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THE
GOSPEL STANDARD

VOL. LXXVII. 1911.

LONDON:
FARNCOMBE & SON, 30 IMPERIAL BUILDINGS,
LUDGATE CIRCUS, E.C.

1911

Price, 2s. in Numbers ; 2s. 8d. Cloth.

PRINTED BY
FARNCOMBE & SON,
78 SOUTHBRIDGE ROAD, CROYDON.

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THE GOSPEL STANDARD.

JANUARY, 1911.

MATT. v. 6 ; 2 TIM. i. 9 ; ROM. xi. 7 ; ACTS viii. 37, 38 ; MATT. xxviii. 19.

AN OPENING WORD.

DEAR READERS,—Another short cycle of our poor, unresting mortality is just completed. Divine goodness has prolonged our lives ; divine providence has controlled them. The Lord has been good to us, and His tender mercies have been over us. Alas that through the pride and stoutness of his heart man will not bow to, nor seek after God ! Notwithstanding it is universally true that “ the lot is cast into the lap : but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord ” (Prov. xvi. 33). “ A proud look ” the Lord hates ; an independent spirit He reproves : “ Go to now, ye that say, To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell and get gain ; whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life ? It is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this or that ” (Jas. iv. 13, 14, 15). It is, therefore, both the mercy and the wisdom of the Lord’s people to unfeignedly and humbly acknowledge so great, so important a truth ; as it is written, “ In all thy ways acknowledge Him ” (Prov. iii. 6).

As the opening of a new year is a convenient moment for a pause, let us pause and review some divine providences which we have been the subjects of and seen in others, and which are fresh in our heart and memory, or may be brought back to us as we meditate on the past. It is a profitable exercise. Stephen’s striking relation of some of the most wonderful episodes in Israel’s history must have been strengthening to his faith as he proceeded. So our faith in Him by whom kings reign and princes decree justice, may be exercised and strengthened by looking back on the way we

have been led, and owning the hand of God in recent events, both personal, relative, and general.

Divine providence is profoundly important—important for eternity. God turns over leaf after leaf of the book of His decrees, and nations and individuals are affected. Men and things decay and fall as leaves touched by autumn chill. Among the most notable dealings of God with our nation in the past year was the sudden removal from us by death of King Edward VII. His fatherly care for his people, his ceaseless labour for the peace of his wide-spread Empire and of the world were cut off as in a moment. Mysterious and inscrutable providence! Its full importance and effects we have not yet fully experienced; but we desire that his royal successor may, on these points, continue in his father's course. But one effect ought to be noticed and deplored by all who love their country, and above that the God of truth. By an Act of Parliament the present King is relieved from the God-honouring obligation to declare the Mass and the so-called worshipping of saints blasphemous and idolatrous; and in place of that noble declaration and protest he is required to make a meaningless, worthless statement. Thus England is no longer protesting against Rome's chief insult to the "one Mediator," whose "one offering" perfected for ever them that are sanctified. And now to her belong the sin, guilt, and shame of practically esteeming her God-given, martyr-procured Reformation a thing of nought.

At home and abroad many striking signs of great and grave changes have been visible, and have brought various divine judgments upon nations and individuals. The growing spirit of unrest manifested by the frequent strikes; the revolution in Portugal; the grave condition of affairs in Persia, all call for serious attention, because the issues of them (which may be mighty and widespread) are in the hands of the Lion of the tribe of Judah. To disregard such occurrences, or separate them from the Lord God omnipotent, who reigneth, is sin, and brings punishment, Ps. xxviii. 5.

Again, if we come closer in our retrospect, and look back on the Lord's dealings with us as individuals, or families, or churches, we may find the sense we had of our sin, our frailty, the uncertainty to us of all things, and of His mercy and wisdom and faithfulness when under those dealings, with much advantage renewed in us. Very painfully and solemnly

has the Almighty dealt with many of us. Dear ones have been smitten down; some on whom we built many hopes have been removed from us, and our hopes are lying with them in their graves. But mercy and judgment have been joined together; sweets have been mixed with the bitter. The Lord has been good, and a Stronghold in the day of trouble. We have no evil report to bring up of our God. "Gracious is the Lord and righteous; yea, our God is merciful" (Ps. cxvi. 5). Underneath have been the everlasting arms; the eternal God has been our Refuge, and as our day so has our strength been.

Now what is the divine end of such dealings as we have in this brief manner mentioned? In very few words that question can be answered—*His own glory* is the necessary, chief, and ultimate end to which all providences conduce; and it is that which is made most dear to His children. It is *necessary* that this should be His end on account of His divine perfections. His goodness, holiness, purity, truth, wisdom, power, and all His excellencies, being *Himself*, or essential to Him, make it impossible but that He should act according to them (Heb. vi. 18). Whence every work of God manifests something of Himself; and in the Person of Christ, in the union of the two natures of God and man, is all His glory shown forth in the most ineffable manner. For the "light of the knowledge of the glory of God" is given us "in the face of Jesus Christ," who is "the Brightness of His glory, and the express Image of His Person" (2 Cor. iv. 6; Heb. i. 3). It is in Jesus Christ as He was "set up from everlasting" that created beings have the fullest view of the transcendent glory of God of which they are capable. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him" (John i. 18; Col. i. 15—17). And to know Him only in measure necessarily brings forth from holy beings and renewed sinners love, adoration and praise. To give Him the glory due unto His name is the proper life and chief joy of intelligent natures, and that for which they were created. And that God may be glorified, or known to, and owned by, His creatures, is the great end of all His dealings in the world and in the church; and it is most perfectly accomplished in and by the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

i. *In the world* He will be glorified. To own Him to be

God is to glorify Him. "Ye shall know that I am the Lord," is shown to be the end of His judgments on the wicked, Eze. vi. 7, 10; xxxviii. 23; Isa. xlv. 5, 6, 23; Phil. ii. 10, 11. "The Lord is known by the judgment which He executeth." By His dealings He puts men in fear, "that the nations may know themselves to be but men" (Psa. ix. 16, 20). Though they acknowledge Him not, He will by strange providences, great changes, revolutions, wars and rumours of wars, cause their hearts to fail them for fear. Unwillingly men glorify Him. He even makes their wrath to praise Him, and restrains the remainder. Pharaoh and his servants are striking examples of this. It is not difficult to imagine the fear and dread the plagues must have filled them with, shown by the apparent readiness to comply with the commandment to let Israel go, that each visitation produced in Pharaoh while on him. But relief brought no obedience; for God intended to show in him the contrary nature of sin to holiness, and His power over its most inveterate opposition; according to the word, "And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee My power; and that My name may be declared throughout all the earth" (Ex. ix. 16). The same solemn and great end was accomplished in the lords of the Philistines, 1 Sam. vi. 9; they would avoid owning God's hand if possible; but He was stronger and prevailed. Though the wicked will not see God's uplifted hand in judgment, they shall see it, Isa. xxvi. 11; and in seeing it, of necessity shall glorify Him. Oh but it is solemn and dreadful beyond measure thus and thus only to answer a divine end; thus only to know how frail we are, and with indefinable fear and dread to own that One reigns over us whom we know not, nor love!

But there is another way, a merciful way, by which the great end of God's glory is answered in His solemn dealings in the world. They are sent as warnings *to call men to repentance*. Ordinarily in any stroke of judgment God makes His voice heard in their consciences, calling them to repentance and reformation of life. So Christ taught the people that the fall of the tower of Siloam on eighteen persons was a warning to lead them to repentance: "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Lu. xiii. 1—5). Some are savingly wrought upon by such means; as we read, "When Thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn |

righteousness" (Isa. xxvi. 9). For this blessed end are God's ministers sent to warn people to flee from the wrath to come, and to show them there is a Refuge provided for sinners. And for a sinner to be turned from his sinful life and led to seek refuge in God's way of mercy through the blood of Christ, is most meet and God-glorifying. So great is the work then wrought that it is said that "he which converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins" (Jas. v. 20).

ii. The end of God in His providential dealings *with the saints* is that He may be glorified in them also, both by judgments and mercies. "Unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages." Thus grace and providence unite in working. "This people have I formed for Myself: they shall show forth My praise in Christ in all the way I have led them. They shall see I have led them by the skilfulness of My hands in all My wisdom and graciousness." Providence is a handmaid and servant of God in the church. It is used to promote His great end—salvation in the experience of His children, that they may show forth His praise. In the birth, circumstances, good and evil, of His own, God works for their eternal good. All their heavy and keen afflictions are sent for the most beneficent purposes. His sovereign grace in their predestination, His Fatherly love in their adoption, He gave them in Christ before the world began. These blessings begin to show themselves in effectual calling, and afterwards come forth from time to time in gracious calls to the throne of grace—that sacred spot where God dwells in our nature, where He will commune with sinners. "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." To go there for mercy is a confession we are in some trouble, some misery; to seek help in time of need is the same as confessing that our needs can be supplied only by Him who is there to send help from the sanctuary, for vain is the help of man.

There are several distinct ends God has in view in sending trials to His children, all subordinate as means to bring about the supreme end of His glory.

1. *That they may humble themselves under His mighty hand.* To be low in our own eyes, lowly in spirit, is by no means natural to vain man, who would be wise, whose haughty

language is, "Who is Lord over us?" But "with the lowly is wisdom;" and because God hath "respect unto the lowly," He mercifully uses such means as, in conjunction with the Spirit's gracious work in them, produce that state of mind. At His footstool they delight to be. *There* their hearts are not haughty, nor their eyes lofty, neither do they exercise themselves in matters too high for them. Thus in a most adverse circumstance—when fleeing before Absalom—was David enabled to humble himself under God's mighty hand, and leave the issue of the death that was then on him, and his throne and glory, with the Lord: "If I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, He will bring me again," &c., 2 Sam. xv. 25, 26. And he found it true that "he that humbleth himself shall be exalted;" he took the lowest room, and was taken back to the highest. The Lord "raiseth up the poor from the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory" (1 Sam. ii. 8). This is the divine rule. And God by His good, though often painful providence, and His grace, brings His people to a hearty obedience to it.

2. It is part of the economy of grace in the church in the wilderness to use providences or judgments so as to *give occasions and need of prayer*; because it is good for us to draw near to God, it is for our life, and without it we cannot live; also He delights to hear the voice of His dove. For the blessings of the covenant the Lord's people are led to pray, Eze. xxxvi. 37. Dependents must go to their Lord; sinners to the Saviour; children to their Father. It is the ordained, the beautiful, the good way.

"Prayer was appointed to convey
The blessings God designs to give;
Long as they live should Christians pray,
For only while they pray they live."

Were we not proud and without understanding, how we should delight in that exercise! The Lord says men ought always to be thus engaged without fainting, Lu. xviii. 1. But as in the parable trouble took the widow to the unjust judge, so does trouble take us to the throne of grace. By means of it, as sanctified, how often in the year just ended have some of us been led by the Spirit to that heavenly meeting-place! There we have been received graciously, have found mercy to accept the chastisement, to look away from this vain world

and vainer self, and look unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith. There the "token for good" has been shown us, even the "bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain,"—shown us in the sweet radiance of Christ's glory, Eze. i. 28. We have seen that the safety and sufficiency of every kind of good we needed the Father had given us in His Son.

3. Yet a third end of painful providences that some of His children have experienced in the past year, yea, years, has been *the sensible turning of chastisement into tokens of love, signs of sonship*, Heb. xii. 7. The Spirit may have made that scripture His very voice in some of our hearts, when pressed with sorrow, and either despising or fainting, or both. His loving smile, the power He has given to submit, to thank Him for taking such pains with us to turn us away from our follies, the witness of His Spirit with our spirits that we are His children—all, all have turned our mourning into humble, trembling joy.

4. Further, by sending afflictions to us the Lord has, as it were, *laid fresh claims on us to be more and more His*, Eze. xxxix. 28, 29; Hos. ii. 16—20. He says, "O My dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let Me see thy countenance, let Me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely" (Song ii. 14). And so, when affliction is on her, Christ's dove says, "Come, and let us return unto the Lord; for He hath torn, and He will heal us; He hath smitten, and He will bind us up" (Hos. vi. 1). We perceive more clearly that He gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, and He is jealous for us with a great jealousy. Therefore, when we go from Him, He sends after us to bring us back. And often He uses some affliction as a servant; and supporting its voice by that of His Spirit in the heart, He says, "O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. Take with you words, and turn to the Lord; say unto Him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously; so will we render the calves of our lips" (Hos. xiv. 1, 2). Blessed with His most merciful answer, "I will heal their backslidings, I will love them freely; for Mine anger is turned away from him," we now say we would be His alone, and desire not to wander from Him. And how sweet this double experience—if we may so

speak—is, is only known to those to whom is given the high privilege of being the Lord's, and who thus bring to Him the sacrifice of praise.

As, then, our spiritual readers may be led to remember the Lord's dealings with them, they will find much profit and edification. Wherever mercy is seen in union with judgment in sweet harmony working, the experimental result is a song composed of them both: "I will sing of mercy and judgment; unto Thee, O Lord, will I sing" (Ps. ci. 1). And thus to regard and use providence is our wisdom.

It remains that we tender to our numerous kind correspondents our warmest thanks for their contributions. Also to all who have sent letters of encouragement; by so doing they have greatly helped us.

"Now our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace," comfort the hearts of all His own, and stablish them in every good word and work. "Brethren, pray" for

Your affectionate servant in Christ,

THE EDITOR.

FOR NEW YEAR'S DAY.

AN EXTRACT. BY JOSEPH SWAIN.

WHENCE is Time, and what his errand here,
 That his incessant voice attention claims?
 From God he comes, the sovereign Lord of all,
 To measure man's existence here on earth
 And waft him from the cradle to the grave.
 Swift on his wings he bears us through the maze
 Of life's short race, its pleasures and its pains,
 Till our appointed moment to depart;
 Then drops us deep into eternity!
 And what's eternity? 'Tis all the past
 And all the future, seeming to unite
 And render *now* a point unseen by man.
 And yet *now's* the hour in which we dress,
 That we may stand before the awful Judge
 Of quick and dead—in robes of heavenly dye,
 Fit to attend the marriage of the Lamb;
 Or in polluted rags, for heaven unfit,
 To sink into the dismal shades of hell!

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE OF JOHN CENNICK.
WRITTEN BY HIMSELF FOR THEIR SAKES WHO FOLLOW THE LAMB.

My grandfather and grandmother Cennick were once very great traders in the clothier's way; but when George Fox and William Penn began preaching, they became Quakers; and in the days of Oliver Cromwell, and in part of King Charles' reign, they suffered the loss of all things, and were imprisoned in Reading gaol, and (I have heard my mother say) were so far reduced that my grandmother knit or wove half-penny laces for her living, in the prison. In several books published by the Quakers of their sufferings, mention is made of them; but my father, after he was married to my mother, was baptised into the church I was brought up in. From my infancy I was carefully instructed by my mother in the principles of religion; who also kept me strict to church, and taught me prayer morning and evening, and would not suffer me to play on the Lord's day, but confined me to read or say hymns all day long with my sisters. This then I counted the worst of bondage, and indeed cruelty. So very prone was I to be disobedient and wicked, even when so young; I then envied other children who were not restrained as I was, and hoped, as I grew up, to get their liberty. When I was very young indeed, I remember my mother led me to see an aunt of hers, who was then on her death-bed. I came first into the room where she lay, and heard her saying to the maid who attended her, "Mary, I have something to say to you; it may be you may think it a lie, but indeed it is truth. This night the Lord stood by me, and invited me to drink of the fountain of life freely; and I shall stand before the Lord bold as a lion." I found, as she spake these words with uncommon cheerfulness, my blood chilled in my veins, and I was struck to the heart. I was set upon praying immediately that before I died I might know (as I thought my aunt did) that I should go to heaven. Soon after, my mother came into the room, and hearing the dying woman shout for joy, and cry out in such assurance of faith, she drew near, and said with tears, "Poor soul!" My aunt scarce heard her speak but she cried out, "Who dares call me poor? I am rich in Christ, I have got Christ, I am rich!" And after this manner she rejoiced till we left her. The words she uttered indeed pierced my soul, so that I could not rest day nor night, but was wishing

continually after (if I thought of death or sickness), "O that I may be assured of heaven before I die!" and began to fear to die greatly. These were the most early convictions I can remember; nor do I know any time between whiles, till my conversion, when I did not meditate on my aunt's last words; for it was not long after I had seen her, that she slept in the bosom of the Lamb. Now although at times I was inclined to be serious, dutiful, &c., till I was about twelve or fourteen years old, I lived (as other young children) fond of play, of fine clothes, and of praise, but afraid to swear, or to take God's name in vain.

My natural temper was to be obstinate, and my lips were full of lies continually; nor could any one be more furious when provoked or angered; but after my passion was over, I commonly dreaded to go to bed, lest I should drop into hell before morning. Nor did I dare to sleep till I had said my prayers, and promised God how good I would be the next day. And this was also my way of buying pardon from God when I had sinned in any gross way, as by lying, sabbath-breaking, stealing from my school-fellows, or disobedience to my parents, being often mindful of those words, "The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it."

As I was taught, so I kept constant to daily prayers at St. Laurence's Church in Reading (the town of my nativity) till I was about thirteen. I went to London with an intent to be there apprenticed to some trade; but, being disappointed, I returned with my mother; and soon after, hearing of another place, I went again eight times, but still without effect; not being permitted by divine providence to agree with any; though my will was much then to be in the world, promising myself great peace and many enjoyments when I should come to be my own master. . . .

From about fifteen I took delight to see and read plays, and to look into histories and romances. And surely, had it been in my power, plays would have had all my time, and I had forgot Jesus and everlasting ages; but, being prevented for want of money, I delighted myself in reading them, in singing songs, talking of the heathen gods, of the wars of the Jews and Greeks, of Alexander the Great, and in the cursed delusion of card-playing, in seeing fights, in horse-races, in

dancing assemblies, revelling and walking with young company. Thus loving ungodliness more than goodness, and to talk of lies more than righteousness.

After this way I spent my life till Easter (I believe 1735), when as I was walking hastily in Cheapside, in London, the hand of the Lord touched me. I felt at once an uncommon fear and dejection ; and though all my days since I could remember had been bitter through the strength of convictions and the fear of going to hell, yet I knew not any weight before like this. . . . I continued dull and thoughtful all the time I was in town ; nor would fights and songs divert my trouble. I then thought it might be the thick, unhealthy air made me out of order, and by going into the country I should be well ; but such a journey did I never take before. No sooner had I left the city but "the terrors of the Lord came about me, and the pains of hell took hold on me." Though the sun shone beautifully, and the day was pleasant, it brought no comfort to me. I came to my house heavy and disconsolate, and would have prayed, but could not. My grief was too great, and increased night and day exceedingly. I grew feeble and was sore smitten, and roared for the very disquietness of my heart.

I went on thus near a year, hoping to get the victory over it, though utterly ignorant what my distemper was ; often looking back to my innocent life, and wondering why God had singled out me to make miserable ; and when I found freedom to pray, I begged the Lord to give me a friend who would join with me in religion, that in his company I might drive away my grief, and "go on my way rejoicing." Not long after I contracted an acquaintance with one who was serious, and in a short time with another, whom I soon loved better than the first ; not for the regard he had to religion, but for his natural sweet disposition and merry behaviour. . . . And I was generally eased of my convictions all that while we were together ; for so greatly did it displease the Lord that He then withdrew His hand, and for awhile let me alone. But it was not long before the weight returned, and whenever I was walking alone, either in the fields or roads, everything appeared so strange and wild, that I often resolved not to look up, and wished to fly to some solitary place where I might dwell in a cave, lying on the leaves of trees, and feeding on the natural fruits of the earth. Whoever I met, I envied their

happiness. Whatever I heard, grieved me; and whatever I said or did, so troubled me that I repented that I stirred or broke silence. . . . When between whiles I was somewhat easier, I began to cry peace to my soul: "I have not been so very great a sinner as such a one; soul, be of good cheer." But my pangs soon returned, and the more I tried to quiet my accusing conscience, the more it testified against me; and my sorrows were so multiplied that I was even buried in affliction. . . . Finding so much dissatisfaction in all I did, not knowing sin from duty, or convictions from temptations, and considering "the prayers of the wicked were an abomination," I at last left off to pray. Scarce had I done this but the devil persuaded me to say in my heart, "There is no God; who is God? no one ever saw Him; how can I tell if there be a God or not? If there were, He would not have suffered me to endure so much, knowing how religiously I have lived from my youth." Thus I reasoned with myself till I sunk deeper and deeper; yet, whenever I read the Scripture, my heart so witnessed to the truth that I could not help saying, "Doubtless there is a God that judgeth in the earth."

The night was more burdensome than the day; I started at every thing that stirred in the dark, fancying I should see apparitions in the corners of the room or behind me or in my way, and being continually afraid of meeting the devil. Then it came strongly to me, "If there be no God, why am I pressed to curse Him?" On which I began to pray again; yet almost in despair for the evil I had done, finding His face was still against me, and His wrath ready to swallow me up. I often despondingly said, "O why am I Thy mark? Have I sinned more than all the sons of Adam? O that I had never been born, or died on the knees when I hanged yet on my mother's breast!" The more I was assured of a divine Ruler by His repeated scourges and the want of Him in my heart, the more Satan pressed me to believe myself quite forsaken; and when I looked up toward heaven, I said, "Ah! I have no part there! the gate of that holy city is closed to every sinner, and no impure thing can enter therein. Alas! what shall I do in the day of judgment? How shall I meet the Lord, when He shall come with ten thousand of His saints, and in flaming fire? But is there no pity with God? Must I be cast away from His eyes? Has the Lord forgotten to be gracious?" . . .

And now a thought sometimes came, "What if I should be saved? It may be the Lord is chastening me for my good." Nay, sometimes I heard a voice as it were saying, "Behold, thou shalt bear My name before much people; and it shall come to pass that in thy days many shall be added to the Lord." To this I myself answered, "Lord, how can I bear Thy name to others, who look every hour to be lost myself? Neither have I learning, nor the understanding of the Scriptures." Then would it be strongly impressed upon me, "Fear not, I am with thee, and thou shalt testify of Me in every place whither I shall send thee. Lo, I will be a mouth to thee, and thou shalt bear My gospel even in the midst of the streets." But this being then an unheard-of thing, I regarded it not, and was soon as heavy as before.

After I had been thus afflicted and grieved near two years, the temptation to think I should "never die, or live to a great age," so prevailed upon me that instead of asking for mercy, I asked hourly for death; yea, and desired to break into eternity, though at the hazard of falling into hell. . . . I remember at one time every error in doctrine or judgment I heard of, staggered me, and made me question if it were not right. . . . But yet if any came in my way and disputed these errors, I had always from Scripture to gainsay and withstand their arguments; yea, I pleaded often for those truths of which I doubted myself, and could not help mightily defending the faith of the church, and of the Scripture; though I stood in fear lest both should be but delusion.

In these temptations I was at times for many months; and besides these, I had such that I dare not mention; they are more than many can possibly believe, and the writing of them might stagger many who are weak. God, Thou knowest my simplicity, and my faults are not hid from Thee.

As I was yet pressed down with convictions of sin, and the fear of God's wrath, and the dreadful looking for of judgment; pride in apparel and spirit, lust, covetousness and passion, still most ruled in my captive spirit. Against these I strove by fasting long and often, and prayed kneeling nine times a day; and the week before the communion I spent as much time as possible in works of mortification and self-denial, eating only once a day, viz. in the evening; and from Friday breakfast I ate not till Sunday morn, when I received the bread and wine. . . . But when I had done all which was

in my power to do, and found no relief, I was convinced salvation was not of works. No alms, or fastings, or prayers, or watchings could cover my naked soul from almighty wrath. I hated my righteousness, loathed my prayers, and could truly say, "I am unprofitable, and my righteousness as filthy rags;" yea, and amidst all my words such terror came upon me as made me sweat and quake exceedingly.

Yet in all I suffered I dreaded turning back into the world more than my present affliction; nay, more than the thoughts of hell; and was bent to go forward and perish at the feet of Jesus. Accordingly, for His sake, I now resolved to part with the only friend I had; having heard him openly blaspheme the Lord that bought him, and deny his God; I therefore wholly refrained from his company, and in a few days we became strangers to each other. This proved a great trial; but though I was tempted thereto, I durst never heal the breach, or renew my friendship.

When we wholly parted, and I had thrown off all thoughts of being free again, the storm so long gathering fell upon me; the arrows of the Almighty so pierced my heart that I could not tell if I should be out of hell a moment. All the sins that ever I had done were set before me; all my secret acts of uncleanness, my theft, lies, and evil words stared me in the face, and cried continually, "Thou art the man; thou art the soul that hast rejected God, and lo, His wrath abideth upon thee." O the torment I then endured! I hated everybody I saw, but especially them of my own house. I was disobedient and without natural affection. I said, "Surely I am a reprobate. God hath loved every man but me."

To this were added trials of all kinds; my employment was to measure land with a gentleman of Reading; and in the harvest, and other times of leisure, I bought things of several sorts, and sold them again retail. But now altogether my business failed, my friends looked cold, and enemies increased. If any one spoke to me, it was like a sword cutting my heart, especially if they spake sharply; all my hope, even in the present life, was taken away.

Quite forlorn and destitute, finding prayers, and tears, and cries in vain, about the beginning of August, 1737, I began to resign myself, in the midst of my distress, to the wise disposal of God. I gave up my desires, my will, and remains of hope; being content to go down to hell (as God should please)

either in life or death. I found I was willing upon any terms to be saved, but was convinced I deserved hell, and so bowed to the justice of God. I waited many hours silently upon God; and, if I broke silence, cried unto Jesus to remember *His blood, and tears, and sufferings*; and if there was room for me in His favour, to reveal it to me. I no more said, "Lord, remember how innocent I have lived;" nor thanked Him because I was better than another, but pleaded the great oblation and sacrifice of Christ crucified; I intreated mercy for His sake alone; I knew my guilt, and was dumb before my God; often repeating these words of Eli's, "It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good."

I was still bent to go into some solitary place, that I might there find the happiness of waiting on God. Though I had often before been hindered, I resolved to try once more, and fixed for it the 7th day of September, 1737. I payed every one to whom I owed anything, intending to take a Bible and Common Prayer-book, with Hugo's Emblems, and prayed my journey might be prosperous. As I lay awake on the sixth day, strange heaviness came upon me; and when I arose it continued. My mind was full of fear and trouble, and I was I think more dejected than ever; I purposed notwithstanding to be gone before the next sun-rising. While I was sitting and reflecting thereon, the saint-bell rang at St. Lawrence's Church for prayers. At first I was careless about going; but considering what the people would say and what they would think, if I missed church when I was in town, and that it might stagger some, fearing I was negligent or gone back, I concluded in my own breast to go. And when I was risen up, I again thought, "I shall be far enough off about this time to-morrow, and I may as well forbear to go now; it is but once, and there is no good there for me; I may as well keep my place and be content." I sat down again, but was so uneasy that I was obliged to get up and go. I went out like some outcast into a foreign land; my heart was ready to burst; my soul at the brink of hell, above measure disconsolate and heavy. Had any met me, my countenance would have betrayed me, as well as low voice and tears. When I had entered the church and fallen on my knees, I began murmuring (as I did often) because my cross seemed more heavy than ever was laid on any one beside; and how untroubled all the children of God passed to heaven, and how full of terror I

must go down to hell. And I was as if the sword of the Lord was dividing asunder my joints and marrow, my soul and spirit; till near the end of the Psalms, when these words were read, "*Great are the troubles of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all. And he that putteth his trust in God shall not be destitute:*" I had just room to think, "Who can be more destitute than I?" when I was overwhelmed with joy, and I believed there was mercy. My heart danced for joy, and my dying soul revived. I heard the voice of Jesus saying, "*I am thy salvation.*" I no more groaned under the weight of sin. The fears of hell were taken away, and being sensible that Christ loved me and died for me, I "rejoiced in God my Saviour."

This joy and peace in believing filled me about three or four hours; and I began to vow everlasting obedience, and how faithfully I would stand for the Lord all the days of my life. In this my prosperity I said, "I shall never be moved; Thou, Lord, hast made my hill so strong." But it was not long before He hid His face, and I was troubled. Satan was suffered to buffet me violently, and to suggest, "Where is now thy God? How do I know but this is delusion? May it not be the Lord has showed me this as an aggravation to my torment, when I am cast away?" My horrors were so great that I sweated, prayed, and cried aloud for mercy. And when I saw no help, I drank the cup which my Father had given me; and I said (submitting myself to His righteous will), "If the Lord is pleased to cast me off, I am content; I would willingly sit down with the saints in the kingdom; but God's will be done."

About three days after, I was sitting thoughtful in an inner room, and in the multitude of my temptations, I imagined that the dull weather might add to my grief; scarce had I thus thought ere the sun (which had not shone for some time) shined beautifully from the clouds; and the voice of God witnessed at that instant: "*Thus shall the Sun of righteousness arise on thee.*" I believed the promise, and found the love of God again shed abroad in my heart; I saw clearly the will of the Lord in calling me through much tribulation, and I said gladly, "It is good for me that I have been in trouble."

I felt great and settled peace daily from this time; and whenever I found temptations, I prayed, and knew always

that scripture true, "God will hear them speedily who cry day and night unto Him." When I laid me down in bed, I lay as in the everlasting arms; and when I rose in the morning, the Lord was present; and often my lips have been uttering words of prayer before I well knew whether I was sleeping or waking. Clouds indeed often passed over my mind; yet at times I had so clear communion with Jesus that I have spent the day, and forgot how the time passed away; and could no more doubt of His presence in my heart than of the shining of the sun when I beheld him in his strength; God bearing witness often with the promises of the gospel in my spirit, saying, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, and I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Only my bliss was not abiding, I rested not in the full participation of Jesus' love; but as a cordial was it given to my soul when I was weary and cried for rest in my pilgrimage; or after the tempter was departed from me; or in the trials which I had from my own family; but all the dissatisfaction or coldness which came from them only served to wean me more and more from the world, and the things of the world. O that I may never love father, or mother, or house, or land, more than Thee!

About the latter end of the year 1738 one lent me a part of Mr. Whitefield's journal, to whom I was then a stranger, and much against my will I read it; for I feared to read any books save the Bible and Hugo's Emblems. But when I read the place where he mentions the woman who had been in the pangs of the new-birth, my heart cleaved to him, believing him not unacquainted with that bitter cup, the dregs of which I had long been drinking. I laid down the book, and went straightway into an upper chamber to pray, if by any means God would permit me to come to the knowledge of this man. When I was on my knees I prayed and said, "O Lord Jesus, who knowest well the sorrow of my troubled spirit, who alone canst give me a companion in my way to Thee, permit me to be intimate with this Thy servant now sent forth to preach Thy gospel in other lands; incline him to stoop to hear me, and to speak humbly to me, and so join us together that together we may be accounted worthy to rest in the kingdom of God for ever." Before I rose up, the Lord answered me; yea, while I was speaking, God showed me how I should be conversant with him and be beloved by him; verily I

believed this, and rejoiced when I thought the day would soon bring it to pass.

Soon after I was invited to a gentlewoman's to supper, where were present her son and another young gentleman from Oxford. In the evening I was asked to play at cards; I waived it and desired to be excused, being so afraid of snares that I trembled at them. I was still urged, because there was no harm in it; and I as often refused, saying, "I believed at best it was misspending the time." Then the young gentleman answered, "There is just such a stupid, religious fellow in Oxford; one Kinchin, whose brother is of our college, and was once as foolish as he, but is much otherwise now." The news so rejoiced my heart that from that day I was not at rest till I should see him. My mouth was full of thanksgiving and praises, that I was not left in a wide world alone, but had now the hope of having a companion. This was all the character I had of him, and in the midst of my joy at these tidings I forgot his name; but remembering he had a brother in Trinity College with mine acquaintance, I despaired not of being happy in his company on this side paradise. With this hope, on a wet Monday, after the morning service at St. Mary's, Reading, I began my journey to Oxford; the enemy was not wanting to persuade me to return back, and especially when I was within sight of the city. . . . After I had prayed for prosperity I went on; and when I came to Mr. Kinchin's room, found him just going out to breakfast. I asked him if his name was Kinchin? he told me, Yes. I said, "Sir, I heard you were despised on the same account with me, and should be glad to speak with you a quarter of an hour." He then spake kindly unto me, and having bidden me to come in, asked me if I would join in prayer with him. I told him, "With all my heart;" when he prayed to God to bless my coming, and to prepare the words which should be spoken to His own glory. After prayer I talked with him some time, yet afraid to mention my temptations and trials, lest he should think them incredible. . . . Presently came Mr. Kinchin with two other gownsmen, before whom I spake of the Lord's dealings with me; and also before a little society, who rejoiced greatly, and blessed God that He had thus far directed me.

By this means I got acquainted with many of the Lord's people; among whom were Charles Wesley, Mr. Hutchins,

and Mr. Whitefield; in all which I saw the hand of the Lord clearly; especially in my being intimate with the latter, which was after this way. I heard of his being come to London, and because he should not be gone, I set out from Reading in the dusk of the evening, and walked all night. I enquired for him at Mr. Hutton's at Temple-bar early in the morning. They told me he would be there at eight of the clock, and about that time I met my dear brother, and fell on his neck and kissed him. I stayed with him several days, and our communion was sweet continually. When I purposed returning, I told him I had a mind to visit the brethren at Bristol. He told me, Mr. John Wesley was going to build a school in Kingswood, for the use of the colliers' children, and asked if I was willing to be one of the masters there. The thing seemed to be of God, and I was obedient; and having taken my leave of him, I came to Reading, which lay in my road to Bristol. On Whit-Monday, June 11, 1739, I set out from thence on foot with one of the brethren of London, . . . and about the close of Tuesday we got safe into Bristol.

CRUMBS FROM THE MASTER'S TABLE

FROM BOSTON'S "CROOK IN THE LOT," OR, "THE SOVEREIGNTY AND WISDOM OF GOD IN THE AFFLICTIONS OF MEN DISPLAYED."

"Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight which He hath made crooked?"—ECCLES. vii. 13.

A just view of afflicting incidents is altogether necessary to a Christian deportment under them; and that view is to be obtained only by faith, not by sense; for it is the light of the Word alone that represents them justly, discovering in them the work of God, and consequently, designs becoming the divine perfections. When these are perceived by the eye of faith and duly considered, we have a just view of afflicting incidents, fitted to quell the turbulent motions of corrupt affections under dismal outward appearances.

It is under this view that Solomon, in the preceding part of this chapter, advances several paradoxes, which are surprising determinations in favour of certain things that, to the eye of sense, looking gloomy and hideous, are therefore generally reputed grievous and shocking. He pronounceth the day of one's death to be better than the day of his birth;

namely, the day of the death of one who having become the friend of God through faith, hath led a life to the honour of God and service of his generation, and thereby raised himself the good and savoury name better than precious ointment, ver. 1. In like manner, he pronounces the house of mourning to be preferable to the house of feasting, sorrow to laughter, and a wise man's rebuke to a fool's song; for that, howbeit the latter are indeed the more pleasant, yet the former are the more profitable, ver. 2—6. And observing with concern how men are in hazard, not only from the world's frowns and ill-usage, oppression making a wise man mad, but also from its smiles and caresses, a gift destroying the heart; therefore, since whatever way it goes there is danger, he pronounces the end of every worldly thing better than the beginning thereof, ver. 7, 8. And from the whole, he justly infers that it is better to be humble and patient than proud and impatient under afflicting dispensations; since in the former case, we wisely submit to what is really best; in the latter, we fight against it, ver. 8. And he dissuades from being angry with our lot, because of the adversity found therein, ver. 9; cautions against making odious comparisons of former and present times, in that point insinuating undue reflections on the providence of God, ver. 10; and, against that querulous and fretful disposition, he first prescribes a general remedy, namely, holy wisdom; as that which enables us to make the best of everything, and even giveth life in killing circumstances, ver. 11, 12; and then a particular remedy, consisting in a due application of that wisdom, towards taking a just view of the case, "Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight which He hath made crooked?"

In which words are proposed, 1. The remedy itself; 2. The suitableness thereof.

1. The remedy itself is a wise eyeing of the hand of God in all we find to bear hard upon us: "Consider the work (or, see thou the doing) of God;" namely, in the crooked, rough, and disagreeable parts of thy lot, the crosses thou findest in it. Thou seest very well the cross itself; yea, thou turnest it over and over in thy mind, and leisurely viewest it on all sides: thou lookest, withal, to this and the other second cause of it, and so thou art in a foam and fret. But wouldst thou be quieted and satisfied in the matter, lift up thine eyes

towards heaven, see the doing of God in it, the operation of His hand. Look at that, and consider it well; eye the first cause of the crook in thy lot; behold how it is the work of God, His doing.

2. This view of the crook in our lot is very suitable to still indecent risings of heart, and quiet us under it. "For who can (that is, none can) make that straight which God hath made crooked?" As to the crook in thy lot, God hath made it; and it must continue while He will have it so. Shouldst thou ply thine utmost force to even it, or make it straight, thine attempt will be vain: it will not alter for all thou canst do; only He who made it can mend it, or make it straight. This consideration, this view of the matter, is a proper means at once to silence and to satisfy men, and so to bring them unto a dutiful submission to their Maker and Governor, under the crook in their lot.

Now, we take up the purpose of the text in these three propositions.

Prop. I. Whatsoever crook there is in one's lot, it is of God's making.

Prop. II. What God sees meet to mar, no one shall be able to mend in his lot.

Prop. III. The considering of the crook in the lot as the work of God, or of His making, is a proper means to bring us to a Christian deportment under it.

Prop. I. Whatsoever crook there is in one's lot it is of God's making. Here, two things are to be considered; namely, the crook itself, and God's making of it.

i. As to the *crook itself*, the crook in the lot, for the better understanding thereof these few things that follow are premised.

1. There is a certain train or course of events, by the providence of God, falling to every one of us during our life in this world: and that is our lot, as being allotted to us by the sovereign God, our Creator and Governor, "in whose hand our breath is, and whose are all our ways." This train of events is widely different to different persons, according to the will and pleasure of the sovereign Manager, who ordereth men's conditions in the world in a great variety, some moving in a higher, some in a lower sphere.

2. In that train or course of events, some fall out cross to us, and against the grain; and these make the crook in our

lot. While we are here, there will be cross events, as well as agreeable ones, in our lot and condition. Sometimes things are softly and agreeably gliding on; but by and by there is some incident which alters that course, grates us, and pains us; as when we have made a wrong step, we begin to halt.

3. Everybody's lot in this world hath some crook in it. Complainers are apt to make odious comparisons: they look about, and taking a distant view of the condition of others, can discern nothing in it but what is straight, and just to one's wish; so they pronounce their neighbour's lot wholly straight. But that is a false verdict; there is no perfection here; no lot out of heaven without a crook. For as to "all the works that are done under the sun, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit. That which is crooked cannot be made straight" (Eccles. i. 14, 15). Who would not have thought that Haman's lot was very straight, while his family was in a flourishing condition, and he prospering in riches and honour, being prime minister of state in the Persian court, and standing high in the king's favour? Yet there was, at the same time, a crook in his lot, which so galled him that "all this availed him nothing" (Esther v. 13). Everyone feels for himself where he is pinched, though others perceive it not. Nobody's lot, in this world, is wholly crooked; there are always some straight and even parts in it. Indeed, when men's passions, having got up, have cast a mist over their minds, they are ready to say all is wrong with them, nothing right; but though in hell that tale is true, and ever will be so, yet it is never true in this world; for there, indeed, there is not a drop of comfort allowed, Luke xvi. 24, 25; but here it always holds good that "it is of the Lord's mercies we are not consumed" (Lam. iii. 22).

4. The crook in the lot came into the world by sin: it is owing to the Fall, Rom. v. 12: "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin;" under which death, the crook in the lot is comprehended, as a state of comfort or prosperity is, in Scripture style, expressed by living, 1 Sam. xxv. 6; John iv. 50, 51. Sin so bowed the hearts and minds of men that they became crooked in respect of the holy law; and God justly so bowed their lot that it became crooked too. And this crook in our lot inseparably follows our sinful condition, till, dropping this body of sin and death, we get within heaven's gates.

