed with his father. Not having the advantages of education, and having a thirst for knowledge, he employed his leisure hours in improving himself in this respect, and the Lord also, while he was but a youth, began to work upon his heart, for he says:—

“Early in life it pleased my God,
Who rules the world without control,
To send an arrow dipped in blood,
That pierced me to the very soul.

"Convictions seized my breast, while I strove by prayers to calm the troubled sea; fond of my own doings, I struggled hard, and fought as hard against the sovereignty of God with high rebellion. I said, 'Can the ever-blessed God His Jacob love and Esau hate?' And, turn which way I would, prickling briars and thorns hedged up my way, until mine eyes were turned to Jesus, whose precious blood bore the curse and my sins away. Often do I think of that memorable day when my soul, by precious faith, arose as on eagles' wings from the pit of miry clay, and I rejoiced in the free salvation of God, realizing my own personal interest therein."

For more than fifty years he walked as a humble Christian before his God, a lover of good men (while Mr. J. C. Philpot was in the Church of England, in 1831, he writes, "I heard Fowler preach at the little 'Refuge' in Deal. Old John Kent, the author of 'Gospel Hymns,' was there, and I had the pleasure of shaking hands with him"), and his attachment to the fundamental doctrines of the Cross was preserved through the whole of his long life. He laboured in the Dockyard, writing his hymns in his leisure hours, until the Lord was pleased to afflict him with blindness; and even after this he composed many by dictation, his little grandson being his amanuensis. When about sixty-five years of age he writes thus:—

"'Tis with me a day of small things indeed; the gold has become dim, and the salt has apparently lost its savour; but blessed be His Name, which is able to make all grace abound towards me; yea, that He waits to be gracious, that He has said, 'I will be as the dew unto Israel.' Before they call, He has promised to answer; and while they are yet speaking, He has said, 'I will hear.' Oh may He come and put His hand a second time to the work, and strengthen those things that are ready to die. I am all wants, wounds, and wretchedness; but to whom shall I go but to Him, who not only hath the words of eternal life, but who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life itself, the Hope of Israel, and the Saviour thereof in the time of trouble? I find every day brings its cross with it, and we should do well to expect it. The waters of Marah are still bitter waters. I find bitters in the world, bitters in the Church, and bitters in the family; but though I thus write, I am persuaded that in the end they often prove to be cross-handed blessings, sent in love. God is dealing with me according to Covenant, and will make crooked things straight and rough places plain. The vision is for an appointed season; in the end it shall speak and not lie, and He that shall come according to the decree will come according to His promise, and will not tarry.

“ Then shall I see in that diviner light,
 What here I can but faintly, dimly see,
 That all the way my God has led was right,
 And e'en the roughest was the best for me.

“ The milk and honey lie beyond the wilderness, and in the promise there is a sweet harvest home. All odds will then be made even, all knots will then be untied, and the most crooked paths that the traveller to Zion ever trod will be as straight as the bonds of everlasting love could make it. I cannot see the end of the dispensation; I draw wrong conclusions, and say as Joseph did when the patriarch Jacob blessed his sons, ‘ Not so, my Father,’ but the Scripture tells us that ‘ he crossed his hands wittingly.’ ”

In the year 1840 the Lord was pleased to remove his eldest daughter suddenly, and not long after his beloved partner in life, to whom he had been united more than fifty years. These heavy strokes told upon his aged frame, yet his mind was raised to things above, as he sweetly writes in 1842: “ Through mercy I enjoy more of the blessings of health than might have been expected at the age of seventy-five years, but I have to be ashamed of my ingratitude and forgetfulness, for mercy and goodness have followed me all the days of my life. I feel the old tabernacle falling into decay, and every day tells me that I shall shortly put it off, and go down to the silent chamber of the tomb. I bless God for a good hope beyond it. He has overcome the last enemy, even death, and him that had the power of death, which is the devil, and consecrated the grave as a subterraneous passage to glory, and given us in the Gospel a sure pledge of that inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled, and cannot fade away. The grapes of Canaan were to Israel a token of the goodly land beyond the swellings of Jordan. It was a saying of good old Rutherford, ‘ I want not to love the breast more than the nurse.’ If you have not seen his ‘ Letters,’ I recommend them as a sweet morsel. Since I last wrote, it has pleased my heavenly Father to remove from me the partner of my joys and sorrows. She has entered, I hope, into her eternal rest, having, as she told me just before her death, committed both body and soul into the hands of her dear Redeemer.”

For some years he had suffered from a painful disorder, for the relief of which he underwent a surgical operation; and when told, after the second or third trial, by the surgeon that there was *no hope*, he exclaimed, “ Thou art a Covenant God, Thy word is never forfeited.”

“ From Pisgah’s top, to faith revealed,
 I see the promised land;
 The milk-white stone my pardon seals,
 ’Tis graved by God’s own hand.”

From this time the symptoms of dissolution showed themselves more formidable, and to everyone it was apparent that the end was near. Addressing his niece, who was in attendance upon him, he said, "My hopes are fixed upon the Rock of Ages." Upon his son reading to him the twenty-seventh Psalm, he observed how it agreed with the whole of his experience. Wishing to be raised up, and a friend offering to take him in his arms, he consented, saying at the same time, "I am in better arms," repeating immediately—

"The arms of everlasting love
Beneath my soul He placed,
And on the Rock of Ages set
My slippery footsteps fast."

His sufferings being very great, he said to those around him, "The consolations of the Gospel afford me support and shelter under all, for we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, to give an account of the deeds done in the body." He remarked, "If I stand there alone, I am lost for ever, but this is my hope; it is the judgment seat of Christ, and He has become my Surety, paying all demands. I shall be tried there by a covenant of grace, not by a covenant of works. Blessed be God for His great salvation. 'It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.' Ah! it is worthy of all acceptation. I'll bless Him, and I'll praise Him too, inasmuch as the promise of the Covenant met me in all my wants, wounds, and wretchedness. I wish to die with 'God be merciful to me a sinner' upon my lips."

Two old companions came to bid him farewell, to whom, with much warmth and feeling, he said, "I would not be without Christ for a thousand worlds. If I had a thousand tongues, I would speak well of His name. My frames and feelings are not the condition of my acceptance. No! Blessed be God, salvation is all of grace from first to last."

Every cord of the feeble tabernacle now seemed loosened by the severe pains, and when his medical attendant informed him it would soon be all over, "Yes," he said, "and that is a consoling thought—

"For weary saints a rest remains
In heaven from all their toils and pains;
Where seas of joy eternal flow,
Without a taint of mortal woe."

He called his son to him, put his arms around his neck for the last time to commend him to God and the word of His grace, praying that His blessing might be upon his children and his

children's children, through the infinite grace of Him who had redeemed him, the God of his salvation. From this time he spoke but little, but from the movement of his hands and lips appeared to be in communion with God. The last words he uttered while entering Jordan's chilling waters were, "I am accepted! accepted!" and so he passed over, November 15th, 1843, aged seventy-seven years. He was interred in Stoke Damerel churchyard, near Devonport, where a neat stone has been erected, 1878, to his memory, by a lover of his hymns, which, besides the inscription, &c., has his own verse—

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

R. F. R.

A GRACIOUS RECORD.

THOSE who knew him, and those who have heard of him, and also those who now read this account of our late friend, will recognize in him the features of a favoured child of God, and will all, I feel sure, be glad to see a record of a few incidents in the life of John Knight, senior deacon of North Street Chapel, Stamford, who died on the 22nd February, 1896, in the eighty-eighth year of his age, in the house in which he had lived for over fifty years. His native county was Bedfordshire; his mother was a praying woman, and her son was the child of many prayers. When quite young he was taught the trade of a shoemaker, and when between twenty and thirty (during which decade he was called by grace), owing to slackness of work, he was obliged to break up his home, and in the providence of God was led to Stamford, and came to North Street Chapel, where he attended for nearly sixty years, with the utmost diligence and regularity. He worked at his trade till within ten years of his death, when increasing bodily infirmity constrained him to lay aside all active employ, but he retained all the faculties and powers of his mind up to the very last. Physically, he was short in stature, being somewhat deformed, which, as years advanced, caused him to stoop more and more; the last three years of his life he was very dependent, requiring the arm of a friend to enable him to get about, which service of love was cheerfully rendered by one of his brethren. Mentally he was a man of remarkable intelligence, although never having received any education, in the common use of the term, yet endowed by God with a power of mind and a gift of expression possessed by

few; and he was spiritually a man who passed through great trials, conflicts and temptations, and who also experienced great and marked deliverances and interpositions of God in his favour.