These being premised, a crook in the lot speaks, in general, two things, (1) *adversity*, (2) *continuance*. Accordingly it makes a day of adversity, opposed to the day of prosperity, in the verse immediately following the text.

The crook in the lot is, first, some one or other piece of *adversity*. The prosperous part of one's lot, which goes forward according to one's wish, is the straight and even part of it; the adverse part, going a contrary way, is the crooked part thereof. God hath intermixed these two in men's condition in this world; that as there is some prosperity therein, making the straight line, so there is also some adversity, making the crooked; which mixture hath place not only in the lot of saints, who are told that "in the world they shall have tribulation," but even in the lot of all, as already observed. Secondly, it is *adversity of some continuance*. We do not reckon it a crooked thing which, though forcibly bended and bowed together, yet presently recovers its former straightness. There are twinges of the rod of adversity, which passing like a stitch in one's side, all is immediately set to rights again: one's lot may be suddenly overclouded, and the cloud vanish ere he is aware. But under the crook, one having leisure to find his smart, is in some concern to get the crook made even. So the crook in the lot is adversity continued for a shorter or longer time.

Now, there is a threefold crook in the lot incident to the children of men.

1. One made by a cross dispensation which, howsoever in itself passing, yet hath lasting effects. Such a crook did Herod's cruelty make in the lot of the mothers in Bethlehem, who by the murderers were left "weeping for their slain children, and would not be comforted, because they were not" (Matt. ii. 18). A slip of the foot may soon be made, which will make a man go halting long after. "As the fishes are taken in an evil net: so are the sons of men snared in an evil time" (Eccles. ix. 12). The thing may fall out in a moment, under which the party shall go halting to the grave.

2. There is a crook made by a train of cross dispensations, whether of the same or different kinds, following hard one upon another, and leaving lasting effects behind them. Thus in the case of Job, while one messenger of evil tidings was yet speaking, another came, Job i. 16—18. Cross events coming one upon the neck of another, deep calling unto deep,

make a sore crook. In that case, the party is like unto one who, recovering his sliding foot from one unfirm piece of ground, sets it on another equally unfirm, which immediately gives way under him too: or like unto one who, travelling in an unknown mountainous track, after having with difficulty made his way over one mountain, is expecting to see the plain country; but instead thereof, there comes in view, time after time, a new mountain to be passed. This crook in Asaph's lot had like to have made him give up all his religion, until he went into the sanctuary, where this mystery of providence was unriddled to him, Psa. lxxiii. 13—17. Solomon observes, "That there be just men, unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked" (Eccles. viii. 14), providence taking a run against them, as if they were to be run down for good and all. Whoever they be whose life in no part thereof affords them experience of this, sure Joseph missed not of it in his young days, nor Jacob in his middle days, nor Peter in his old days, nor our Saviour all His days.

3. There is a crook made by one cross dispensation, with lasting effects thereof coming in the room of another removed. Thus one crook straightened, there is another made in its place; and so there is still a crook. Want of children had long been the crook in Rachel's lot, Gen. xxx. 1. That was at length made even to her mind; but then she got another in its stead, hard labour in travailing to bring forth, xxxv. 16. This world is a wilderness, in which we may indeed get our station changed; but the remove will be out of one wilderness station to another. When one part of the lot is made even, soon some other part thereof will be crooked.

More particularly, the crook in the lot hath in it four things of the nature of that which is crooked.

(1) *Disagreeableness.* A crooked thing is wayward; and being laid to a rule, answers it not, but declines from it. There is not in anybody's lot any such thing as a crook, in respect of the will and purposes of God. Take the most harsh and dismal dispensation in one's lot, and lay it to the eternal decree made in the depth of infinite wisdom before the world began, and it will answer it exactly, without the least deviation, "all things being wrought after the counsel of His will" (Eph. i. 11). Lay it to the providential will of God, in the government of the world, and there is a perfect

harmony.—If Paul is to be bound at Jerusalem, and “delivered into the hands of the Gentiles,” it is “the will of the Lord it should be so” (Acts xxi. 11, 14). Wherefore the greatest crook of the lot on earth is straight in heaven; there is no disagreeableness in it there. But in every person’s lot there is a crook in respect of their mind and natural inclination. The adverse dispensation lies cross to that rule, and will by no means answer it, nor harmonise with it. When divine providence lays one to the other, there is a manifest disagreeableness: the man’s will goes one way, and the dispensation another way; the will bends upwards, and cross events press down: so they are contrary. And there, and only there, lies the crook. It is this disagreeableness which makes the crook in the lot fit matter of trial and exercise to us, in this our state of probation; in which, if thou wouldst approve thyself to God, walking by faith, not by sight, thou must quiet thyself in the will and purpose of God, and not insist that it should be according to thy mind, Job. xxxiv. 33.

(2) *Unrightness.* Crooked things are unpleasant to the eye; and no crook in the lot seemeth to be joyous, but grievous, making an unsightly appearance, Heb. xii. 11. Therefore men need to beware of giving way to their thoughts, to dwell on the crook in their lot, and of keeping it too much in view. David shows a hurtful experience of his, in that kind, Psal. xxxix. 3: “While I was musing the fire burned.” Jacob acted a wiser part, called his youngest son Benjamin, the son of the right hand, whom the dying mother had named Benoni, “the son of my sorrow;” by this means providing that the crook in his lot should not be set afresh in his view, on every occasion of mentioning the name of his son. Indeed, a Christian may safely take a steady and leisurely view of the crook of his lot in the light of the holy Word, which represents it as the discipline of the covenant. So faith will discover a hidden rightness in it, under a very unsightly outward appearance; perceiving the suitableness thereof to the infinite goodness, love, and wisdom of God, and to the real and most valuable interests of the party; by which means one comes to take pleasure, and that a most refined pleasure, in distresses, 2 Cor. xii. 10. But whatever the crook in the lot be to the eye of faith, it is not at all pleasant to the eye of sense.

(3) *Unfitness for motion.* Solomon observes the cause of

the uneasy and ungraceful walking of the lame, Prov. xxvi. 7: "The legs of the lame are not equal." This uneasiness they find who are exercised about the crook in their lot: a high spirit and a low, adverse lot make great difficulty in the Christian walk. There is nothing that gives temptation more easy access than the crook in the lot; nothing more apt to occasion out-of-the-way steps. Therefore, saith the apostle, Heb. xii. 13: "Make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way." They who are labouring under it are to be pitied then, and not to be rigidly censured; though they are rare persons who learn this lesson, till taught by their own experience. It is long since Job made an observation in this case, which holds good unto this day, Job xii. 5: "He that is ready to slip with his feet, is as a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease."

(4) *Aptness to catch hold and entangle*, like hooks, fish-hooks (Amos iv. 2). The crook in the lot doth so very readily make impression, to the ruffling and fretting of one's spirit, irritating corruption, that Satan fails not to make diligent use of it for these dangerous purposes; which point once gained by the tempter, the tempted, ere he is aware, finds himself entangled as in a thicket, out of which he knows not how to extricate himself. In that temptation it often proves like a crooked stick troubling a standing pool, which not only raises up the mud all over, but brings up from the bottom some very ugly thing. Thus it brought up a spice of blasphemy and atheism in Asaph's case, Psa. lxxiii. 13: "Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocence;" as if he had said, "There is nothing at all in religion; it is a vain and empty thing, that profiteth nothing. I was a fool to have been in care about purity and holiness, whether of heart or life." Ah! is this the pious Asaph? How is he turned so quite unlike himself! but the crook in the lot is a handle, whereby the tempter makes surprising discoveries of latent corruption even in the best.

This is the nature of the crook in the lot; let us now observe, ii. *What part of the lot it falls in*. Three conclusions may be established upon this head.

1st. It may fall in any part of the lot; there is no exempted one in the case; for sin being found in every part, the crook may take place in any part. Being "all as an unclean thing," we may all "fade as a leaf" (Isa. lxiv. 6). The main stream

of sin, which the crook readily follows, runs in very different channels in the case of different persons. And in regard of the various dispositions of the minds of men, that will prove a sinking weight unto one which another would go very lightly under.

2ndly. It may at once fall into many parts of the lot, the Lord calling, as in a solemn day, one's terrors round about, Lam. ii. 22. Sometimes God makes one notable crook in a man's lot; but its name may be Gad, being but the fore-runner of a troop which cometh.—Then the crooks are multiplied, so that the party is made to halt on each side. While one stream, let in from one quarter, is running full against him, another is let in on him from another quarter, till in the end the waters break in on every hand.

3rdly. It often falls in the tender part; I mean, that part of the lot wherein one is least able to bear it, or at least thinks he is so, Psa. lv. 12, 13: "It was not an enemy that reproached me, then I could have borne it. But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and my acquaintance." If there is any one part of the lot which of all others one is disposed to nestle in, the thorn will readily be laid there, especially if he belongs to God; in that thing wherein he is least of all able to be touched, he will be sure to be pressed. There the trial will be taken of him; for there is the grand competition with Christ. "I take from them . . . the desire of their eyes, and that whereupon they set their minds" (Ezek. xxiv. 25). Since the crook in the lot is the special trial appointed for everyone, it is altogether reasonable and becoming the wisdom of God that it fall on that which of all things doth most rival Him.

But more particularly, the crook may be observed to fall in these four parts of the lot.

First, in the natural part, affecting persons considered as of the make allotted for them by the great God that formed all things. The parents of mankind, Adam and Eve, were formed altogether sound and entire, without the least blemish, whether in soul or body; but in the formation of their posterity, there often appears a notable variation from the original. Bodily defects, superfluities, deformities, infirmities, natural or accidental, make the crook in the lot of some: they have something unsightly or grievous about them. Crooks of this kind, more or less observable, are very common

and ordinary ; the best are not exempted from them ; and it is purely owing to sovereign pleasure they are not more numerous. Tender eyes made the crook in the lot of Leah, Gen. xxix. 17. Rachel's beauty was balanced with barrenness, the crook in her lot, chap. xxx. 1. Paul, the great apostle of the Gentiles, was, it should seem, no personable man, but of a mean outward appearance, for which fools were apt to condemn him, 2 Cor. x. 10. Timothy was of a weak and sickly frame, 1 Tim. v. 23. And there is a yet far more considerable crook in the lot of the lame, the blind, the deaf, and the dumb. Some are weak to a degree in their intellects ; and it is the crook in the lot of several bright souls to be overcast with clouds, notably bemisted and darkened, from the crazy bodies they are lodged in : an eminent instance whereof we have in the grave, wise, and patient Job, going mourning without the sun ; yea, standing up and crying in the congregation, Job xxx. 28.

Secondly, it may fall in the honorary part. There is an honour due to all men, the small as well as the great, 1 Pet. ii. 17 ; and that upon the ground of the original constitution of human nature, as it was framed in the image of God. But in the sovereign disposal of holy providence, the crook in the lot of some falls here,—they are neglected and slighted ; their credit is still kept low ; they go through the world under a cloud, being put into an ill name, their reputation sunk. This sometimes is the natural consequence of their own foolish and sinful conduct ; as in the case of Dinah, who, by her gadding abroad to satisfy her youthful curiosity, regardless of, and therefore not waiting for a providential call, brought a lasting stain on her honour, Gen. xxxiv. But where the Lord intends a crook of this kind in one's lot, innocence will not be able to ward it off in an ill-natured world ; neither will true merit be able to make head against it, to make one's lot stand straight in that part. Thus David represents his case, Psa. xxxi. 11—13 : “ They that did see me without, fled from me : I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind : I am like a broken vessel. For I have heard the slander of many.”

Thirdly, it may fall in the vocational part. Whatever is a man's calling or station in the world, be it sacred or civil, the crook in the lot may take its place therein. Isaiah was an eminent prophet, but most unsuccessful, Isa. liii. 1. Jere-

miah met with such a train of discouragements and ill usage in the exercise of his sacred function, that he was very near giving it up, saying, "I will not make mention of Him, nor speak any more in His name" (Jer. xx. 9). The psalmist observes this crook often to be made in the lot of some men very industrious in their civil business, who sow in the fields—and at times "God blesseth them, and suffereth not their cattle to decrease:" but again, "they are minished, and brought low through oppression, affliction, and sorrow" (Psa. cvii. 37—39). Such a crook was made in Job's lot after he had long stood even. Some manage their employments with all care and diligence; the husbandman carefully labouring his ground; the sheep-master "diligent to know the state of his flocks, and looking well to his herds;" the tradesman, early and late at his business; the merchant diligently plying his, watching and falling in with the most fair and promising opportunities; but there is such a crook in that part of their lot as all they are able to do can by no means make even. For why? The most proper means used for compassing an end are insignificant without a word of divine appointment commanding their success. "Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?" (Lam. iii. 37). People ply their business with skill and industry, but the wind turns in their face. Providence crosses their enterprises, disconcerts their measures, frustrates their hopes and expectations, renders their endeavours unsuccessful, and so puts and keeps them still in straitened circumstances. "So the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise" (Eccles. ix. 12). Providence interposing, crooks the measures which human prudence and industry had laid straight towards the respective ends; so the swift lose the race, and the strong the battle, and the wise miss of bread; while in the meantime some one or other providential incident, supplying the defect of human wisdom, conduct, and ability, the slow gain the race, and carry the prize; the weak win the battle, and enrich themselves with the spoil; and bread falls into the lap of the fool.

Lastly, it may fall in the relational part. Relations are the joints of society; and there the crook in the lot may take place, one's smartest pain being often felt in these joints. They are in their nature the springs of man's comfort; yet

they often turn the greatest bitterness to him. Sometimes this crook is occasioned by the loss of relations. Thus a crook was made in the lot of Jacob by means of the death of Rachel, his beloved wife, and the loss of Joseph, his son and darling, which had like to have made him go halting to the grave. Job laments this crook in his lot, Job xvi. 7 : "Thou hast made desolate all my company;" meaning his dear children, every one of whom he had laid in the grave, not so much as one son or daughter left him. Again, sometimes it is made through the afflicting hand of God lying heavy on them : which, in virtue of their relation, recoils on the party, as is feelingly expressed by that believing woman, Matt. xv. 22 : "Have mercy on me, O Lord ; my daughter is grievously vexed." Ephraim felt the smart of family afflictions, when "he called his [son's] name Beriah, because it went evil with his house" (1 Chron. vii. 28). Since all is not only vanity, but vexation of spirit, it can hardly miss but the more of these springs of comfort are opened to a man, he must, at one time or other, find he has but the more sources of sorrows to gush out and spring in upon him ; the sorrow always proportioned to the comfort found in them or expected from them. And finally, the crook is sometimes made here by their proving uncomfortable through the disagreeableness of their temper and disposition. There was a crook in Job's lot by means of an undutiful, ill-natured wife, Job xix. 17. In Abigail's, by means of a surly, ill-tempered husband, 1 Sam. xxv. 25. In Eli's, through the perverseness and obstinacy of his children, chap. ii. 25. In Jonathan's, through the furious temper of his father, chap. xx. 30—33. So do men oftentimes find their greatest cross where they expected their greatest comfort. Sin hath unhinged the whole creation, and made every relation susceptible of the crook. In the family are found masters hard and unjust, servants froward and unfaithful ; in a neighbourhood, men selfish and uneasy ; in the church, ministers unedifying and offensive in their walk, and people contemptuous and disorderly, a burden to the spirits of ministers ; in the State, magistrates oppressive and discountenancers of that which is good, and subjects turbulent and seditious ; all these cause crooks in the lot of their relatives. And thus far of the crook itself.

(To be continued.)

THE DOOR INTO THE KINGDOM.

A MORNING READING BY JAMES BOURNE.

MARCH 24th, 1841.—Lu. xxii. 28: “Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom.” Such have a kingdom allotted them, and this is a spiritual kingdom, that they may eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, and have real communion with Him in all they have to do. Now people make mistakes about the way of entering this kingdom. Cannot you understand that if you could pray all day, that is not the way? It is not your prayers, but God’s answers that you are to look to. If He answers your prayers, then that shows that it was the Spirit of God that dictated them; for flesh and blood are of no use here. Some think they will do this and that; and the more they do the farther off they are. The way that God brings people into His kingdom is by causing them to fear and tremble at His Word. The Spirit never convinces us of sin, but sooner or later He sets before us Jesus Christ as an open Door to enter this kingdom by. And the apostle says, “Let us *labour* therefore to enter into that rest.” We are not to rest till we find Jesus Christ, and make Him our bosom Friend. We are to keep no secret from Him, to tell Him all our desires, and all our fears. For the Word of God is sharper than a two-edged sword; and when the Spirit applies this, it makes such a discovery that we had no idea of before. Then He says, “We have not an High Priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”

But you say, “My sins, my guilt hinder me from coming to this throne of grace.” No; Christ felt this load; He sweat great drops of blood under the apprehension of the Father’s wrath due to sin, that we might have His righteousness in exchange. Now this is very hard to get into our hearts—that He is touched by our sins, and feels for us *exactly as we feel by His grace* with regard to sin. You say, “But I cry, and get no answer: I do not lay hold of the power of God to maintain my cause.” Now did not Christ say, “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?”

And He took our nature to deliver us from death. We are subject through sin to death spiritual, death temporal, and death eternal; and Christ delivered us from these when He took our sins on Him and died on the cross. And He raised Himself by His own eternal power and Godhead; and every time, after any spiritual decay, that He comes again into the soul and causes us to draw nigh to Him, He makes us to feel the effect of His resurrection, and we rise again with Him. None but they who are united to Him can describe or understand the power of His death and resurrection. And although natural death is not removed, it is turned into a sleep, because the sting of it is taken away, and all fear removed; as we have seen in many that have died amongst us.

HEAVENLY TEACHING.

My beloved Friend,—My intention was to have written you a line last Saturday, but though the will was present, my head was too bad to admit of my putting pen to paper—'Tis ours to propose, the Lord's to dispose. Every dispensation and circumstance of our lives has a voice to teach us some lesson, and prove some truth of the Bible, had we but hearts to learn. All we can say is, "None teacheth like Him," and without His teaching nothing can we learn to profit.

My health has much improved during the past week. I have been downstairs and into the garden for a few minutes; the weakness of my back still keeps me very much to the couch. My affliction has been light; though I have known from the first that, humanly speaking, it was very likely to leave me an invalid the few remaining years of my life. I could not *look* to any human skill for a cure (though diligently following all prescribed means). I had a persuasion of my own mind that the Lord would either restore me perfectly, or graciously shorten my days; it remains to be proved whether or no this is a right persuasion. The last Sunday I was out (my lameness having then commenced), the minister was led in a most peculiar manner to plead in prayer for true submission to the will of God, if we should be called to part with our limbs—it made me hot all over. I felt sure he was praying about my leg, and it very much prepared my mind for what followed. The next Tuesday I ventured to Frant to

hear Mr. Mockford ; on entering the chapel, these lines passed through my mind :

"If Thou should'st call me to resign
What most I prize, it ne'er was mine ;
I do but yield Thee what is Thine ;
Thy will be done."

When I came to this part, "It ne'er was mine," I said, "No, Lord, it ne'er was mine, not even my leg; and, if Thou shouldest call me to resign it, O give me grace to say, 'Thy will be done!' Lord, Thou knowest that I do most prize my limbs on account of getting to Thy house of prayer, and most dread to lose them because of being deprived of the means of grace." I had such a peculiar feeling of giving them up into the Lord's hands, at the same time reminding Him of what made it hardest to part with them. The Lord most graciously and sensibly accepted the surrender, and it was as though He said, not in words, but in substance, "Leave that to Me. I have considered thy trouble. I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth ; how thou hast gone after Me in the wilderness ;"—but I can tell you what I remembered was of a very different kind ; I could only remember my shortcomings, my negligencies, my abused privileges and wasted opportunities.

That season, together with the fulness of this word applied, "His work is perfect," has kept my mind in a quiet waiting frame, to see what the Lord will do ; for I believe I shall not for very long be deprived of the privileges of His house ; and sometimes I hope He condescends to visit me with His word when I am at home alone. Last Sunday week Job's words were good to me : "What is man, that Thou dost magnify him ? that Thou shouldest set Thine heart upon him ? that Thou shouldest visit him every morning, and try him every moment ?" The corrections of the Lord, though grievous to the flesh, do at times appear such blessed privileges that instead of thinking we are dealt hardly with, I can only wonder at the Lord's taking so great pains with such a one, to chasten and teach me out of His law ; and from my own feelings I do believe 'tis true what old Mr. Vinall says, "that Job had more solid grace in his soul when he uttered those words than he had in all the days of his prosperity." I felt too such a sweet union and mingling of spirit with David, when he says, "O, Lord God, what am I ? and what is my father's house, that Thou hast brought me hitherto ?" "Lord, what

is man, that Thou art mindful of him, or the son of man, that Thou visitest him?" It is almost a question without an answer, except—"So it seemed good in Thy sight." On the whole I feel most tried because my affliction is so little trouble to me; like the poet when he says:

"Whene'er becalm'd I lie,
And storms forbear to toss,
Be Thou, dear Lord, then nigh,
Lest I should suffer loss.
For more the treach'rous calm I dread,
Than tempest bursting o'er my head."

O that treacherous calm, carnal security, how many has it proved a grave to! O may it not to me! That little piece of Mr. Brown's has been much on my mind, and often comforted me during my illness. He says,

"Not day nor night, nor dark nor light,
The Christian's hidden life."

This has been my spot; and how often, as Mr. B. puts it, does the question come,

"Thy day, is it intensely light?
Thy night intensely dark?"

And still faith, or want of faith, cannot answer. I do like that word, "He shall open His mouth for the dumb." I am often dumb, and am afraid prayerless too. I long to feel a living cry go up, but cannot produce it. A living cry is a saving cry, for it brings salvation down, and yet 'tis all of grace.

In reading an old "Standard" the other day, I found a scrap of Huntington's very suitable to me. He says: "At present there is no going or coming; no fresh views or new discoveries; no faith or hope in exercise; nor are there any storms within; all is quiet and at peace with me; and yet I have not half the life as when I am at war. When in the midst of trouble, my help is nigh; when oppressed beyond measure, I can feel my strength; when exercised with continual changes, I can clearly discern my spiritual life, and its mighty struggles against its spiritual enemies. But in ease there is no trouble to drive, no love to draw, no enemy to watch, no war to *exercise* our weapons."

But though I complain of ease, or rather am afraid of carelessness, I don't want to feel those mighty struggles; for if I had been left to struggle with dreadful rebellion under this

and other complicated trials, I know not what would have been the consequence; so that while I would flee from a dead calm, I would at the same time be grateful that the Lord has so tenderly, and in such infinite wisdom, so evened it out as to give me quietness of mind; but I want to be right.

I must now thank you for your very kind, sympathising, and welcome letter. I can give but little reply to what you say respecting my affliction, and the peaceable fruits of righteousness, which I truly would should be yielded thereby. If I am learning anything, 'tis hidden from me; if I am exercised *unto godliness*, I perceive it not. It remains a sealed packet to me, though I know it springs not out of the dust, and believe it shall not fall unheeded to the ground; it may be of some service to me in days yet to come. Like bread cast upon the waters, to be found after many days. I find no good in it now, except this—I see I have often mistaken His providences; He is His own interpreter, and He does make it plain. In the end we find His interpretations are best, much as we shrink from the first unfolding; every fresh trial seems a supplement to the last, something to perfect that which was lacking before, and to show forth the wisdom of that hand that guides all things after the counsel of His own will. If I had my own way, my crosses would be tenfold heavier than they are; so that I may well say, “Choose Thou the way, but still lead on.” Thanks for the copy of Berridge's hymn; 'tis very nice; but you have more faith for me than I have for myself.

Accept my warmest love for yourself, and each of our friends, also your family circle, with many thanks for your labour of love towards one that is not worth it.

I remain, my very dear friend, yours most affectionately,
River Hall, May 17, 1875.

C. PIPER.

(*The late Mrs. Loughurst.*)

NOTICE OF BOOKLET.

WONDERFUL CONVERSION OF THREE HIGHLAND GIRLS; OR, The Story of the Lord's Dealings in leading them to Himself. To be had of Miss A. M. Mackay, 85 High Street, Dingwall, N.B. Price 1½d., 11d. per dozen, 7s. 6d. per hundred, post free.

We think that every grace-taught person who reads the above booklet will conclude that it relates some of the great

works of the Lord, and that it is good that they have been sought out and published. If further details had been known and given, the spiritual interest of the accounts would have been enhanced. But what is before us shows the mighty, wise, loving, and beautiful work of the blessed Spirit, and the wonder-working hand of that gracious One who possesses all power in heaven and in earth. We advise our readers to obtain the little work.

Obituary.

ALICE CHAPLIN, the subject of this memoir, was born in Manchester, May 6th, 1868, of godly parents, who were both members of the Particular Baptist chapel there. She was brought up in a very careful and conscientious manner, and well guarded from the many gins and snares that abound in a great city. So gentle was the commencement of the work of grace upon her heart that she could not tell with certainty when it began, but probably it was about twenty years ago. Like the working of the moth, it worked, however, effectually, though quietly, and the effect was to be seen in a humble, tender walk, and a clinging to the house of God and His people. For many years she could say,

"I love to meet among them now,
Before His gracious feet to bow,"

but then had to halt, feeling she had not had the depth of experience to justify her in saying with the heart and the understanding,

"Though vilest of them all ;"

and this caused many an anxious thought lest she should be out of the secret. She knew the value of prayer, and was many times encouraged to hope in the mercy of God, through receiving answers to prayer.

In June, 1892, she was constrained to follow the Lord through the ordinance of baptism, after giving a simple, but honest, reason of the hope that was in her, before the Lord's people at Manchester, by whom, to her surprise and joy, she was warmly received. The following remarks, written after passing through the water, describe her feelings at that time: "What a blessed day in my life when I was allowed to follow our dear Lord Jesus in that ordinance! After having had a trying time for two months, I had these words given to me (I

believe) as soon as I opened my eyes in the morning, 'This is the way, walk ye in it,' and it seemed to come with such sweetness that all my fear went.'

In January, 1895, she was married to the writer, and for fifteen years we were favoured to walk together in happy Christian wedlock. Many trials as a means constantly brought her to the throne of grace; and there was a humble, teachable spirit, and a growing in grace, with a gradual revelation of the working of a sinful and corrupt heart, and an increasing acquaintance with the sustaining power of God in afflictions and bereavements. Many an anxious cry was uttered that the blessed Spirit would lead her into all truth, and satisfy her that she really was a child of God. In a time of deep sorrow the 116th Psalm was much blessed to her soul, and ever afterwards was claimed by her as her Psalm.

About eighteen months ago her health began to wane, and this gradually brought her into a deeper and more earnest concern about the state of her soul. In April this year she sought medical advice, and found out the cause of her weakness was a large tumour in the breast, which had been forming for about four years. This news came as a sad blow, causing great anxiety, fear, and rebellion. Added to her mental suffering was also the excruciating pain common to this sad affliction, when once a cure was attempted. Oh how she fought against the trial, refusing to submit! Her bitterness increased to such an extent it was pitiable to watch. At length one night, when fighting inwardly against the decree of God, full of rebellion and dread of the future, and with the tempter almost driving her mad, she was led by the Spirit into the Garden of Gethsemane, and there she had a most solemn view of the sufferings of the holy and blessed Son of man. She was led to view Him sweating and groaning in agony, His humanity shrinking, as it were, from the tremendous suffering before Him, until He cried out, "Oh My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me. Nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt." She had here a real time of fellowship with the dear Lord in His sufferings; so much so that it took away the rebellion and laid her like a child at His feet. At the same time this promise came with power, "I go to prepare a place for you;" and though she did not realise then that her sickness was to be unto death, the promise continued with her, and sweetly exercised her mind.

As she was most strongly opposed to an operation being performed to remove the tumour, it was arranged to try other means, which proved to be very painful and distressing. And now the work of grace visibly deepened, and she appeared to learn more of the depravity of the human heart in a few months than she had experienced during all the previous twenty years. Her sickness made very rapid strides, and brought her body very low. Early in August she was taken into Wales, in the hope that a change of air would do her good ; but this had just the opposite effect. What pain she endured whilst away none but the Lord and herself knew. She spent ten almost sleepless nights and days ; and yet amidst it all she felt much nearness to the Lord. At length a doctor ordered her home immediately, and she was brought to her mother's house, her own family being still away. After a most distressing journey, during which she was in constant danger of losing consciousness through extreme suffering, she told me she solemnly realised she could never have got home, but when near collapsing, "One like unto the Son of God" was with her, supporting and upholding, just as He was with the three Hebrew children in the fire. The following words were also blessed to her :

" Faithful Jehovah must remain,
Nor shalt thou seek His face in vain."

The work of grace still further developed, and she was day and night sadly harassed and tempted of the devil. On one occasion she said the devil had tormented her for three days. One night in particular he appeared before her, and she durst not go to sleep, lest she should never wake again, and enter into eternity. She pleaded piteously with her sister, who was with her, not on any account to leave her for a moment. She told us afterwards that the devil had stood by the bedside. After an awful soul conflict she suddenly became quiet, and then begged her sister not to speak a word. "Oh it is lovely," she cried, "it is beautiful!" Then she had a blessed view of Jesus Christ upon the cross, viewed His suffering body, and the wounds in His hands and feet. He looked upon her, and she was assured that He had died for her. The following verse came with power to her soul :

" Forget thee I will not, I cannot ; thy name
Engraved on My heart does for ever remain ;
The palms of My hands while I look on, I see
The wounds I received when suffering for thee."

Not long before her end came she said to one of the nurses, "Oh, Lily, I'm lost! eternally lost!" The nurse repeated the following verse:

"If once the love of Christ we feel
Upon our hearts impress'd,
The mark of that celestial seal
Can never be erased."

This appeared to calm her mind, and break the snare.

On Sept. 15th a little daughter was born, and from this time she gradually got weaker, until, on Sept. 27th, she passed gently away, to be for ever with the Lord. The day before she died, she lay exhausted and helpless, and said, "He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust;" and she found pleasure in reciting hymn 477 (Gadsby's):

"Give me the wings of faith to rise;" &c.

It was very remarkable to witness, after many years of most gentle leading, how the work was cut short in righteousness. During the latter period of her life she hardly appeared to live upon the earth, but often indicated to us that what she was passing through in her soul was too solemn to be spoken of. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." F. C.

On May 18th, 1909, SIMEON FLAVELL, of Hurst Hill, Bilston, Staffordshire, aged 38.

The subject of this short memoir was brought up at the place of truth situated at Coppice, Coseley, in his early years; but he felt no love to the place, his determination being to leave it as soon as he was free from parental restraint, which resolve he carried out in due time. He was a source of trouble to his parents, and went in the opposite direction to what they desired. Naturally, he was of a free and jovial disposition, and his favourite resorts were the public house and the racecourse, which were truly his gods; and from what he has related, nothing would have afforded him greater joy than to have been the owner of such a horse as would have been successful on the course. At the beginning of the year 1905 he lost a little daughter by death, at which circumstance he had hard thoughts of God for taking the child away. At the end of March of that year his father, a godly man, was suddenly called to rest. Simeon was strongly opposed to his father's body being interred in the ground adjoining the Coppice Chapel, and the burial took place in the Cemetery at Sedgley. Here, however, the

over-ruling providence of God was conspicuously manifested in bringing about the Lord's eternal purpose towards him. As customary, the family attended the Church of England on the Sunday following the burial of their father, and Simeon accompanied them; but, as he said, more with the object of satisfying others than from a real desire to attend the place of worship. Thinking that his mother, who was not present, would ask him what the minister took for his text, he listened for it, and the clergyman chose these words, "But he that sinneth against Me wrongeth his own soul." The words were applied with power by the Holy Ghost to him. He did not know the substance of the clergyman's discourse, but he came out of the church with a burden that he was unable to shake off. In order to get relief he went into a public-house drinking; but the words kept following him up, "He that sinneth against Me wrongeth his own soul."

The burden became heavier and heavier. Not possessing a Bible at his home, he borrowed one; but he could get no relief. He had the solemn conviction that he would be lost for ever, and in his distress asked his mother to pray for him, who replied that she had been praying for him for thirty years. He experienced great temptations from the devil. First he suggested to him that he had not been so bad as some others; but as his cries continued, he attacked him in the opposite direction, and told him he was too great a sinner ever to find mercy. He groaned under his burden for about ten days and nights. The time, however, had now arrived when the Lord was to reveal Himself in such a way as to make him sing for joy. This very night at his work he really felt as though he was sinking into hell. In this solemn condition he put up strong cries for mercy, and these words were spoken to him, "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved; and thy sins which are many"—"Lord," he said, "Thou knowest how many"—"shall be all forgiven thee." In a moment a wonderful deliverance was effected in his soul. Like Bunyan's pilgrim, his burden fell from off his back, and he felt as though in another world. "Old things had passed away, and all things had become new." Instead of oppression, misery, and sorrow, he felt joy and peace in believing. His old ways were forsaken, and he was so strengthened as

to plainly tell the world that the things he previously loved he now hated, and the things he before hated he now loved.

For several months he walked in the light of God's countenance, rejoicing in the full assurance of being a pardoned sinner. He felt to be in the position described by the psalmist in the words, "In my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved," nor would he believe his own mother that the time would come when he would have to walk in darkness. Notwithstanding, he was honest in his expressions, as he spake according to what he then felt. He was, indeed, dandled on the knees of consolation, and realised the experience of the psalmist in those words, "Lord, by Thy favour Thou hast made my mountain to stand strong;" but he also painfully had to prove later on, "Thou didst hide Thy face, and I was troubled." He took a special delight in the experience of the apostle Paul, feeling it so much agreed with his own; and he often used to remark how he longed to get into those deep and precious truths which the apostle wrote of; although, as he said later on, he little thought of the solemn trials which were the means of coming into them.

He attended the nearest chapel to where he lived, which was a large Wesleyan chapel at Hurst Hill. His case was considered a very exceptional one, and a Wesleyan minister suggested that the Lord had a work for him to do. Matters, however, did not go on smoothly for long. In conversing with the people who attended this chapel, he expected them to relate to him a similar experience to his own; and in this he was greatly disappointed. They could not understand his language, and he on his part was troubled because they could not tell him what the Lord had done for them. As he began to get dissatisfied with the local Wesleyan ministry, he was advised to go and hear those men who were looked up to as leaders of that denomination; but it was with little more satisfaction. He was also much annoyed at the way in which persons were made members of the Wesleyan church, and had to speak against it.

Finding no one with whom he could walk in union became a great trial to him, and he was tempted that it must be himself that was wrong. After some months he began to go to other places of worship in the district, but did not find what he was seeking. Although the Coppice cause was situated only a short distance from his home, he strongly avoided

attending ; because, as he himself confessed, it was the place he hated above all others ; this would particularly refer to the time of his unregeneracy. However, it was the last chapel that remained to which he felt compelled now to go. On the Sunday evening before going he went to prayer about the matter, and had those words, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate ;" which he felt applied to the other churches. Mr. Battersby was preaching at the Coppice, and after describing the way in which the Lord leads a sinner, he said some words to this effect, "Do you know anything of this ? If you do, you have passed from death unto life." This was the means of assuring him where he must go to hear the truth.

The first time he engaged in prayer at the Coppice (Dec. 10th, 1906), he first of all related a little of what the Lord had done for his soul, and it was felt to be good by those present. The time now arrived when his joys abated, and instead of walking in gladness he had to encounter much darkness of soul. He had great temptations to cope with ; and on one occasion the devil suggested to him that if he would take away his life, he would be rid of all his troubles. The scene he had now entered upon was unexpected by him. He was not, however, without some encouragement. He heard Mr. Eddison at Temple Street Baptist Chapel, Wolverhampton, from the 10th verse of the 54th chapter of Isaiah : "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but My kindness shall not depart from thee," &c. Mr. Eddison was led to speak first of the mountain of sin which was laid upon the conscience of the sinner. This hill was removed, but in due time another mountain rose up in front of the sinner, the mountain of unbelief, which was also taken away. This sermon was made good to him, as it was so descriptive of the way he had been led. On another occasion at the same chapel, Mr. Richard Adams, of Birmingham, was preaching, and his path was so traced out that he remarked to Mr. Adams to the effect that if it had been written with a knowledge of his case, it could not have better set forth what he had experienced.

In the year 1907 he was attacked with a malady, the nature of which it was difficult to understand. He attended local doctors, but his case seemed to baffle their skill. After a time he went to the General Hospital at Wolverhampton, and

was treated with the X Rays, which seemed to give him much benefit at the commencement, so that he regained some strength. About this time he wrote to Mr. Brignell, minister, as follows :

“Dear Friend and Brother,—I feel I must address you as brother, for you and your sect I once hated now I dearly love, for your people are my people, and your God is my God. I thank God that He has planted that in my soul that nothing but Jesus Christ can satisfy ; and when it pleases the Lord to give me a little peace that the world and many who name the name of Jesus Christ, but are strangers to His power, know nothing about, then I can sing :

“ ‘In His presence I am happy.’

I have not been in those spots much of late ; neither can I put myself there, but,

“ ‘When I turn my eyes within,
All is dark and vain and wild ;
Fill’d with unbelief and sin,
Can I deem myself a child ?’

I am proving the words of Paul true, ‘I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing ;’ but thanks be to God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ‘with the mind I serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.’ I feel it a mercy to know these things ; for when I look back on my past life, anything less than death seems a mercy to me. But I get a little advice of Mr. Morality sometimes about little things which would please the flesh, but would bring death in the soul ; for to follow after the flesh is death. Only a short time ago, after having a little of this good advice, as they call it, how beautifully the words dropped into my soul, ‘There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.’ That was more to me than anything this world calls good or great ;

“ ‘And though the world may think it strange,
I would not with the world exchange.’

with all its wealth and health ; for if it were possible for me to gain my health by following after the course of this world, I would refuse it ; for what would it profit me, if I gained the whole world, and lost my own soul ? Life here is only short, but oh eternity—where a day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as a day ! Hoping the Lord, if it be His will, will bless the means used, that I may soon be better,

or, if otherwise, that He may take me to be with Him, which is far better.

“S. FLAVELL.”

In consequence of being unable to follow up his employment he was brought into providential straits; but the Lord opened up ways for him. One evening a certain person visited him, and gave him some help, who told him that it had been laid so much on his mind that he felt compelled to come.

On the 30th of October, 1908, he was obliged to go as an in-patient to the hospital, where he remained for seven weeks. While here the Lord again interposed for him in a providential manner. He was not without some sweet in-shinings while in the hospital, as the following letter written in November will show:—

“What is man when it pleases Him to lay His hand of affliction upon us? Only a few nights ago a man in our ward sat in bed chatting, and in less than ten minutes had passed into a solemn eternity—a sight which I shan't forget in a hurry. We all have to face death some day; but what a mercy to know that Jesus has taken the sting away for all for whom He died! But am I in the all? is a question of great importance to me. I am often tempted by the enemy to murmur at God's dealings with me; but I hope we know a little of the truth that, “Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth;” which is for our profit. We do not always feel it at the time, but when it pleases the Lord to give us resigning grace; as He did to me a few days ago. Then I did sing with tears flowing down my face:

“ ‘Were the whole realms of nature mine;’

also,

“ ‘Times of sickness, times of health,
Times of penury and wealth;
All my times are in Thy hand,
All events at Thy command.’

Times of penury I experienced some few weeks ago, when it needed shillings; but before the time that it was needed the money came, and to spare, which I did not deserve, with the beautiful promise:—

“ ‘He does for all His seekers care,
And will their needs supply.’

You know:—

“ ‘Wrestling prayer can wonders do.’

“From your loving friend, SIM, the chief of sinners.”

The treatment he now received appeared to greatly benefit

him ; so that he came out of the hospital a few days before Christmas. Just after this he returned to his labour, which caused some surprise, and he kept at it continuously for a period of six weeks. He again, however, had another serious decline, and on March 17th, 1909, he was compelled to re-enter the hospital as an in-patient. From this time he gradually sank, and he insisted on returning to his home. In addition to bodily suffering, his appetite for spiritual things also declined, and his mind became dark to such an extent that he was averse to conversing on the truths of God. His depression increased so greatly that he desired the people of God to stay away from visiting him. Waves of trial and temptation rolled over his head, and on one occasion he fell in with the temptation ; but even then he realised that he possessed a principle which could not consent to evil. His body quickly wasted away. The last time he attended chapel was the first Sunday in May, 1909 ; on which occasion the first hymn sung was made a blessing to him :—

“ It is the Lord, enthroned in light,
Whose claims are all divine ;
Who has an undisputed right
To govern me and mine.”