One of the special features of his later days was his great attachment to the people of God; he cared for no other society, and never seemed so much at home as when, surrounded by a few friends, he found an opportunity of telling them some of the things the Lord had done for him. He was made a deacon in the year 1883, and many can testify how affectionately, and prayerfully, and soberly he filled that office, nor will they ever forget the clear voice and the telling manner in which he gave out the hymns at the services in the chapel. Yet, being "a man of like passions with ourselves," his friends who loved him were not blind to his failings, neither was he blind to them; yet grace shone in him, and as the years rolled on, his spirit became more and more gentle, tender, and considerate. He was what he was by the grace of God. We have no wish to exalt the man, but we do wish to exalt the grace of God as experienced and manifested by this dear friend. The following incidents, as told by himself and written from memory, will be read with interest and, I hope, profit.

He often referred with much feeling to his state of mind the evening he entered Stamford for the first time, and to the Lord's faithfulness to the promise He then gave him. Stopping to rest for a few minutes on the top of some rising ground, from which he had a view of the town he was about to enter, his needy and destitute condition so weighed him down that he felt persuaded he should become a "fugitive and a vagabond on the face of the earth:" so great was his distress that he fell on his knees, and cried to God in the bitterness of his soul, when these words were spoken to him, "Bread shall be given him, his waters shall be sure" (Isaiah xxxiii. 16). He often has said, "And God has been as good as His word. I have never lacked bread or water; and never shall I forget on one occasion when I was literally reduced to bread and water—how, as I asked the blessing of God on that meal my heart was dissolved in gratitude to God that I was not in hell, that He had given me a good hope through grace in His Son Christ Jesus, and that I had food sufficient." Many years after his first entrance into Stamford, he stood again almost on the same spot, and in the dead of the night bade farewell to one of his children, who had to leave his home under the most painful circumstances. The poor father felt as though his heart would burst as he bid his first-born Good-bye, not knowing that he would ever see him again; but as soon as he was alone the Lord spoke these words into his soul, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them

that fear Him" (Psalm ciii. 13). "What!" he said, "does the Lord feel for me as I feel for my child? and if it costs me so much to part with my son, what must it have cost God to give up His dearly beloved Son to die for me? Now," he said, "my heart was like to break with joy and gratitude and godly sorrow."

At one time in his life he was brought down to the gates of the grave through the "fear of death." It so worked upon him that he was greatly reduced in strength, and could neither eat nor sleep. The doctor prescribed for him, but all in vain; and it really appeared that he would soon be taken away. His own account of the Lord's deliverance was almost in these words: "One morning I came down to breakfast, but could not eat a mouthful of food. I then thought I would return to my bedroom, according to my invariable custom, to spend a little time in prayer; so weak was I that I literally crawled up on my hands and knees, and when getting into the room I found I was too weak to raise myself from the floor, and there, lying on the floor of my room, I thought I should die. But the Lord spoke these words to me, 'He is not here, He is risen,' and with the words came such a conviction into my soul of my union to the Lord Jesus Christ in His death and resurrection, that I said, 'Dear Lord, and I am risen too.' With that I got up off the floor, went down to my wife, and told her I was as well as ever I was in my life. I then had a good meal, and went off to my work, and from that day I have never been in bondage through the fear of death."

On another occasion he was sorely pressed by the devil to fear that he had no scriptural ground of hope. He said: "The conflict went on for some hours; it was as though I said this and the other was a ground of hope; but to everything I said, the devil raised some objection, so that I could not reply. Everything seemed taken away, and here was I all alone, in my little workshop, in solemn conflict with the devil; his presence there was as real to me as anything in my life. I kept begging the Lord to appear for me and give me the victory, which He did, and never shall I forget it. He put these words into my mouth, and I repeated them in a loud voice, 'But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.' And I challenged the devil, and I asked him if that was not scriptural proof. He knew, and I knew, that I believed in my heart, and had confessed my faith with my mouth, and God had said that such shall be saved. I asked him to tell me what

could keep me out of heaven, and he departed for a time, leaving me alone, full of gratitude to God who had so signally appeared for me and given me the victory."

At another period of his history he was sorely tried about the Godhead of Jesus Christ. Till this time of temptation came upon him, he thought no one could dispute him out of a truth so plainly revealed in the Word of God; but now every text seemed to have a different meaning from what he had been accustomed to, and he saw and felt that unless he was satisfied from the Word of God as to the Godhead of Jesus Christ, he had no foundation for hope. His distress was great, and he sought the Lord day and night for light on His Word. "Many nights," said he, "I have been in my workshop alone till the early morning, on my knees, with a Bible in front of me, reading chapter after chapter, in hope of finding something that would satisfy my soul that Jesus Christ was in truth the Son of God. One night, on my knees, I was reading the second chapter of the Gospel by Mark, and I came to these words, which rivetted my attention, 'Who can forgive sins but God only?' Now I knew that my sins were forgiven, and I had a blessed sense of pardoning mercy at that very time. I read on, 'Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?' Then I came to the next verse, 'But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins;' but I could read no further. Divine light shone into my soul; I saw that Jesus Christ, who could forgive my sins, must be God. Oh, what an ecstasy of joy my soul was in! Do you know, my dear sir, I never used that Bible again; it was completely spoilt, all crumpled up and disfigured by my tears, the book was saturated with them. 'I wept to the praise of the mercy I had found.' From that day the Godhead of the Lord Jesus Christ has been the anchor of my soul."

Some few years ago he was walking through the town on the occasion of one of the fairs that are held in the streets, feeling very wretched, as though he were neither fit for this world or the next. Whilst pondering over his sad state, amid all the noise and excitement around him, these words dropped into his soul with remarkable power: "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory; for the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and He hath set the world upon them" (1 Sam. ii. 8). "Ah," he said, "no words could have been spoken more suitable to my case—that is just what I felt myself to be, poor and in the dust, a beggar on a dunghill; and what a change they produced in me! I was

raised out of the dust and from the dunghill, and felt that I was a prince, and was assured that I should inherit the throne of glory. I said, 'Why, I am one of the pillars of the earth—the salt that preserves the world—one of the saints for whom the world is established.' And my soul was so filled with the glory of these things that I hardly knew how to walk home. What a change had come over me in the course of a few minutes!" He often used to say, "Oh, that word grace! It is too big a word for man to speak—the grace of God. It fills heaven and earth; it is infinite, unfathomable." One Lord's Day he came into the vestry, after the morning service, and taking hold of my hand with the tears streaming down his face, he said: "Oh, my dear sir, we must die to know what it is to be saved, and we must die to know what it is to be lost. 'Salvation is of the Lord' (quoting the text), and we cannot spell that word down here."

Amongst his special favourite verses was, "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water" (John vii. 37, 38). And another was, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Peter i. 3). Also, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is" (1 John iii. 2). In his latter days this was his great desire, to see Jesus Christ and be like Him. For two or three years before his end he had repeated and rather severe attacks of bronchitis, but he soon got over them; and this led some to hope that he might recover from the one which proved fatal. He was only laid aside a few days, and but for his great weakness and loss of appetite, there really seemed ground to hope for his recovery. I saw him a few hours before he fell asleep, having just returned to Stamford after seeing my beloved mother pass away. I said to him as I entered his room, "Well, Mr. Knight, my dear mother has got a few hours start of you." "I know it, my dear sir," he said. "I know it, and I grieve for you; but she is at rest, for ever with the Lord." "Yes," I said, "and you will soon follow her, and see Jesus Christ face to face and be like Him." "Ah! my dear sir," he replied, "that is what I have longed for years—to see Him, and to be like Him." Then raising his voice, he said, "And oh, what a transforming sight it will be—what a transformation! Everlasting glory!" Shortly after this he sank into a state of stupor and unconsciousness, and gradually fell