Shortly after this he had to take to his bed. On Sunday, the 16th of May, although in a critical condition, his mind had experienced a wonderful change, so that instead of manifesting an aversion to eternal realities, they were now uppermost in his thoughts. He mentioned the words having come to him that morning, “ Thy hour is not yet come.” He said he did not start his religion himself. He was dark in his mind ; but he wanted the Lord to assure him of the pardon of his sins, and take him home. His soul went through many changes during this day, and he gave utterance to the following expressions :—“ I think I shall endure to the end.” “ How can I sink with such a prop ? ”

“ My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesu’s blood and righteousness.”

“ Shall I be lost after all ? Till He bids I cannot die.”
During the night he uttered the following verses :

“ Where is the blessedness I knew
When first I saw the Lord ?
Where is the soul-refreshing view
Of Jesus and His Word ? ”

“ Why was I made to hear His voice,
And enter while there’s room ;

While thousands make a wretched choice,
And rather starve than come ? ”

“ It was because He loved my soul,
Because He died for me ;
Because that nothing could control
His great, His firm decree.”

He asked if it were possible for a soul to experience the things he had passed through, and yet be left of the Lord. He was told this could not be ; and that promise was quoted to him, “ I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” On Monday afternoon he said the Lord had told him that “ the afflictions of the righteous are many, but the Lord will deliver him out of them all ; ” but that the Lord had not yet delivered him out of all his ; and in the evening he said he had not got all he longed for. He was not yet free from the attacks of the devil. He told his mother of a man coming to him and asking him to “ back a horse ; ” but he told him he had come too late. He said the person further told him that he would win a lot of money. His mother asked him what he replied, and he said, “ What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul ? ” He often expressed the desire that the Lord would come,

“ And take a ransom'd sinner home.”

He seemed to be loosened from everything in this world. On Tuesday, the 18th of May, he told his mother that he had now left everything at the foot of the mount. He also spake some words to the effect that,

“ Not a wave of trouble roll'd,
Across his peaceful breast.”

At about half-past six this same evening he became unconscious to everything around him, and continued so until 10 o'clock, when he peacefully passed away, leaving a widow and four young children.

A few days before his decease he expressed a desire for his body to be laid in the burial ground of the Coppice Baptist Chapel, the very place in which he strongly objected to his father's body being interred. His desire was carried out, Mr. Richard Adams officiating on the occasion. Truly, his case was a striking instance of an over-ruling providence, to which the words of Cowper would aptly apply :

“ God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform ;
He plants His footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.”

NOTICES OF DEATH.

JOSEPH SMITH, of the Manor Farm, Blunsdon, passed away, April 8th, 1910; minister of the gospel between thirty and forty years. He was tried with unbelief and carnal reason toward the end of his pilgrimage; but after taking to his bed he was blessed with those words,

"I've bound thee up secure,
'Midst all the rage of hell;
The curse thou never shalt endure,
For I'm unchangeable."

Also Psa. ciii., which was read to him. The last Sunday he was alive he very feelingly joined with a few friends in singing,

"Give me the wings of faith to rise." J. G. WILKINS.

On September 13th, 1910, DAVID HARRIS, of East Challow, passed peacefully away, aged 62 years. He had been an honourable member of the church at Grove for nineteen years; also deacon for four years. He was enabled to adorn the doctrine he loved; he had great reverence for the house and people of God. He was blessed with calm resignation to God's will for some time before he died; his sufferings were great. When near the end his face seemed suddenly lit up, and he exclaimed, "'Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.' I am going to Him;" and in a few minutes his happy spirit was gone to Him he so much loved.

C. H. COLLINS.

On Sept. 19th, 1910, J. T. JORDAN, of 40, Railway View, Portsmouth, aged 45 years, passed almost suddenly into his eternal rest, after a day or two's illness. He was a lover of Zion and the Lord's faithful ministers and people, and was most happy when engaged in the service of the Lord. His end was peace. His last words were:

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word!
What more can He say than to you He has said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?"

Also, "Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." We laid his mortal remains to rest, in sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection to life everlasting.

A. T. JORDAN.

On October 12th, 1910, ELIZA STONBRIDGE, passed peacefully away in her 78th year. She has been an attendant at Providence Chapel, Blunham, Beds, for a number of years, and will be greatly missed by the few who attend there; she was a very quiet person, but we have a good hope she has left this vale of tears to join the church triumphant, where sin and sorrow are for ever at an end.

W. R. G.

SAMUEL PACK, of Huntingdon, passed peacefully to rest in his 84th year. For sixty-one years he was a member of the church at Godmanchester, and for more than twenty years of this period he was a deacon. He was committed to the grave in the Huntingdon Cemetery, on Oct. 3rd, 1910, by Mr. Oldfield, his pastor. Further particulars will (G.w.) follow.

JANE GIBBS, died, Nov. 17th, 1910, aged 65. She was for many years a member at "Rehoboth," Swindon. We believe our loss is her eternal gain.

F. J. B.

MARTHA WILTSHIRE, the beloved wife of Edmund Pocock, of Calne, died, Oct. 12th, 1910, aged 81 years. She was baptised by the late Mr. Mortimer, Oct. 22nd, 1854, and joined the church at Studley, remaining a member there about twelve years; she afterwards joined the church at Melksham, and was a member there until her death. We believe she is now with Christ, which is far better.

J. C. POCOCK.

MRS. REYNOLDS, died Oct. 15th, 1910. She was for many years a member at Fairford, but about two years ago she came to live at Cirencester. Of her early days and call by grace I know but little, but I have heard her speak of the good times she had in hearing the gospel preached in the little chapel at Fairford; how it came with power to her heart, and abode with her. In her later years she seemed to walk much in the dark, and was continually mourning her emptiness. She loved and contended for a free grace gospel, feeling that no other would meet her case. We shall miss her as a woman of prayer, a consistent member, and a helping friend, but we cannot wish her back. She has gone to be with Christ, which is far better.

E. PACKER.

CHARLES FARNCOMBE, of Dane Hill, Sussex, passed away on Oct. 22nd, aged 84. He was a man of few words, but of sound judgment, and was most useful in the management of the cause of truth in the village, of which he was a member for about fifty-four years. He was in his place on the last Lord's day of his life, and gave out the hymns as usual, but with much feeling and brokenness of spirit, as if nearing his end. He was taken with a paralytic fit, and unable to make himself understood, and expired peacefully within twenty-four hours. To him sudden death was sudden glory. A short account of his call by grace, and life, will probably follow, God willing.

M. S.

On Oct. 23rd, 1910, THOMAS PAUL ASH, aged 82, my dear and only brother, fell asleep in Jesus.

E. M. DRURY.

ANNE ARNOLD, a most consistent member of the church at Smallfields, near Horley, who passed peacefully away on Oct. 25th, 1910, aged 78. She was called by grace when about sixteen years of age, and joined the church at Smallfields when it was first formed under the late Mr. Joseph Hatton. Further particulars, written by herself, will (G.w.) follow.

J. SPARKS.

LUCY BIRD, of Great Yarmouth, was taken home Nov. 4th. My mother was well taught in the things of God; He led her about and instructed her for over fifty years. In her young days she was favoured to hear Philpot and Tiptaft.

F. BIRD.

On Nov. 20th, 1910, aged 71 years, MARY ANN BURBAGE, for many years a consistent member of the church meeting at Chaucer Street, Nottingham. Our dear friend was called by grace in early life, and was favoured to be instructed in the truth of God by that honoured woman, Ruth Bryan, for whom she always retained the deepest affection. She passed away very peacefully, her hope resting

“On nothing less
Than Jesu's blood and righteousness.”

H. T. STONELAKE.

THE GOSPEL STANDARD.

FEBRUARY, 1911.

MATT. v. 6; 2 TIM. i. 9; ROM. xi. 7; ACTS viii. 37, 38; MATT. xxviii. 19.

COVENANT INTEREST IN GOD,

AND A VIEW OF WHAT IS IN HIM AS A COVENANT-GOD, A SUFFICIENT ENCOURAGEMENT TO HIS PEOPLE AT ALL TIMES.

By JOHN GILL, D.D.

“But David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.”—1 SAM. xxx. 6.

DAVID was at this time in as great distress, if not greater, than ever he was in all his life. He had been persecuted from place to place by Saul, and his life often in imminent danger; but then he had friends along with him, to comfort and encourage him, to protect and defend him to the utmost of their power; but now it was otherwise: yet he encouraged himself in the Lord his God. Ziklag, the place where he and his men had dwelt for some time,—the Amalekites taking the advantage of his absence, came and burnt and destroyed it; carried captives the wives and concubines of his men, and his own wives also. This occasioned a general discontent, and even a mutiny among the people; so that David's people, his own friends, spake of stoning him; but notwithstanding all this, “David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.”

At this time of distress he was at the eve of his outward grandeur and glory; for much about this time, very likely at the very time, that battle, from whence he was very providentially withdrawn, was fought between Saul and the Philistines in which Saul and his sons were slain, which paved the way for David to ascend the throne of Israel. So sometimes it is, that when God is about to work salvation from His people, to bestow upon them great favours whether in a way of providence or grace, He suffers them to be brought into the greatest straits, that His power, wisdom, and goodness may be the more visible.

But David knew nothing of this for the present; his state

was very distressing, hopeless, and helpless, as to human appearance; nevertheless he encouraged himself in the Lord his God. He encouraged *himself*, for he had none to encourage him; they all spake of stoning him. He encouraged himself not by virtue of any power of his own, but through the influence of the divine Spirit, which impressed his mind, directed him to God, and enabled him to exercise faith upon Him; he encouraged himself in the *Lord his God*. In the Lord—not absolutely considered, for “God is a consuming fire;” but he strengthened, he encouraged himself in the Lord his God, his covenant God and Father.

The observation I make upon this is, that covenant interest in God, and a view of what is in God as a covenant God, are a sufficient encouragement to His people in their greatest distresses; and in enlarging upon this observation I shall consider,

I. That the people of God have their times of trouble and distress.

II. That God is their covenant God; and this is a source of support and comfort to them under their troubles. And,

III. That a view of what is in God is enough to encourage the saints in the worst of times. “David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.”

I. *The people of God have their times of trouble and distress.* The apostle Paul seems to distinguish between *trouble* and *distress* when he says, “We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed” (2 Cor. iv. 8). Troubled on every side, from every quarter, all around; look which way we will, there is nothing but trouble; and yet not distressed, that is, not so distressed as to be reduced to despair, as is afterwards explained; or to be brought to ruin and destruction; for it follows, “perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.”

The people of God in all ages and periods of time have been poor, and afflicted with divers sorts of afflictions, temporal and spiritual; but this is the favour bestowed upon them, that they shall trust, they are enabled to trust, they do trust in the name of the Lord their God. Their afflictions and troubles are partly outward, and partly inward; some are outward afflictions, such as affect their bodies, their families, and estates, or arise from the world, and the men of it, their reproaches and persecutions; and these come not by

chance, but are by divine appointment. They are appointed to these afflictions, and these afflictions are appointed for them; these are a legacy their great Lord and Master hath bequeathed them, "In the world ye shall have tribulation" (John xvi. 33). There are many tribulations through which the saints enter the kingdom, they attend them all the way, more or less, to the heavenly glory. They follow them to their entrance into the kingdom—then they leave them, and not till then. These troubles and afflictions are all in love, and are directed by the hand of a tender Father; yet, nevertheless, no affliction is joyous, but grievous to the flesh.

There are other troubles, trials, and exercises which are internal, and more especially affect the soul, or the spiritual state of God's people; I mean, their comfortable spiritual state. Nothing can affect, so as to destroy, their state and standing in Christ; but there are many things which distress them, with respect to their spiritual frames, and comfortable spiritual state. Sometimes they are under the hidings of God's face; and as His presence gives them the greatest pleasure, so His absence the greatest pain and uneasiness. When He hideth His face, their souls are troubled, and upon this follows darkness, and sometimes such darkness that they can see no light. This being the case of good men, that they walk in darkness and have no light (Isa. l. 10), no joy, comfort, and peace in a sensible manner, hence follow many doubts and fears in them relative to their case. They are ready to fear that a work of grace was never begun in them, or that they shall never hold on and out unto the end, but fall short of heaven at last; without are fightings, and within are fears. Unbelief sometimes prevails to a very great degree, and their language is like that of the psalmist, "Is His mercy clean gone for ever? doth His promise fail for evermore? hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath He in anger shut up His tender mercies?" (Ps. lxxvii. 8, 9). Unbelief reads all this in the affirmative. You may well imagine God's people are in distress when this is their case. Sometimes their distresses arise from the temptations of Satan, who is a very busy adversary, and goes about, like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour; though he cannot do this with respect to the people of God, yet he can, and is, often suffered to distress them. Yea, he is said to desire to winnow one as wheat, as Peter; and he buffets another, as in the case of Paul; he

throws his fiery darts thick and fast, and these give a great deal of pain and uneasiness. To all these may be added the corruptions of their nature, which are suffered sometimes to prevail very much in them; they find a law in their members warring against the law of their minds, and bringing them into captivity to the law of sin and death, which makes them say, "Oh wretched men that we are!" These old Canaanites left in the land are as pricks in their eyes, and thorns in their sides, that give them great distress.

II. *God is the covenant God of His people, and that is a source of support and comfort to them under all their troubles and distresses.* David says, "Fear was on every side; but I trusted in thee, O Lord; I said, Thou art my God" (Psa. xxxi. 13, 14). God is the God of His people, not only in a general sense, as He is the God of the spirits of all flesh; not in a national sense, as He is the God of the Jews—He avouched them to be His people, and they avouched Him to be their God; but He is the God, the covenant God of His people, in a more special sense in the covenant of grace, ordered in all things and sure, the tenor of which runs thus, "They shall be My people, and I will be their God." This covenant interest is made manifest in effectual vocation, when God calls His covenant ones effectually by His grace; which makes it clearly appear that they are His covenant ones. Then they who are not a people, that is, who were not known to be a people of God either by themselves or others, openly appear to be His people: for the application of covenant blessings unto them is an undeniable proof of their interest; for to whomsoever covenant blessings are applied, such must be most certainly interested in the covenant of grace.

Now this covenant interest always continues, it never can be dissolved, let the saint come into what condition he will; let him be in what trouble or distress he may, covenant interest always abides. Afflictions that are laid upon him of one kind or another are no arguments at all disproving his covenant interest; rather are proofs of the same, for in the covenant it is provided that when the Lord's children forsake His law, and walk not in His statutes, He will visit their transgression with a rod and their iniquity with stripes; nevertheless His lovingkindness He will not utterly take from them, nor suffer His faithfulness to fail. His covenant He will not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of His

lips (Psa. lxxxix. 30, 34). Even the sins and corruptions of God's people, the temptations of Satan, and the snares of this world, do not, cannot dissolve covenant interest; for Jehovah knew beforehand, when He took His people into this covenant, what they would be, that they would be called transgressors from the womb, that their neck would be as an iron sinew, and their brow as brass; and yet this did not hinder their admission into this covenant, and consequently cannot be a reason for dismissing them from it. Besides, in this covenant of grace there is provision made for the forgiveness of the sins of God's people. One principal promise runs thus, "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jer. xxxi. 34). That darkness and desertion, those doubts, and fears, and unbeliefs which attend God's people, cannot destroy their covenant interest; that still continues the same: whether they are in the light or in the dark, whether in comfortable or uncomfortable frames, covenant interest is always invariably the same. As it was with the Head, so it is with the members; as it was with our Head, Christ Jesus, when suffering, and God withdrew His presence from Him, and He said, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"—forsaken He was, but God was His God still: so it is with the members, they may be forsaken, God may hide His face from them, they may be in darkness, and in the deeps, yet they may say, "My God," still. So says the church, "My God will hear me; when I sit in darkness, the Lord will be a light unto me, He will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold His righteousness" (Mic. vii. 7, 8, 9). Covenant interest always abides, and is the source of comfort to the saints in all their distresses; for He that is their covenant God will be their God and their Guide unto death (Psa. xlviii. ult.)

III. *There are such things in God as are a sufficient encouragement to His people in the worst of times, and they may, through the strength of divine grace, as David did, encourage themselves in the Lord their God. Thus, for instance,*

1. There are the *mercy, grace, and love* of our heavenly Father, of our covenant God; He has proclaimed His name, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin" (Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7). Upon this declaration of grace, David might well, and so every believer also, with the greatest assurance affirm, "Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful" (Psa. cxvi. 5).

Now this yields relief to the people of God, when first awakened to a sight and sense of their state and condition by nature. This relieves them in their first soul trouble, namely, the declarations of the grace, mercy, and love of God. As Benhadad's servants argued with their master, "We have heard that the kings of the house of Israel are merciful kings; let us, I pray thee, put sackcloth on our loins, and ropes on our heads, and go out to the king of Israel; peradventure he will save thy life" (1 Kings xx. 31). So poor sinners, when they are first awakened to a sight and sense of their vileness, the just demerit of their sins, and the consequences of them, having heard, through the report of the gospel, that the King of kings, and Lord of lords is gracious and merciful, they are encouraged to go and throw themselves upon His grace and mercy, and say, as the publican did, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Not that they cast themselves upon the absolute mercy of God, but upon the mercy of God *as it streams through the blood and righteousness of Christ*, which is the sense of that request of the publican, "God be merciful to me," through the propitiatory sacrifice of Thy Son. It is a view of this that encourages sinners in their first distress of soul to go to God, and venture their souls upon His mercy. "Let Israel (and so let every sensible sinner) hope in the Lord; for with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him there is plenteous redemption" (Psa. cxxx. 7); that is, there is mercy streaming through that plenteous redemption by our Lord Jesus Christ. It is a declaration of the grace and mercy of God that is a relief to poor sensible souls, under the first workings of the Spirit of God upon their hearts, whereby they are encouraged to hope for pardoning grace, and to obtain it, as the apostle says he did, "I who was before a blasphemer and a persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained mercy" (1 Tim. i. 13). So likewise it is a relief unto them, after having fallen into sin, and when brought again to repentance, when they stand in need of fresh discoveries of forgiving love. In affliction the Lord is pleased to reveal Himself unto them in this manner, and apply His pardoning grace unto them; they find Him to be a kind, merciful, and tender-hearted Father to them. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him" (Psa. ciii. 13). He sympathises with them in all their troubles; in all their afflictions He is afflicted; His bowels yearn towards

them when they are in distress; and though He may seem sometimes to frown upon them in His providence, yet He changes His dispensations towards them in love, saying, "Is Ephraim My dear son? is he a pleasant child? Verily he is, for since I spake against him in a providential way, I do earnestly remember him still; therefore My bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord."

God, the covenant God of His people, is full of mercy, grace, love, kindness, and tenderness unto them at all times; and this is an encouragement unto them to trust in Him. In a view of this they may do as David did, encourage themselves in the Lord their God; and the rather, inasmuch as this mercy, grace, and love always continue the same. The mercy of God is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him; His love to His people is an everlasting love; His lovingkindness never departs from them, nor can anything separate them from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus their Lord.

Well then, let the saint be in what trouble and distress he will, if he can but be directed and is but enabled to look unto the grace and mercy of God as a covenant God, always the same, it will yield him relief in the worst of times.

2. There is the *power* of God, which is great and unlimited. "Twice have I heard this (says the psalmist), that power belongs to God." There are not only one or two, but there are many instances of the almighty power of God; He who is almighty is able to save His people when in the greatest distress. His hand is not shortened that it cannot save, nor His ear heavy that it cannot hear. When they cry unto Him in their distress, pray to Him for deliverance, they pray to a God that can save them to the uttermost, save them out of all their troubles. "This poor man cried," says David, and it may be he means himself particularly; "and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles." So this poor man, and the other poor man, and thousands of poor saints, in all ages, have cried unto the Lord in their distress, and He has saved them out of all their troubles.

He has power and ability to fulfil all the promises which He has made unto His people, and they are many, exceeding great and precious. Abraham had a special promise made to him, and the fulfilment of it was attended with many diffi-

culties, insurmountable to carnal reason ; yet he staggered not at the promise, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God. And what was it kept up his faith in the view of those difficulties that attended the accomplishment of the thing promised ? Why, it was this,—he was persuaded that God “ was able also to perform ” (Rom. iv. 21). God, the covenant God of His people, is of such power that He is able to supply all their wants, let them be what they will ; to supply all their need according to His riches in glory, by Christ Jesus. He is able to support them under their greatest trials, and He has promised to do it ; He has said, “ Fear not, I am with thee ; be not dismayed, I am thy God ; I will help thee ; I will strengthen thee ; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness.” And when He puts underneath everlasting arms, they are a sufficient support. He is able to protect and defend them from all enemies. They that trust in Him as their covenant God, are as mount Sion, that can never be removed ; for as the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so is the Lord round about His people, from this time forth, even for evermore. He is a wall of fire round about them, to preserve them, and to annoy their enemies ; He is a glory in the midst of them. They are kept, as in a garrison, by His power through faith unto salvation ; He is able to build them up, and to give them an inheritance among all them that are sanctified by faith in Christ Jesus. He is able to keep them from falling, from a total and final falling away, and present them faultless before the throne of His Majesty, and He will exert His power in the preservation of them safe to His everlasting kingdom and glory. Now a view of this power in God, of His ability to do these things and much more, is a sufficient encouragement to saints in the worst of times.

3. There is the *unchangeableness* of God, which also, when believers have a view of it, relieves them under the greatest distresses. He is the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning—not the least appearance of a change in Him. He is the Lord, that changeth not, and therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed ; they cannot be consumed, they cannot be destroyed who are interested in an unchangeable God. He is unchangeable in His love to them ; He never varies in that, let them be in what condition they will, or let His appearance to them be

what it may in the external dispensation of things, His love is always the same. If He chides them, if He chastises them in a providential way on account of their sins, yet His loving-kindness He doth not take from them, nor suffer His faithfulness to fail. If He hide His face from them, to rebuke them on one account or another, because of some misbehaviour of theirs, yet still He loves them, His lovingkindness does not depart from them; having loved them, He loves them to the end. His love is everlasting; as it commenced in eternity, it will continue to all eternity, invariably and unchangeably the same. There may be different dispensations towards them, as I have suggested, they may be in different frames of soul, and not always have the like apprehensions of the love of God; yet that in itself is the same.

He is unchangeable in His *counsels* and *decrees*, particularly in that relative to the everlasting salvation of His people. This is a foundation of solid comfort, even of everlasting consolation. So says the apostle, "Wherein God, . . . to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things" (His counsel, which is immutable, and His oath annexed to it, which is likewise so) "in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us (Heb. vi. 17, 18).

God is unchangeable in His *promises*, which He hath made to His people. He is not a man, that He should lie, nor the son of man, that He should repent, or change His mind. What He hath said He will do, what He hath purposed He will most certainly fulfil. Not one of the good things He hath promised in covenant has ever fallen to the ground, or ever shall. For all His promises are yea and Amen in Christ Jesus, to the glory of God by us.

He is unchangeable in the *blessings of His grace*. These are the sure mercies of David, sure to David's Son, and sure to all His seed. They are irreversible ones. Upon whomsoever they are bestowed they remain, they are never revoked, God never repents of them. His Son also is as unchangeable as Himself—the eternal Word. The Chaldee paraphrase upon the text respects this, and reads it thus, "And David strengthened himself in the Word of the Lord his God"—in that eternal Logos, that Word which was in the beginning

with God, and was God. "Strengthened himself" in Him, or, to use the apostolic language, he became strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, who is the same yesterday, today, and for ever; unchangeable in His nature, Person, offices, and grace. He hath particularly an unchangeable priesthood; an unchangeable virtue in His righteousness, to justify from all sin; in His blood to cleanse from it; and in His sacrifice, to make expiation for it. A view of this unchangeableness in God and Christ is a sufficient encouragement to the saints under all their distresses, be they what they may.

4. The *faithfulness of God*. This is a wonderful attribute. "Who is like unto Thee," says the psalmist, "or to Thy faithfulness round about Thee?" (Psa. lxxxix. 8). God is faithful to Himself, faithful to His promises and counsels. His counsels of old are faithfulness and truth—all true, and faithfully fulfilled. He is faithful to every promise of His. Hence the apostle describes Him as faithful who hath promised, who also will do it. He is faithful to His covenant. He will not break His covenant upon any account whatsoever; nor suffer His faithfulness to fail. He is faithful to His Son. As Christ is faithful to Him that appointed Him, even His divine Father, so Jehovah the Father is faithful to His Son with respect to all the promises He made to Him concerning His own glory as Mediator, and the good of His covenant people. And He is faithful to His covenant people, notwithstanding their unfaithfulness and unbelief; for though we believe not, says the apostle, He abides faithful.

Now a consideration of this perfection of our covenant God is sufficient to support and encourage us under the greatest distresses in life. The same may be observed indeed of every perfection of His; as His omniscience, omnipresence, and the like. He is *omniscient*. He knows all persons and things, and the knowledge He has of His people is special and particular. It is not merely a general knowledge, as He knows all His creatures, but is joined with the greatest affection to them. In this sense we are to understand it, when He is said to "know them that are His." He knows all the world, and all the men in it, but not in the sense in which He knows His covenant ones. His knowledge being connected with the greatest affection to them, His eyes are upon the righteous, and His ears are open to their cries, in a different manner

from what they are upon, and to others. Indeed the eye of His providence is particular. He "is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe" (1 Tim. iv. 10), and the eyes of the Lord run to and fro to show Himself strong in a remarkable manner on the behalf of those whose hearts are upright towards Him. He knows their persons, and their wants. Their desires are before Him, and their groanings are not hid from Him. This is a great encouragement to them.

So the *Omnipresence* of God. He is a God at hand, and not a God afar off. He is nigh to all them that call upon Him in truth. It was the peculiar privilege of Israel of old, that they had God so nigh unto them in all things they called upon Him for (Deut. iv. 7); so have all the saints and people of God. He is the eternal God, from everlasting to everlasting, He which was, and is, and is to come; and He has been, and is, the dwelling-place of His people in all generations. He is the ever-living God, to protect, preserve, and bring them safe to the everlasting enjoyment of Himself. Thus a view of what God is in Himself, and of what is in our covenant God and Father, is a sufficient encouragement in the worst of times. "David encouraged himself in the Lord his God."

But I must draw to a conclusion. You may be directed from hence where to go, and to whom to apply in times of trouble; not to the creature, or an arm of flesh, but to the Lord as your covenant God. When refuge fails you, and no man cares for your soul, then say, as David did, "Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living" (Psa. cxliii. 5). This doctrine may serve to support the people of God under all the vicissitudes that attend them in this life, in body, soul, or estate. This may be a relief to them, that they have to do with, and are interested in a covenant God, whose love and covenant are unchangeable, and therefore the sons of Jacob shall not be consumed. What may not such persons expect who have Jehovah for their covenant God? They may say, as Jacob did, they have all things, they have enough. The Lord is their Shepherd, He is their Shield, and their exceeding great Reward. They have nothing to fear from their enemies, spiritual or temporal. They may say, as David did, "The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear?" (Psa. xxvii. 1). If God be for them, if He is

on their side, if He is their covenant God and Father, who shall be against them? or what does it signify who are against them? Happy that people whose God is the Lord! they may expect every blessing of grace here, and eternal glory hereafter. His grace will be sufficient to carry them through all the trials of life, and bring them safe to glory. He who is their God is a Sun and Shield; He gives grace and glory, and no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him.

SOME ACCOUNT OF HENRY FRENCH OVENDEN.

“SOUGHT OUT” AND “NOT FORSAKEN.”

His own Relation.

I was born in Penshurst parish, Kent, October, 1802, and was brought up with my grandfather and grandmother. My grandfather was a drunken, swearing man, but was never cruel towards me. A look from him made me obedient. My grandmother was a hard-working, frugal person; and went through many hard struggles for my sake.

I will here make mention of some of the Lord's providential care over me when very young, and speak of His merciful kindness. When about four or five years old, I fell into the river Medway, pitched in upon my head. A youth (who was an idiot) being close behind me, dragged me out before I sank out of his reach. The Lord prepared a fish to bring Jonah to land; and this poor idiot was instrumental in saving me from a watery grave. Praised be the Lord's holy name.

When about fourteen years of age, being the slightest lad on the premises, I was ordered to creep into a gasometer, to drive a nail into the bottom, the large iron drum hanging over my head, suspended by a chain over a pulley wheel. While I was inside the chain broke, and the ponderous weight was coming down with fury. But—what can I think but that it was the interposition of my divine Protector who so ordered it?—there was a long plank of timber leaning against the iron cylinder, and one of the iron bolts, or the rim of the drum, caught against the plank and turned the ponderous weight on one side. My master standing outside immediately ran to the plank, and kept the drum from falling, until

several of the workmen were called. With iron hooks they kept the weight from falling, allowing me to creep out unhurt, but much frightened.

About this time of my life, a strange and mysterious temptation beset me one day. I was standing on Chafford Bridge, that spans the Medway river, looking into the water (I had no trouble on my mind, nor foreboding of anything), when something seemed to say, "Jump in, jump in!" And I thought for a few seconds that I must really throw myself over the rails into the water. At last I thrust myself off the bridge, as though I had torn myself from the grasp of something that I could not see. Praised be the name of my divine Preserver. Very many years after this I helped to get a young man out at the same spot, who had thrown himself in; and he was drowned, poor fellow.

When about nine years old, I went to work at the paper-mill; consequently I had no schooling, not even at a night school. My grandmother taught me my letters and to read a little in the New Testament; and as I became anxious to learn to write, she taught me; such was her indulgence towards me. In those days of childhood I often provoked her, and caused her uneasiness by my peevishness and disobedience; but many a time when out of her sight, after causing her trouble, I used to grieve from my very heart for it, and used to think if she should be taken from me by death, I should never bear up under the loss. But after years my feelings towards her were so changed (which shows that sin hardens the heart) that I often wished her out of the way, that I might have my own way in sin and vanity without reproof.

Now the time came that I should be bound an apprentice to paper makers. During the first part of that time I was employed in a department with three of the most profligate young men then in existence. The love of the world and the vain pleasures thereof daily gained the ascendancy over my weak mind. Being naturally fond of music and singing, my company was often sought. I was so delighted with theatrical performances that had I been living near to such things, I should have parted with everything to indulge my love for the theatre. I ran into great lengths of folly and sin from the age of fifteen up to twenty-two and a half. During all this wild career, I had sometimes very alarming pricks of

conscience, and that from my earliest days. I had been made to go to church regularly; and hearing there of the justice of God, the judgments of God, the end of the world, and the punishment of sinners in hell for ever, these things used to alarm me most frightfully; and especially when the lightnings flashed and the thunders roared; which in my earliest days I thought was the angry voice of the Almighty, because of the wickedness of the world. O what horror, dread, and fear would seize me at such times, fearing the next flash of lightning might strike me dead! The thought of the end of the world would sometimes terrify me, and the day of judgment, and everlasting punishment. At these seasons, when suffering with such fears, I often made vows and promises to forsake my sinful pleasures, and amend my ways and turn to the Lord. But I was so much in love with my sins that all my vows of amendment proved like Samson's "green withes"—they soon broke.

Now a fresh project was framed in my mind, which was that by and by I should get married, then I should give up all my vanity and folly, and settle down and prepare for another world, and make my peace with God. O the blindness and ignorance of our fallen nature, to talk about *making peace with God!* It makes me blush when I think of my stupidity, darkness, and foolishness. But such was the deceitfulness of my foolish heart and the delusion of Satan. So I went on drinking in sin as the ox drinketh in water, with very little restraint or reluctance. When I reached the age of twenty-one my apprenticeship was out. My masters said, as I had served them well, they would give me two sovereigns to treat the journeymen; and a great merry-making was held on the occasion. Three months after, I was married. Now (as my heart was much hardened through the deceitfulness of sin and Satan), instead of settling down and making preparations for another world, I soon became more unsettled and restless after the follies of this world. My wife, being industrious and anxious to get a few things about us, would often be reproving me for my carelessness. Her reproof I could not bear, so I often flew into a passion; then angry words would ensue, and that would cause me much wretched feeling; so that sometimes I became so unhappy that I said sometimes to myself, "I will go away from the place altogether." But as I did not like to leave my employers, I did not put my thoughts into practice.

I went on in the broad way that leads to destruction, until the early part of the year 1825. Being very fond of music and singing, with a little gift for them, I was very often invited to places of merry-making. When I had been to one of these, and had drank a great deal too much, my wife and my lodger dragged me up to bed; and I found myself very ill the next day and could not go to work. My uncle called to enquire why I was not at work. (He had been for some months brought to a serious concern about his soul and eternity; consequently he felt concerned about me.) When he learned the cause of my absence from work, he spoke to me in a few serious words about the awful sin of drunkenness, and living and dying in the love and practice thereof. I made him no answer, but thought within myself, "You are quite right; but I do not feel the least inclination to forsake these things that I have such a delight in." The next day he spoke to me again upon the subject, and said he had a book that he should like me to read. I promised to do so, but I did not like my work-mates to know about it; so I kept it in a secret place, and read it at meal-times privately. Nothing took my attention in the book until I came to the last page, wherein were written a few serious, solemn words to such as were without hope and without God in the world; speaking of the uncertainty of life, that a tile falling from a house might cause instant death. Like a dart it struck me with such terror and amazement I was like one just awaked from a dead sleep, enquiring within myself where I was, or where I had been, or what had I been doing. Twenty-two years and a half of my life had been spent in the service of sin and Satan. I was so terror-stricken that I trembled at the thought of having sinned against such an almighty Being; and what a wonder that He had not cut me off from the earth and sent me, for my sins, down to hell! Very many things darted through my mind in a very short space of time. My thoughts seemed to be directed to several old men I knew, who had spent their lives in sin, and were so hardened that they seemed to have no concern about their souls or eternity. "Oh," thought I, "how awful my case, if I should be permitted to do the same! O what a wonder that I am spared. How sparing and long-forbearing hath the Lord been to such an unworthy wretch!"

Now what shall we see in the Shulamite, but as it were

the company of two armies? For thus it seemed with me when I said, "I will begin to seek the Lord and the forgiveness of my sins." Then something seemed to say within, "For you to pretend to reform and seek the Lord would only aggravate your crime, and cause the Lord to be more angry with you; and your case would be worse than ever. Look at your former vows and promises that you have made so many times and always broken; it is nothing but mockery to make any attempt to do such a thing." But the other party replied, "Although you have failed of fulfilment hitherto, the cause was that your vows were made in your own strength, trusting to your own wisdom, not asking the Lord for grace, strength, and will to forsake your sins and walk consistently; thus you have always failed." Now this brought me to seek the Lord and His pardoning mercy by private prayer and searching the Scriptures. A persuasion was wrought in me that the Lord did favour His people with a knowledge of their sins being forgiven; and it was the pursuit of my mind to find pardon and peace with God, against whom I had so awfully sinned; and my earnest desire was to know that I was safe for eternity. O the thought of death and the day of judgment and a never-ending eternity, and not to find pardon—how awful the thought!

Now I began in earnest to seek to please God and to procure pardon and peace by forsaking such things as I thought were wrong, and doing what I thought was right, and by searching the Scriptures, and shutting myself in my bedroom to pray for the pardon of my sins. I thought that I must repent, and be in great dread and terror, and fast, and do many things to gain the notice and favour of the Almighty before He would pardon me, or give me any assurance of safety. So I became very diligent in attending to various things; and by reading the Scriptures, such passages as, "Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you," I was much encouraged, and was raised to rejoice in hope that the Lord had begun to help me to believe that what was written would certainly be fulfilled. But as the longed-for pardon and assurance were not yet obtained, it occurred to my mind that my repentance was not deep enough to move the Lord to have mercy upon me and grant me pardon. And another thing stung me. Although I had for some time fallen on my knees in private, I was shy of doing

so in the presence of my wife. I had seen or heard, "Who-soever therefore shall be ashamed of Me and of My words, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." This sentence that He would be ashamed of me in the presence of the holy angels shook me to the very heart! "O, I am not enough in earnest! O that I could feel heartfelt sorrow! O that my eyes did run with tears of repentance! Then the Lord would surely take notice and show me pity and pardon." I ventured to let my wife know that I was trying to please God and seeking forgiveness, by reading a form of prayer leaning on the bed. Then this shame troubled me again; then I would kneel on a box with one knee. That would not do long, for the words, "He that is ashamed of Me"—still followed me, till I was obliged to fall down in the presence of my wife, as I did in private. But I could not feel or find that my sins were forgiven; therefore I was troubled because I feared I had not trouble enough to move the Almighty to pity; as it was that which I thought would procure my pardon. Then I would double my diligence—I would fast once or twice in the week. I would go home at dinner-time, and instead of sitting down to my dinner, go up to my room and cry to the Lord to give me repentance. "O Lord, I cannot repent! O Lord, if my repentance is not deep enough, do make it deeper; let me suffer anything in this life so that I may be safe for eternity!" During this time I was sometimes "holpen with a little help," even to rejoice in hope, from such scriptures as, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." I was sure the Lord could not lie; therefore, if I was really hungering and thirsting, I rejoiced in hope that I should sometime find the blessing.

(To be continued.)

Suppose we should resolve with great earnestness, diligence, watchfulness, to abide in duties, in inward duties, to watch over our hearts,—which is required of us; yet if in so doing we are taken off thereby from frequent actings of faith upon Christ, as the spring of our life, we shall decay under all our endeavours, watchfulness, and multiplication of duties.—*J. Owen, D.D.*

REDEMPTION.

AN EXTRACT. BY JOSEPH SWAIN.

HIGH in the heav'n of heavens JEHOVAH sat,
 With all His plan of Justice, Love, and Grace
 At once before His eye. Man's shameful Fall
 He mark'd ; and heard the voice of rectitude
 That call'd for vengeance on the rebel's head.—
 He heard, and own'd the justice of the claim.
 But casting back a retrospective glance
 On His eternal counsels, in the book
 Of His decrees unalterable, the names
 Of millions of the human race appear'd,
 Chosen by sovereign Love to be redeem'd,
 And call'd, and purifi'd, and set apart
 To magnify on earth His holy name ;
 Till He to glory should receive them up,
 To be for ever with and like Himself.
 Their names He read in everlasting lines
 Of sovereign Love, deep on His heart engraved,
 And written on the palms of both His hands
 In living characters ; from which His eye
 He turns not once, in all the various scenes
 Of joy and sorrow, soul-expanding hope,
 And heart-depressing fear, sickness and health,
 Through which on earth He causes them to pass ;
 But still remembers* they were ev'ry one,
 Before the morning stars together sang
 Or yet angelic harp was heard in heaven,
 ' Predestinated from eternity,
 To be to all eternity conform'd
 To the bright image of His equal Son.†
 This many a happy saint since then has seen,
 Clear as a sun-beam, in the sacred page,
 With holy love and admiration fill'd,
 With eyes fast flowing and a melting heart.
 All these of His own will,‡ not their desert,
 Were to Himself united close by love
 Immutable : all THESE, but not all MEN.
 And though by sin His image from the hearts
 Of His elect was every feature lost,

* Isa. xlv. 21. † Rom. viii. 29, 30. ‡ Jam. i. 13.

And those He loved were plunged as deep in guilt
 As others were, with whom alike they fell ;
 And though as strong propensity they feel
 As others, to infringe the law of God ;
 Jehovah's own eternal, equal Son,
 Pure as His Father, and with Him alike
 Almighty to create or to destroy,
 By covenant-engagement undertook
 Their ransom from the slavish chains of sin,
 And from the curse of God's avenging law.

(To be continued).

DESIRES NOT HID FROM THE LORD.

“ Lord, all my desire is before Thee: and my groaning is not hid from Thee.”—PSALM xxxviii. 9.