asleep, and so passed away to be for ever with the Lord. He was buried in the cemetery at Stamford, on Wednesday, the 26th February, in the presence of a large number of friends from the surrounding district, as well as of those with whom he had been associated for so many years, by all of whom he was greatly respected and beloved, and highly esteemed as an honoured vessel of mercy. His body was well laid in the grave, there to remain till the archangel's trump shall sound, "and the dead in Christ shall rise first." He often has said, "Why, my dear sir, you know this body of mine is as much redeemed as my soul, and I rejoice in the hope of the resurrection, and in the prospect of this body and soul of mine being brought together again, when I shall be presented 'faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.'"

We could and did commit his body to the dust in sure and certain hope of its resurrection to eternal glory; knowing that whilst so engaged his spirit was in the presence of God, having entered upon the enjoyment of the things referred to in the following verses, which he often quoted as describing the heaven awaiting him: "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes" (Rev. vii. 14-17).

M. J. TRYON

ANSWER TO INQUIRY.

TO S. H. I.

WE are always anxious to encourage anyone in the study of the Word of God, and especially when they are concerned to know the mind of the Spirit as to the important parts which have reference to the truths which all true ministers are enjoined to preach, and which the hearers are admonished to receive. It is difficult to get some people to read, examine, and think for themselves; but we decline to take things for granted from any man, and ever wish to search the Word to learn the mind of the Spirit therein. For some people we are too narrow, but we hope not narrower than the Word of God. And for some we are too broad, but we hope we can always refer these objectors to both

precept and example in the Word of God, for all we teach and contend for. There is "a path" between free will and fatalism, clearly defined, to those who are led into the subject by the Spirit of Christ, who, while He sets forth the responsibility of man, also shows that God is just in holding him accountable for disobedience to His Word and will, for although man has neither power nor will to obey, yet, because he lost both by transgression, therefore his inability becomes his guilt. Thus it becomes the servants of Christ to show to these their sin, as did our Lord and Master when He warned the unbelieving Jews (John viii. 12, and 26 to 47). Yet, even when He gave the blessed call (Matt. xi. 28), "Come unto Me, all ye that labour," &c., He did not mean that all who heard Him would come, nor that they had the power to do so, but the call was made openly, in the hearing of the whole congregation, that they who had ears to hear might receive the invitation. He knew that none others would, because faith can only be mixed with the Word where it is given by God, as Christ plainly set forth when He said to His disciples, "It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given" (Matt. xiii. 11). Thus when He cried, "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear," He referred to those among them to whom faith was given to hear the Word believingly, and who felt it to be suited to their case, as bread is to a hungry man, and as water is to a thirsty person. Yet the proclamation was made in the hearing of all, that those to whom it was given to know the secret might be called and gathered out from among the impenitent. This agrees with what He says John v. 25, "The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God." The whole mixed congregation are to hear His voice in the general proclamation of the Gospel, as an outward call; but there will be a manifest difference between those who merely hear that, and those who so hear His voice that they receive life, for to those the grace is given to cause them to receive what they hear. Thus the former will reject or neglect what is spoken, but the latter will treasure up the Word in honest and good hearts, made so by the preparation work of the Holy Spirit, and in their case it will bring forth fruit, in the other it will prove unfruitful, as is clearly set forth in the parable of the sower. Read carefully Matthew xiii. 1-23, and compare it with other portions of the Word which deal with this important subject.