It is clear that the trouble of the psalmist is *sin*. If ours is the same, what a mercy for us! He could not put it aside, as if it were low, and mean, and legal to think about it. It stuck to him, was always with him; he said so, “ My sin is ever before me; ” he could not forget it. As a man afflicted with sore pain in the multitude of his bones could not forget his pain, so a sinner convinced of his sin is not able to forget it, to throw it aside. The psalmist felt he was like to be destroyed by it. He says, “ Mine iniquities are gone over mine head; as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me.” And if he stumbled under such a load, how could he rise again? His sin was loathsome to him, and he used language that a man in this day would scarcely dare to use in a congregation: “ My wounds stink, and are corrupt, because of my foolishness.” This was his case, and not an easy one. But there was one thing with him—that was *prayer*. If we can pray, there is hope in our end. God set before him an open door. Let us not disregard that mercy, if we have it; as we intently regard our sin. When we can pray, the Lord help us to regard that privilege. There is a Door set before the people of God in their affliction by sin and all other things. It is that Door which they enter by faith, described by Christ Himself: “ I am the Door.” “ No man cometh to the Father but by Me ”—the Door of access to God. We shall never see the Father but through Christ, never know the Father's

love but in Christ, never receive the forgiveness of sins but the same way.

So the psalmist found himself at this business—*prayer*. He said he would confess his sin, and be sorry for it: "I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin"—and that not because it was to be punished, but because it was against God, and was an evil. How do we regard sin? Dead people may be sorry they have sinned, because it brings punishment. But those souls in whom is the life of grace, are sorry they are sinners, because sin is contrary to God's nature. It was a dreadful disease this man had; for sin is an evil. There is no evil but this; strictly it is the only evil there is; and the pain of sin is the worst pain. Yet some think their afflictions and outward trials the worst, till God comes and teaches them the nature of sin. Then they say, "There is nothing evil but this." It looked an incurable thing to the psalmist. It was a rankling thing; there was poison in it. He says, "My loins are filled with a loathsome disease: and there is no soundness in my flesh." He goes on in this way of deprecating this evil thing; he said his strength was failing, he was feeble and sore broken; that he would confess it all, and he went forward in this business. If we were more diligent in confessing our sins, there would more peace come to us.

I believe there is sometimes a bar between a child of God and peace; and the want is the want of an honest, gracious principle to make a clear confession before God of the sin that is on the spirit, that is before the eye, that is burdening the conscience. O, the excuses of nature are many! its subtilty is great, the Adamic spirit is strong; you will be sure to find excuses. "The woman Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." But when God kills that spirit, and blessed be His name He has done so over and over again in some of us, we can go and say, "There is no soundness in my flesh. . . . My wounds stink, and are corrupt, because of my foolishness." "My sin is ever before me; my transgressions—my oversteppings, my evil ways, these are before me." May we be as diligent as we can in confessing our sins. "Only acknowledge thine iniquity"—this is God's word. Some may think they are always doing it, because they can say, "We know we are sinners;" but that is not it. It is not a question of common knowledge.

Who would deny they are sinners? But the thing is, when God's light is on our spirits, and we go back in the working of an enlightened understanding, what we see there sickens us; then we go deep into the present workings of our nature, and what we see there, it sickens us. Talk about faith, we see we are near Atheism; talk of love, we see we are full of enmity; of spirituality, we have not a scrap of it; and under this light we go on confessing our sins. To some it may look a gloomy, bondaging thing; but it is the way to liberty and a free spirit before God. If choice were mine now, I would choose to live before Him deprecating what I am, what I have been, and what I would be to-day, if left to myself. O confess, confess, confess! It will be well, sinner.

In the midst of all this exercise the psalmist breaks out in the language of the text: "Lord, all my desire is before Thee: and my groaning is not hid from Thee." "I am sincere in what I have confessed myself to be; but, Lord, all my desire is before Thee, and my groaning is not hid from Thee." I think the man went a long way out of himself then; he was not living in bondage and corruption then, but was looking beyond what he felt in himself. There was a bubbling, an upspringing; and he said, "Lord." Can we address His holy Majesty thus, "Lord"? Of old Christ said many should come to him at last, saying, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name, and taught in Thy streets?" But the psalmist says nothing about all that; he comes here, "Lord, all my desire is before Thee; and my groaning is not hid from Thee." This word teaches us that he saw a remedy for his disease, and after that remedy his desires ran. He could set them out before God. Why, sinner, it makes you, as you get a sight of it, free to pour out your heart before Him. The sight of a remedy is a great and grand sight for a diseased soul. Now, in other language there is the same thing in Paul's experience expressed by him: "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." That is not common to-day, it never has been, nor will be, among fallen men; but it is a great thing to come to. O, to look on all we are, and have been, and have done, and say, "My best is as dung; I esteem my best to be nothing better!" What then? Is the man left there? No. There is an object he sees before him—a *righteousness* better than any he could have of his own. He sees a

righteousness divine, a union with Christ to be had, and his desire is before the Lord—"O to be found in Him!" "That I may win Christ, and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." He sees these mercies, and says, "I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." That following after is desiring, believing, praying. So says the psalmist in another Psalm, "My soul followeth hard after Thee." And this brings me back to what I am constantly trying to set forth, and want for myself—the remedy. Hart says,

"Death's within thee, all about thee,
But the remedy's without thee;
See it in *the Saviour's blood!*"

O what a remedy it is! God give me grace to speak of it! It is so high, so deep, so broad, so wonderful and glorious, it needs a tongue moved by the Holy Ghost to speak of it rightly.

"Lord, all my desire is before Thee"—first, my desire for *the cleansing blood of Christ*. Which would one taught of God rather do—cleanse himself by his own efforts and good works, or wait for the blood of Christ to cleanse him from all sin? That is the point.

"Let the water and the blood
From Thy pierced side which flow'd,
Be of sin the double cure,
Cleanse me from its guilt and power."

Ah,

"The blood of Christ, a precious blood,
Cleanses from all sin—doubt it not;
And reconciles the soul to God
From every folly, every fault."

Why, sinner, you must sink to hell without it—you *must*. But it would not make any difference to the efficacy and virtue of this blood, if your sin were a thousand times more than it is now. There is a desire in the troubled soul for the blood of Christ; there is an esteem for it that, in the nature of it, resembles the esteem the Father has for it. The Father's esteem is of this kind. He looks on it not only as the blood of His only begotten Son in our nature, but as that which satisfies justice on behalf of the sinner. He regards it as that which renders a sinner

“ . . . fit with Christ to feast,
And be the guest of God.”

And as the Father esteems it, so does faith. If we see what the blood of Christ can do, it will carry us on, and carry us out of ourselves: “Lord, I would not cleanse myself; do Thou cleanse me.” It is no easy thing to pray with a sense of sin; but God sets this remedy before us, and says, “Pray, poor sinner.” “Thus saith the Lord God, I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them” (Eze. xxxvi. 36). “Men ought always to pray, and not to faint.”

Prayer is setting out the desires of the soul: “Lord, I would fain be holy;” and there is but one way of being so. Do not be too anxious to be religious, poor soul. You may think I ought not to say so, but there is no religion worth having but that which brings in a sinner’s acceptance with God, which gives purity of conscience, ground of hope, and the sweetest comfort. The blood of Jesus Christ—that is the plea, the ground, the way. We must come to this, “Lord, I have no soundness in me; Thou canst give it. I am corrupt; Thou canst make me incorrupt. I am full of sores, and my loins are filled with a loathsome disease; Thou canst heal me, and make me perfectly whole by the blood of Jesus Christ.” Well, that blessed remedy that God Himself has prepared, and filled a fountain with, is what the Holy Ghost sets before faith. Blessed be God for a sight of it! I know of nothing that gives a sinner courage to pray like this. One may say, “I have courage.” But let us look at it. “Well, forty years ago I got some hints God was good; and I am not going to give that up or be put out of countenance by anything I may feel now.” Be it so; but I would like to pull away your confidence in respect of your use of it. Anything that gives you courage but the blood of Christ, when you feel sin present, will let you through. A bad use of your experience, if it is a true one, God will never honour. This is what gives courage: “They shall look on Me whom they have *pierced*.” That gives power to the faint, draws the soul near, gives strength not to give in, but to press the case.

“Urge thy claim through all unfitness;
Sue it out, spurning doubt;
The Holy Ghost’s thy Witness.”

That is the first thing to draw our attention—the cure that can come to a sinner by the blood of Jesus Christ.

The second thing I want to mention is, the desire the Holy Ghost gives for *union with Christ*. There is nothing that will expel the loathsome disease of sin but the life of Christ communicated to the soul. Nothing will give us a sound conscience but this; nothing can give us a healthy exercise, healthy feelings, strong faith, pure affections, a will to do what God requires, but this—union with the Lamb, and the powerful life of grace flowing from Him into our hearts. As the sap flows from the root of the vine into the branches, so the life of grace in Christ must flow into our souls to give us soundness. The soundness consists in these things—a sense of acceptance with God; the removal of guilt, of the law, the breaking of the power of sin, and destroying its dominion; His bringing us from the great distance we are at from Him, and from the bondage we feel to be in, and making us nigh by the blood of Christ. That will be soundness indeed; and every one knows it who has had a sense of being received by Christ. “This Man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.” Could we, thus blessed, feel anything but spiritual life and vigour? No. And is it not a warm desire that goes out after this union and healing; “Lord, all my desire is before Thee”? It is like being at home, to be so near the fountain that the soul realises the flow of it; or to be so exposed to the sun that we are warmed and cheered by its rays. When far off, we have some perception that that would give us health. All the soul’s health, and sense of being right for eternity, comes this way—by the life flowing in through union with Christ. Therefore when a man sees this, it is with him just as when Paul said, “I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord . . . that I may win Christ, and be found in Him.”

(To be continued.)

The watch [on the heart] set by God’s fear, examineth all messengers that come in, all motions, all suggestions, all angels white and black: all rises, falls, ebbings and flowings of love, joy, desire, fear, sorrow, come under search and scrutiny: “Whence come ye? from heaven or hell?” It is time of war with the saints in this life; and then all cities keep watch, and strangers without a pass are examined, searched, and tried, what correspondence they have with the enemy.—*Lutherford*.

TURNING AGAIN TO THE LORD.

A MORNING READING BY JAMES BOURNE.

MARCH 3rd, 1841.—Jer. xxxi. 16: "Thus saith the Lord, Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears; for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy." This "work" is the work of God alluded to by Paul, where he says, "Be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. xv. 58). And what is it? Why, this: "I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus: Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised." "Thou hast checked me in many ways, brought my schemes to nought, and that for my sin. What a fool I have been! Turn Thou me, and I shall be turned, for Thou art the Lord my God." This is what I said even when I knew very little, going to Him and begging Him to help me, and saying that He could help me, and none else could. And this work is often very secret in the heart, and goes on when none see it.

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the city shall be built. . . . And the measuring line shall yet go forth," that is, the law. This is the way whereby God brings about this returning at first; He brings before us a broken law. See where R—— is, and the despair he feels, how full of self-accusations. "I have done despite to the Spirit of grace. I fear there is no hope." Now this is the way God takes to bring the soul to return to Him.

Do not think to return an easier way, and avoid this measuring line; for it is said, "Thus saith the Lord, We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace," &c. (Jer. xxx. 5—8). Some of you have forgotten your resting-place a long while, and God will certainly bring you back, but with weeping and supplications. For He takes notice of the long troubles and misery your evil ways have brought on you, and says, "Surely I have heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus."

Soon after I came to London I turned into the spirit of the world, and the Lord showed His displeasure at my folly, that I should be so foolish as for a bauble to forsake Him. He showed me that He sent for me to London not to make an independence, but to have union and fellowship with Jesus

Christ, and a religion not merely for time, but for eternity. And since that time my worldly occupations, which have led my heart aside, have been a source of continual misery; and yet the Holy Spirit has always, in the intervals of oppressive business, worked in my heart a returning spirit, though I have been constantly carried back by the power of temptation. Once when after Christmas I was going to the bank for my dividend, I thought of many ways not good in the sight of God which had attended my work, so that I could not but fear, looking on the money as the hire of a harlot. I begged of God to cleanse it, and my heart softened very much at the consideration of Him as my Father; so that with weeping I could not help saying as I went along, "My dear Father!" many times, and these words ran in my mind, "Thou shalt call Me, My Father, and shalt not turn away from Me" (Jer. iii. 19). I wanted to understand by them that the Lord would correct and chasten me, and not let sin have dominion over me; but I dare not say the Lord gave me power so to understand them; only I could not but feel them as an indication of His kindness. And a day or two after, whilst meditating on the words, "Thou art my strong Tower," I seemed cast into the mould of the words, so as to enter into the Lord Jesus Christ as into a tower of solid masonry; and this scripture picked up my heart, and encouraged my hope: "If thou shalt say in thine heart, These nations are more than I; how can I dispossess them? thou shalt not be afraid of them, but shalt well remember what the Lord thy God did unto Pharaoh and unto all Egypt"—and what He has done for thee—"whereby the Lord thy God brought thee out: so shall the Lord thy God do unto all the people of whom thou art afraid" (Deut. vii. 17—19).

God says, "Set thee up waymarks." If He has shown you mercy to-day, make a note of it or call it to mind in some way; for if you do not, you may lose it, and justly. It is not acting like a friend not to remember repeated acts of friendship. If they were fixed on your mind in this way, you would find them more in number than the hairs of your head, and Satan would not get over them so easily.

True faith, in all doubtings touching Christ, goes to Christ Himself for resolution, and will be satisfied from none but Christ.—*W. Dell.*

A SUFFERING SAVIOUR REVEALED.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—Let me tell you what a good Christmas I have had. On Christmas Day I felt comfortable all day during the services, but did not have the sweet hearing I have sometimes; and on Sunday night I went to bed calm and composed. I felt a sweet nearness on my knees, and got into bed feeling a desire to depart, and had a softness of heart the whole day, till 3 p.m. A. had gone to tea with some chapel friends, and I was left alone. I fastened the doors, and began to sing,

“Jesus, Lover of my soul;”

and my soul was full of heaven in a minute. I fell on to my knees, and Jesus Christ was with me of a truth—I thought I felt Him touch me. And oh (my tears of love run down as I write, at the remembrance of it), I saw His hands and His feet—

“Those blessed feet that once rude iron tore;”

and I began to sing again,

“Didst Thou for me, my Saviour, brave
The scoff, the scourge, the gall,
The nails, the thorns, the spear, the grave,
Whilst I deserved them all?”

And oh, I was as near heaven as I can be, till I enter in.

This lasted two hours; and a boy knocking at the door disturbed me. O brother, I did not know what to do; the boy would have thought me not myself, I am sure. I sat down [again], and said, “Blessed Jesus, art Thou gone?” O, I said, “Am I in the same house? am I the same man?” I felt altogether different. And then I was meditating on His glorious Person, and His glory seemed enhanced. I have often had sweet views of Him; but this has eclipsed them all. Last week I was sorrowful because I had not my loved one to share the season with me, after all the long years of mutual love. But my glorious ALL has removed every shade of sorrow, and filled my soul with joy and peace.

Will you wait till I can write to you again? Writing of this blessed overshadowing of Jesus Christ makes me indifferent to anything. I love Him with intense love, and I know He loves me, and He loves you. I have had sweet drawings out in prayer for you and others of God's dear servants. Give Him all your love; He is most worthy. Worthy is the Lamb!

J. TURTON.

Heydock, Dec. 27th, 1910.

CRUMBS FROM THE MASTER'S TABLE

FROM BOSTON'S "CROOK IN THE LOT," OR, "THE SOVEREIGNTY AND WISDOM OF GOD IN THE AFFLICTIONS OF MEN DISPLAYED."

(Continued from page 34.)

II. HAVING seen the crook itself, we are in the next place, to consider *God's making it*. And here is to be shown,
 1. *That it is of God's making.* 2. *How it is of His making.*
 3. *Why He makes it.*

1. That the crook in the lot, whatever it is, is *of God's making* appears from these three considerations:

First. It cannot be questioned but the crook in the lot, considered as a crook, is a penal evil, whatever it is for the matter thereof; that is, whether the thing in itself, its immediate cause and occasion, be sinful or not, it is certainly a punishment or affliction. Now, as it may be as such holily and justly brought on us by our sovereign Lord and Judge, so He expressly claims the doing or making of it, Amos iii. 6: "Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord has not done it?" Wherefore, since there can be no penal evil but of God's making, and the crook in the lot is such an evil, it is necessarily concluded to be of God's making.

Secondly. It is evident from the Scripture doctrine of divine Providence, that God brings about every man's lot, and all the parts thereof. He sits at the helm of human affairs, and turns them about whithersoever He listeth. "Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did He in heaven and earth, in the seas and all deep places" (Ps. cxxxv. 6). There is not anything whatsoever befalls us, without His overruling hand. The same providence that brought us out of the womb, bringeth us to, and fixeth us in, the condition and place allotted for us by Him who "hath determined the times, and the bounds of our habitation" (Acts xvii. 26). It overrules the smallest and most casual things about us, such as "hairs of our head falling on the ground" (Mat. x. 29, 30); "a lot cast into the lap" (Prov. xvi. 33). Yea, the free acts of our will, whereby we choose for ourselves; for even "the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water" (Prov. xxi. 1). And the whole steps we make, and which others make in reference to us; for "the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. x. 23). And this, whether these

steps causing the crook be deliberate and sinful ones, such as Joseph's brethren selling him into Egypt; or whether they be undesigned, such as man-slaughter, purely casual, as when one hewing wood, kills his neighbour with the head of the axe slipping from the helve, Deut. xix. 5. For there is a holy and wise Providence that governs the sinful and heedless actions of men, as a rider doth a lame horse, of whose halting, not he, but the horse's lameness, is the true and proper cause. Wherefore in the former of these cases, God is said to have sent Joseph into Egypt, Gen. xlv. 7, and in the latter, to deliver one into his neighbour's hand, Exod. xxi. 13.

Lastly. God has, by an eternal decree immovable as mountains of brass, Zec. vi. 1, appointed the whole of every one's lot, the crooked parts thereof as well as the straight. By the same eternal decree whereby the high and low parts of the earth, the mountains and the valleys, were appointed, are the heights and the depths, the prosperity and adversity, in the lot of the inhabitants thereof determined; and they are brought about in time, in a perfect agreeableness thereto.

The mystery of Providence in the government of the world is, in all the parts thereof, the building reared up of God in exact conformity to the plan in His decree, "Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will" (Eph. i. 11). So that there is never a crook in one's lot but may be run up to this original. Hereof Job piously sets us an example in his own case, Job xviii. 13, 14: "He is in one mind, and who can turn Him? and what His soul desireth, even that He doth. For He performeth the thing that is appointed for me; and many such things are with Him."

2. That we may see *how the crook in the lot is of God's making*, we must distinguish between pure, sinless crooks, and impure, sinful ones.

First. There are pure and sinless crooks; which are mere afflictions, cleanly crosses, grievous indeed, but not defiling. Such was Lazarus's poverty, Rachel's barrenness, Leah's tender eyes, the blindness of the man who had been so from his birth, John ix. 1. Now, the crooks of this kind are of God's making by the efficacy of His power directly bringing them to pass, and causing them to be. He is the Maker of the poor, Prov. xvii. 5: "Whoso mocketh the poor, reproacheth his Maker;" that is, reproacheth God who made him poor, according to that, 1 Sam. ii. 7, "The Lord maketh poor."

It is He that hath the key of the womb, and as He sees meet, shuts it, 1 Sam. i. 5, or opens it, Gen. xxix. 31. And it is "He that formeth the eyes," Psa. xciv. 9. And the man was "born blind, that the works of God should be made manifest in him" (John ix. 3). Therefore He saith to Moses, Ex. iv. 11: "Who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? Have not I, the Lord?" Such crooks in the lot are of God's making in the most ample sense, and in their full comprehension, being the direct effects of His agency, as well as the heavens and the earth.

Secondly. There are impure, sinful crooks, which in their own nature are sins as well as afflictions, defiling as well as grievous. Such was the crook in David's lot through his family disorders—the defiling of Tamar, the murder of Amnon, the rebellion of Absalom, all of them unnatural. Of the same kind was that made in Job's lot by the Sabeans and Chaldeans, taking away his substance and slaying his servants. As these were the afflictions of David and Job respectively, so they were the sins of the actors, the unhappy instruments thereof. Thus one and the same thing may be to one a heinous sin, defiling and laying him under guilt, and to another an affliction, laying him under suffering only. Now, the crooks of this kind are not of God's making in the same latitude as those of the former: for He neither puts evil in the hearts of any, nor stirreth up to it: "He cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man" (James i. 13). But they are of His making by His holy permission of them, powerful bounding of them, and wise overruling of them to some good end.

1st. He holily permits them, suffering men "to walk in their own ways" (Acts xiv. 16). Though He is not the Author of those sinful crooks, causing them to be by the efficacy of His power: yet if He did not permit them, willing not to hinder them, they could not be at all: for He "shutteth and no man openeth" (Rev. iii. 7). But He justly withholdeth His grace which the sinner doth not desire, takes off the restraint under which he is uneasy; and since the sinner will be gone, lays the reins on his neck, and leaves him to the swing of his lust. Hos. iv. 17: "Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone." Ps. lxxxix. 11, 12: "Israel would none of Me: so I gave them up unto their own hearts' lusts." In which unhappy situation the sinful crook doth

from the sinner's own proper motion, naturally and infallibly follow; even as water runs down a hill, wherever there is a gap left open before it. So in these circumstances, Israel "walked in their own counsels" (ver. 12). And thus this kind of crook is of God's making, as a just Judge, punishing the sufferer by it. This view of the matter silenced David under Shimei's cursings, 2 Sam. xvi. 10, 11: "Let him alone, and let him curse; for the Lord hath bidden him."

2dly. He powerfully bounds them, Ps. lxxvi. 10: "The remainder of wrath" (that is, the creature's wrath) "Thou shalt restrain." Did not God bound these crooks, howsoever sore they are in anyone's case, they would be yet sorer. But He says to the sinful instrument, as He said to the sea, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." He lays a restraining band on him, that he cannot go one step farther in the way his impetuous lust drives, than He sees meet to permit. Hence it comes to pass that the crook of this kind is neither more nor less, but just as great as He by His powerful bounding makes it to be. An eminent instance hereof we have in the case of Job, whose lot was crooked through a peculiar agency of the devil; but even to that great sinner God set a bound in the case: "The Lord said unto Satan, Behold all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand" (Job i. 12). Now, Satan went the full length of the bound, leaving nothing within the compass thereof untouched, which he saw could make for his purpose, ver. 18, 19. But he could by no means move one step beyond it, to carry his point, which he could not gain within it. And therefore, to make the trial greater and the crook sorer, nothing remained but that the bound set should be removed, and the sphere of his agency enlarged; for which cause he saith, "But touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse Thee to Thy face" (chap. ii. 5); and it being removed accordingly, but withal a new one set, ver. 6: "Behold he is in thine hand, but save his life;" the crook was carried to the utmost that the new bound would permit, in a consistency with his design of bringing Job to blaspheme: "Satan smote him with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto the crown of his head" (ver. 7). And had it not been for this bound securing Job's life, he, after finding this attempt unsuccessful too, had doubtless despatched him at once.

3dly. He wisely overrules them to some good purpose, becoming the divine perfections. While the sinful instrument hath an ill design in the crook caused by him, God directs it to a holy and good end. In the disorders of David's family, Amnon's design was to gratify a brutish lust; Absalom's, to glut himself with revenge, and to satisfy his pride and ambition; but God meant thereby to punish David for his sin in the matter of Uriah. In the crook made in Job's lot by Satan, and the Sabeans and Chaldeans his instruments, Satan's design was to cause Job to blaspheme, and theirs to gratify their covetousness: but God had another design therein becoming Himself, namely, to manifest Job's sincerity and uprightness. Did not He wisely and powerfully overrule these crooks made in men's lot, no good could come out of them; but He always overrules them so as to fulfil His own holy purposes thereby (howbeit the sinner meaneth not so): for His designs cannot miscarry, His "counsel shall stand" (Isa. xlv. 10). So the sinful crook is, by the overruling hand of God, turned about to His own glory and His people's good in the end; according to the word, Prov. xvi. 4: "The Lord hath made all things for Himself." Rom. viii. 28: "All things work together for good to them that love God." Thus Haman's plot for the destruction of the Jews "was turned to the contrary" (Est. ix. 1). And the crook made in Joseph's lot by his own brethren selling him into Egypt, though it was on their part most sinful and of a most mischievous design, yet as it was of God's making, by His holy permission, powerful bounding, and wisely overruling it, had an issue well becoming the divine wisdom and goodness; both of which Joseph notices to them, Gen. l. 20: "As for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive."

3. It remains to inquire, *why God makes a crook in one's lot*. And this is to be cleared by discovering the design of that dispensation: a matter which it concerns every one to know, and carefully to notice, in order to a Christian improvement of the crook in his lot. The design thereof seems to be, chiefly, sevenfold.

First. *The trial of one's state, whether one is in the state of grace or not; whether a sincere Christian, or a hypocrite.* Though every affliction is trying, yet here I conceive lies the

main providential trial a man is brought into, with reference to his state; forasmuch as the crook in the lot being a matter of a continued course, one has occasion to open and show himself again and again in the same thing; whence it comes to pass that it ministers ground for a decision in that momentous point. It was plainly on this foundation that the trial of Job's state was put. The question was, whether Job was an upright and sincere servant of God, as God Himself testified of him; or but a mercenary one, a hypocrite, as Satan alleged against him. And the trial hereof was put upon the crook to be made in his lot, Job i. 8—12, and ii. 3—6. Accordingly, that which all his friends, save Elihu, the last speaker, did in their reasonings with him under his trial aim at, was to prove him a hypocrite; Satan thus making use of these good men for gaining his point. As God made trial of Israel in the wilderness, for the land of Caanan, by a train of afflicting dispensations, which Caleb and Joshua bearing strenuously, were declared meet to enter the promised land, as having followed the Lord fully; while others being tired out with them, their carcasses fell in the wilderness: so He makes trial of men for heaven by the crook in their lot. If one can stand that test, he is manifested to be a saint, a sincere servant of God, as Job was proved to be; if not, he is but a hypocrite: he cannot stand the test of the crook in his lot, but goes away like dross in God's furnace. A melancholy instance of which we have in that man of honour and wealth who, with high pretences of religion arising from a principle of moral seriousness, addressed himself to our Saviour, to know what he should do that he might inherit eternal life, Mark x. 17—22. Our Saviour, to discover the man to himself, makes a crook in his lot where all along before it had stood even, obliging him, by a probatory command, to sell and give away all that he had, and follow Him, ver. 21. "Sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and come, take up the cross, and follow Me." Hereby he was that moment, in the court of conscience, stript of his great possessions; so that henceforth he could no longer keep them with a good conscience, as he might have done before. The man instantly felt the smart of this crook made in his lot; "he was sad at that saying," ver. 22; that is, immediately upon the hearing of it, being struck with pain, disorder, and confusion of mind, his countenance changed, became cloudy

and lowering, as the same word is used, Mat. xvi. 3. He could not stand the test of that crook; he could by no means submit his lot to God in that point, but behoved to have it, at any rate, according to his own mind. So he "went away grieved, for he had great possessions." He went away from Christ back to his plentiful estate; and though with a pained and sorrowful heart, sat him down again on it a violent possessor before the Lord, thwarting the divine order. And there is no appearance that ever this order was revoked, or that ever he came to a better temper in reference thereunto.

Secondly. *Excitation to duty, weaning one from this world, and prompting him to look after the happiness of the other world.* Many have been beholden to the crook in their lot for that ever they came to themselves, settled, and turned serious. Going for a time like a wild ass used to the wilderness, scorning to be turned, their foot hath slid in due time; and a crook being thereby made in their lot, their mouth hath come wherein they have been caught, Jer. ii. 24. Thus was the prodigal brought to himself, and obliged to entertain thoughts of returning unto his father, Luke xv. 17. The crook in their lot convinces them at length that here is not their rest. Finding still a pricking thorn of uneasiness, whensoever they lay down their head where they would fain take rest in the creature, and that they are obliged to lift it again, they are brought to conclude there is no hope from that quarter, and begin to cast about for rest another way; so it makes them errands to God, which they had not before; forasmuch as they feel a need of the comforts of the other world, to which their mouths were out of taste, while their lot stood even to their mind. Wherefore, whatever use we make of the crook in our lot, the voice of it is, "Arise ye and depart; this is not your rest." And it is surely that which, of all means of mortification, of the afflictive kind, doth most deaden a real Christian to this life and world.

Thirdly. *Conviction of sin.* As when one walking heedlessly is suddenly taken ill of a lameness: his going halting the rest of his way convinces him of having made a wrong step; and every new, painful step brings it afresh to his mind: so God makes a crook in one's lot, to convince him of some false step he hath made, or course he hath taken. What the sinner would otherwise be apt to overlook, forget, or think light of, is by this means recalled to mind, set before

him as an evil and bitter thing, and kept in remembrance, that his heart may every now and then bleed for it afresh. Thus, by the crook, men's sins find them out to their conviction, "as the thief is ashamed when he is found," Num. xxxii. 23; Jer. ii. 26. The which Joseph's brethren do feelingly express, under the crook made in their lot in Egypt, Gen. xlii. 21: "We are verily guilty concerning our brother;" chap. xliv. 16. "God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants." The crook in the lot doth usually, in its nature or circumstances, so naturally refer to the false step or course that it serves for a providential memorial of it, bringing the sin, though of an old date, fresh to remembrance, and for a badge of the sinner's folly, in word or deed, to keep it ever before him. When Jacob found Leah, through Laban's unfair dealing, palmed upon him for Rachel, how could he miss of a stinging remembrance of the cheat he had, seven years at least before, put on his own father, pretending himself to be Esau? Gen. xxvii. 19. How could it miss of galling him occasionally afterwards during the course of the marriage? He had imposed on his father the younger brother for the elder; and Laban imposed on him the elder sister for the younger. The dimness of Isaac's eyes favoured the former cheat; and the darkness of the evening did as much favour the latter. So he behaved to say, as Adonibezek in another case, Jud. i. 7: "As I have done, so God hath requited me." In like manner, Rachel dying in childbirth, could hardly avoid a melancholy reflection on her rash and passionate expression, mentioned Gen. xxx. 1: "Give me children, or else I die." Even holy Job read, in the crook of his lot, some false steps he had made in his youth many years before, Job xiii. 26: "Thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth."

Fourthly. *Correction, or punishment for sin.* In nothing more than in the crook of the lot is that word verified, Jer. ii. 19. "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee." God may, for a time, wink at one's sin, which afterward He will set a brand of His indignation upon, in crooking the sinner's lot, as He did in the case of Jacob and of Rachel, mentioned before. Though the sin was a passing action, or a course of no long continuance, the mark of the divine displeasure for it, set on the

sinner in the crook of his lot, may pain him long and sore, that by repeated experience he may know what an evil and bitter thing it was. David's killing Uriah by the sword of the Ammonites was soon over; but for that cause the sword never departed from his house (2 Sam. xii. 10). Gehazi quickly obtained two bags of money from Naaman in the way of falsehood and lying; but as a lasting mark of the divine indignation against the profane trick, he got withal a leprosy which clave to him while he lived, and to his posterity after him, 2 Kings v. 27. This may be the case as well where the sin is pardoned as to the guilt of eternal wrath, as where it is not. And one may have confessed and sincerely repented of that sin which yet shall make him go halting to the grave, though it cannot carry him to hell. A man's person may be accepted in the Beloved, who yet hath a particular badge of the divine displeasure, with his sin hung upon him in the crook of his lot, Ps. xcix. 8: "Thou wast a God that forgavest them, though Thou tookest vengeance on their inventions."

(To be continued.)

Obituary.

EMMA LEES, of Nottingham, on October 1st, 1910, aged 71 years, formerly for many years the chapel keeper at Chaucer Street.

I believe she was brought under some concern about eternal things in early life, she being at that time in the Church of England. During the illness of her father, who died in 1879, the Lord deepened the work of grace. At the prospect of his decease she was greatly troubled regarding her future temporal support. While in this state these words were distinctly spoken to her, "Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." She looked round to see if any one was near, when the words were repeated. She then went outside the house to see if any person was there, when the words were spoken again. It was then she realised that the Lord had spoken to her; and this greatly comforted and supported her. Soon after, she came to Nottingham, but found the pathway one of much tribulation; yet she proved the above promise true in her trying

experience. She was led to Chaucer Street Chapel. At the time she entered it Mr. Coughtry was preaching; and the word being made a blessing to her, she resolved to continue to meet amongst the people there; saying in the language of Ruth, "This people shall be my people, and their God my God."

During the last few years of her life, the Holy Spirit gave her a deeper knowledge of her own vileness, and also of His superabounding grace; and about a year ago she was brought out into the liberty of the sons of God. She told some of the friends about this time that she now felt her sins were pardoned, and that she could say for the first time in her life, "*My Lord and my God.*" In conversation with her at this time we could discover how her mind had expanded, and what a clear insight she had into some of the deep things of God. Many parts of the sacred Word she had not understood were now opened to her spiritual understanding, while the Holy Spirit of God revealed to her her own interest in those precious truths. Many found it sweet and profitable to be in her company at this season. Hymn 273 was much blessed to her then; particularly the lines:

"All thy wastes I will repair;
Thou shalt be rebuilt anew;
And in thee it shall appear,
What the God of love can do."

Also Hymns 704 and 707.

The following were some of the remarks she made to the writer during this favoured season. "I am getting near to the land which is very far off." "I am a vile sinner, and this troubles me." "I have for many, many years been looking to the one Foundation as my only hope; but now I *feel* to be resting upon it." "I have had a glimpse of His dear face." "I feel that it will be well with me."

"There shall I see His face,
And never, never sin;
But from the river of His grace,
Drink endless pleasures in."

"The words that He speaks, they are spirit and they are life."
"It is life eternal to know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent."

On one occasion, after I had spent a few minutes with her in prayer, she broke out in a rapturous praise, saying,

“Hallelujah, Hallelujah! The Lord God omnipotent reigneth!”

Soon after this her joys declined; and Satan was permitted at times to harass her mind, which brought her into deep distress and darkness; but the Lord did not leave her entirely, and after a time she was again brought into a more comfortable frame of mind.

During her last few days her mind was kept calm, although her sufferings were great. Psalms lxi. and lxii. were much blessed to her. She said, “O that I had the pinions of a dove! I would fly away, and be at rest.” A friend remarked, “And be for ever free from suffering and sorrow.” With much emphasis she replied, “Yes, and be free from sin; and that’s the best of all.” She frequently quoted the last two lines of hymn 162. She often begged the Lord for patience, which she manifested particularly at the last; and thus her ransomed spirit passed away to be “for ever with the Lord.”

H. T. STONELAKE.

EPHRAIM STONE, died at Avebury, Wilts, Aug. 15th, 1910, aged 75 years. The following is his own testimony:

“I was born at Haxon, Netheravon, Wilts, Dec. 6th, 1834. When thirteen years of age I was employed as shepherd boy, and for some years did not attend any place of worship. But I believe the Lord was with me from a child; for I was not without stings of conscience. But I was ignorant of the way of salvation, and tried to merit heaven by my own works, but was led to see that was a sandy foundation. Oh what a mercy I was not cut down as a cumberer of the ground! But the Lord will have mercy on whom He will have mercy. From reading Matthew xii. 36, 37, I was kept from using many idle words I had been in the habit of doing. A heavy law-work now began on my soul. I was tempted to put an end to my life, which the Lord mercifully prevented. I was afraid to close my eyes in sleep, lest I should wake up in hell. At times I heard the gospel with much sweetness; yet it pleased the Lord that I should not be delivered under the preached word. It pleased Him to meet me one morning as I was going to my work, and give me such a sweet feeling that I could not forget it, by the application of these lines:

“Thy soul with tempest may be toss’d,
And Satan sorely thrust;

Yet sure no soul shall e'er be lost,
Who makes the Lord his trust."

This caused me to bless and praise the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I was baptised by Mr. J. Strong, of Devizes, June 15th, 1879, and joined the church at Market Lavington, Wilts.

In 1880 the Lord was pleased to afflict my wife, and there seemed little hope of her recovery; but she was restored again. For eleven Sunday mornings I was much favoured with nearness and sweetness in prayer; I was melted in love and tears. But new trials were in store. I was afflicted for seventeen weeks, but so comforted with many sweet promises, I did not wish to get better; fearing if I went into the world again, I should lose the enjoyment of it. After this we were obliged to move, to earn the bread that perisheth; and went to Compton Bassett, near Calne, for a short time; and from there we moved into the chapel house, Calne. I was very tried in providence, which was a trial for faith, and brought much wrestling with the Lord in prayer. In this trial my wife's faith got low. She met me at the door, and said, "Now what have you brought us to?" I said, "Never mind, mother; the Lord will appear." I left her, and went into the back yard pleading with my God; and before I returned, a boy knocked at the door, having a note for us, and in it a ten-shilling piece. The writing it contained was, "The gold and the silver are the Lord's"; which broke us down, and we fell on our knees to thank and praise the God of all our mercies. I got another situation near Allington, but lost that through affliction; and the last I had was at Beckhampton, near Avebury, where I took a chill in 1895, which was followed with dropsy in the legs."

In process of time our friend's affliction affected his mental power, so that he could not converse on spiritual things, but at short intervals. He was kept very humble and free from murmuring; and not long before he departed, the Lord applied these words: "Saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation." He said, "What can I have more blessed?" Another time these words were sweet to him, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love," &c. In health and in sickness our friend was resting on the finished work of Christ.

W. HALE.

Our beloved sister, SARAH FULLER, after months of much suffering, passed peacefully away in her sleep, June 14th, 1910, in her 80th year.

She was convinced of sin very early in life, and thought when old enough she would go into a convent, that she might lead a holy life. But God, whose thoughts are higher than ours, led her about, and instructed her out of His Word. In 1848, at the age of eighteen, she left home; and in much soul trouble moved about till the year 1855. She went to to live at Cambridge, and became acquainted with a godly old lady who took her to Hope Chapel, where she heard the gospel preached; and the Holy Spirit was pleased to deepen the work of grace in her soul. While at Cambridge I visited her; and the lady whom she lived with asked me what was the matter, for when she was in her own room she was always praying, and seemed in trouble. But in due time she was brought out of legal bondage into gospel peace, and was baptised by Mr. Warburton, of Southhill, in the year 1861, and had fellowship with the people. Being a woman of discernment, she searched the Scriptures, and could set to her seal that God is true, and had sweet assurance that she was united to the living Head, the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the year 1864 we lost a dear brother, who was killed instantly, leaving a widow and four children. This was a great sorrow to her. Besides, out of her small earnings she had to spend a great part towards the support of the family. This made many errands to a throne of grace, and brought her into much soul trouble again; not only on her own account—but also about the state of her dear departed brother; when this word was whispered into her heart: "What ye know not now ye shall know hereafter." She said it must have come from the Lord, as it humbled her at the feet of Jesus. (My father had had a letter from our brother a few weeks before he died, telling him he was in soul trouble, and begging him to pray for him.) After this she went to live at Northampton, where she had another severe trial, and this word was given to her, Isa. xxxiii. 16: "He shall dwell on high; his place of defence shall be the munition of rocks: bread shall be given him, and his water shall be sure." She indeed proved it to be a path of tribulation, having many providential trials, until she went to live at Bewerley Hall. In this matter she was much tried, as

there was no gospel near ; but the Lord gave her this word, Isa. xvi. 4 : " Let Mine outcasts dwell with thee, Moab ; " and fulfilled them, for she stayed with the family seventeen years. During this time she had two severe illnesses, and once she dislocated her shoulder ; and each time the lady ordered she should be carefully nursed and medically attended, till she was quite restored ; as she was valued for her uprightness. Her hope was built on the eternal and everlasting love of God.

When she began to feel her strength fail, in her 71st year, she went to live with our sister, Mrs. Beall, at Newcastle-on-Tyne. While there another heavy trial came across her path, which caused much self-pity ; and one morning while she was dressing, this verse dropped into her heart :

" For this correction render praise ;
 'Tis given thee for thy good ;
 The lash is steeped He on thee lays,
 And softened in His blood."