As to whether the Gospel is to be preached to dead sinners, we reply, the commission given by Christ says, "Go ye into *all* the world, and preach the Gospel," not only to every believer or seeker, but, "to *every creature*," &c. (Mark xvi. 15, 16). Was not Ezekiel sent to preach upon the dry bones, though

they were *very* dry? Were not the Ephesians dead in trespasses and sins when the Gospel was first preached to them? (see Eph. ii. 1-12.) Look, again, at 1 Cor. vi. 9-11; also Col. iii. 7, &c. See also examples by Paul, Acts xiii. 38-46; xviii. 4-6; * xix. 16-34; xxviii. 23-28, &c. &c. Yea, more, see an example set by the Lord Jesus Himself, Mark i. 14-15; also John vi. 26-29, with many more, recorded, for our instruction, in the Word of God. Are all these testimonies, commands, and examples to be set aside because some who oppose them say that such preaching savours of free will, and implies that the creature has some native power to repent and believe the Gospel? The conduct of such manifests great ignorance or enmity, or both. The Lord Jesus never implied, while He spake the things we have referred to, anything of the kind. Neither do those ministers of truth in the present day who feel it is demanded of them "as stewards of the mysteries of God" (1 Cor. iv. 1-5), as ambassadors for Christ (2 Cor. v. 20), that they faithfully declare "the *whole* counsel of God" (Acts xx. 26, 27). The Gospel is to "be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations," as the testimony of God concerning His good will and pleasure to save all who believe the record concerning His Son Jesus Christ, and as a witness against all those who deny, reject, or neglect the Divine proclamation. See how this is powerfully corroborated by the very word and testimony of Christ Himself, again and again: Matt. vii. 26, 27; x. 14, 15; xi. 16-24; xii. 41, 42; Mark vi. 10-12; xvi. 16; Luke xii. 47, 48; John iii. 18-21; ix. 41; xii. 48; xv. 20-25; Rom. ii. 8, 9; 2 Thess. i. 8; 1 Pet. iv. 17. Carefully examine these parts of the Divine Word, and you will find that the responsibility of unbelievers under the Gospel is fully proved, and that their condemnation will be measured according to the privileges and light they have been favoured with. This is Divine equity; Divine sovereignty is exercised by God in the case of all whom He saves by free grace. Saying that man is responsible to God, as an unbeliever, is not saying, as some ignorant ones represent, that man is responsible for his salvation. No; blessed be God, salvation is all of grace from first to last, and therefore all the glory is due to Him who sovereignly and freely bestows it.

We have written as fully as our time, and limited space in the SOWER will admit of; and we hope our effort to help you in your anxious search after the true meaning of the Gospel commission may not prove fruitless.

THE EDITOR.

* We earnestly desire that all who read these remarks will carefully examine all the Scripture references here given.

THE SEEKERS' CORNER.

MY DEAREST L——,—Once again I am endeavouring to scribble you a few short lines. If I remember rightly, you told me to write when brighter, and until to-day I have been thinking that you would never hear from me again. For a long time I have been like a dried-up pool, so carnal, so dead, so indifferent to good things, truly my poor heart has been like a desert vast, and these lines so often describe my case—

Sin has laid my vineyard waste,
Overgrown with weeds and briars;”

but is it not good for us at times to feel the pruning hand of the gracious Husbandman? for while He is chastising with the one hand, is He not upholding with the other? Oh, how I am filled with shame to think of my cruel indifference towards that dear Friend, whose name is Jesus, and how often I feel as though He has indeed forsaken me entirely, because He, in love, sees fit to hide His blessed face; oh that I could be more thankful for being still out of a million-times-deserved hell. This afternoon I went to see a dear young friend who died yesterday, and while standing there looking upon her sweet face, the Lord was graciously pleased to break the iron fetters which had bound me so long. And while gazing on one who is indeed a lily gathered home,* I really envied her position, and again such a sweet hope sprang up within that I should one day meet her, and all the dear ones who are “not lost, but gone before,” and it was as if the dear Lord asked the question, “Dost thou desire to meet her there?” and I answered, “Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I do;” and the sweet answer came, “Thy request thou shalt obtain.” And oh, dearest L——, if it had been the Lord’s will, I would gladly have flown from that room to Him in glory, where I shall be able to praise Him as I ought. There we shall see a loving, precious Redeemer, with no veil between. Indeed—

“The hope that such a day will come,
Makes e’en the captive’s portion sweet.”