While at Newcastle she attended the room, and joined with a few of God's people in church membership.

From there she often visited Stamford, and heard Mr. Tryon with profit. The last visit was in 1909. I shall never forget the pleasant time we had together. She would say, " I don't think I shall ever come again ; but I have a good hope through grace we shall meet in heaven. Not of works ; it is all of grace." I often found her in tears, blessing and praising God for giving His Son to redeem a poor sinful woman, as she felt herself to be. On leaving Stamford she went to Coningsby, where she was taken ill. While there I went to see her ; and though very ill, her mind was stayed on the Lord. She often said, " I have no fear of death ; the sting is taken away. It is only the Jordan I fear." The nurse told me she would say at night, " One step nearer ! " In her last letter she said, " I want the Lord to take me in His arms, and carry me right over the river ; and then to begin the never-ending song, ' to Him that loved us ' " (Rev. i. 5). And so the dear one passed away to be for ever with the Lord, at the home of her dear neice, whom she brought up from an infant.

M. MASON.

On June 29th, 1910, SARAH ANN AVIS, aged 84.

My beloved wife was born at Hellingly, on Sept. 25th, 1825. Her mother died when she was only a year and a

half old, leaving five small children; and at an early age she was obliged to go to service. While at a farm house it was the custom to have the servants in to read a portion of the Word of God, and it appears the Lord made use of these means in opening her eyes to see the state she was in as a sinner before a holy and sin-avenging God. The word *eternity*, how it filled her with fear and trembling! This caused her to cry to the Lord for mercy; and in His own time she was raised to a little hope that the Lord would pardon her sins. But she had to wait for years before she got deliverance. After a time she went to Brighton to seek for a situation. I have heard her say how earnestly she begged the Lord to make a way for her to live there, which He did after a short time. It was under the ministry of Mr. Grace He was pleased to deepen the work in her soul, and then in a most blessed way to deliver her from that state of bondage she had been in for so long. I think the text was, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." She went into the chapel with a heavy burden of sin and guilt, and came out a pardoned sinner. Oh, the sight she said she had of Christian losing his burden at the cross of Christ; and the language of her heart was,

" Now will I tell to sinners round,
What a dear Saviour I have found;
I'll point to Thy redeeming blood,
And say, ' Behold the way to God.'"

She was favoured to walk with that peace in her soul for some time. She sat under Mr. Grace's ministry for eleven years, and felt it keenly when having to go home to keep her father's house after the death of her step-mother. This was soon after the death of Mr. Cowper, and she attended at the Dicker chapel. In those days they were favoured with some gracious men, so that her grief was in a great measure relieved. I have heard her speak of the blessed times she had under the word preached.

About this time she had to pass through some trying things, and these words arrested her mind: "Though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations; that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire." This lasted for some time, which brought her very low; but one day the words came, "Wilt Thou break a leaf

driven to and fro? and wilt Thou pursue the dry stubble?" and it followed, "Nay; but I will put strength in thee." This seemed greatly to restore her; she did not sink so low with those dreadful temptations afterwards. About this time she read a sermon of the late Mr. Russell's, and thought, "If I ever get within the reach of Rotherfield, I will go and hear him." After this, her father died, and she had to leave her home, not knowing where to go. But soon after, her brother's wife died, leaving a young baby, and she went to keep his house. After a time he moved to Eridge Green, about four miles from Rotherfield, where she had the privilege of hearing Mr. Russell. Under his ministry she was much favoured. Her path at that time was very trying, which caused her often to go forth with much sorrow of heart. At one time Mr. Hazlerigg came to preach at our anniversary. She was then having to drink of that cup of bitters that Paul speaks of, "Troubled on every side; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." As she was walking to the chapel the words were much on her mind, "The diligent soul shall be made fat." Mr. H.'s text was the cry of the poor woman, "Lord, help me," and that discourse was so blessed to her that she returned with a heart overflowing with the goodness of the Lord. I often heard her refer to that time in after days. In the year 1870 we were married, and moved to Wadhurst, where we had about five and a-half miles to walk to the chapel.

She had been for years exercised respecting believers' baptism, but now it became a heavy weight on her mind, which made her cry to the Lord to guide her right, and apply a portion of the Word with power to her heart. After a short time these words came with power, "Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him shall the Son of man confess also before the angels of God" (Luke xii. 8). In going to chapel she begged the Lord to give her one more token for good, that she might hear something that day to confirm her. Mr. Barringer spoke from Acts viii. 33, "In His humiliation His judgment was taken away," &c. What she heard so confirmed her that while in chapel she made a vow that at the first church meeting that was called she would ask to be allowed to come before them, and to her surprise there was a meeting after that service. In much fear and trembling she was enabled to tell what the Lord had done for her, and was

received. She was baptised by Mr. Ashdown, and felt the answer of a good conscience, and the same day she was received into the church, Oct. 24th, 1875.

Now I must pass over many of her trials and deliverances, and come to her last days. I had noticed the last two years of her life how familiar she seemed with death. She would say, "Mine are only borrowed days; it will not be long before I am taken from you," which I felt keenly. Early in this year her strength began to fail. After examining her, the doctor found her heart very feeble, and her little strength seemed fast ebbing out. These words kept passing through her mind: "Be still, and know that I am God." The last time she was at chapel was the first Sabbath in April, in the afternoon; and as she took her seat at the table, she cried earnestly to the Lord that He would be pleased to be present. The first hymn was,

" ' Jesus is precious,' says the Word ; "

and was much blessed to her, the sixth verse being most sweet:

" As they draw near their journey's end,
How precious is their heavenly Friend ;
And when in death they bow their head,
He's precious on a dying bed."

This was most blessedly fulfilled in her case. One morning as I was alone I felt a prompting to go on my knees and ask the Lord to give her another token of His love, when these words powerfully came to my mind, "He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." In a few minutes my wife sent for me. "Oh," she said, "the Lord has appeared, and put away all my sins; He has told me so. There is a mansion prepared for me; I shall soon be there. These lines came with such power I thought I must tell you of the Lord's goodness to me:

" ' Thy word is past, Thy promise made,
With power it came from heaven ;
" Cheer up, desponding soul," it said ;
" Thy sins are all forgiven." ' "

She said, "What a mercy the Lord has prepared a seat in heaven for me!" She was so overcome with His goodness that she wept to the praise of the mercy she had found. She would often say, "What should I do if I had my religion to seek now I am so weak and prostrate in body?" After this

she seemed somewhat tried, and often to be in prayer. She would take no notice of anyone in the room, but would lie with her hands clasped together, and her lips moving. She looked at me very earnestly one morning, and said, "Oh, I don't know how it will be with me after all. But I have had these lines :

" 'The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.' "

As long as her strength permitted, it was a pleasure to visit her, as there was such a heavenly peace on her soul. The 303rd hymn was very sweet to her :

" Jesus, Lover of my soul."

She said how many portions of the Word of God sweetly flowed into her mind. She seemed to be favoured to taste of that "river the streams whereof make glad the city of God."

For about ten days before she died she could only speak in a low whisper, and would often try to speak, but could not. As I was sitting by her the last night, she looked with an earnest look at me, and said twice, "I wish I could talk." I said, "Yes, you would have something to tell us." She replied, "Yes, yes; *Christ!*" and her face seemed to light up as I had never seen it. Her lips kept moving with a sweet smile. That brightness lasted about five minutes, then gradually passed away. She could not be understood after this, and the next day her breathing became very heavy, and at length she quietly breathed out her soul without a sigh, or the least movement.

W. AVIS.

ON March 31st, 1910, JOHN LAY, of Harwell, Steventon, Berks.

He attended at Morton for many years, and was esteemed by many of God's dear people; and a kind friend to many of the Lord's poor. By what I have been able to gather from others, he had been concerned about his soul for more than twenty years, but was very reserved in soul matters. But I believe the Lord brought him into a much deeper concern about his real standing before Him last autumn, when He saw fit to lay His afflicting hand upon his dear partner in life, and for some time the doctor gave but little hope of her recovery. Then the Lord so blessed her that she had no desire to get well again; but His thoughts are not as ours, and she was raised up to her usual health. But oh, what grief

and sorrow of heart John passed through during that time is better felt than expressed. At the same time he was suffering much internally from what proved to be cancer, and ended in his death. But the Lord graciously sustained him in his great sufferings, giving him some blessed promises from His Word. At times he prayed earnestly to the Lord not to let him be deceived in soul matters, but to make him truly hunger and thirst after righteousness; to feed his soul with the true Bread from heaven, to prepare him for all His will, and fit his soul for His kingdom; also not to suffer him to be too much taken up with his business; which the Lord answered, so that he could leave his wife, children, and business in His gracious hands, feeling sure the Lord would take care of them, and that in His time his wife would meet him above. At one time in his illness the Lord made the 8th verse of Psa. cxliii. a blessing to his soul: "Cause me to hear Thy lovingkindness in the morning; for in Thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto Thee." At another time, Isa. xlvi. 7: "Thus saith the Lord thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee in the way thou shouldest go." At another time, Isa. l. 10: "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of His servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God;" which he asked to be read to him several times, as he felt he wanted the assurance it was his, and that the Lord was his God. Nearer his end the Lord made these words a blessing to him, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden; and I will give you rest." Several of Gadsby's hymns were made a blessing to him, and some were his prayers, as the 1105th; also he often repeated,

"Weary of earth, myself, and sin,
Dear Jesus, set me free;
And to Thy glory take me in,
For there I long to be."

He was operated on six days before his death, but the operation was found to be of no avail. He was taken worse on the morning of March 31st, and died at 8.45 at night, aged 57 years, and we believe entered that rest prepared for all God's dear people. He leaves a widow and eight children to mourn his loss.

J. E. P.

NOTICES OF DEATH.

BENJAMIN HUNT, aged 51, a deacon of Galeed Chapel, Brighton, and a "brother beloved," entered into rest on October 11th, 1910, after a season of heavy suffering. G. w., some further particulars will follow.
G. M. H.

MRS. JAMES TANNER, aged 70 years, of Luckington, was taken suddenly ill early on Sunday, Nov. 6th, and passed away at half-past nine the same morning. She was a regular attendant at Luckington Chapel for many years, and used to entertain the ministers, and was a great help to us. We believe that our loss is her eternal gain.
RICHARD ANDREWS.

FREDERICK PERRY, of Rushall, Wilts, entered into rest, Nov. 17th, 1910, aged 69. He was a member of Cave Adullum, Strict Baptist Chapel, Upavon, Wilts, for over 47 years, and a deacon for more than 28 years. He was greatly afflicted for many years. His end was calm and peaceful; he was resting on the Person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ in the prospect of death. He leaves a poor afflicted widow (rich in faith), to mourn her sore bereavement. Other particulars may follow. O. G. S.

MIRIAM DANE, of Ashford, Kent, died, Nov. 20th, 1910, in her 68th year. For nearly 20 years she was a member at Ebenezer, Norwood Street. Her last illness was very short, but severe. I spoke to her on the previous Lord's day, when she was at chapel in the afternoon. She quoted some portions of Scripture and hymns, saying, "Come life or come death, it is well." She was conscious to the last, dying from heart failure. She knew, and loved, and walked in the truth, and will be much missed by members and friends.
GEORGE GOLDSMITH.

HANNAH JENNINGS, Dec. 25th, 1909, aged 87 years, for some years a member of Gower Street.

JAMES WHITEHEAD, Sept. 27th, 1910, aged 78 years, for 39 years a member of Gower Street.

JANE SMITH, Dec. 12th, 1910, in her 81st year, for 40 years a member of Gower Street.

These three godly souls died in faith, and according to promise their end was peace.
E. J. BEAZLEY.

MARK SALTMARSH, of Tunbridge Wells passed peacefully away on November 25th, 1910, aged 73. His last words were, "Very comfortable, peace, no pain." He had held the office of deacon at "Hanover" for many years, and had gone out to speak in the Lord's name for nearly forty years. Further particulars will (G. w.) follow.
J. NEWTON.

ELIZABETH WALKER, of Leicester, passed away on December 8th, 1910, aged 61. She had been a lover of the truth for many years, and earnestly longed for a manifestation of Christ to her soul; and though often encouraged under the preached word, especially of late years, by the ministry of Mr. Hazlerigg, whom she much loved as a servant of Christ, yet she had to wait for this unspeakable favour until last year, when the Lord laid His afflict-

ing hand heavily upon her. She had to go into Brompton Hospital for an operation, and while there the Lord greatly favoured her, and spoke sweetly and powerfully to her heart. Two portions were especially given her, viz., "My grace is sufficient for thee," and on the morning of the operation, "I have prayed for thee," &c., which removed all fear, and she said she felt it was well, live or die; she felt to lie in His arms like a child. She was brought safely through the operation, and as she improved she said such was the sweet peace felt within that she almost feared to leave the hospital, lest she should leave the sweetness behind. However, she returned home, and felt a desire to follow her Lord in the ordinances of His house. After seeing her pastor, Mr. Hazlerigg, and the deacons, she came before the church, and was enabled to give a living testimony of the Lord's dealings with her. She was warmly received by the church, and was baptised on the first Lord's day in February this year, 1910. Both she and many of the friends had a very refreshing season. About three months ago her health began to fail again, and she had to take to her bed, and after about three weeks of severe suffering, during which time she was mostly in a semi-conscious state, so as not to be able to converse intelligently, she passed to her eternal rest, to

"Join in the everlasting song,
And crown Him Lord of all."

F. T. B.

ELLEN MUSK HART, the beloved wife of A. H. Hart, of 37 Church Terrace, Bury St. Edmunds, passed peacefully away on the 10th of December, 1910, aged 75, to be for ever with the Lord. Her affliction, extending over twenty years, was patiently borne without a murmur. Her end was peace. A. H. H.

On December 14th, 1910, at Leamington, MARY ANNE, wife of the late ENOCH FEAZEY, Strict Baptist minister. W. H. F.

SARAH IRVING, late of Wantage, Berks, and Swindon, Wilts, passed peacefully away on Dec. 17th, 1910, at 28 Hova Villas, Hove, Sussex, in her 95th year. She was a member of the church at Zion Chapel, Wantage, from its formation. Her great age and infirmities prevented her from conversing for some months during her illness, but she was always pleased to be visited by any of the Lord's people; she was often praying and praising the Lord for His many mercies, and we have no doubt that she is now praising Him above. F. HARDING.

FREDERICK FLETCHER, of Arlesey, Beds, died, Dec. 17th, 1910, aged 64. He was deacon for many years at Hope Chapel, Stotfold, and was held in high esteem by the church and late pastor for his faithfulness. He loved to converse about the precious blood of Jesus Christ, and His glorious righteousness. His desire was,

"O may my last expiring breath,
His loving kindness sing in death!" T. EMERY.

THE GOSPEL STANDARD.

MARCH, 1911.

MATT. v. 6; 2 TIM. i. 9; ROM. xi. 7; ACTS viii. 37, 38; MATT. xxviii. 19.

GOD FOR US.

A SERMON PREACHED ON THURSDAY EVENING, OCT. 22ND, 1840,
BY MR. SHORTER, AT ZOAR CHAPEL, GREAT ALIE STREET, LONDON.

“If God be for us, who can be against us?”—ROM. viii. 31.

It should be remembered that he who writes in such a triumphant manner in this very blessed chapter, in the preceding one gives us to know that he was not a stranger to trouble—to depression. The good that he would he could not do; and the evil which he would not, which he hated and strove against, was the thing he did; which made him (as it often does make pilgrims now) to sigh out, “O wretched man that I am!”

But in this chapter he rises above all sorts of fear, and tramples upon it by faith; and he shouts forth the honours of Jehovah, and triumphs in Him in a most surprising way. He felt that he was delivered from “the law of sin and death” by “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.” He felt that God, who dwelt in him, would also quicken his mortal body by His Spirit that dwelt in him. He reckoned himself “to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” He felt in his soul that “the sufferings of this present time were not worthy to be compared with the glory which should be revealed in him” by and by. He felt that he had the “witness” of God the Spirit in his heart, that he was a son of God, and consequently a joint-heir with Christ Jesus. He felt in his soul that he was called according to an eternal purpose of mercy, and that “all things should work together for his good.” He felt that God had foreknown him, and therefore predestinated him to be conformed to the image of His dear Son; that having predestinated him, He had also “called” him and “justified” him; and that He would in the end “glorify” him. Was

not this enough to make the man triumph? Says he, "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"

What was it that raised up the man's soul above all his troubles? The light of divine truth shining upon his soul in the unction of the Holy One. And that, my friends, will lift you and me up whenever it pleases God to exalt our souls.

Now in this word of the apostle there is comprehended so much that I am utterly incapable of knowing how to proceed with it. But may that wise and blessed Teacher of His elect condescend to enable me to speak a little of it, and bless the truth to your souls and mine.

Everything hinges here. Either God is against us, or He is "for us." God is not neutral; He is either *for* a man or *against* a man. And if God be against us, woe unto us! Our hell is certain—eternal ruin is certain—if God be against us. And against us He is, and must be for ever, if He be not "for us."

But if God be "for us," *He always was for us*; and He always was for us *on His own account too*. I say He was always for us, if He is now; and, my hearers, this is a truth that ought not to be questioned by the Lord's dear children. "I am the Lord; I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." This is my belief—I believe the Lord has taught it me—that He is always in one mind. And if He be for us, it is solely on His own account. It is for His own glory. That is His eternal object—the glorifying of Himself; and that in the good of those He favours. If God be for us, it is not because we ourselves have brought Him over on our side, and made Him our Friend. No such thing; those who have God on their side, as much deserve to be damned for ever as those who *are* so; there is no difference in us by nature, for "all have sinned," and we are all sinners, from the sole of the foot even unto the head, and all under condemnation. And therefore, friends, if God be for us, it is for His own name's sake and for His own glory's sake; and He was so in eternity, and is so through time and to all eternity.

Arminians do not like this doctrine. Human nature does not like it. But I tell you now just where it brings a good man. It brings him to nothing in his own view and estimation. He had no hand in procuring the favour of God

and he has no hand in continuing it ; but he is just as a bit of clay, as a particle of dust in the Almighty's hand, who hath dealt out His favour, dealt out His mercy, in a most free, a most sovereign, and a most wonderful way.

When I think of the infinite greatness of the Almighty, and when I think of the infinite greatness of the favour that is couched in this one expression—"God for us," I feel a trembling frequently to claim this great and wonderful favour as mine. And yet, short of this there is nothing but hell ; short of God for me, I am lost for ever and ever. But who can come to the knowledge of this secret, *God for me*, without God's own revelation in the heart ? God must tell it, and not I.

I look upon it, my friends, that if God be "for us," *the whole of His nature* is for us ; the whole that He is is for us. God is not part for, and part against. There is no *part* in God's mind. The nature of God is for us, His whole nature ; and the whole Persons of the Trinity are for us, if God be for us. The life of God is for us, for He is the living God and steadfast for ever ; and all His life is for us. All His divine power, His infinite power—that amazing power that formed all things out of nothing, that upholdeth all things, that governeth all things—that almighty power is for us, if God be for us. If God be for us, His eternal love is set upon us ; His affection runneth out to us—as great as God Himself is great. "God is love ;" and if God be for us, God Himself is delighted with us, pleased with us, and doth embrace us in His infinite affection. And that from eternity to eternity ; no alteration ; He loves "with an everlasting love." And if God be for us, all His mercy—His tender mercies, His multitudes of tender mercies—are for us. Yea, all His loving-kindness, all His longsuffering, all His pity, all His compassion, are for us ; they are all on our side. And not only so, but all His justice, His holiness, His purity, are for us. Oh ! how have I been sometimes ravished with the feeling sense of this in my heart—that the Holy One of Israel is my Holy One ! Sometimes I go to Him thus—"O my holy One, my sweet One, my almighty One, my loving One, my condescending One, my great and glorious all-sufficient One !" Do you know what sweetness there is in thus worshipping the Almighty ? I am sure the tongue cannot express it ; but the heart will sometimes run over with it, and I have sometimes felt so full

by the breaking in of this glorious truth upon my soul, that I have been ready to burst. And I know that truth revealed, brought home into the heart with assurance by God Himself, will transport the soul in a wonderful, in an inexpressible manner. Many of God's dear children are not strangers altogether to what Peter says, "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." True, there are more lamentations than rejoicings; but God's children are sometimes favoured with a feast, a real "feast of fat things, and wines on the lees well refined."

If God be for us, then His infinite understanding and knowledge, and wisdom, and prudence—all of it is for us. "God is Light." We ourselves are nothing else but darkness, and can comprehend nothing; but God Himself is Light. And the prophet said, He "shall be a Light unto me." And so (bless His dear name!) He is a Light unto Israel. "And the Light of Israel," it is said, "shall be for a flame." Blessed for ever be our God, that He doth lift up the light of His countenance upon His dear children, and make it light sometimes in their poor souls.

All His truth, all His faithfulness, is for us. All His counsel, all His covenant, His oath, His promise, are for us, if God be for us. It is all our own. God has given the covenant to us, the strength to us, the promise to us—made it all over to us; for He will be our God for ever.

If God be for us, then be it remembered that God likewise *is everything for us*. If God the Redeemer be for us, then He was born for us, He was circumcised for us; He was anointed for us; He was tempted for us; He preached for us; He wrought miracles for us; He prayed for us; He groaned and died for us, and rose again for us, and is now at the right hand of God for us, a great High Priest for us. And if He be for us, why, then, friends, "who can be against us?"

If God be for us, then, I observe again, He is for us as a portion, *our portion*. We are "the lot of His inheritance," and He is "our portion." He has made Himself over unto us for our inheritance. And oh, what a wonderful inheritance it is! "I am the Lord thy God," He says. Doth He not make Himself over thus unto His people?

And then again, if God be for us, we may likewise remark that He is for us as a Father, as a Husband; yea, He is for

us as a Fountain of living waters ; He is a Refuge for us, a Hiding-place for us, a Shadow for us. He is indeed, friends, all that the Scriptures speak of Him. Everything that He is, He is "for us." His anger is for us ; His wrath is for us. But, say you, how is that ? Why, the Lord declares that He will not be wrath with His people, nor rebuke them, but His anger and His wrath shall burn against all their enemies to their destruction, for He is "a consuming fire" unto them. If God at any time be angry with His people, it is a Father's anger ; and He afflicts them and chastises them only to do them good. He still loves them ; as a father loves his child as much when he is angry as when he is pleased. I really never felt so much compassion and pity working in my heart as when my child offended me ; I never thought I had so much love towards him, until my heart was almost broken with grief. And I know that "like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him."

If God be for us, why, then *He hath predestinated us*—hath appointed us "to be conformed to the image of His Son." And if God be for us, He calls us, He quickens us, He instructs us, He wounds us, He draws us, He overcomes us, He makes us willingly come unto Jesus as poor lost sinners. Yes, friends, if God be for us, He calls us : "Whom He did predestinate, them He also called." He calls them with a holy calling, an effectual calling. He makes them hear the truth, feel the truth, know the truth ; He makes them know their hearts, know their ruin, feel that they are lost and damned for ever except mercy—free, boundless, sovereign mercy—save them. He teaches them to pray. He invites them to come. He lays hold of their hearts by divine truth. While He is teaching them out of His law their ruined state and condition, He likewise shows them mercy, and kindness, and love, and promise in the Saviour, and woos, and draws, and wins their hearts, and they say at length, "Lo, we come ; lo, we come." Yes, friends, and we come as it were with a halter about our neck, knowing we have sinned, knowing we deserve damnation, justifying Him if He actually sent us down to hell ; and we lay our mouths in the dust, we confess our sins, and we sue for mercy. The heavy load of our crimes would shut out all hope, but the Lord reveals a way. A door opens, a door of hope. The Lord hath promised, "The valley of Achor shall be for a door of hope." The place of trouble is

the place where Jesus Christ shall be revealed as the only way by which a poor sinner can be saved.

Oh, my dear friends, if God has graciously brought home truth, made you feel its power and tremble at it, made you to feel and acknowledge it and seek for mercy, it proves that God is for you. It is so. I know I cannot make you believe it, but I am as sure, as confident, as that I stand before you to-night, that you would never have been brought feelingly to confess your sin before Him, and to cry unto Him, "Lord, have mercy upon me, and save me," if He did not love you. If the Lord had not chosen you, if He had not called you, and drawn you, you would never have come thus far.

But the Lord God, friends, will go a little further—*He will justify. He doth justify.* "If God be for us," He justifies us in the righteousness of His Son. He reveals pardoning mercy; yea, He will in His own good time manifest unto the poor sinner that there is no charge in heaven against him, that all his sins and his iniquities shall never damn him, but that they were all put to the account of a precious Lord Jesus. And when this is revealed, the conscience purged by the blood of Christ revealed, apprehended by faith, and laid hold upon, why, there is peace—"a peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." And if thou art made hungry after this, it is because God hath provided this feast for thee; the Lamb was sent into the world on purpose to seek out thy poor lost soul from eternal death, and thou art as welcome to Jesus now as any that are around His throne—as welcome to Him as any that are now singing His praises in glory. For what does He say? He says, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." I feel sometimes, when I have an assurance of this in the pulpit, that I wish I could but persuade the people to believe in this great love of God unto them; but notwithstanding all that I say, I prove from time to time that nothing short of the divine hand put forth, laying hold of a sinner's heart, binding it up, and pouring in oil and wine, will ever bring him to solid rest and peace. No, no, friends; the word of God must come with power from the Holy One.

"If God be for us," however, He justifies us. And "who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" God will never impute sin to thee, "if God be for thee." This is the blessedness of the glorious gospel of Christ; it proclaims

remission of sins—of all sins and all transgressions—to every one that believeth; and we have “the word of reconciliation” to preach. We have not to preach a “yea and nay” gospel; we have not to tell you that you must do your part and Christ will do His; no such thing. But we tell you that the great work is already done, that the wonderful sum is paid by the Lord Jesus Christ, that the way is opened into heaven; and whosoever feels his ruin and believes in the Lord Jesus Christ shall never perish, but have eternal life. And the man that is blessed with faith in the Lord Jesus Christ receives this testimony, feels the effect of it, and finds salvation in his soul.

I am glad in my heart and conscience that there is nothing left for such a poor wretch as I to do towards my own salvation. And that is it that hath raised me up, and made me more than usually happy of late. On the Monday morning before I came up to town, it pleased God to enter into sweet communion with me, and He was pleased to reveal His holy, sacred mind and will about free and full and everlasting salvation by sovereign grace. Those words of Hart came in and sealed it all up:

“’Tis not for good deeds, good tempers, nor frames;
From grace it proceeds, and all is the Lamb’s;”

and that revelation to my poor soul has really had an abiding upon me. It seemed to me as if new things had come to pass, the legal bonds were broken off, and I felt like a giant refreshed with wine. For really overnight no “bullock in a net” was ever more stubborn than I was, and I felt to have all the sorrow of the nation in my soul; I was as bitter as ever I could be. But oh, the free mercy of God—when it comes, how it reconciles the soul to Jesus! How it sweetens the way of salvation, to have free grace and mercy and love shining in upon a sinner’s soul! There is nothing to do; the victory is won, the battle is gained, and there is nothing to do but to enter in and take possession. Jesus has gone before, done all the work, and got possession of the whole, and His dear children are to come after Him, and take the spoils.

You will observe, my dear friends, that if God be for us, He so justifies us that there is no one in heaven, no one on earth, and no one in hell that can condemn us. There is not a spot nor a stain left upon any for whom God is employed. I am confident in my soul that if this be not the gospel of the Lord

Jesus Christ, there is no way to heaven for any sinner upon earth. There is no way to heaven but through the free and sovereign grace and mercy of our Lord and Saviour Jesus, through His precious blood. And oh, my dear friends, to be enabled by precious faith to trust in this most glorious and wonderful work of the Lord Jesus Christ, and feel in our heart that God doth not impute sin to us, why, it brings heaven upon earth; it brings our souls into the very suburbs of the city of God.

And "if God be for us," my dear friends, He not only justifies us, but *preserves* us. He will hold us up, He will be our help, He will support us. He will not leave us in the midst of our storms—in our afflictions, in our temptations, in our troubles; no, but He will be about us, He will be with us, He will abide with us, He will keep us. "He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of His eye," and although you may be in the storm and tempest, like the disciples were, yet the Lord Jesus Christ is still nigh and still wise, and upholds those that have no other support. He will keep you from putting confidence in yourselves, and He will make you to call upon Him from day to day, to bring your troubles and distresses to Him; and when you are oppressed, when you are cast down, and are fainting, and have no strength, and it is all clean gone, the Lord God then "giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might He increaseth strength." The Lord Jesus Christ being "for us," He will be our Strength; as in the Psalms: "The Lord is their Help and their Shield." You may be ready to say, perhaps, "I cannot find that I have any help; I cry, and pray, and beg, and knock, and yet God seems to regard me not;" and David seems as if he was a little like you, for he says, "Be not silent to me, lest, if Thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit." I have many a time been so myself. But, my friends, it is one thing for God to seem to be against us, and everything to seem to be against us, and another thing for them to be really so. We are bad interpreters in times of darkness, affliction, temptation, and desertion; we cannot enter into the knowledge of the truth at that time; and it would be well if we could suspend our judgment till the light comes; then we should see things in their proper colour, and know black from white. We often call evil good, and good evil, while darkness is upon us. The Lord God has promised this, and I am con-

fidest He will be as good as His word: "I will bring the blind,"—mind, they are blind—"by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight." It shall be all dark and all crooked, and all ups and downs, so that they cannot tell at all where they are going; and yet, the Lord God being with them, He is their Leader, He is their Guide, His hand secretly governs and keeps, and by and by He arises and shines. Light then comes upon their paths, and all the crooked is made as straight as can be. There is not one crook in the lot now. "Why, it seems now," says the poor child of God, "as if, had I not these troubles, I should not have the mark that I belong to God; all these things prove that I am in the way, and that God is really my Helper and my Salvation." So, my friends, night gives place to day; and day is succeeded by night. We shall have our changes, and that many times, no doubt. But the Lord our God is the same from year's end to year's end; and He will keep His own people night and day. "If God be for us," then, my friends, we have a sure dwelling-place; for we dwell in His arms, we dwell in His eye, we dwell in His righteousness, we dwell under His shadow, we are encompassed about by the Almighty.

"If God be for us," why, then, for certainty *we shall be for Him*. Sooner or later, all they that have God on their side are brought to the Lord's side. That is a very sweet truth. "I love them that love Me, and those that seek Me early shall find Me." "If God be for you," He will "put His fear in your heart," and He will make you more afraid of offending the Almighty than offending the whole world. He will make you afraid of sinning against Him in secret, even in your thought. He will make you to hate and abhor the workings of your own pride, your own unbelief, and your covetous thoughts that are at work in secret, your plannings to get money, and the secret devices that are at work in your heart. I am sure of that. If He be for you, you must be against sin. This is where He brings you. I would not thank you for a man's religion, if it does not make him honest in secret before God, and honest in his business, and if, when at any time he is overcome by the flesh, it does not cast him down and make him a miserable man. I know very well that some professors can make very light of sin; but I would not be in

such professors' places for a good deal. "If God be for you," He gives you "a new heart and a right spirit," that hates and abhors that which is contrary to God. This is His word, and this is His promise: "I will put My fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from Me."

And therefore, if one says, "How shall I know if I am for God? how shall I know if I am on the Lord's side?"—Do you take the side of truth? If truth be not made more precious to you than silver and gold, than honours of all descriptions, and life itself, depend upon it you do not know the value of it, and it has never yet had a place in your heart. "Buy the truth, and sell it not," is the wise man's advice; and the Lord helps His children, who are the children of truth, to take this counsel—and they do. Our Lord has said, "If any man come to Me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple; and whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after Me, cannot be My disciple." "He that findeth his life, shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for My sake, shall find it." These are startling things, when they come to be brought home.

Now is it so? Are you denying yourselves? or are you indulging yourselves, and making provision for the flesh? The apostle Paul saith of the Lord's people, "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts;" and he says, "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live;" and says he, "Put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him. . . . Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." Now are these things to go for nothing? Some professors seem to think very lightly of them; but I believe the Lord makes these things the real desire, the real delight of His dear children; and their grief is that it is not more with them as the Word describes and calls for. Now how is it with you? "If God be for you," then you are for Him.

I do not know you personally, and I do not speak to you in any way but as I am publicly engaged in God's name. But I hope to speak what truth comes to my mind plainly and faithfully; and may God bless it, if His holy will, to your souls' good. I would not, if I knew it, spare any—no, not the dearest creature that I know upon earth—when I speak in God's name.

But I observe further, friends, that "if God be for us," then for certainty we feel and know and understand, from day to day, that we are utterly unworthy of God's great kindness and mercy and being on our side. Every one that finds the Lord on his side feels himself more or less the most loathsome of wretches. He finds in his heart to sing that song, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory, for Thy mercy, and for Thy truth's sake."

The subject is by no means exhausted; but I shall leave it now. And may God's good blessing rest upon His word of truth to your souls, for His name and mercy's sake.

SOME ACCOUNT OF HENRY FRENCH OVENDEN.

"SOUGHT OUT" AND "NOT FORSAKEN."

(Concluded from page 69.)

ABOUT this time, one day going home through the field to my dinner, the hounds were crossing the field in full cry; which made me think of the day of judgment afresh. The huntsman's horn reminded me of the trump of God: "For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised." The shouting of the men reminded me of the righteous shouting victory over sin, death, and hell; the noise of the dogs, of the howling of the wicked being driven into hell. So I went home to my dinner with these solemn thoughts of the end of the world, and the resurrection of the dead; which things were very much in my thoughts in those days. A verse of Luther's, which I had formerly helped to sing at the church often, was brought to my recollection:—

"Methinks the last great day is come,
Methinks I hear the trumpet sound
That shakes the earth, rends every tomb,
And wakes the prisoners underground.
The mighty deep gives up her trust;
And by the Judge's high command.
Both small and great now quit their dust.
And round the dread tribunal stand."

These and similar things were daily and hourly, more or less, upon my mind ; so that I thought sometimes that I should get to such a state of holiness and perfection that the Almighty would surely take notice and have mercy upon me, and pardon my sins and give me rest. I thought I would print on pieces of paper certain passages of Scripture and the commandments, and stick them about the house, to keep me in remembrance of them ; as I wished to have nothing on my mind but heaven and hell and death and the day of judgment. O how shall I meet that great and terrible day without pardon and peace !

Now I had been seeking in this way for a considerable time, when I was asked by a friend to accompany him on Sunday evening to Lady Huntingdon's chapel, at Tunbridge Wells. Accordingly I went, and this proved to be a night much to be remembered by me. My ear was opened to hear, and my heart to receive the word preached, as they had never been before. The minister spoke from a portion of the prophecy of Isaiah relating to the Lord Jesus Christ coming into this world to seek and to save that which was lost ; to fulfil the holy law of God, which I had broken ; and to lay down His life a ransom price, to save and redeem such sinners as I felt myself to be. The word was applied to my heart with such sweet power and assurance that it seemed as though I had seen Him with my bodily eyes, coming forth and saying, "I will die, that they may live." I looked at one and the other, thinking the whole congregation will be converted this night ; for it seemed to me the man spoke as none ever spake before. But this was my mistake ; I found when coming home my companions had not heard as I had. "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness." And, "They shall look upon Me whom they have pierced." These scriptures were often thought of now with admiration ; and many other parts of the Word at times came with much sweetness and comfort ; as the promises of Christ's coming in the Old Testament, and the account of His coming in the New Testament ; all which was delightful to read or to hear, and think upon ; and the more so as I was raised to such a hope through grace that I was interested therein, that my heart was filled with joy and gladness, thanking and praising the Lord all the day long.

I was as yet a constant attendant at the church where I had been accustomed to go from a child ; and now after I had been favoured with the revelation of Jesus Christ as the only Way of salvation, the sermons delivered by the minister for a considerable time seemed as though they were on purpose for me ; as though some one had told him my thoughts and exercises that I had had through the previous week ; which was very encouraging and establishing to me. The minister's name was Mr. John Benn ; he held Calvinistic doctrines. He used to show and open up the awful state mankind were in through the fall of our first parents, and the need of the Holy Spirit to bring a sinner to God, as well as ever I heard it in my lifetime. I believe, if I am ever permitted to enter heaven, I shall meet him there. These were the days of my espousals, the days of the Son of man, to me. It was as delightful to enter the church doors, as it had been formerly to go to the play-house. I had much enjoyment whilst spending my bounty money over forty years ago ; it is fresh in my memory now.

But it was not long before I fell into the Slough of Despondency. It was suggested to me that all my happy feelings were nothing but fleshly feelings, or something wrought upon me by the devil, and were not at all likely to be the work of the Lord ;—"nothing but the vain imagination of a weak mind, the effect of conversations you have had with your fellow-workman, who is a true penitent, who was brought from drunkenness to be a sober, religious man. Indeed, you being of a weak, pliable mind and disposition, have been talked into what you thought was the work of the Lord ; you have not had any real sorrow for sin nor true repentance. You are deceived altogether." Such was the effect of these suggestions that I became unhappy and very uneasy respecting my state for eternity ; which brought me more vehemently to cry to the Lord in secret for pardoning mercy to be granted me in whatever way the Lord would be pleased. "O Lord, do not suffer me to be deceived ! O Lord, let me suffer anything here rather than to be deceived in things relating to eternity !" My supplications upon my knees in private were urgent and agonising at times, begging for faith and repentance to be bestowed, and pardon and peace to be granted me, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake ; and if I really was deceived that He would undeceive

me, and put me right and safe for eternity. O how awful to be wrong for eternity! "O Lord, give me true faith and repentance." This agonising, striving, and crying had lasted about ten days when one evening I opened the Bible upon these words: "Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; He will come and save you." These words were powerfully applied with such a comforting assurance that the burden of my mind was removed, and I rejoiced again in a good hope, through grace, of being saved.

Now I went on rejoicing, thinking my mountain stood so fast that I should never be moved. But in this I was mistaken; for there was a trap laid for me, and into it I fell; which was this—"Perhaps if you were to mix a little more with your former associates, from whom you have somewhat withdrawn, those that are moral and not openly profane, who can tell but they observing your piety, may fall in love with religion too? Then what a good thing it would be for them; then you would have double enjoyment." This being suited to my old man of sin, I tried it on, and soon found my mistake in this. I found it something like this; as if I saw a number of persons in a deep pit, and I let down a rope to pull them up, but they being too heavy for me, pulled me in with them; and thus my conscience became defiled, and the enemy set in upon me again with, "Where is your religion now? Where is your God?" These things brought on fresh struggling, fresh agonising in private prayer, begging of the Lord to lead me to a people of His own right-hand planting, that I might have an opportunity of mixing more with such persons who were concerned about eternal things.

Although I had been so fed and so encouraged under Mr. Benn at the little church at Ashurst for a considerable time, he did not touch upon the trial of faith, and the exercises of the soul under the temptations of the wicked one. Now I was much tried about leaving the Church of England, which caused me many cries and groans at a throne of grace, that the Lord would direct and lead me to join with some party that were of His own teaching. After a while a person with whom I had been conversant about religion, told me of a Mr. Chandler, from Edenbridge, who preached on Sundays

at Blackham, and asked me to go and hear him. Accordingly I went. At first I did not seem to like his plain, homely manner, but before the conclusion of the service he got into my path, and the exercises of my heart, so that I said to a neighbour, "If that is right, I am right." From that time to the day of his death he became more and more amiable in my estimation as a minister of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

From letters written in his last years.

. . . Now, dear friend, relating to my standing in a profession, I beg you to read Hart's hymn commencing,

"When Jesus with His mighty love
Visits my troubled breast."

There you have it in print better than I can write it.

"Their pardon some receive at first,
And then compell'd to fight,
They feel their latter stages worst,
And travel much by night."

This is my case, if I am not deceived. For an explanation please read Hart's beginning,

"What tongue can fully tell"—

This is the stage of my experience in these days; and there is no discharge in this warfare of the flesh and the spirit. "What shall we see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies."