I had, however, to beg for submission to His divine will, but when we have one sip of the sweet well of Bethlehem, does it not make us long for the Fountain Head? Yes—

“I’d part with all the joys of sense,
To gaze upon His throne;
Pleasures spring fresh for ever thence,
Unspeakable, unknown.”

* See “A Lamb Folded,” in November and December GLEANER.

I am so glad that you have had a word from your dear Master : may you have many, many sweet touches as you journey to the Celestial City, is my earnest desire. Now I must close. Give my love to dear E. and K., and tell them if they knew all about me, they would not think so well of me.

With much love, I remain,

Your unworthy Sister,

July, 1896.

FLORRIE.

THE EDITOR'S CLOSING REMARKS FOR 1896.

DEAR READERS,—As we are fast approaching the close of another year, we desire to offer a few brief remarks, under a feeling sense of the Lord's great goodness manifested towards us, as the months, weeks, and days have passed by. The feeling sense of the poor returns we have made, our shortcomings and manifold transgressions, make us feel the suitability of David's prayer (Psalm li. 1-13), and the great mercy that for such sin-afflicted ones there is a Fountain open, filled with that precious blood of Christ which cleanseth from *all* sin, and which makes the sinner that is washed therein whiter than snow. How frequently we feel that the sight and true apprehension of our sinnership would, as Mr. Hart says, sink us to despair, had we not the blood of Christ to plead. Our religion is all contained in that, and our free confession is with the poet, who says—

"I have no hope but in Thy blood ;
Remember me, O Lord, for good."

Oh what a precious Gospel is that of free grace, to those who are incurably leprous and helplessly lost apart from that precious blood ! This is the only way of life, the only hope, the only remedy, the only salvation for sinners. This we endeavour to preach and to set forth in our Magazines, and we hope our covenant God will ever enable us to stand fast in the determination not to know anything among men save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Those who *reject* it and those who *neglect* it are alike left without hope, and are under condemnation (see John xii. 48 ; and Heb. ii. 3). Yet how little concern is manifested by believers of the truth respecting hearers of the Gospel, and how few hearers are concerned about their own spiritual case and state. Some Gospel-hardened ones will roughly answer any kindly inquiry or admonition with, "Oh, if I am to be saved I shall be, and if I am to be lost, I cannot help it ;" which at once betrays the hardness of their spirits and the firm hold the god of this world has of their

hearts. So they will live, and so they will die, even under the light and sound of the Gospel, if the God of sovereign grace does not, in mercy, interpose, and pluck them as brands from the fire. For while the Gospel is to be preached to every creature, for the purpose of gathering from among men the Lord's chosen seed, only they to whom the Holy Ghost applies the testimony with power will receive it to the saving of the soul (read Acts xiii. 44-48). This proves the gift of eternal life to be a sovereign act of unmerited grace, and all the saved ones will own it to be so, and ascribe all the glory to Him who appointed them "to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. v. 9); while the despisers shall behold, and wonder, and perish (Acts xiii. 41). "For the *wages* of sin is death [that is what the sinner has merited]; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. vi. 23). The latter flows from the sovereign and eternal purpose of the God of love, who says, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy." Oh to grace how great debtors are we who have obtained that mercy!

May the gracious Giver, the God of our salvation, ever help us to so live and walk that we may glorify Him who has done such great things for us, remembering that we are not our own, having been bought with a price—oh, what a price!—even with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot. These are the *living* things, the things of God, of Christ, and the Spirit, which we contend for, and, the Lord helping us, we hope to continue to do so while life shall last.

It is many years since the Lord first wrought these vital truths in our heart, and the longer we live the more we prize them, and the greater debtors we feel to be to Him who granted to us this divine mercy. The language of our heart is—

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

Now, dear friends, we ask you to accept our humble but sincere thanks for all your kind sympathy and help so generously and lovingly accorded us, and we trust that during the coming year you will render us all the aid and encouragement you can in our arduous labours; and may the Lord shine in your hearts, as the old year dies away and the new one dawns upon us, is the prayer of yours,

THE EDITOR.

OH, let us not look so much at second causes: that is the reason we are so often puzzled.—*Romaine*.

REVIEWS.

The Young People's Treasury and Little Gleaner.

THE new Annual Volume of this valuable Magazine for the young presents a handsome appearance, both in the Cloth binding at 2s., and also in the Picture Board bindings at 1s. 6d. The sight of one of these volumes for a Christmas present will make the eyes of the young recipient glisten with joy, and the contents will be found by them as pleasing as the outside, and, with the Lord's blessing, will be found truly profitable.

The Sower Annual Volume. Price 2s. Cloth.

FULL of spiritual manna, and containing several Portraits, and short Biographies of well-known ministers—Mr. Hull (the Editor), Mr. Hemington, the late Mr. Eli Page, the late Mr. Lewis, and many others whose memories are revered amongst the Churches of Truth. The Editor's Portrait in the volume is exceedingly well done. The volume is well worth purchasing, perusing, and preserving.

The Gleaner and Sower Almanack. Price One Penny.

FULL of pictures; gives a text for every day; much interesting reading and information. It should be hung up in every house, and every schoolroom.

The Baptist Almanack. Price 2d. (post free 3d.) London: Robert Banks and Son, Racquet Court, E.C.

EVERYONE that desires information respecting Baptist Churches should possess one of these. It contains much information that is nowhere else obtainable, and will be found most useful.

The Life of Francis Covell. Price 1s. Cloth, 2s. Leather. London: E. Wilmshurst, Blackheath, and 10, Paternoster Square.

PITHY, gracious, and profitable. "The memory of the just is blessed." Seldom have we read more weighty and golden utterances than many which are recorded in these pages; the book is most interesting, and will be read through from cover to cover.

The Travels of Seek-Truth: An Allegory. By W. T. ANDRESS. Price 2s. Cloth. London: E. Wilmshurst, Blackheath, and 10, Paternoster Square.

THIS book may be called Bunyan up to date; and although no other pen could write as did the Immortal Tinker, yet it is no small praise to say that the writer of *Seek-Truth* puts truths of present-day importance in quite a Bunyanesque style—indeed, in its pages we have the story of the Pilgrim's Progress in the Nineteenth

Century. In giving our readers an idea of what this book is like, we cannot do better than quote from the Preface, written by Mr. E. Wilmshurst, "We have read the book with pleasure and profit, and in doing so we repeatedly felt it was *a book for the times*, and should be placed in the hands of youth, as well as those of a mature age. The true Protestant ring about the book is especially noticeable. 'Seek-Truth' also meets on his pilgrimage with Duty Faith, Higher Criticism, Human Tradition, Antinomianism, and other so-called pilgrims, and, with the sword of truth in his hand, pierces their errors. We should be glad if *The Travels of Seek-Truth*, with its solemn warnings and golden precepts, found as many readers in as many languages as has fallen to the lot of Bunyan's *Immortal Dream*. While we commend this able work, yet we may add that it is possible to find a passage or two in which we might differ from the author."

Huntington's Posthumous Letters. In four volumes. Cloth, 16s; Half-calf, 20s. London: F. Kirby, 17, Bouverie Street.

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"HITHERTO HATH THE LORD HELPED US."

My gracious Lord, by Thy good hand
 I hitherto have been sustained;
 Thy care o'er all Thy chosen band
 My life and cause has still maintained;
 And through the year, now near its end,
 Thou hast stood by me as my Friend.
 Oh, help me, Lord, to praise Thy name,
 And breathe my heartfelt thanks to Thee,
 Whose loving-kindness is the same,
 Still flowing from Thy heart to me;
 In Thee it springs as when I felt
 Thy love first cause my heart to melt.
 O Jesus! still befriend Thy worm,
 Still guide, uphold, and save from ill;
 Thy word to me in love perform,
 For I am poor and needy still;
 Forgive my sins, and give me rest,
 Oh, let me lean upon Thy breast.

THE EDITOR.

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