Now relating to what you say of your own safety or fearing about it, it is a good sign to be jealous of ourselves. For your encouragement and edification see Hart on the subject of doubting:

"Ye tempted souls. reflect."

May the blessing of God be with you and yours for time and eternity. So prays your unworthy,

Fordcombe, Jan. 17th, 1889.

H. F. O.

Dear Friend,—I am really astonished at the Lord's tender mercies towards me, such an unworthy worm as I feel myself to be. He is fulfilling His promise in and for me, that in old age "I will not forsake thee." Friends are moved by His kind providence to show their liberality towards me. . . . I am thinking every day and every hour this may be the last, although I feel as well in bodily health as ever. Nevertheless the change may be sudden, when we are not looking for it. May we be found watching unto prayer, and made ready and willing to depart through Jesus Christ.

March 11th, 1889.

H. F. O.

. . . I am now under medical treatment, yet my cough continues so distressing that I almost despair of ever getting to Smart's Hill again. God only knows. I wish to drop submissively into His hands.

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

That passage in Isaiah has been on my mind lately, xlvi. 3, 4 :
“ Harken unto Me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne by Me from the belly, which are carried from the womb : 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.” Now I look back, and see how I have been borne and carried. . . .

“ Determined to save, He watch'd o'er my path,
When, Satan's blind slave, I sported with death,”

till brought to hear His voice saying,

“ I have seen what you were doing,
Though you little thought of Me ;
You were madly bent on ruin ;
But I said, ‘ It shall not be.’

“ You had been for ever wretched,
Had not I espoused your part ;
Now behold My arms outstretched,
To receive you to My heart.”

And to old age and hoar hairs I am experiencing the fulfilment of the promise, by the great kindness of our chapel friends, who are so benevolent in sending nourishing things. It makes me to wonder with astonishment that such an unworthy worm of the earth should meet with such indulgence. I can only look at these blessings as from God the Fountain of all good, and the friends as instruments to distribute the blessings, a noble employment. May His blessing be with them for time and eternity.

May 24th, 1889.

H. F. O.

Dear Friend and Brother in the faith of the gospel,—I should have written before but for the irritating cough which has been so heavy upon me for three weeks, more or less, night and day. But blessed be the Lord for giving me a comfortable night's rest, and I feel better again to-day. Through grace I have been kept calm and submissive to the will of the

Lord, in whose hands I commit myself, body, soul, and circumstances, believing He is

“Too wise to err,
Too good to be unkind.”

Unworthy as I feel myself to be of the least mercy, yet I daily see and experience the fulfilment of His gracious promise by the prophet Isaiah, xlvi. 3, 4: “Even to old age and hoar hairs.”

Our little place [at Smart's Hill] was opened for preaching by Mr. Beeman, in the spring of the year 1835. I have had the privilege of meeting the friends from that time to this. My life has been spared to show me more and more the abominations of my heart; as we read in Ezekiel viii., “Turn again, O son of man, and thou shalt see greater abominations than these.”

May 5th, 1890.

H. F. O.

A Few Particulars by his Daughter.

Before there was service at Smart's Hill, my father hired a barn near his house at Fordcombe; and supplies used to come from different parts—Mr. Chandler, of Edenbridge, Mr. Sharp, of Brighton, and others. Before this he used to walk into Tunbridge Wells, to Hanover Chapel. He gave out the hymns and engaged the supplies at Smart's Hill Chapel for over forty years. His friend, Mr. Vane, says of him, “I never knew a man to have lower views of himself than he had, nor one more useful in conducting the services of the Lord's house when without a minister. His prayers I shall never forget.”

My dear father passed through very heavy family troubles up to the time of his death, which took place while on a visit to his daughter, Mrs. Taylor, at Matfield. He was only ill a few weeks, and did not say much during his illness. He passed away very peacefully on Oct. 14th, 1891, aged 89 years.

L. MUMMERY.*

Seek the blessed Spirit of God to help your infirmities in prayer. God loves the simple prayers of His saints; they are melody in His ears; and an odour of a sweet smell: “Let Me see thy countenance, let Me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.—*Huntington.*”

* A letter by H. F. Ovonden was inserted in the Oct. No., 1910.

DESIRES NOT HID FROM THE LORD.

(Concluded from page 76.)

“Lord, all my desire is before Thee; and my groaning is not hid from Thee.”—PSALM xxxviii. 9.

Now, brethren, let us look at this great point. We want spiritual health. The sickness of sin is a weakening thing, like a running sore, draining the strength. O this running sore of sin! As God teaches us how it can be stopped, and health restored—as He says, “I will restore health unto you, and heal you of your wounds”—then I say this: the desire will be strong, “Lord, bring me near, give me access, grant me acceptance in my soul’s experience, that the sores of sin may be healed; that Thy saving health that is to be made known among all nations, may be made known to me.” This is what He has promised, “I will bring it health and cure.” I know that the cure of wanderings in heart, of the all-but-constant eruptions of sin, of that inveterate unbelief, is this access, this acceptance. We do not want to gad then. And unbelief is so clipped and crippled that faith is the stronger; and what the Word says is understood: “The people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.” A poor sinner, with all his sickening sense of sinfulness, can be bold, and is bold here. Jacob could say, “I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me.” Ah, the Lord and Jacob were so near each other, and there were such communications between them, that Jacob had all that courage. It was not the courage a man has who is desperate, and near to be defeated. No, but a courage born of nearness. There was a Man who wrestled with him, who communicated such strength to Jacob that he got power as a prince with God, and prevailed. It is not a light thing when we look at our hearts, at our lives, when we see, and feel, and acknowledge that the whole is just one mass of sin. O then, without contradicting anything we feel, or losing any conviction, to find the sweet renewing of life in us through access by Christ, and to have acceptance in Christ through the blessing of the Father! Then it is, “Lord, all my desire is before Thee.” That is a great point to come to.

Another thing I would notice is this; that this blessed health that is desired, this overcoming of the loathsome disease of sin, is *through the mighty working of the Holy Ghost.*

“If ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.” And what is that working of the Holy Ghost but the bringing in of the grace of Christ, the giving in of new energy to faith, whereby the soul takes up the cross, and says of the workings of the flesh, “I won’t indulge you”? If we know what it is to have an hour of this, we know a great matter,—what it is for faith to be so strengthened that we say, “I will not allow this; it must not be.”

Now the Scriptures bear me out in this assertion. We find Paul speaks like this: “The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.” Now let us take the bad side. First, whenever the flesh prevails (O that I did not know it as well as I do!), there is such a damping of the ardour of the spirit, such a weakening of faith, such a killing of the appetite for God, that the poor child of God’s life is trampled down; as the psalmist speaks in a psalm further on, “Our bones are scattered at the grave’s mouth, as when one cutteth and cleaveth wood upon the earth.” And the man says, “I am hindered in my best life, and best desires, and carried where I would not go. I am baulked in my wishes, injured in my conscience; and there is no soundness in me, because of my foolishness.” But vital religion is not all that side. Israel is not a home-born slave. “Hath Israel no sons? hath he no heir,” that the children of Ammon rule? (Jer. xlix. 1.) Yes. There comes a time when the blessed Spirit arises, and looking on the oppressed and down-trodden soul, says, “What have I here, that My people is taken away for nought? They that rule over them make them to howl, saith the Lord; and My name continually every day is blasphemed.” “For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord.” And what does He do? He puts new energy from Christ’s grace and fulness into the soul; and faith begins to gather new courage, strength, and motion. It rises and goes to God; and there is confession, a fresh making of peace with Him, a new up-taking of Christ in the arms of faith; and what then? The flesh cannot do as it did. Faith makes one quit oneself like a man, and say, “No.” And indulgence in carnal thoughts, setting the Lord last and the flesh first, the world first, and all those things first that are first to us—all

are stopped; and now Father, Son, and Holy Ghost we desire, and say to the flesh, "You must not go on." Faith rises and overcomes it; and hope says, "There is a good day before me."

That is the desire—to get this health. There is that desire in a renewed soul before the Lord. Its desire is to be healthy, that the deeds of the body may be mortified in that only possible way set forth, which is through the Spirit's bringing life from the Source of life into the soul. "Lord, all my desire is before Thee." I might branch it out in various desires, as when a child of God is in a trial through an outbreak of sin, or the prevalence of unbelief, and knows not what to do, but says, "Lord, I desire to profit by my exercises, to learn a useful lesson. Grant I may not always be ignorant of Satan's devices, nor of the windings and deceitfulness of sin, and not be so easily beguiled." One would think it would be otherwise with some of us by this time. For the years I have been at God's school, and had a good, patient Teacher in God, one would have thought it would have been far different with me now. This covers me with shame sometimes. O that He would cause us to learn by what we suffer, to depend on Christ, to go to Him in all afflictions, not to nourish wrong things, not to cherish poison, or those foolish thoughts that damage us, and injure God's character! that we might learn to go to Him like this, "Lord, help, arise for my help; come and save me. Keep me from sinking under sin's dominion; keep me from nourishing despairing thoughts." O that we may not be always children! We are to be children in malice; but in understanding, men. Why should we who have been so long in the school of Christ, judge always by what we feel? Why judge ourselves dead, because we have deathly feelings cast over us? Why judge that we are cast out, because we cannot get so near as we fain would? I know that a right confidence in the goodness of our state will not lead to presumption. Some say that in certain bad states any confidence would be presumption; but that is not the case. When we pray and feel a little budding of hope in our spirits, as if we can almost say, "I believe I shall come through this, and God will help me;" does that lead us to presumption or security, and to say, "I need not trouble"? No; the more hopeful, the more prayerful; the more confidence, the more we go on crying, "Lord, help me, keep me."

“ ‘ O come, Thou much desired Guest ! ’ ”

The more expectation, the more earnest desire.

“ When, when will that blest time arrive
When Thou wilt kindly deign
With me to sit, to lodge, to live,
And never part again ? ”

The stronger our hope is, the more fervent will be our petitions.

“ Lord, all my desire is before Thee.” One desire is this, that *with a single eye, a more simple faith acting directly on Christ's blood, we may cleave to Him in our troubles, and judge Him faithful who hath promised*; though the promise be not fulfilled, nor appears likely to be. Fly, poor, tried soul, fly to the throne of grace by prayer; make known all your wants and wishes there.

“ *And my groaning is not hid from Thee.*” I take this to be the groaning that arises in the child of God from the inward intercession of the Holy Spirit. Paul teaches us this in the viiith of Romans: “ The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.” And this groaning is attended with travailing in pain to be delivered. Paul cries out, “ O wretched man that I am ! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death ? ” The psalmist's groaning was attended by that same travail for deliverance: “ O Lord, awake for my help, and come and save me.” Groaning—it is praying fervently; it is spreading your case before God with every attendant aggravation you may feel. And this is not hid from Him. How can such groaning be hid from God? But one may say, “ How can it come before Him ? ”

It is before Him, first, because it is *the effect of His good Spirit's work in the soul*. He will not hide His face from that. What? a child groan in spirit for God and after Him, and He hide His face from him? No; shall we judge Him like that? We do not wish to do it. This groaning under sin because you do not attain the desires of your heart; because you have such a silly, wandering, atheistical spirit; because you cannot get near Him; because when you take your trouble to Him, you take it away again; because of an unbelieving heart—this groaning being the work of His Spirit, He is not going to hide His face from it.

And next, another reason it is not hid from Him is, because

when His people thus groan, *they are following Him, and obeying by faith His exhortation*: "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint." And this we do night and day; on our beds when unable to sleep it is, "Lord, bless me; let me not sink, let me not be overcome by this sin." There is the groaning, the work of the Spirit. Now God says, "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint." And this is His word about that great labour, "Shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them?" The psalmist felt this, and said, "My groaning, my many sighs are not hid from Thee." Jeremiah felt the Comforter that should relieve his soul was far from him; and when he would comfort himself, his heart was faint. Still he was heard in his groanings after the Lord: "O the Hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in times of trouble, why shouldest Thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night?" Probably we feel there are reasons why He should be as a stranger to us. What are they? Why, the thorns and weeds cover our ground; we see our barrenness, uncomeliness, and the neglected condition of our land. What? are we going to cleanse it ourselves? How is it to be cleansed? By the Holy Ghost coming and giving us grace to break up our fallow ground and to sow in tears. What is it to sow in tears? It is to sow prayers, confessions of sin, prayers for mercy, pleadings for Christ's sake. Our land, our soul will be cleansed so, and our bondage and legality broken up. "Sow in tears," and what will follow? Reaping in joy. There is to be a reaping in joy.

The Lord help us, forgive what has been amiss, and bless that holy gospel which I have mentioned, and only mentioned; that it may be felt in such power and glory in our souls that the disease of sin may be removed, and this word take good effect upon us: "I will bring it health and cure."

J. K. P.

In order to our walking honourably and comfortably in Christ's way, we must be daily fighting with the world by faith on Christ; having our eye on Him directed, and our prayer to Him poured out, that He would be pleased not to take us out of the world, but keep us from its evil.—*Berridge*.

REDEMPTION.]

AN EXTRACT. BY JOSEPH SWAIN.

(Concluded from page 71.)

PURE, from the bosom of eternal Love,
 Jehovah gave His well-beloved Son,
 That men on Him believing, might have life;
 And with design as pure, the Son came down
 To serve and suffer in the sinner's stead.
 The cross explains the state of man with God:
 The cross reveals the mind of God to man.
 There Mercy, Truth, and Righteousness, with Peace,
 Met in one pure embrace. The whole of God
 Was manifested in that awful scene,
 Brighter than heav'n had seen Him shine before,
 Stronger than human intellect could bear;
 And yet so plain that man must read it,—LOVE.
 Never did TRUTH DIVINE so fair appear
 As when she told, with her impartial voice,
 The Lord of Life, that He behoved to die;
 Because she found Him in the sinner's place,
 And read the names of sinners on His heart.
 Never did JUSTICE on her brow a frown
 Wear so majestic, nor an heart so firm
 Display, to punish with impartial hand
 Sin where she found it, as when, through the soul
 Of man's Redeemer, her avenging sword
 She plunged vindictive; till each vital stream
 Was dry, and life before her dreadful face
 Fled from its sinless dwelling.
 Never did MERCY so divinely shine,
 As when on Calvary she sat enthroned,
 While Judgment placed the sceptre in her hand,
 And smil'd in crimson robes! Never before
 Nor since, was GOODNESS so benign display'd
 As when, to save vile intellectual worms
 From hell's dark realms, the Prince of intellect
 Himself endured God's wrath; and with His blood
 Quench'd the devouring flames: through His own heart
 Thus opening an amazing avenue
 For sinners numberless to pass from death
 To life immortal and immortal bliss.

Never did LOVE ETERNAL, though immense,
 To such mysterious depths descend before,
 Or rise to such sublime, unbounded heights ;
 Sinking beneath the gloomy caves of death,
 To drown the sins and purify the souls,
 Howe'er depraved, of all who trust His grace ;
 Rising beyond the everlasting hills
 To fix the subjects of redeeming Grace
 Secure among the highest sons of bliss !
 Never did LIGHT, so glorious from its source,
 Break on all borders of intelligence,
 As when the Sun of Righteousness in blood
 Sacrific tinged His uncreated beams,
 From the vast chaos of His sufferings rose,
 And everlasting Light, through heaven and earth,
 Diffused in one full blaze of endless day !
 Here all God's attributes together meet,
 As an assemblage of unclouded suns,
 Each on the others shining. Angels here,
 With holy wonder struck, and fill'd with awe,
 Gaze and admire, to read their Maker's name
 In living characters ; where every truth
 Like a celestial mirror, on the rest
 Reflects eternal beauty !

CRUMBS FROM THE MASTER'S TABLE

FROM BOSTON'S "CROOK IN THE LOT," OR, "THE SOVEREIGNTY AND WISDOM OF GOD IN THE AFFLICTIONS OF MEN DISPLAYED."

(Continued from page 88.)

FIFTHLY. *Preventing of sin.* Hos. ii. 6 : "I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths." The crook in the lot will readily be found to lie cross to some wrong bias of the heart, which peculiarly sways with the party : so it is like a thorn-hedge or wall in the way which that bias inclines him to. The defiling objects in the world do specially take and prove ensnaring, as they are suited to the particular cast of temper in men : but by means of the crook in the lot, the paint and varnish is worn off the defiling object, whereby it loses its former taking appearance : thus the edge of corrupt affections is blunted, temptation

weakened, and much sin prevented; the sinner after gadding about so much to change his way, returning ashamed, Jer. ii. 36, 37. Thus the Lord crooks one's lot that "He may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from men;" and so "He keepeth back his soul from the pit" (Job xxxiii. 17, 18). Every one knows what is most pleasant to him; but God alone knows what is most profitable. As all men are liars, so all men are fools too: He is "the only wise God" (Jude, ver. 25). Many are obliged to the crook in their lot, that they go not to those excesses which their vain minds and corrupt affections would with full sail carry them to; and they would from their hearts bless God for making it, if they did but calmly consider what would most likely be the issue of the removal thereof. When one is in hazard of fretting under the hardship of bearing the crook, he would do well to consider what condition he is as yet in, to bear its removal in a Christian manner.

Sixthly. *Discovery of latent corruption*, whether in saints or sinners. There are some corruptions in every man's heart, which lie, as it were, so near the surface that they are ready on every turn to rise up; but then there are others also which lie so very deep that they are scarcely observed at all. But as the fire under the pot makes the scum to rise up, appear a-top, and run over: so the crook in the lot raises up from the bottom, and brings out, such corruption as otherwise one could hardly imagine to be within. Who would have suspected such strength of passion in the meek Moses as he discovered at the waters of strife, and for which he was kept out of Canaan? Ps. cvi. 32, 33; Num. xx. 13. So much bitterness of spirit in the patient Job as to charge God with becoming cruel to him? Job xxx. 21. So much ill-nature in the good Jeremiah as to curse not only the day of his birth, but even the man who brought tidings of it to his father? Jer. xx. 14, 15. Or, such a tang of Atheism in Asaph, as to pronounce religion a vain thing? Ps. lxxiii. 13. But the crook in the lot bringing out these things, showed them to have been within, how long soever they had lurked unobserved. And as this design, however indecently proud scoffers allow themselves to treat it, is in no way inconsistent with the divine perfections; so the discovery itself is necessary for the due humiliation of sinners, and to stain the pride of all glory, that men may know themselves. Both which appear

in that it was on this very design that God made the long-continued crook in Israel's lot in the wilderness; even to humble them and prove them, to know what was in their heart, Deut. viii. 2.

Seventhly. *The exercise of grace in the children of God.* Believers, through the remains of indwelling corruption, are liable to fits of spiritual laziness and inactivity, in which their graces lie dormant for the time. Besides, there are some graces which of their own nature are but occasional in their exercise; as being exercised only upon occasion of certain things which they have a necessary relation to: such as patience and long-suffering. Now, the crook in the lot serves to rouse up a Christian to the exercise of the graces overpowered by corruption, and withal to call forth to action the occasional graces, ministering proper occasions for them. The truth is, the crook in the lot is the great engine of Providence for making men appear in their true colours, discovering both their ill and their good; and if the grace of God be in them, it will bring it out, and cause it to display itself. It so puts the Christian to his shifts that however it makes him stagger for a while, yet it will at length evidence both the reality and the strength of grace in him. "Ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations, that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, may be found unto praise" (1 Pet. i. 6, 7). The crook in the lot gives rise to many acts of faith, hope, love, self-denial, resignation, and other graces; to many heavenly breathings, pantings, and groanings, which otherwise would not be brought forth. And I make no question but these things, however by carnal men despised as trifling, are more precious in the sight of God than even believers themselves are aware of, being acts of immediate, internal worship; and will have a surprising notice taken of them, and of the sum of them, at long run, howbeit the persons themselves often can hardly think them worth their own notice at all. The steady acting of a gallant army of horse and foot to the routing of the enemy, is highly prized; but the acting of holy fear and humble hope is in reality far more valuable, as being so in the sight of God, whose judgment, we are sure, is according to truth. This the psalmist teacheth, Ps. cxlviii. 10, 11: "He delighteth not in the strength of the horse; He taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man. The Lord

'taketh pleasure in them that fear Him, in those that hope in His mercy.'

And indeed the exercise of the graces of His Spirit in His people is so very precious in His sight that whatever grace any of them excel in, they will readily get such a crook made in their lot as will be a special trial of it, that will make a proof of its full strength. Abraham excelled in the grace of faith, in trusting God's bare word of promise above the dictates of sense: and God, giving him a promise that He would make him a great nation, made withal a crook in his lot, by which he had enough ado with all the strength of his faith; while he was obliged to leave his country and kindred, and sojourn among the Canaanites; his wife continuing barren, till past the age of child-bearing: and when she had at length brought forth Isaac, and he was grown up, he was called to offer him up for a burnt-offering—the more exquisite trial of his faith, that Ishmael was now expelled his family, and that it was declared, "That in Isaac only his seed should be called" (Gen. xxi. 12). "Moses was very meek above all the men which were upon the face of the earth" (Num. xii. 3). And he was intrusted with the conduct of a most perverse and unmanageable people—the crook in his lot plainly designed for the exercise of his meekness. Job excelled in patience, and by the crook in his lot, he got as much to do with it. For God gives none of His people to excel in a gift, but some time or other He will afford them use for the whole compass of it.

Now, the use of this doctrine* is threefold. 1. For reproof. 2. For consolation. And 3. For exhortation.

Use 1. *For reproof.* And it meets with three sorts of persons as reprovably.

First. *The carnal and earthly,* who do not with awe and reverence regard the crook in their lot as of God's making. There is certainly a signature of the divine hand upon it to be perceived by just observers; and that challengeth an awful regard, the neglect of which forebodes destruction, Psa. xxviii. 5: "Because they regard not the works of the Lord, nor the operation of His hands, He shall destroy them, and not build them up." And herein they are deeply guilty who, poring upon second causes, and looking no further than the unhappy instruments of the crook in their lot, overlook the first cause;

* That the crook in the lot is of God's making.—ED.

as a dog snarls at the stone, but looks not to the hand that casts it. This is, in effect, to make a god of the creature : so regarding it as if it could of itself effect anything, while, in the meantime, it is but an instrument in the hand of God, "the rod of His anger" (Isa. x. 5); ordained of Him for judgment, established for correction (Hab. i. 12). O why should men terminate their view on the instruments of the crook in their lot, and so magnify their scourges? The truth is, they are for the most part rather to be pitied, as having an undesirable office, which for their gratifying of their own corrupt affections in making the crooks in the lot of others, returns on their own head at length with a vengeance, as did "the blood of Jezreel on the house of Jehu" (Hos. i. 4). And it is specially undesirable to be so employed in the case of such as belong to God; for rarely is the ground of the quarrel the same on the part of the instrument as on God's part, but very different. Witness Shimei's cursing David as a bloody man, meaning the blood of the house of Saul, which he was not guilty of; while God meant it of the blood of Uriah, which he could not deny. (2 Sam. xvi. 7, 8.) Moreover, the quarrel will be at length taken up between God and His people; and then their scourgers will find they had but a thankless office (Zec. i. 15). "I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction," saith God, in resentment of the heathen crooking the lot of His people. In like manner are they guilty who impute the crook in their lot to fortune or their ill-luck, which in very deed is nothing but a creature of imagination, framed for a blind to keep man from acknowledging the hand of God. Thus, what the Philistines doubted they do more impiously determine, saying, in effect, "It is not His hand that smote us; it was a chance that happened to us" (1 Sam. vi. 9). And, finally, those also are guilty who, in the way of giving up themselves to carnal mirth and sensuality, set themselves to despise the crook in their lot, to make nothing of it, and to forget it. I question not but one committing his case to the Lord, and looking to Him for remedy in the first place, may lawfully call in the moderate use of the comforts of life, for help in the second place. But as for that course so frequent and usual in this case among carnal men, if the crook of the lot really be, as indeed it is, of God's making, it must needs be a most indecent, unbecoming course, to be abhorred of all good men, Prov. iii.

11: "My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord." It is surely a very desperate method of cure, which cannot miss of issuing in something worse than the disease, however it may palliate it for a while. Isa. xxii. 12—14: "In that day did the Lord God of hosts call to weeping and to mourning, . . . and behold joy and gladness, . . . eating flesh and drinking wine: . . . and it was revealed in mine ears by the Lord of hosts, Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till ye die."

Secondly, *The unsubmitive*, whose hearts, like the troubled sea, swell and boil, fret and murmur, and cannot be at rest under the crook in their lot. This is a most sinful and dangerous course. The apostle Jude, characterising some "to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever" (ver. 13), saith of them (ver. 16), "These are murmurers, complainers;" namely, still complaining of their lot, which is the import of the word there used by the Holy Ghost. For, since the crook in their lot, which their unsubdued spirits can by no means submit to, is of God's making, this their practice must needs be a fighting against God: and these their complainings and murmurings are indeed against Him, whatever face they put upon them. Thus when the Israelites murmur against Moses (Num. xiv. 2), God charges them with murmuring against Himself: "How long shall I bear with this evil congregation, which murmur against Me?" ver. 27. Ah! may not He who made and fashioned us without our advice, be allowed to make our lot too, without asking our mind, but we must rise up against Him on account of the crook made in it? What doth this speak, but that the proud creature cannot endure God's work, nor bear what He hath done? And how black and dangerous is that temper of spirit! How is it possible to miss of being broken to pieces in such a course? "He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength: who hath hardened himself against Him, and hath prospered?" (Job ix. 4).

Thirdly, *The careless and unfruitful*, who do not set themselves dutifully to comply with the design of the crook in their lot. God and nature do nothing in vain. Since He makes the crook, there is doubtless a becoming design in it, which we are obliged in duty to fall in with, according to that, Mic. vi. 9: "Hear ye the rod." And, indeed, if one shut not his own eyes, but be willing to understand, he may easily

perceive the general design thereof to be to wean him from this world, and move him to seek and take up his heart's rest in God. And nature and the circumstances of the crook itself being duly considered, it will not be very hard to make a more particular discovery of the design thereof. But, alas! the careless sinner, sunk in spiritual sloth and stupidity, is in no concern to discover the design of Providence in the crook; so he cannot fall in with it, but remains unfruitful; and all the pains taken on him by the great Husbandman in the dispensation are lost. "They cry out by reason of the arm of the mighty;" groaning under the pressure of the crook itself, and the weight of the hand of the instrument thereof: "But none saith, Where is God my Maker?"—they look not, they turn not unto God for all that. (Job xxxv. 9, 10).

Use 2. *For consolation.* It speaks comfort to the afflicted children of God. Whatever is the crook in your lot it is of God's making; and therefore you may look upon it kindly. Since it is your Father has made it for you, question not but there is a favourable design in it towards you. A discreet child welcomes his father's rod, knowing that being a father, he seeks his benefit thereby; and shall not God's children welcome the crook in their lot as designed by their Father, who cannot mistake His measures, to work for their good, according to the promise? The truth is, the crook in the lot of a believer, how painful soever it proves, is a part of the discipline of the covenant, the nurture secured to Christ's children, by the promise of the Father, Psa. lxxxix. 30, 32: "If His children forsake My law, and walk not in My judgments, then will I visit their transgressions with the rod." Furthermore, all who are disposed to betake themselves to God under the crook in their lot, may take comfort in this,—let them know that there is no crook in their lot but may be made straight; for God made it, surely then He can mend it. He Himself can make straight what He hath made crooked, though none other can. There is nothing too hard for Him to do: "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill; that He may set him with princes, even with the princes of His people. He maketh the barren woman to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children" (Psa. cxiii. 7—9). Say not that your crook hath been of so long continuance that it will never mend. Put it in the hand of God who made it, that He may mend it, and wait on Him: and if

it be for your good that it should be mended, it shall be mended; for "no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly" (Psa. lxxxiv. 11).

Use last. *For exhortation.* Since the crook in the lot is of God's making, then, eyeing the hand of God in yours, be reconciled to it, and submit under it, whatever it is; I say, *eyeing the hand of God in it*, for otherwise your submission under the crook in your lot cannot be a Christian submission, acceptable to God; having no reference to Him as your party in the matter.

Object. I. But some will say, "The crook in my lot is from the hand of the creature; and such a one too as I deserved no such treatment from."

Ans. From what hath been already said it appears that although the crook in thy lot be indeed immediately from the creature's hand, yet it is mediately from the hand of God; there being nothing of that kind, no penal evil, but the Lord hath done it. Therefore, without all peradventure, God Himself is the principal party, whoever be the less principal. And albeit thou hast not deserved thy crook at the hand of the instrument which He makes use of for thy correction, thou certainly deservest it at His hand; and He may make use of what instrument He will in the matter, or may do it immediately by Himself, even as seems good in His sight.

Object II. "But the crook in my lot might quickly be evened, if the instrument or instruments thereof pleased; only there is no dealing with them, so as to convince them of their fault in making it."

Ans. If it is so, be sure God's time is not as yet come that the crook should be made even; for if it were come, though they stand now like an impregnable fort, they would give way like a sandy bank under one's feet: they should "bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet" (Isa. xlix. 23). Meanwhile, that state of the matter is so far from justifying one's not eyeing the hand of God in the crook in the lot, that it makes a piece of trial in which His hand very eminently appears; namely, that men should be signally injurious and burdensome to others, yet by no means susceptible of conviction. This was the trial of the church from her adversaries, Jer. l. 7. "All that found them have devoured them; and their adversaries said, We offend not: because they have sinned against the Lord, the Habitation of

justice." They were very abusive, and gave her barbarous usage; yet would they own no fault in the matter. How could they ward off the conviction? Were they verily blameless in their devouring the Lord's straying sheep? No, surely, they were not. Did they look upon themselves as ministers of the divine justice against her? No, they did not.

Some indeed would make a question here, "How the adversaries of the church could celebrate her God as the Habitation of justice?" But the original pointing of the text being retained, it appears that there is no ground at all for this question here, and withal the whole matter is set in a clear light. "All that found them have devoured them; and their adversaries said, We offend not: because they have sinned against the Lord, the Habitation of justice." These last are not the words of the adversaries, but the words of the prophet, showing how it came to pass that the adversaries devoured the Lord's sheep, as they lighted on them, and withal stood to the defence of it, when they had done, far from acknowledging any wrong: the matter lay here, the sheep had sinned against the Lord, the Habitation of justice; and as a just punishment hereof from His hand, they could have no justice at the hand of their adversaries.

Wherefore, laying aside these frivolous pretences, and eyeing the hand of God as that which hath bowed your lot in that part, and keeps it in the bow, be reconciled to, and submit under the crook, whatever it is, saying from the heart, "Truly this is a grief, and I must bear it" (Jer. x. 19). And to move you hereunto, consider,

1. It is a duty you owe to God as your Sovereign Lord and Benefactor. His sovereignty challenges our submission; and it can in no case be meanness of spirit to submit to the crook which His hand hath made in our lot, and to go quietly under the yoke that He hath laid on; but it is really madness for the potsherds of the earth, by their turbulent and refractory carriage under it, to strive with their Maker. And His beneficence to us, ill-deserving creatures, may well stop our mouth from complaining of His making a crook in our lot, who would have done us no wrong, had He made the whole of it crooked: "Shall we not receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" (Job ii. 10.)

2. It is an unalterable statute, for the time of this life,

that nobody shall want a crook in their lot ; for “ man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward ” (Job v. 7). And those who are designed for heaven, are in a special manner assured of a crook in theirs, that “ in the world they shall have tribulation ” (John xvi. 33) ; for by means thereof the Lord makes them meet for heaven. And how can you imagine that you shall be exempted from the common lot of mankind ? “ Shall the rock be removed out of his place for thee ? ” And since God makes the crooks in men’s lot according to the different exigence of their cases, you may be sure that yours is necessary for you.

3. A crook in the lot which one can by no means submit to, makes a condition of all things the likest to that in hell. For there a yoke which the wretched sufferers can neither bear nor shake off, is wreathed about their necks ; there the almighty Arm draws against them, and they against it ; there they are ever suffering and ever sinning ; still in the furnace, but their dross not consumed, nor they purified. Even such is the case of those who now cannot submit to the crook in their lot.

4. Great is the loss by not submitting to it. The crook in the lot, rightly improved, has turned to the best account, and made the best time to some that ever they had all their life long ; as the psalmist from his own experience testifies, Psa. cxix. 67, “ Before I was afflicted I went astray ; but now have I kept Thy word.” There are many now in heaven who are blessing God for the crook they had in their lot here. What a sad thing must it then be to lose this teeth-wind for Immanuel’s land ! But if the crook in thy lot do thee no good, be sure it will not miss of doing thee great damage ; it will greatly increase thy guilt and aggravate thy condemnation, while it shall for ever cut thee to the heart, to think of the pains taken by means of the crook in the lot, to wean thee from the world, and bring thee to God, but all in vain. Take heed, therefore, how you manage it, “ Lest . . . thou mourn at the last . . . and say, How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof ! ” (Prov. v. 10—12).

(To be continued).

If we do not abide in prayer, we shall abide in cursed temptations.—*J. Owen, D.D.*

A STRONGHOLD IN THE DAY OF TROUBLE.

A MORNING READING BY JAMES BOURNE.

MAY 13th, 1841.—Nahum i. 7 : “ The Lord is good, a Stronghold in the day of trouble ; and He knoweth them that trust in Him.” We find it hard to reconcile this—that the Lord is good, with what is said in the 2nd verse : “ God is jealous, and the Lord revengeth ; the Lord revengeth, and is furious.” What words can be more terrible ? But here it is—we have two natures, and the old nature is always striving to be uppermost ; and if the new nature is not able to retain the mastery, but the old nature gets the upper hand, then we are sure to find this fury, this revenge ; for God will teach us the exceeding sinfulness of sin. But He is still good. His fury is against that evil nature, and in defence of the new principle. He has His way in the whirlwind and in the storm. We know what a storm is in a ship ; we cannot escape, and there is but a step between us and death. So spiritually, we are full of fears and terrors when He arises against our sin. Before that we had some tenderness, we were good, we did many things, as we thought ; but when the Lord draws nigh in this fire, all these fruits of a self-righteous spirit are burnt up, and we cannot do anything but sin. There seems only a little feeble principle to take God’s side and cleave to Him—a mere spark in the ocean ; and we cannot but think we must be destroyed in the fire. But yet here it is that “ the Lord is good.” “ Who can stand before His indignation ? ” Who ? Why, they who have the fear of God, who in the midst of all these dangers cleave to Him and pray to Him. “ The mountains quake at Him, and the hills melt.” This is the case especially when He comes first to the soul ; all the mountains of goodness, conceit, pride, and knowledge quake and crumble, that we may be taught to trust in Christ only. “ And the earth is burned at His presence.” What is the token of His saving presence in this tumult, when there is nothing good to be seen ? Why, it is that awe, that dismay—we see these evils of our nature with dismay, and cannot get away from them ; and this destroys all hope in ourselves. This is the work of the Holy Spirit ; for unless He were secretly to support us, and give us some hope and trust in His mercy through Christ, we could not live in this fire. But you may say, “ I do not feel this trust ; I have no faith.” You have no right to sit

in God's judgment seat, and utter such things. You are exhorted to cleave to Him, and to commit your cause to Him; and in the end you will find you do trust, you have faith.

We must all come to these places sooner or later. The work of God in His people's hearts is various, and begins in various ways; but I never knew one who was not brought, either in life or at death, to feel that he must perish without Christ, and to cry, "Lord, save me." I often find myself in much confusion and dismay; these inward evils seem so to domineer that I can make a judgment of nothing; I seem as if I have no faith. But I find in the end that the Lord comes; and then I can but see how good He has been. I bless Him for all that I have suffered, and see the absolute need-be for these fiery trials, to keep under my pride and conceit; and see His goodness and wisdom in dealing with me as He does. I am always full of fear in the conflict; and yet He has never once failed me in all my troubles.

"The soul that would to heaven attain,
Must Jacob's ladder climb,"—

begin very low, at the first step. Do not mount yourselves, but wait till God says, "Friend, go up higher." If you climb up yourself, you will be sure to have to go down and begin again.

In Isa. xxxvii. we read that Rabshakeh sent messengers to Hezekiah, saying, "Let not thy God *in whom thou trustest* deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not be given into the hand of the King of Assyria," &c. This is what the devil is always saying. "How can you go to God now you have just been sinning, and are in such a state?" Now cannot you understand that this is the very time to go to Him? He is "a Stronghold in the day of trouble;" and the Holy Spirit leads us to go to Him as we are, with our sins. Jesus Christ came to save sinners. But the enemy says, "Have the gods of the nations delivered them? and shalt *thou* be delivered? See how such a one died---he was not delivered." But the Holy Spirit lifts up a standard against all his charges; and see how Hezekiah prayed and trusted and committed all to God. He did not say in a presumptuous way that the Lord had promised, and therefore He must perform. No; he felt himself a sinner. Conscience makes cowards of us all. He pleads and sues humbly; and so must we, if we are led of the Holy Spirit: "O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest

between the cherubims"—that is, Jesus Christ, who sits on His throne, the mercy seat, to plead the cause of His people—"incline Thine ear, O Lord, and hear; open Thine eyes, O Lord, and see; and hear all the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent to reproach the living God." Now this is a sweet way of pleading. He does not say "to reproach *me*," but "the living God;" he makes them out to be God's enemies. So the battle is not ours, but the Lord's. And he acknowledges that the king of Assyria had laid waste all nations, and had cast their gods in the fire because they were no gods; and then you see how the Lord answers: "Because thy rage against Me, and thy tumult, is come up into Mine ears, therefore will I put My hook in thy nose, and My bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest." How have I seen this, when my opposers have been resolved for my destruction—how the Lord has put His hook in their noses and turned them away, and caused me to bless His holy name.

GOD'S END IN AFFLICTION.

FROM JOHN PRESTON, D.D.

HE [God] doth not go a jot beyond thy need; and this will appear by the opening of two excellent similitudes: Isa. xxviii. (for all the wits in the world cannot find out better expressions than the Word hath, if we had eyes to see the glory of them) from the 24th ver. downward. First. "Doth the plowman plow all day to sow? doth he open and break the clods of his ground? When he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he cast in the fitches, and scatter the cummin, and cast in the principal wheat and the appointed barley, and the rie in their place? For his God doth instruct him to discretion, and doth teach him." The husbandman, he tells you, plows not but where he means to sow, and to have a harvest; and the plow goes no longer than till the clods be broken; and says he, God hath given him this discretion. And therefore shall not God have the same and use the same Himself? Dost thou think that thou art plowed longer than thou needest? It is but till the clods, *thy stiff spirit, be broken*; and whereas thou thinkest thy heart soft enough, it may be so for some grace, but God hath seeds of all sorts to cast in,

the wheat and the barley, and the rie, and that ground which is soft enough for one is not for another.

And again, secondly. When it comes to harvest, to some maturity, he has to thresh it with divers kinds of instruments (which is the second similitude), *v. 27*, "For the fitches are not threshed with a threshing instrument, neither is a cart-wheel turned about upon the cummin, but the fitches are beaten out with a staff, and the cummin with a rod. Bread corn, wheat, is bruised, because he should not always be threshing it." So God beholdeth every man's strength, and knows what affliction is most suitable for him. He finds out a fit instrument for every grain. His end is but to drive thee out of the husk of thy circumcision, of some lusts, whereof some sit more close to the heart than others. And as the wheat and the husk sit closer together than in other grains, therefore the wheel goes over it; and when it is threshed enough, and God hath unloosed the heart and the sin, the husk and the wheat, He doth it no longer. Now says he, *This is from the LORD, who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working.* And therefore, as when you see a husbandman do so with his ground and grain, you judge him a wise man in doing so; so also is God therein.

REVIEW.

"THEOPNEUSTIA : " The Plenary Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. By L. Gaussen, D.D. Cloth boards, 1s. 6d. net. From all booksellers, mentioning publishers' name. London: Farncombe & Son, 30 Imperial Buildings, Ludgate Circus, E.C. Postage, 3d. extra.

MANY years ago this valuable work was brought to our notice, and we remember being struck by its excellence. The first reading of it left a lasting impression of its greatness and usefulness. The remaining copies of the third edition are now being offered at a very low price; and it is with pleasure and confidence that we commend it to our readers.

The subject here put before us is one that concerns us all to know something about; indeed it is one of supreme moment to mankind, wherever the sacred Scriptures are sent. The manner in which they were ALL given—"by inspiration of God"—must ever deserve our careful attention, and our belief thereof be founded on the inspired Word itself. Dr.

Gaussen's work appears to us fitted to meet the abounding prejudices and errors of our day, relating to the divine source of the Bible. In looking over it our impressions have been uniformly favourable; and more—our belief in verbal inspiration rests on, and is fortified by, the evidence here concentrated from Scripture. The pages treat of what is vital to our faith—that the original words of Scripture were given by God; that “holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;” “not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth” (2 Pet. i. 21; 1 Cor. ii. 13). Thus our warrant for this belief is holy Scripture, the supreme authority for all truth. This fact is recognised by our author; he appeals to the Scriptures only, and that not in a dry way, but as if he found his own life in and from those sacred writings. The following words are taken from his opening observations:

“For myself I fear not to say that in devoting myself to the labour this work has cost me, I have often had to thank God for having called me to it; for while engaged in it, I have more than once beheld the divine majesty fill with its brightness the whole temple of the Scriptures.”—*p. 23.*

His aim is not to convince unbelievers that the Bible is worthy of belief; but rather, to make manifest in a pure, clear light that the subtle theories of partial inspiration are destructive to faith. Here are exhibited the erroneous consequences of a belief in a partial and intermittent inspiration, and how the notion of degrees of inspiration involves that of some passages of Scripture being quite unimportant or even mixed with error. Inspiration we understand to be the entire subjection of the writer in his thoughts and words to the Holy Spirit's influence. And the declarations of Scripture concerning their own inspiration are here displayed in their overwhelming strength and number.

Perhaps one of the most excellent sections is the one headed:

“The examples of the apostles and of their Master attest that, in their view, all the words of the holy Books are given by God.”

It begins,

“Consider what use is made by the apostles themselves of the Word of God, and the terms in which they quote it. See how, in doing this, they not only think it enough to say, ‘God hath said;’ ‘The Holy Ghost saith;’ ‘God saith in such a prophet;’ but observe, farther, when they quote it, with what respect they speak of what are for them its smallest particles; how attentively they

weigh every word ; with what religious assurance they often insist on a single word, in order to deduce from it the most serious consequences, and the most fundamental doctrines.

“ For ourselves, we confess nothing more strongly impresses us than this view of the subject ; nothing has begot in us so deep and firm a confidence in the entire inspiration of the Scriptures.”
—*p. 91.*

Very many are the passages here quoted as instances and proofs of this great truth ; one only can be given here, from the example of Christ :

“ But listen to Him, especially when in the temple He would prove to other Pharisees, by the Scriptures, the divinity of the expected Messiah. Here likewise, to demonstrate this, He still insists on the use of a SINGLE WORD, which He proceeds to take from the Book of Psalms : ‘ If the Messiah be the Son of David,’ said He, ‘ how doth David, BY THE SPIRIT, call Him LORD, saying (at the 110th Psalm), The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit Thou at My right hand ? If David then call Him Lord, how is He his Son ? ’ ”—*p. 101.*

The doctrine being fully established, the reader is confronted with numerous *objections and evasions*. The first is *the fallibility of translations*, which is by some alleged to render an infallibility of the original text useless, and therefore to overthrow the faith of full and complete inspiration. The reply demonstrates forcibly that the necessity for verbal inspiration in the one case is infinitely greater than in the other. A few words will suffice here :

“ The divine thought being already incarnated, as it were, in the language of the sacred text, what remains to be done in translation is no longer the giving of it a body, but only the changing of its dress, making it say in French what it had already said in Greek, and modestly substituting for each of its words an equivalent word. Such an operation is comparatively very inferior, very immaterial, without mystery, and palpably less subject to error than the preceding ”—[that is, a man’s expressing exactly in words the thought of God revealed to him without words.]—*p. 158.*

It can hardly be denied that to translate is a far simpler operation than the other, and if we consider for a moment how difficult it often is to express our deepest thoughts and impressions in words, so as to lay them down with precision on paper, and how much training and education is usually needed for this purpose,—how much more above our reach naturally must it be to express exactly the thought of God revealed to us ? It would require, as our author points out, that we “ thoroughly comprehended it in its just measure, and in the whole extent and depth of its meaning ; ”

and this is what we are told that the prophets sought after, not having attained thereto, 1 Pet. i. 10—12.

Perhaps one of the most important objections is that relating to the *various readings of the original text*. In view of these it is enquired, "What becomes of the doctrine of verbal inspiration, and what purpose can it serve?"

Much valuable information is given on this subject. It is shown that modern critics, with immense labour and research, have been unable to produce any significant difference in the readings of thousands of different manuscripts. Almost all of the hundreds of variations discovered are without any weight at all, with regard to the sense conveyed; while the small remaining portion does not in any way alter or invalidate any revealed truth. Various readings are given as examples, and among them,

"A table containing our received text compared with all the different readings that could be presented by the 150 Greek M.SS. collected and consulted for the Epistle to the Romans."—*p. 180.*

The result is pointed out; it is in short:

"According to Griesbach, *five insignificant corrections* in the whole Epistle—according to more modern critics, *ONLY TWO*, and these the most insignificant of the five; and according to Scholtz *THREE!*"—*p. 190.*

Thus it appears that too much has been made of the variations in the original text handed down to us. In all that is advanced by our author on this point, how powerfully does the tender care of God shine forth in the preservation of His sacred Word! How should uncertain minds be confirmed in the belief that the holy Scriptures do not merely *contain the mind of God*, but *consist of His own inspired words!* And considering that a faithful translation still leaves an impress of the original words—not letting them go without giving their nearest equivalent—how then should we hearken with awe and reverence to the voice of God in the *words* of our English Bible!

Our author also points to the rage of the prince of darkness against those pages of light and life; whereby they were hidden away in corners through a thousand years or more, yet were preserved; and have been translated into all the modern languages, with life-long zeal and labours, and restored to the world, as it were, at the price of blood—the blood of martyrs. And being afresh committed to us and other nations, to slight and neglect them, to criticise and

despise them, is to betray the charge, and to wrong our own souls. The Lord keep us from the power of the evil one, as opposed to the power of the Scriptures.

Let not our readers think we have in these few remarks exhausted the merits of the book before us; we have but touched some principal parts. Sundry supposed difficulties and alleged inconsistencies are fairly examined; some of these are resolved, others to a good degree cleared up; and among them are Paul's statements on the subject of marriage in 1 Cor. vii. 10, 12, 25, in which he *appears* to admit he was not fully inspired. We believe the book as a whole ably holds forth the distinctive value of the holy Scriptures as verbally inspired. It is that plenary inspiration which gives them their tremendous authority. There is our warrant for *the absolute truth, the certain fulfilment, of every word*; as the Lord Jesus testified, "Verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled" (Mat. v. 18). The belief of this inspires awe, and if fully realised, awakens and quickens the conscience; for "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Rom. x. 17). When the divine origin of any passage is really felt, the most stubborn heart will bow before it. Thus the Scriptures stand alone as "able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. iii. 15).

May many of our readers gather some valuable knowledge concerning them from the book we now commend to their notice.

Obituary.

RICHARD ADAMS, of Birmingham, minister of the gospel for about thirty-seven years, departed this life, Oct. 12th, 1910, aged 71 years.

Before his call by grace he was a wild, reckless youth, and the leader of a number of young men of the same spirit. He was an expert in the art of self defence, and people who knew his character were careful not to quarrel with him. The time came, however, which he was often enabled to look back upon as an evidence of the Lord's eternal purpose towards him,

"Not to propose, but call by grace."

The Lord stopped him in his career of wickedness, and con-

vinced him of his solemn state one Sunday night in a public house, which also had a bad reputation attached to it; and he was well qualified by personal experience to confute that erroneous doctrine which makes the calling of a sinner depend upon the exercise of his own free will. Hell was set before him, and he felt the solemn conviction that it would be his everlasting portion. Such was the depth of his convictions that he went into his room, stripped himself, and fell on his knees crying for mercy. After going on for some time he was one morning, while lying in bed, favoured with a sweet revelation of God's way of salvation through Jesus Christ and Him crucified for sinners, accompanied by a blessed feeling that he was interested in it. He walked in the enjoyment of this blessing for a few months, which prepared him for the fiery temptations that he had to undergo. Some time after his deliverance, he was sorely tempted by the devil, and on one occasion had to hold his mouth to prevent oaths and curses coming out against the Lord Jesus Christ. He was freed from this trial in the following manner. He had walked about four miles to a chapel at Coventry, but received nothing there. When coming away he was impressed to go to another place, which meant his walking about another six miles. He obeyed the impulse, and the minister he heard so described the path he was travelling that he was instrumental in delivering him from the temptation. The minister was the late Simeon Burns, pastor for many years of Gornal Baptist Church. This resulted in a strong union between them, and at Mr. Burns's death Mr. Adams buried him. And he referred to the blessing he received under him in an account of him which appeared in the "Gospel Standard" for October, 1877.

At another time he was tempted to worship the devil, in the hope that it would be better for him in eternity; but when about to fall under it, the Lord showed him where the temptation came from; the snare was broken, and a light shone into his soul with that promise, "My Beloved is mine, and I am His."

The Lord well prepared him for the work of the ministry which He had appointed him unto. On one occasion, before entering upon this work, when present at a funeral these words were applied, "Let the dead bury their dead, but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." He began to speak in public when about thirty-five years of age; and his ministry was

blessed of the Lord in the calling of some of His people from the kingdom of Satan, and to the comforting and establishing of the church.

He first came to the Coppice on the 17th of Sept., 1876, and when going back to the railway station after preaching, the words kept running through his mind, "This is your place;" and so it happened. The pastor at the Coppice having to resign through affliction, he received a call from the church, and took over the charge about April, 1877. His ministry at this time was of a very searching and discriminating character; but it was no doubt needful, as when he settled first, there was much which did not seem to bear the impress of God's work, and which could not stand before the solemn truth of God when pressed home. After he entered upon this work, he passed through deep waters, at one time feeling as if he was ripening for hell; but when going round the hill side near to Dudley, he was delivered by the application of that hymn:

"Sovereign grace o'er sin abounding."

He only continued pastor for five years; but the Lord gave him seals to his ministry, so that he continued preaching to the people to his end. He felt greatly attached to them, and on that account refused a call from another place which would have brought him a good income.

His whole life was one of continuous trials and afflictions, in family matters, in providential circumstances, and in his soul's experience. On one occasion the Lord gave him that promise, which was a prelude to sore afflictions, "My grace is sufficient for thee;" on another occasion this verse was applied, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." He was once favoured with a blessed revelation of the Trinity.

Once when walking in providential trouble the Lord gave him that promise, "The barrel of meal shall not waste;" which was soon followed by substantial help from an unexpected quarter. On another occasion in similar circumstances, this promise or exhortation was given him, "Be still, and know that I am God." When lying in bed tossed about and distressed in soul, the two following lines were sweetly applied:

"No goodness or fitness expects He from us;
This I can well witness, for none could be worse."

His ministry was made of great benefit to the Lord's tried people in the country, being made a consolation to many around Farndon, and a few at Leicester prized it. He was made instrumental in delivering a man who had been a hearer of the late John Warburton, and who had been walking in bondage for about nine years. In the "Gospel Standard" for Oct. 1896 is the account of a member of the Coppice church, John Astley, who was called under Simeon Burns. He went to the room at Dudley one week evening when Mr. Adams was preaching, and under the word a precious Christ was revealed to his soul, and he was brought into sweet liberty.

Coming to his last days, for eighteen months before his death it was evident that Mr. Adams was suffering from some serious malady, as it began to tell sadly on his frame. He gradually sank, and it was felt by many that his affliction would terminate in his removal from this world. He himself was always hopeful that the Lord would strengthen him to continue preaching; and it was not till within a week or two of his death that he gave up hope of recovery, and felt resigned to his departure. He went out preaching as long as he could possibly hold up, and it was pitiful to see him toward the last, so much altered was he in appearance. He was particularly solemn and weighty, realising the great importance of an experimental acquaintance with the truths of the gospel to sustain one in the path of affliction; and he impressed upon his hearers the danger of resting in a knowledge of the truth in the judgment, without a saving experience in the heart. He discerned with dismay the direction in which the professed church was going in the present day, feeling that she was departing from the spirit of the gospel in its power; and he frequently expressed his fears in this respect from the pulpit. The last time he preached was at the Coppice on the 7th of Aug. 1910. Just before this five persons were baptised at the Coppice. It was a trial to him that he was too weak to take them through the ordinance; but he had the pleasure of receiving them into the church fellowship on that day, which event he had long waited for. The service was felt to be very good by Mr. Adams and others, who enjoyed the Lord's presence; so much so that one old member after the service remarked that they had heard Mr. Adams for the last time; which proved to be so. He took to his bed for good a few days after this. He experienced many changes on his dying

bed, sometimes tempted by Satan, and at other times favoured with visits from the Lord. To a brother minister, Mr. Davies, of Birmingham, he said he had not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God, that he had preached what he had been taught, and that he could die upon the truths he had preached to poor sinners. On one occasion he said to the person waiting upon him, "I want my Beloved;" and after earnest prayer he exclaimed, "I have my Beloved; He is my Beloved." During the last week he was much favoured, and it was felt to be blessed to be in his room. Once he quoted that verse:

" There I shall see His face,
And never, never sin,
But from the rivers of His grace,
Drink endless pleasures in."

The day before he departed a member of the Coppice visited him, and found him in a good frame, Mr. Adams saying to him, "Christ is my Beloved." He passed away from this wilderness world about nine o'clock on Wednesday morning Oct. 12th, 1910, his last words being the following:

" I feel this mud-wall'd cottage shake,
And long to see it fall,
That I my willing flight may take
To Him who is my All."

" My hope is built on nothing less,
Than Jesu's blood and righteousness."

Many of the Lord's tried people will feel the lack of his ministry, as it was particularly acceptable to those who knew the plague of their own heart, the temptations of Satan, the power of sin, and the preciousness of the blood of Christ. One thing which was gratifying to notice, was the way in which numerous friends rendered help to him in his last great affliction; thus giving practical proof of the esteem in which they held him. It is probable that fuller particulars of Mr. Adams's life will be published in pamphlet form at a somewhat later date.

A FRIEND.

MAY COUSINS, died, Sept. 3rd, 1910, aged 36 years.

I believe from quite a girl my dear sister-in-law was much exercised about her soul, and earnestly desired the Lord to pardon her sins. She told me when she was about 18 years old, the Lord revealed Himself to her as her Saviour in a very striking manner. That night she was so terrified she durst not lie down for fear, if she fell asleep, she should awake,

and find herself in hell; when suddenly she saw a form approaching her bed, One like the Lord Jesus. She was very much afraid, but when quite near a sweet voice said,

“Fear not, it is *I*. Oh, be not afraid!”

Then the sight vanished. Her joy now was as great as her fears before, for now she could not lie down for the blessedness she felt. She was quite sure the Lord had pardoned all her sins, and she was His child. She told this to no one, although often wishing she could approach someone on the subject; but for seventeen years she went on without making any profession; yet her walk was that of one that loved the best things.

My first talk with her closely was about three years ago. Being in a little trouble myself, I seemed directed to her, and the effects proved it was the work of the Holy Spirit, for I returned home full of praise. While telling her a little of my experience since coming into the church (which was then only a few months), she would join in and say, “Oh, I know something of what you are saying. Do *you* have those desires, those doubts and fears, those ups and downs, and those blessings and deliverances? Then if you are a right character to be baptised, *I am*.” She was for a long time earnestly desiring to join the church, but wanted another visit from the Lord to confirm her she was right. She was very fearful, and her great desire was that she might not deceive the people of God. She prayed earnestly one week that some one might even call on her, that she might know in this way that it was from the Lord Himself; and so it happened. Mr. Battersby called on her, and she was drawn out sweetly to tell him what the Lord had done for her. Afterwards she went before the church, and was well received. She was baptised at Shaw Street, Liverpool, on July 18th, being much blessed all through the day.

She had a very weak body, both lungs being far gone for about four years, but the doctor said she had great vitality. A little daughter was born on July 29th, when she had a serious time, but she was wonderfully supported and cheerful, and this promise was given her, “My strength shall be made perfect in thy weakness.” And He that gave the promise was faithful to the end. She got up, and went out a little in a bath-chair; but the consumption fell in her throat, and hindered her swallowing. She had every attention and com-

fort, but her time had come to depart, although her dear husband could not believe she would die; nor did she herself up to a few hours of her death. I was with her on the Friday afternoon before she died in the next morning. I asked her how she felt. "Quite peaceful." I said, "Is Jesus precious?" "He is.

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds!"

and pointing to a text on the wall, "Without Me ye can do nothing," she said, "That's mine. I know that *I* cannot do anything of myself; I dare not try to take a drink without first asking the Lord to help me swallow it." She said, "You see, it is He in me." These lines were powerfully blessed to her:

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

She said she sweetly saw the Trinity in the promise: "Nor suffer My faithfulness to fail;" and again, "My strength shall be made perfect in thy weakness." Seeing she still thought she should recover a little, I said, "Perhaps when I come again, I may see you up." "Yes," she said, "and in the sitting-room." But secretly I believed I should see her no more.

I believe she changed about 7.30 that evening; she laboured much for breath. About two a.m., she said to her sister, "Shall I die?" Her sister replied, "Well, we have done all we can for you." She said, "Yes, you have done everything, and been very kind." Then for the first time she seemed to realise death; a little fear (we believe only for the body) came over her, and she said, "Lord, help me." But in a very little time, looking on those around her who were crying, she said, "Don't weep for me, but praise the Lord. Oh, bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name." She prayed for her husband, children, and friends; but kept saying many times over, "But especially, Lord, those that are Thine own. 'The Lord knoweth them that are His.'" She said, "What a rejoicing there will be! How I shall praise Him!" It was indeed a most blessed testimony to leave behind. She lay quiet for a few moments, and without a sigh or a movement passed away to the heavenly Canaan, to take her seat among the redeemed of the Lord.

A. ELSOM.

NOTICES OF DEATH.

Mr. A. M. BIGGS was born at Leicester, England, March 28th, 1833, and died, Nov. 13th, 1910, in his 78th year, surviving his dearly beloved wife just a little over three years. His illness extended a little over a year, and during this time, the only books he cared to have read to him were the Bible and the "Gospel Standard." He often expressed a wish to be free from this world of sin. During the last week of his life he suffered great pain, and was too weak to talk, but still wished to have the Bible read to him. On Sunday evening he dropped asleep, never to awaken again in this world, at the home of Mrs. Henry Life, Elyria, Ohio.

Died at Bradenstoke, Dec. 3rd, 1910, THOMAS MATTHEWS, aged 83. Though our late friend had gone in and out amongst the brethren here from a child—I have heard him speak in his last days of what was said to him in the Sabbath school—yet he cast not his lot in with them till "old and grey-headed." He was baptised in the open air, June 14th, 1908, being then four score and one years old.

E. MORSE.

On Monday, Dec. 19th, 1910, aged 66 years, ERNEST JAMES JOY, of Akron, Ohio, U.S.A. He came here from Staplehurst, Kent, about forty-four years ago. He had been ill for over four months, and during the last month his suffering was great. He bore it without a murmur, and just on the Saturday before he died, his wife had been talking to him, then he said,

"When I turn my eyes within,
All is dark and vain and wild,
Full of unbelief and sin,
Can I deem myself a child?"

All must pass through death, and must be born again to be saved. I cannot die yet, for my passport has not come; every one that is saved must have a passport." A little later in the day he recited the whole of the hymn:

"O for an overcoming faith!"

The last thing we heard him say was, "My passport," as though it had come. He was unable to talk for several hours before his death, because his throat was paralysed. He was a dear lover of a free grace gospel; nothing short of it would appeal to him. He took but little interest in the things of this life in his last year. He left a wife and ten children to mourn his loss. Our loss is great, but it is his eternal gain.

BESSIE C. JOY.

MARY STEVENSON, of 13 City Walk, Pendlebury, Lancs., died, Dec. 22nd, aged 79 years. A member at Zion Chapel, Thirlemere Street, Manchester. She was much afflicted in body, yet most regular in her attendance—travelled nine miles every Sabbath. She had bands in her death, but died resting for salvation wholly upon Jesus Christ and His atoning blood and righteousness. Her last words were, "Come, come, come."

T. EMERY.

FRANK SCOTT, of Radnor St., Swindon, died, Jan. 29th, 1911, aged 54, for many years a member of "Rehoboth," Swindon. He was much favoured in his last illness, death having lost all its terrors. He expressed himself as "a sinner saved by sovereign grace."

F. J. B.

THE GOSPEL STANDARD.

APRIL, 1911.

MATT. v. 6; 2 TIM. i. 9; ROM. xi. 7; ACTS viii. 37, 38; MATT. xxviii. 19.

IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS.

AN EXTRACT FROM BUNYAN'S "LAW AND GRACE."

Now, secondly, the soul being thus killed to itself, its sins, its righteousness, faith, hope, wisdom, promises, resolutions, and the rest of those things which it trusted in by nature, in the next place it hath also given unto it a most glorious, perfect, and never-failing life, which is first a life imputed to it; yet so really that the very thought of it in the soul hath so much operation and authority, especially when the meditation of it is mixed with faith, as to make it (though condemned by the law) to triumph, and to look its enemies in the face with comfort: notwithstanding the greatness of the multitude, the fierceness of their anger, and the continuation of their malice be ever so hot against it.

This imputed life (for so it is) is the obedience of the Son of God, as His righteousness in His suffering, rising, ascending, interceding, and so consequently triumphing over all the enemies of the soul; and given to me as being wrought on purpose for me. So that, is there righteousness in Christ?—that is mine; is there perfection in that righteousness?—that is mine; did He bleed for sin?—it was mine; hath He overcome the law, the devil, and hell?—the victory is mine, and I am counted the conqueror; "nay, more than conqueror, through Him that hath loved me." And I count this a most glorious life; for by this means it is that I am, in the first place, proclaimed both in heaven and earth guiltless, and such an one who, as I am in Christ, am not a sinner, and so not under the law as to be condemned, but as holy and righteous as the Son of God Himself, because He Himself is my Holiness and Righteousness; and so likewise having by this all things taken out of the way that would condemn me.

Sometimes I bless the Lord my soul hath had the life that

now I am speaking of not only imputed to me, but the very glory of it upon my soul; for upon a time when I was under many condemnings of heart, and feared because of my sins that my soul would miss eternal glory; methought I felt in my soul such a secret motion as this, "Thy Righteousness is in heaven;" together with the splendour and shining of the Spirit of grace in my soul, which gave me to see clearly that my righteousness by which I should be justified (from all that could condemn) was the Son of God Himself in His own Person, now at the right hand of His Father, representing me complete before the mercy-seat in His own Self; so that I saw clearly that night and day, wherever I was, or whatever I was doing, still there was my Righteousness just before the eyes of Divine glory; so that the Father could never find fault with me for any insufficiency that was in my righteousness, because it was complete; neither could He say, "Where is it?" because it was continually at His right hand.

Also, at another time having contracted guilt upon my soul, and having some distemper of body upon me, "Suppose (I thought) that death were now to seize upon and to take me away from among men." Then I thought, "What shall I do now? Is all right with my soul? Have I the right work of God on my soul?" Answering myself, "No surely, and that because there are so many weaknesses in me; yea, so many weaknesses in my best duties. For," thought I, "how can such a one as I find mercy, whose heart is so ready to evil, and so backward to that which is good (so far as it is natural)?" Thus musing, being filled with fear to die, these words came in upon my soul, "Being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption which is in Christ;" as if God had said, "Sinner, thou thinkest because thou hast had so many infirmities and weaknesses in thy soul whilst thou hast been professing Me, therefore now there are no hopes of mercy; but be it known unto thee that it was not anything done by thee at the first that moved Me to have mercy upon thee; neither is it anything that is done by thee now that shall make Me either accept or reject thee. Behold My Son, who standeth by Me; He is righteous, He hath fulfilled My law, and given Me good satisfaction; on Him, therefore, do I look, and on thee only as thou art in Him; and according to what He hath done, so will I deal with thee." This having stayed my heart, and taken off the guilt through the strength of its

coming on my soul, shortly after came in that word as a second testimony: "He hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

And thus is the sinner made alive from the dead, being justified by grace through the righteousness of Christ, "which is unto all and upon all them that believe," according to the Scriptures: "And the life I now live, it is by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me" (Gal. ii. 20). "I lay down My life for My sheep" (John x. 10, 15). "I am come that you might have it more abundantly." "For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more then being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life" (Rom. v. 10, 21). "That as sin reigneth unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."

Secondly. This life is not only imputed to him that is wrought on by the Spirit of grace, that is, not only counted his, but also there is put into the soul an understanding enlightened on purpose to know the things of God, which are Christ and His imputed righteousness (1 John v. 20), which it never thought of nor understood before (1 Cor. ii. 9—11); which understanding being enlightened and made to see such things that the soul cannot be contented without it lay hold of, and apply Christ unto itself so effectually; I say, that the soul shall be exceedingly revived in a very heavenly measure, with the application of this imputed righteousness; for thereby it knoweth it shall find God speaking peace to itself with a Fatherly affection, saying, "Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee; the righteousness of My Son I bestow upon thee, for what the law could not do in that it was weak through the (thy) flesh, I have sent forth My only Son, and have condemned thy sins in His flesh (Rom. viii. 3, 4). And though thou hast gone astray like a lost sheep, yet on Him have I laid thine iniquities; and though thereby thou didst undo and break thyself for ever, yet by His stripes I have healed thee." Thus, I say, the Lord causeth thy soul by faith to apply that which He doth by grace impute unto it (for thus every soul more or less is dealt with).

The soul being thus enlightened, thus quickened, thus made alive from that dead state it was in before (or at least having

the beginnings of this life), it hath these several virtuous advantages, which they have not that are dead in their sins and trespasses, and under the law.

First. It seeth what a sad condition all men by nature are in, they being in that state which itself was in but a while since; but now by grace it is beginning to creep out of it; now it seeth the whole world lieth in wickedness, 1 John v. 19, and so liable to eternal vengeance, because of their wickedness. . . .

Secondly. The soul that hath been thus killed by the law to the things it formerly delighted in, now, O now it cannot be contented with that slender, groundless faith and hope that it once contented itself with. No, no; but now it must be brought into the right saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, now it must have Him discovered to the soul by the Spirit, now it cannot be satisfied because such and such do tell it so. No; but now it will cry out, "Lord, show me continually in the light of Thy Spirit through Thy Word, that Jesus that was born in the days of Cæsar Augustus (when Mary, a daughter of Judah, went with Joseph to be taxed at Bethlehem) that He is the very Christ. Lord, let me see it in the light of Thy Spirit, and in the operation thereof, and let me not be contented without such a faith that is so wrought even by the discovery of His birth, crucifying, death, blood, resurrection, ascension, intercession, and second (which is His Personal) coming again; that the very faith of it may fill my soul with comfort and holiness." And O how afraid the soul is, lest it should fall short of this faith, and of the hope that is begotten by such discoveries as these are! For the soul knoweth that if it hath not this, it will not be able to stand, neither in death nor judgment; and therefore saith the soul, "Lord, whatever other poor souls content themselves with, let me have that which will stand me in stead, and carry me through a dangerous world, that may help me to resist a cunning devil, that may help me to suck true, soul-satisfying consolation from Jesus Christ through Thy promises, by the might and power of Thy Spirit." . . .

Thirdly. The soul is quickened so that it is not satisfied now without it do in deed and in truth partake of the peace of God's elect; now it is upon the examination of the reality of its joy and peace. Time was indeed when anything would serve its turn, any false conceits of its state to be good; but

now all kind of peace will not serve its turn, all kind of joy will not be accepted with it. Now it must joy in God through Jesus Christ; now its peace must come through the virtue of the blood of Christ speaking peace to the conscience, by taking away both the guilt and the filth of sin by that blood; also by showing the soul its free acceptance with God through Christ—He hath completely fulfilled all the conditions of the first covenant, and freely hath placed it into the safety of what He hath done, and so presents the soul complete and spotless in the sight of God through His obedience. Now, I say, he hath “peace through the blood of His cross,” and sees himself “reconciled to God by the death of His Son” (Col. i. 20, 21); or else his comfort will be questioned by him. It is not every promise as cometh now upon his heart that will serve his turn; no, but he must see whether the Babe Jesus be presented to the soul in and through that promise. Now if the Babe leap in his womb, as I may so say, it is because the Lord’s promise sounds aloud in his heart, coming to him big with the love and pardoning grace of God in Christ Jesus; I say, this is the first and principal joy that the soul hath that is quickened and brought into the covenant of grace.

Fourthly. Now the man finds heavenly sanctification wrought in his soul through the most precious blood of the Man whose name is Jesus Christ. “Jesus, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate.” Now the soul finds a change in the understanding, in the will, in the mind, in the affections, in the judgment, and also in the conscience; through the inward man a change, and through the outward man a change, from head to foot as we used to say; for “he that is in Christ,” and in this covenant of grace, “is a new creature” (2 Cor. v. 17), or hath been twice made—made and made again. O now the soul is resolved for heaven and glory, now it crieth out, “Lord, if there be a right eye offensive to Thee, pluck it out; or a right foot, cut it off; or a right hand, take it from me.” Now the soul doth begin to study how it may honour God, and bring praise to Him. Now the soul is for a preparation for the second coming of Christ, endeavouring to lay aside everything that may hinder; and for the closing in with those things that may make it in a beloved posture against that day.

Fifthly. And all this from a gospel spirit, and not from a

legal, natural principle; for the soul hath these things as the fruits and effects of its being separated into the covenant of grace, and so now possessed with that Spirit that doth attend, yea, and dwell in, them that are brought into the covenant of grace, from under the old covenant; I say, these things do spring forth in the soul from another root and stock than any of the actings of other men do; for the soul that is thus wrought upon, is as well dead to the law and to the righteousness thereof (as the first covenant), as to its sins.

Sixthly. Now the soul begins to have some blessed experience of the things of God, even of the glorious mysteries of the gospel.

1. Now it knoweth the meaning of those words, "My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed" (John vi. 55), and that by experience; for it hath received peace of conscience through that blood, by the effectual application of it. First, by feeling the guilt of sin die off from the conscience, by the operation thereof. Secondly, by feeling the power thereof to take away the curse of the law. Thirdly, by finding the very strength of hell to fail, when once the blood of the Man Jesus Christ is received in reality upon the soul.

2. Now, the soul also knoweth by experience the meaning of that scripture that saith, "Our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed" (Rom. vi. 6). Now it sees that when the Man Jesus did hang on the tree on Mount Calvary, that then the body of its sins was there hanged up, dead, and buried with Him, though it was then unborn; so as never to be laid to its charge, either here or hereafter, and also, as never to carry it captive into perpetual bondage, being itself overcome by Him, even Christ the Head of that poor creature. And indeed this is the way for a soul both to live comfortably as touching the guilt of sin, and also as touching the power of faith over sin; for the soul that doth, or hath received this in deed and in truth, finds strength against them both by and through that Man that did for him and the rest of his fellow-sinners so gloriously overcome it, and hath given the victory unto them; so that now they are said to overcome, nay, to be "more than conquerors through Him," the one Man Jesus Christ (Rom. viii. 33—37).

3. Now the soul hath received a faith indeed, and a lively hope indeed; such an one as now it can fetch strength from the fulness of Christ, and from the merits of Christ.

4. Yea, now the soul can look on itself with one eye, and look upon Christ with another, and say, "Indeed, it is true, I am an empty soul, but Christ is a full Christ; I am a foolish sinner, but Christ is a wise Christ; I am an unholy, ungodly, unsanctified creature in myself, but Christ is made of God unto me 'wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption'" (1 Cor. i. 30).

5. Now also that fiery law, that it could not once endure, nor could once delight in; I say, now it can delight in it after the inward man. . . . Rom. vii. 24, 25. And yet it will not endure that even that law should offer to take the work of its salvation out of Christ's hand. No, if it once come to do that, then out of doors it shall go, if it were as good again. For that soul that hath the right work of God indeed upon it cries, "Not my prayers, not my tears, not my works, not anything in me, though they come from the work of the Spirit of Christ itself, yet these shall not have the glory of my salvation. No; it is none but the blood of Christ, the death of Christ, of the Man Christ Jesus of Nazareth, the carpenter's Son (as they called Him), that must have the crown and glory of my salvation. None but Christ, none but Christ!" and thus the soul labours to give Christ the pre-eminence, Col. i. 18.

"THE SON."

FROM H. W. SOLTAU ON "THE TABERNACLE AND THE PRIESTHOOD."

THE whole Epistle to the Hebrews turns upon that especial name of the Lord Jesus, "THE SON." All the beauty and glory of the gospel is connected with that name. It is the name which the Lord holds because He is God, and therefore when a believer is baptised, he is baptised into "the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," the names forming but one name of the Godhead.

The love of God in the gift of Christ all turns upon that wondrous truth, that He was and is the only begotten Son of God; not because made of a woman; not because made flesh; but because of His eternal relationship of wondrous, divine existence, to the Father; incomprehensible indeed to us, as is the whole mystery of the Sonship (for none knoweth the Son but the Father), but received by faith. The love of God in the gift of Christ depends upon this great truth. It was

not a love which merely caused the Incarnation of the Word, and thereby established a new relation of Sonship which had not previously existed. Had this been the case, it would not have been true that God *sent*, or *gave*, His only-begotten Son. He could not give or send a Son whom He possessed not. Neither did any fresh love spring up in the heart of the Father towards the Word made flesh. No new affection of Father towards Son commenced when the blessed Lord was born of the virgin. But that eternal love towards His only-begotten, the ever existing One in the bosom of the Father—that love which God had reposed in Him who was ever the Son, “the Brightness of His glory, and the express Image of His Person”—that love manifested itself towards poor, ruined, fallen creatures; so that God has proved in the gift of Jesus that He has loved us, worms of the dust as we are, as He loves Him, the only-begotten One in His bosom. It is also said that by Him, the Son, “the Brightness of His glory, and the express Image of His Person,” God made the worlds, Heb. i. (In our translation of the second verse, “*His Son*” is substituted for “*the Son*.”) The same truth is expressed in Col. i. 15—17.

Again, the Lord Jesus is addressed by the Father as God, because He is “the Son” (Heb. i. 8—12). The revelation of the Father could only be made by the Son, “He hath declared Him” (John i. 18). And the truth of the pre-existence of the Father would be destroyed, were there a doubt as to the eternity of the Son *as Son*. In one remarkable text He is called “the Son of the Father.” (2 John iii.) And the truth of the eternity of the Sonship is really “the doctrine of Christ;” as it is written, “He that *abideth* in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son,” v. 9. The Lord Jesus is the only begotten Son of God in His divine, eternal relationship to God the Father.

Again, this truth of the eternal Godhead of the Son as the Only-begotten of the Father, is intimately bound up with the presence and power of the Holy Ghost in the believer. The Holy Spirit is called, “*the Spirit of His Son*,” and as such He teaches us to cry, “Abba, Father,” to use the same words as the Lord Jesus Himself could use; to know the same love as the Son Himself knows, not the love of God to a mere creature, but the love wherewith God loved His Son from everlasting, a love which chose us in Christ before the founda-

tion of the world, which predestinated us to be conformed to the image of His Son, and which we shall taste to the full when that which is in part shall be done away, and that which is perfect shall come. God sent "His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh"—in our likeness, having predestinated us to be conformed to His likeness.

The Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Sonship, "beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God, and if children, then heirs." The inheritance is ours because we are sons, as the inheritance is Christ's because He is the Son, according to Heb. i. 4, where it is said, "He hath *inherited* a more excellent name" than angels—not received it for the first time by incarnation, for then it would not be inherited.

Many more texts might be quoted to establish this leading truth of the gospel; but these may be sufficient. God grant that no child of His may, through carnal reasoning or the self-will of the flesh, lose in any degree fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ, through not holding the eternal Sonship of Christ, as declared in the Word of God.

SOME OF THE LORD'S MERCIES TO MARY MUSTCHIN.

RELATED IN HER 78TH YEAR, IN 1906.

It has been many times impressed on my mind to note down the Lord's dealings with my soul. I am often lost in wonder, love, and praise, to think the Lord should look upon me, and call me out from the world. "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

I believe the Lord wrought this great change in me soon after I was 21; although I was the subject of convictions from my childhood, and the thought of death was very terrible to me. O the fears that used to seize me in a thunder-storm, lest it should be the end of the world! When about 10 or 11, these words had a powerful effect on my mind, "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." How true did I find it,—"*There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.*" We try to do

something to recommend ourselves to God. What legal strivings there were in my soul!

In my 21st year I went to live with a gracious man, Mr. Marshall, of Uckfield, and here it was the Lord sent the conviction deep into my heart that I was a lost, ruined sinner, and if I died in my sins, where God was I could never come. I was hearing Mr. Forster, and he said, "God is a Father to all His elect people, but an angry Judge to all others. 'Who-soever offendeth in one point is guilty of all.'" This took fast hold of me, and I never lost the conviction till I found a blessed assurance. At one time I read, in Bunyan's "Grace Abounding," his dream of the hole in the wall, and where he speaks of the little knot of godly women,—how he desired to get with them to warm himself with their sun. Here my heart was melted, and O the desire that went up that the Lord would let me know and feel the same as Bunyan did! There came such a sweetness with it, light dawned, and love kindled; and I now believe it was the dawning of His favour on my poor soul, though it was a new and strange feeling at the time.

In Oct., 1850, the Lord in His kind providence brought me to Brighton, to live with a lady who attended the ministry of Mr. Grace, whose memory will, I believe, be ever dear to me. Here the word was made as a hammer to break the rocky heart in pieces, or as a plough to plough up the fallow ground. It used to enter my heart in cutting convictions, showing me the state I was in; and how I used to wish I could get out where no eye could see me, and weep over my lost condition! Mr. Abrahams was the first I heard at West St., and his text was, "The things that accompany salvation." As he described those things, I saw they were the same that I had been labouring under for the last year and a-half—fear of destruction, sense of ruin, and felt need. He said those things accompanied salvation, and were the preparation for a blessing. Mr. Smart came the next Sunday, and preached from Lam. iii. 27—29: "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth. He sitteth alone and keepeth silence, because he hath borne it upon him," &c. I shall never forget it; it was light and teaching in my soul. And O the love I felt to Mr. Smart from this and other hearings! Many times that autumn I heard Mr. Grace with power, and my heart was drawn out to look for a full blessing. Some of these hear-

ings were from, "Blessed are they that mourn," &c.; "Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her;" and the vision of the dry bones. When he spoke of the shaking among the dry bones, I felt there had been a shaking in my soul, and that it was a preparation. This encouraged me to cry for the breath of life to come into me. Once he preached from, "If the Lord were pleased to kill us, He would not have . . . told us such things as these." I felt then that the Lord gave me through him the promise that I should find the things I was seeking, and that he told me of things to come. At another time when he preached from, "That Thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth," &c., he made it so plain to me that I was the Lord's prisoner, I was sure that if that was the Lord's teaching, I was His. And through the following week I hung on the next Sunday, thinking I should then be brought into liberty; but I had to wait for this until the year 1858.

In 1855 I went home for a change, and the next day an illness began which laid me on a bed of affliction for twelve weeks, with brain fever. On the second Sunday I thought I was dying, and O the distress of mind I was in, crying to the Lord to reveal His pardoning love before I died. I thought Satan was watching to take my spirit when it departed. Then the Lord gave me these words, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God." After that this word came, "Ye have an Unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." The first time I was dressed, as I looked into the fire, I thought there was no hope for me, and said, "O Lord, how shall I endure eternal torments?" Then this came to me, "The Lord knoweth them that are His," and I said within myself, "Then if I am His child, He will take me back to Brighton again." I asked for Hawker's Portions, and read first the one on Phil. i. 23: "Having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better." O the hope that came! I wept, and said, "O that I had died when I was so happy!" It brought back the words, "Ye have an Unction," &c. On recovering I returned to Brighton to live, but could no longer hold a situation, and some friends kindly asked me to live with them and help with needlework; which I did for two years.

I would not forget some other hearings before I was delivered. One from, "When the desire cometh, it is a tree

of life," and one from, "O My dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, let Me hear thy voice," &c. Mr. Grace turned aside to speak of the "virgins her companions that follow her," that they shall be brought. As he preached, it was like coming up out of winter, and the sun arising and dawning again on my soul. In the last three and a half years before my deliverance I was much harassed lest I should never get the blessing, having waited so long; yet at times I had hearings that assured me I should.

At length the Lord revealed Himself to me. One Sunday, Oct. 4th, 1858, Mr. Grace's subject was the man at the pool of Bethesda, when he traced out my feelings and the remedy. I had a hope that deliverance was coming that night, but it did not come; and I went home in a sort of despair of ever finding it, the devil suggesting I never should, and was deceived. I was sunk low till the Tuesday. Then the text was, "The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways, but a good man is satisfied from himself." I sank again, and all seemed condemnation; I groaned in my spirit, and began to acknowledge that the Lord would be just if He sent me to hell, yet I groaned for mercy—if there was any way whereby He could have mercy on me and save me. Then the dear man quoted these words, "*Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.*" "*Fear not, I have redeemed thee; thou art Mine.*" "*Thou art all fair, My love, there is no spot in thee.*" With these three Scriptures my soul was filled with the blessing of the Lord, and at the conclusion the hymn sung fitted me well:

"Poor famish'd prodigal, come home,
Thy Father's house is open yet;
Much greater mercy bids thee come
Than all thy sins, though these are great."

"The blood of Christ, a precious blood,
Cleanses from all sin, doubt it not;
And reconciles the soul to God
From every folly, every fault."

I went home with the peace of God in my soul, and sat like one lost in wonder till past one o'clock. I was afraid that if I went to sleep I should lose all that blessed feeling, as I had done before. But on the Wednesday, the Lord filled my soul again with His blessing. I awoke at six o'clock, and it was as if some one came to me and said, "*Peace, peace.*" Very soon my hard heart was melted into a blessed peace. All I

had felt that night in chapel came over again, with such a view of the Lord suffering on the cross for me that I lay from six to seven blessing and praising Him, for His dear presence filled my soul. I felt,

“ If I loved my Lord before,
I would love Him ten times more ;
Drop into His sea outright,
Lose myself in Jesus quite.”

For some weeks I would wake with these two verses :

“ He from the grave my dust will raise,
I in the heavens shall sing His praise,” &c.

“ Yes, when this heart and flesh shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess within the veil
A life of joy and peace.”

Read where I would, I read my salvation instead of condemnation. What a change, after having so long laboured under fear ! Soon after, in hearing from, “ Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens,” &c., I saw again something of His glory and His sufferings.

In 1863 I had a second blessing that abounded over the other in the fulness of it. After reading Hawker’s portion for the day, Dec. 13th, I turned to the chapter it was on, Rev. xxii. ; and it opened to me all through—the Tree of life, the state of the blessed, and that of the wicked. I saw that I was one of those healed ones, and the blessedness of being on the right side. Then I was broken down with these two verses :

“ On Him Almighty vengeance fell,” &c.

And,

“ Should storms of sevenfold thunder roll,
And shake the globe from pole to pole,
No flaming bolt should daunt my face,
For Jesus is my Hiding-place.”

I wept with the sense of that blessed Hiding-place being mine. I had before been crying for that blessed knowledge of Christ, that I might weep over Him who was pierced for me. The text that morning was about being filled with the Spirit, and Mr. Grace began by quoting the same two verses, saying they were not in the hymn-book. My heart was then filled with praise ; and on the Tuesday after, when I began to feel the Lord withdraw, O the stretching forth of my spirit for Him to abide and not leave me !

In the providence of God I was taken away from Brighton

to Bolney, where I remained from 1865 to 1887. I believe my soul was kept alive through trials, and often mourning over the lack of communion with the friends at Brighton. There were some at Bolney who had heard Mr. Huntington, but I longed to return to Brighton; and when I was told that Mr. Popham had become the pastor at Galeed, I went over to hear him. I felt he came to me with the Lord's message the first time I heard him, and my soul was knit to him. I was very much tried and cast down about my circumstances for the first half of the sermon; then he quoted the very words that had delivered me in 1858, saying, "Poor soul, His love is the same now as when He spoke to your heart, 'Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.' 'Fear not, I have redeemed thee, thou art Mine.' 'Thou art all fair, My love; there is no spot in thee.'" This brought back a sense of His mercy to me, and when Mr. Stenning gave out,

"Your harps, ye trembling saints,
Down from the willows take," &c.,

I was quite overcome. I longed increasingly to come back to Brighton, and often had hopes of it, but the way was not yet made clear. In May, 1887, I heard Mr. Warburton from, "Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them," &c., and what he said on Psa. lxxvii. spoke to me, "You can trace footsteps in the sand, but who can trace God's footsteps in the mighty waters of trouble?"

At length, in Sept., 1887, the home where I was was broken up, and I came back to live at Brighton with my sister. One Sunday morning, when on my way to "Galeed," the Lord came into my soul, and Mr. Popham, in preaching, so pointedly took up my pathway for more than twenty years that it quite settled me that I was in my right place. I was much tried at this time in providence, and said one day to my sister, "I am cast on you, if my health fails," when this hymn came,

"A fulness resides in Jesus our Head,
And ever abides to answer our need," &c.

The following Sunday, in hearing Mr. Popham, I had a sweet hope that the Lord would provide for me, and was watching over me. In April he preached three times on chastening, and O the love I felt to the Lord in hearing; that He should take such pains with a poor sinner, and come over all my vile-

ness through a precious Redeemer! And when he preached from, "The Lord will give that which is good, and our land shall yield her increase," he so entered into my path for many years that it stirred up my love to him and the people, and I felt I must go and see him. He received me kindly, and made me welcome to join the church, which I did in Feb., 1889.

After this I found that my brother had to come out of East Street, and could do no more for me. I went to my bedroom overwhelmed, and said, "Lord, is this for any particular sin? Art Thou going to make it manifest that all I have hoped was from Thee is nothing worth?" Then this came, "A Brother born for adversity;" and it followed, "I am that I am," which I had some months before. I said, "Lord, if I have Thee, I have all, if everything besides is taken away." I could not get to chapel for two or three weeks, and was ill too. The first Sunday I went, the text was, "The Lord liveth, and blessed be my Rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted"—a word I had about four years before returning to Brighton; and then it gave me the same feeling that the Lord would assuredly provide and watch over me while I needed anything here. And I can still say that through the kindness of friends I have never wanted any needed good, though for the last ten years I have not been able to do much.

In the year 1897, I was for a time very low in my mind, and troubled about my end, lest I should not find the Lord when the end came. One day these words helped me, "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations," &c., and encouraged me to hope I should be brought up again. The following Sunday Mr. Popham preached from Jno. xii. 32, 33: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me." While hearing, I was brought into blessed liberty again, and felt, "Lord, stay Thy hand till I get home." And when I awoke at five the next morning, I was quite overcome with this hymn:

"Thou Shepherd of Israel divine,
The joy of the upright in heart,
For closer communion I pine,
Still, still to reside where Thou art."

About six weeks ago, in Jan., 1906, on awaking early one morning, I felt to cast myself at the feet of the Lord Jesus as a poor ruined sinner, nothing but sin in myself, a sink of sin,

like Ruth at the feet of Boaz, and prayed, "O dear Lord, do come again over all my vile sins and unworthiness, and assure me of the reality of all those blessings I have thought were from Thee in times past. I do want a sweet manifestation of Thy mercy again, to make me ready when Thou shalt call me hence." I was feeling to lie thus at His feet when this came so blessedly, "But ye are washed, but ye are justified, but ye are sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." It continued with me through that day and the next night; and other scriptures came which I cannot now remember. The Word of God was so opened to me, I had never seen such blessedness in it before. I read it with a light on it. It was truly an earnest of eternal day. I saw both sides, the blessed security of the righteous, and the solemn end of the wicked, and the reality of being translated out of the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God's dear Son. I was led by the gracious hand of God to see the past, re-assured of all, and that I should be with Him in glory when He called me hence. Everything came up, even the earliest helps I had—like a resurrection. This verse that I had in early years came again :

"He freely redeem'd with His blood
My soul from the confines of hell,
To live on the smiles of my God,
And in His sweet presence to dwell ;"

and now not only the verse, but the whole hymn, and these, which had been blessed to me before :

"My glorious Redeemer, I long," &c.
"The sinner that truly believes," &c.
"Bless the Lord, my soul, and raise," &c.

Also these verses came with blessed power and unction :

"What right can my tormenters plead," &c.
"O my Jesus, Thou art mine," &c.
"Weak in body, sick in soul," &c.

For many days I seemed to sit beneath the droppings of His mercy.

Since then, one Thursday morning about a fortnight ago, this hymn came :

"My soul, this curious house of clay,
Thy present frail abode,
Must quickly fall to worms a prey,
And thou return to God."

Then it was as if the Lord said to me,

“Canst thou by faith survey
The change before it come,
And say, ‘Let death this house destroy,
I have a heavenly home’?”

I said, “Yes, Lord, I hope I have, but I cannot say so with joy unless Thou art with me.” That is how I have been going on all through—first a cloud, then a return of His presence. When at any time I feel His presence, I can look forward to the change. This word has been good to me: “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.”

Conclusion.

Through all Mary Mustchin’s later years, her little strength of body and mind slowly decayed, till it was found needful to remove her from her room to the Infirmary. She was, however, always ready to converse on spiritual things, especially of the Lord’s past mercies to her; so that her lively hope brightened up her last years. She was born in the year 1829, and passed away on March 29th, 1910.

While reading the above record of some of the Lord’s mercies to our dear friend, now at rest, the sight of our own name was not pleasant, and occasionally the disposition to cut out the references to it was strong. But a little reflection led to the consideration that it is the Lord’s work there set forth, and that in His own work He is honoured. And if it pleases Him in infinite condescension to reflect a ray of that honour on an instrument, that also will lead to His praise.

J. K. P.

The gospel hath taught us that Christ is the true Temple, wherein the church of the New Testament, which is a kingdom of priests, are all alike to worship God without any difference or distinction of persons. And also that Christ is our Rest as well as our Righteousness; and it is as great a sin to make another rest than Christ, as it is to make another righteousness than Christ; for in Him alone we are complete and furnished to all things that appertain to the kingdom of God; and stand in need of nothing out of Him. Wherefore it is said, Heb. iv. 3, he which hath believed is entered into rest, that is, into Christ and His righteousness; and so hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His.—*W. Dell.*

TO BE INCLINED TO GOD'S TESTIMONIES.

IF we by the Holy Ghost could walk in the way of prayer and supplication and application to the Lord, as did the psalmist throughout this sixteenth Psalm, we should also find the fruits springing up of love and praise, as he also did in this Psalm. There is one petition that is very beautiful in the 36th verse: "Incline my heart unto Thy testimonies, and not to covetousness."

Now the testimonies of God are all the truths He has caused to be written in the Scriptures. And those testimonies which cause sinners to live, are the gospel, in the great declarations of it. To have the heart inclined to these is to be under the movings of the Holy Ghost and the attractions of Christ. These testimonies are sure for ever; God has settled them in heaven. "For ever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven." What a mercy for the divine Spirit to open any of them, and fit them into a felt need! I will mention two or three, to which it is a mercy if our hearts are inclined by the Spirit.

i. The testimony concerning *justification*. The heart of Abraham was inclined to this. We read he "believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness" (Rom. iv. 3). He "believed God"—a greater thing than most people think. He "believed God" when in his own deadness; believed Him in the promise. What a mercy to be brought to this faith, which is counted for righteousness—a free robe, freely given, the robe of righteousness; in which arrayed a sinner is fit to feast with Christ, and be the guest of God. In heaven they walk in white robes, and they do the same on earth; it is given them in different measures to walk in them here below. He that does not wear that robe here will never walk in white above. It is therefore a great thing for the heart to be inclined to Christ's righteousness. "I bring near My righteousness," the Lord says. It does not seem much to people who know nothing about it, to have the heart so inclined. But it is a great thing to a person plagued with self-righteousness, to be inclined to this testimony. It means looking off and out of and away from the worst thing that exists—sinful self. One would think if we were sick of sin and self, it would not be difficult to look away from them; nor would it, but for the fearful spirit of pride that is in all of us taking

the form of self-righteousness, but secretly working as a spirit that would fain pacify God by bringing something to Him. But to be undone in heart and mind, to be nothing but a ruined sinner, and to be following after Jesus Christ for righteousness and justification, is a great mercy. For the Lord to justify the ungodly with the free gift of righteousness is an amazing mercy. "Incline my heart unto Thy testimonies"—here they are concerning justification. The more God takes the heart of a convinced sinner away from self, the more He fixes it on Himself, and causes him to believe that salvation is in Another, even in the Lord Jesus; and that that salvation must be applied to him when and while he is a sinner, and just because he *is* a sinner, undone in himself, and because Christ wrought this righteousness for him.

ii. "Incline my heart unto Thy testimonies"—those concerning *help and deliverance*. This is one: "God is our Refuge and Strength, a very present Help in trouble" (Psa. xlvi. 1). Another: "They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy. . . . Salvation is of the Lord" (Jon. ii. 8, 9). The heart of Asa was inclined to this testimony in great difficulty and danger, when a host came against him; and Jehoshaphat likewise. Both were brought to this, they cried unto the Lord. "We have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do; but our eyes are upon Thee" (2 Chron. xiv. 11; xx. 12). Now that is easy enough to say; but it is impossible to attain to this self-renunciation, through our pride and ignorance, without the Holy Ghost. He turns the heart, inclines the sinner to look away from self to Omnipotence, to the deliverances God will command for Jacob. He inclined the heart of David to this act of faith when He sent him against Goliath, the worm to meet the giant. He inclined the stripling's heart not to trust in his armour, but to the hand of God. Five smooth stones were all he chose, nothing more, except that the Lord went with him. "I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand" (1 Sam. xvii. 45). The heart of Jacob was inclined to this testimony, when Esau came against him with 400 men. He pleaded, "O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country and to thy kindred, and I will deal

well with thee"—O but there came this death in the way, and now he was turned to God alone for deliverance, inclined to His testimony—"deliver me, I pray Thee, from the hand of my brother" (Gen. xxxii. 9—12). We find Paul brought in the same way when in the storm and all hope of being saved was taken away. "I believe God," he said; his heart went to the testimony God gave him that there should be no loss of any man's life, but of the ship; and he said, "I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me." "And so it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land" (Acts xxvii. 22, 44). What a mercy, too, for us to have the heart inclined in affliction to the God of all grace to be our Refuge and Strength!

iii. A third thing I would mention. Paul had his heart inclined to it, and so are the hearts of all saints more or less; namely, *to follow after Christ for closer union and more intimate communion*. Paul had a good deal to hang to naturally as a Jew, being, "as touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless." But he was instructed by the Spirit that none of this would bring him to union with Christ, or help him to communion. So, wanting that union and panting for that communion, he left all to follow Christ; his heart was bent that way. As the roots of a tree bend towards nourishment, so the renewed heart goes after Christ.

Now the testimonies of the Lord concerning this union and communion are such as these.—That He receives His people: "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor. vi. 17, 18). That they are the temple of the Holy Ghost; "Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them" (ver. 16). "An holy temple in the Lord, in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph. ii. 22). That Christ, that great mystery of God, is to be in their hearts "the Hope of glory:" "Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the Hope of glory" (Col. i. 26, 27). This also is a testimony to the intimate communion granted

to them: "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him; and He will show them His covenant" (Psa. xxv. 14). And Hart says of them,

"Living so near Him,
His secrets they learn."

May the Lord incline our hearts to these testimonies concerning union and communion with Him. The living Vine alone can give life to those who in themselves are but as dry, dead sticks.

iv. "Incline my heart unto Thy testimonies" concerning *the end, that it is to be better than the beginning*. "Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof" (Ecc. vii. 8). The end of a profession, where real, is possession; the end of weak grace is glory. "The Lord God will give grace and glory" (Ps. lxxxiv. 11). The end of the Spirit's operations in our hearts is conformity to Christ in perfection. "We shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." Predestinated "to be conformed to the image of His Son." "The day of death is better than the day of one's birth" (Ecc. vii. 1). Now the beginning of grace is the beginning of sorrow, of trouble, of confusion, of hunger and thirst after righteousness; and the carrying on of the work is by the satisfying of the soul in beholding the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; it is by the coming of Christ into the heart, by the opening up of Christ, His blood, His righteousness; by receiving nourishment from Him, to sweeten care and strengthen the soul in all its tribulation.

But there is an end—that shown to the apostle John. There are three things said concerning it. He was shown a great multitude, which no man could number, clothed with white robes, having palms in their hands, and singing songs of praise, the song of redemption (Rev. vii. 9, 10). That is the end. It is wonderful when one is led to meditate on that perfection, that perfect state, walking in white—signifying they were not ashamed before Him; having palms in their hands—signifying the victory granted to them, strength to overcome; and singing the song of Moses and of the Lamb, (Rev. xv. 2, 3). Here in measure by blessed occasions they do this. Every sight of Christ, every reception of His righteousness brings the soul to walk with Him in that robe; every victory over some lust gives us a palm with which to glorify God; and every deliverance puts a new song into the mouth, as with the psalmist: "I waited patiently for the Lord; and He inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up

also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And He hath put a new song in my month, even praise unto our God" (Ps. xl. 1—3). These three things every saint in some little degree has here; but O, hereafter!—that we do not know. "We know not what we shall be;" but it is good to have the beginning, to have heaven let down. "I saw," said John, "the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven," "having the glory of God;" by which we are to understand that Jerusalem on earth is blessed with the glory of God; and what is that but His presence in her? "Thy God thy glory."

To have the heart inclined to this testimony concerning the end is a good thing. It is what the psalmist prayed for: "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." "Lord, make me to know mine end and the measure of my days, what it is, that I may know how frail I am;" and knowing that, that I may seek to be prepared for the last enemy, to meet him armed with grace, clothed with the armour of God, blessed with Christ in my heart the Hope of glory; that I may look forward to the approaching end, and meet death without terror, and with anticipation. It is wonderful to be made more than willing to die; to be so ready, so wrapt up in God that it is difficult to be willing to stay here below; to be so sick of love as to long to be filled with it. Here every little fulness is succeeded by a painful emptiness; every sweet comfort by some bitter sorrow.

"Incline my heart"—that heart so prone to wander, to gad about—"to Thy testimonies, and not to covetousness." That means not only coveting money, but anything we would wish to have for our enjoyment, and that God has not given. How we need to cry, "Do not leave me;" for if left to ourselves, that is what we do—wish for what God has not given us. But if blessed with His presence, that covetousness goes, and we covet the best gifts—justification, help in troubles and deliverance from them, closer union with Christ and more communion with Him, and at last, a good finish. What will it be to be there? who can tell? They only know who are there; but we may meditate on it. The Lord help us often to look within the veil, and at last complete our holiness and happiness. May we look for that blessed end which He has promised, "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there ye may be also" (John xiv. 3).

“HE DWELLETH WITH YOU, AND SHALL BE
IN YOU.”—JOHN xiv. 17.

Saviour, I Thy word believe,
My unbelief remove ;
Now Thy quick'ning Spirit give,
The Unction from above ;
Show me, Lord, how good Thou art,
My soul with all Thy fulness fill,
Send the Witness, in my heart
The Holy Ghost reveal.

Dead in sin till then I lie,
Bereft of power to rise ;
Till Thy Spirit inwardly
Thy saving blood applies.
Now the mighty gift impart,
My sin erase, my pardon seal,
Send the Witness, in my heart
The Holy Ghost reveal.

Blessed Comforter, come down,
And live and move in me ;
Make my every deed Thy own,
In all things led by Thee ;
Bid my every lust depart,
And with me O vouchsafe to dwell !
Faithful Witness, in my heart
Thy perfect light reveal.

Let me in Thy love rejoice,
Thy shrine, Thy pure abode ;
Tell me, by Thine inward voice,
That I'm a child of God.
Lord, I choose the better part ;
Jesus, I wait Thy peace to feel ;
Send the Witness, in my heart
The Holy Ghost reveal.

Whom the world cannot receive
O manifest in me !
Son of God, I cease to live,
Unless I live in Thee.

Now impute Thy whole desert,
 Restore the joy from which I fell,
 Breathe the Witness, in my heart
 The Holy Ghost reveal.

AUGUSTUS TOPLADY.

CRUMBS FROM THE MASTER'S TABLE

FROM BOSTON'S "CROOK IN THE LOT," OR, "THE SOVEREIGNTY AND WISDOM OF GOD IN THE AFFLICTIONS OF MEN DISPLAYED."

(Continued from page 133.)

PROP. II. *What God sees meet to mar, we shall not be able to mend in our lot. What crook God makes in our lot, we shall not be able to even.—We shall,*

I. Show God's marring and making a crook in one's lot, as He sees meet.

II. Consider men's attempting to mend or even that crook in their lot.

III. Consider in what sense it is to be understood, that we shall not be able to mend or even the crook in our lot.

IV. Render some reasons of the point.

I. As to the first head, namely, *to show God's marring and making a crook in one's lot, as He sees meet.*

First. God keeps the choice of every one's crook to Himself; and therein He exerts His sovereignty, Matt. xx. 15. It is not left to our option what that crook shall be, or what our peculiar burden; but as the potter makes of the same clay one vessel for one use, another for another use; so God makes one crook for one, another for another, according to His own will and pleasure. Psa. cxxxv. 6: "Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did He in heaven and in earth," &c.

Secondly. He sees and observes the bias of every one's will and inclination, how it lies, and wherein it especially bends away from Himself, and consequently wherein it needs the special bow. So He did in that man's case, Mark x. 21: "One thing thou lackest; go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor," &c. Observe the bent of his heart to his great possessions. He takes notice what is that idol that in every one's case is most apt to be His rival, that so He may suit the trial to the case, making the crook there.

Thirdly. By the conduct of His providence or a touch of

His hand, He gives that part of one's lot a bow the contrary way; so that henceforth it lies quite contrary to the bias of the party's will, Ezek. xxiv. 25. And here the trial is made, the bent of the will lying one way, and that part of one's lot another, that it does not answer the inclination of the party, but thwarts it.

Fourthly. He wills that crook in the lot to remain while He sees meet, for a longer or shorter time, just according to the holy ends He designs it for, 2 Sam. xii. 10; Hos. v. 15. By that will it is so fixed that the whole creation cannot alter it, or put it out of the bow.

II. We shall *consider men's attempting to mend or even that crook in their lot.* This, in a word, lies in their making efforts to bring their lot in that point to their own will, that they may both go one way. So it imports three things:

First. A certain uneasiness under the crook in the lot; it is a yoke which is hard for the party to bear, till his spirit be tamed and subdued. Jer. xxxi. 18: "Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: turn Thou me, and I shall be turned," &c. And it is for the breaking down of the weight of one's spirit that God lays it on: for which cause it is declared to be a good thing to bear it, Lam. iii. 27; that being the way to make one at length as a weaned child.

Secondly. A strong desire to have the cross removed, and to have matters in that part going according to our inclinations. This is very natural, nature desiring to be freed from everything that is burdensome or cross to it; and if that desire be kept in a due subordination to the will of God, and it be not too peremptory, it is not sinful. Matt. xxvi. 39: "If it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will," &c. Hence so many accepted prayers of the people of God, for the removal of the crook in their lot.

Thirdly. An earnest use of means for that end. This naturally follows on that desire. The man being pressed with the cross which is in his crook, labours all he can in the use of means to be rid of it. And if the means used be lawful, and not relied upon, but followed with an eye to God in them, the attempt is not sinful, whether he succeed in the use of them or not.

III. *In what sense it is to be understood, that we shall not be able to mend or even the crook in our lot.*

It is not to be understood as if the case were absolutely hopeless, and that there is no remedy for the crook in the lot. For there is no case so desperate but God may right it. Gen. xviii. 14 : "Is any thing too hard for the Lord?" When the crook has continued long, and spurned all remedies one has used for it, one is ready to lose hope about it; but many a crook, given over for hopeless that would never mend, God has made perfectly straight; as in Job's case.

But we shall never be able to mend it by ourselves. If the Lord Himself take it not in hand to remove it, it will stand before us immovable, like a mountain of brass; though perhaps it may be in itself a thing that might easily be removed. We take it up in these three things :

1. It will never do by the mere force of our hand. 1 Sam. ii. 9 : "For by strength shall no man prevail." The most vigorous endeavours we can use will not even the crook, if God give it not a touch of His hand; so that all endeavours that way, without an eye to God, are vain and fruitless, and will be but ploughing on the rock, Psa. cxxvii. 1, 2.

2. The use of all allowable means for it will be successful, unless the Lord bless them for that end. Lam. iii. 37 : "Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?" As one may eat and not be satisfied, so one may use means proper for evening the crook in his lot, and yet prevail nothing; for nothing can be or do for us any more than God makes it to be or do. Ecc. ix. 11 : "The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding," &c.

3. It will never do in our time, but in God's time, which seldom is so early as ours. John vii. 6 : "My time is not yet come, but your time is always ready." Hence that crook remains sometimes immovable, as if it were kept by an invisible hand; and at another time it goes away with a touch, because God's time is come for evening it.

IV. We shall now *assign the reasons of the point.*

1st. Because of the absolute dependence we have upon God, Acts xvii. 28. As the light depends on the sun, or the shadow on the body, so we depend on God, and without Him can do nothing, great or small. And God will have us to find it so, to teach us our dependence.

2ndly. Because His will is irresistible. Isa. xlvi. 10 :

“My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure.” When God wills one thing, and the creature the contrary, it is easy to see which will must be done. When the omnipotent Arm holds, in vain does the creature draw. Job ix. 4: “Who hath hardened himself against Him, and hath prospered?”

Inference 1. There is a necessity of yielding and submitting to the crook in our lot; for we may as well think to remove the rocks and mountains, which God has settled, as to make that part of our lot straight which He hath made crooked.

2. The evening of the crook in our lot by main force of our own, is but a cheat we put on ourselves, and will not last; but, like a stick by main force made straight, it will quickly return to the bow again.

3. The only effectual way of getting the crook evened is to apply to God for it.

Exhortation 1. Let us then apply to God for removing any crook in our lot that in the settled order of things may be removed. Men cannot cease to desire the removal of a crook, more than that of a thorn in the flesh: but since we are not able to mend what God sees meet to mar, it is evident we are to apply to Him that made it to amend it, and not take the evening of it in our own hand.

Motive 1. All our attempts for its removal will, without Him, be vain and fruitless. Psa. cxxvii. 1. Let us be as resolute as we will to have it evened, if God say it not, we will labour in vain. Lam. iii. 37. Howsoever fair the means we use bid for it, they will be ineffectual if He command not the blessing. Ecc. ix. 11.

2. Such attempts will readily make it worse. Nothing is more ordinary than for a proud spirit striving with the crook, to make it more crooked. Ecc. x. 8, 9: “Whoso breaketh a hedge, a serpent shall bite him. Whoso removeth stones shall be hurt therewith,” &c. This is evident in the case of the murmurers in the wilderness. It naturally comes to be so; because, at that rate, the will of the party bends farther away from it: and moreover, God is provoked to wreath the yoke faster about one’s neck, that He will by no means let it sit easy on him.

3. There is no crook but what may be remedied by Him, and made perfectly straight. Psa. cxlvi. 8: “The Lord raiseth them that are bowed down,” &c. He can perform

that, concerning which there remains no hope with us. Rom. iv. 17: "Who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were." It is His prerogative to do wonders; to begin a work where the whole creation gives it over as hopeless, and carry it on to perfection. Gen. xviii. 14.

4. He loves to be employed in evening crooks, and calls us to employ Him that way. Psa. l. 15: "Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee," &c. He makes them for that very end, that He may bring us to Him on that errand, and may manifest His power and goodness in evening them. Hos. v. 15. The straits of the children of men afford a large field for displaying His glorious perfections, which otherwise would be wanting. Exod. xv. 11.

5. A crook thus evened is a double mercy. There are some crooks evened by a touch of the hand of common providence, while people are either not exercised about them, or when they fret for their removal: these are sapless mercies, and short-lived. Psa. lxxviii. 30, 31; Hos. xiii. 11. Fruits thus too hastily plucked off the tree of providence can hardly miss to set the teeth on edge, and will certainly be bitter to the gracious soul. But O the sweets of the evening of the crook by a humble application to, and waiting on, the Lord! It has the image and superscription of divine favour upon it, which makes it bulky and valuable. Gen. xxxiii. 10: "For therefore I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God," &c.

6. God has signalised His favour to His dearest children in making and mending notable crooks in their lot. His darling ones ordinarily have the greatest crooks made in their lot. Heb. xii. 6. But then they make way for their richest experiences in the removal of them, upon their application to Him. This is clear from the cases of Abraham, Jacob, and Joseph. Which of the patriarchs had so great crooks as they? but which of them, on the other hand, had such signal tokens of the divine favour? The greatest of men, as Samson and the Baptist, have been born of women naturally barren; so do the greatest crooks issue in the richest mercies to them that are exercised thereby.

7. It is the shortest and surest way to go straight to God with the crook in the lot. If we would have our wish in that point, we must, as the eagle, first soar aloft, and then come

down on the prey. Mark v. 36. Our faithless, out-of-the-way attempts to even the crook, are but our fool's haste, that is no speed; as in the case of Abraham's going in to Hagar. God is the first Mover, who sets all the wheels in motion for evening the crook, which without Him will remain immovable. Hos. ii. 21, 22.

Objection 1. "But it is needless, for I see that though the crook in my lot may mend, yet it never will mend. In its own nature it is capable of being removed, but it is plain it is not to be removed, it is hopeless."

Ans. That is the language of unbelieving haste, which faith and patience should correct. Psa. cxvi. 11, 12. Abraham had as much to say for the hopelessness of his crook, but yet he applies to God in faith for the mending of it. Rom. iv. 19, 20. Sarah had made such a conclusion, for which she was rebuked, Gen. xviii. 13, 14. Nothing can make it needless in such a case to apply to God.

Objection 2. "But I have applied to Him again and again for it; yet it is never mended."

Ans. Delays are not denials of suits at the court of heaven, but trials of the faith and patience of the petitioners. And whoso will persevere will certainly speed at length. Luke xviii. 7, 8: "And shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily." Sometimes indeed folks grow pettish, in the case of the crook in the lot, and let it drop out in their prayers, in a course of despondency, while yet it continues uneasy to them; but if God mind to even it in mercy, He will oblige them to take it in again. Ezek. xxxvi. 37: "I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them," &c. If the removal come while it is dropt, there will be little comfort in it. Though it were never to be removed while we live, that should not cut off our applying to God for the removal; for there are many prayers not to be answered till we come to the other world, Rom. vii. 24; and there all will be answered at once.

Directions for rightly managing the application for removing the crook in the lot.

1. Pray for it, Ezek. xxxvi. 37; and pray in faith, believing that for the sake of Jesus, you shall certainly obtain at length, and in this life too, if it is good for you; but without per-adventure in the life to come. Matt. xxi. 22. They will not

be disappointed that get the song of Moses and of the Lamb, Rev. xv. 3. And, in some cases of that nature, extraordinary prayer, with fasting, is very expedient. Matt. xvii. 21.

2. Humble yourselves under it, as the yoke which the sovereign Hand has laid on you. Micah vii. 9: "I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against Him," &c. Justify God, condemn yourselves, kiss the rod, and go quietly under it; this is the most feasible way to get rid of it, the end being obtained. James iv. 10. "Thou wilt prepare their heart, Thou wilt cause Thine ear to hear," Psa. x. 17.

3. Wait on patiently till the Hand that made it mend it. Psa. xxvii. 14. Do not give up the matter as hopeless, because you are not so soon relieved as you would wish. "But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing," Jas. i. 4. Leave the timing of the deliverance to the Lord; His time will at length, to conviction, appear the best; and it will not go beyond it. Isa. lx. 22: "I the Lord will hasten it in his time:" waiting on Him, you will not be disappointed, "For they shall not be ashamed that wait for Me," Isa. xlix. 23.

Exhortation 2. What crook there is which, in the settled order of things, cannot be removed or evened in this world, let us apply to God for suitable relief under it. For instance, the common crook in the lot of saints, *viz., in-dwelling sin*; as God has made that crook not to be removed here, He can certainly balance it, and afford relief under it. The same is to be said of any crook, while it remains unremoved. In such cases apply yourself to God, for making up your losses another way. And there are five things I would have you to keep in view, and aim at here.

1. To take God in Christ for, and instead of, that thing the withholding or taking away of which from you makes the crook in your lot. Psa. cxlii. 4, 5. There is never a crook which God makes in our lot, but it is in effect heaven's offer of a blessed exchange to us; such as Mark x. 21: "Sell whatsoever thou hast,—and thou shalt have treasure in heaven." In managing of which exchange, God first puts out His hand, and takes away some earthly thing from us; and it is expected we put out our hand next, and take some heavenly thing from Him in the stead of it, and particularly *His Christ*. Wherefore has God emptied your left hand of such and such an earthly comfort? Stretch out your right hand to God in

Christ, take Him in the room of it, and welcome. Therefore the soul's closing with Christ is called buying, wherein parting with one thing we get another in its stead. Matt. xiii. 45, 46: "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman seeking goodly pearls: who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it." Do this, and you will be more than even hands with the crook in your lot.

2. Look for the stream running as full from Him as ever it did or could run, when the crook of the lot has dried it. This is the work of faith, confidently to depend on God for that which is denied us from the creature. "When my father and mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up," Psa. xxvii. 10. This is a most rational expectation: for it is certain there is no good in the creature but what is from God; therefore there is no good to be found in the creature, the stream, but what may be got immediately from God the Fountain. And it is a welcome plea, to come to God and say, "Now, Lord, Thou hast taken away from me such a creature-comfort; I must have as good from Thyself."

3. Seek for the spiritual fruits of the crook in the lot. Heb. xii. 11. We see the way in the world is, when one trade fails, to fall on and drive another trade: so should we, when there is a crook in the lot making our earthly comforts low, set ourselves the more for spiritual attainments. If our trade with the world sinks, let us see to drive a trade with heaven more vigorously; see, if by means of the crook, we can obtain more faith, love, heavenly-mindedness, contempt of the world, humility, self-denial, &c. 2 Cor. vi. 10. So while we lose at one hand, we shall gain at another.

4. Grace to bear us up under the crook, 2 Cor. xii. 8, 9: "For this thing I besought the Lord thrice;" and He said, "My grace is sufficient for thee." Whether a man be faint, and have a light burden, or be refreshed and strengthened, and have a heavy one, it is all the same; the latter can go as easy under his burden as the former under his. Grace proportioned to the trial is what we should aim at; getting that, though the crook be not evened, we are even hands with it.

5. The keeping in our eye the eternal rest and weight of glory in the other world. 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18: "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look

not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen." This will balance the crook in your lot, be it what it will; while they who have no well-grounded hope of salvation, will find the crook in their lot in this world such a weight as they have nothing to counter-balance it: but the hope of eternal rest may bear up under all the toil and trouble met with here.

Exhortation 3. Let us then set ourselves rightly to bear the crook in our lot, while God sees meet to continue it. What we cannot mend, let us bear Christianly, and not fight against God, and so kick against the pricks. So let us bear it,

1. Patiently, without fuming and fretting, or murmuring. James v. 7; Psa. xxxvii. 7. Though we lose our comfort in the creature through the crook in our lot, let us not lose the possession of ourselves. Luke xxi. 19. The crook in our lot makes us like one who has but a scanty fire to warm at: but impatience under it scatters it, so as to set the house on fire about us, and expose us to danger. Prov. xxv. 28: "He that hath no rule over his own spirit, is like a city that is broken down, and without walls."

2. With Christian fortitude, without sinking under discouragement:—"Nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him" (Heb. xii. 5). Satan's work is by the crook either to bend or break people's spirits, and oftentimes by bending to break them: our work is to carry evenly under it, steering a middle course, guarding against splitting on the rocks on either hand. Our happiness lies not in any earthly comfort, nor will the want of any of them render us miserable. Hab. iii. 17, 18. So that we are resolutely to hold on our way with a holy contempt, and regardlessness of hardships. Job xvii. 9: "The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger."

(To be continued.)

Christ's kingdom brings good to all, but it receives nothing from anybody; for it carries in it all the unsearchable riches of God, and stands in need of nothing that man can do.—*W. Dell.*

When God looks upon a people, it is with them as with the earth in spring time; and when He departs from them, they are as withered trees in winter.—*John Preston, D.D.*

THE WAY OF ESCAPE FROM SNARES.

A MORNING READING BY JAMES BOURNE.

ABOUT July, 1838.—Psalm cxli. 9: "Keep me from the snares which they have laid for me, and the gins of the workers of iniquity." These snares are all that darkness and confusion in which we walk and are entangled; the devil all along turning us aside by every possible artifice, from the simple way of escape pointed out by God. What is that? "Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me."—Now do let me impress this on your minds, and entreat you, whatever the nature of your trouble be, whether from the accusations of the law, or of the devil, or from the convictions of the Holy Spirit, do you act in this way—"Call upon Me;" and let me entreat you to pay no attention to anything but the Word of God. Pay no attention whatever to your feelings; for when you are most sensibly distant from God, then He may be nearest to you. Do you only beg for patience, and keep on, whatever your perplexity be; do not try to mend it; do you look to no other relief. Pray with the psalmist, "Keep me from the snares laid for me." I am sure I do pray, at times, with such a sensible deadness on my soul as cannot be conceived, with such whinings and murmurings; and I am driven to give it all up, and say God never did anything for me. But I find the Word of God is full of encouragement to all who seek His face, let their state be ever so bad, ever so hard or impenitent. Only keep on. As Abraham's servant found: "I being in the way, the Lord met me;" so God will appear.

In Isaiah xxviii. He says, "Hear the word of the Lord, ye scornful men"—ye who say it is of no use, that you cannot prevail, you are so bad. For "thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation." Now this must be our only Refuge; no past experience will serve us to rest on, but here we must come; and they that believe on Him shall not be confounded. For God will lay judgment to the line, to convince us not that we have this sin or that sin, but that we are all sin, a body of sin; and as such we must come to Him. We may be vexed morning by morning, the same dreary entanglements continuing, and the devil telling us it is of no use, God is a hard Master, and causing us to forget

many deliverances of His on our behalf. But let us still go on and tell the Lord of it. "For the Lord shall rise up as in Mount Perazim, He shall be wrath as in the valley of Gibeon, that He may do His work." Nothing shall be impossible with God. Only "be ye not mockers;" go and try if God will confirm His Word, and add to what He has given you. Be sure you do not attend to your feelings; only to the Word of God. He says, "Give ye ear, and hear My voice; hearken and hear My speech. Doth the ploughman plough all day to sow?" &c. God will not contend for ever; for the spirits would fail before Him, and the souls which He has made (Isa. lvii. 16). The Lord give us patience; for after that has had its perfect work, He will come to give us this heavenly Bread, Christ Jesus.

DIVINE COMMUNICATIONS.

DEAR Friend,—I do feel thankful for, and am in some measure refreshed with, your love for the truth; and I do hope that love will lead you and me to seek for more, and that we shall, by the goodness of God, find the truth of Jesus' word: "They that seek Me shall find Me"—as "the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

I am, dear sister, much delighted with the way that the Lord doth save poor sinners, such as you and me; for I had not known the law (nor myself) in its condemning power but by the teaching of the Holy Ghost in my heart and conscience. For "when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died;" as the apostle found it, so have we. And we found it searching and stripping work. "Pay me what thou owest," followed me more or less for years. My sins had become my burden and grief, and the fear of destruction oppressed my weary soul, till Jesus gave me rest. Though I feared I should never find peace, yet His loving-kindness prevented my sorrows; for He did in the whispers of love distil peace into my soul when fears prevailed and darkness covered me. Then I cried and groaned, and He heard me, and came for my help. He delivered this poor captive one, and the year of jubilee was proclaimed, and I did indeed rejoice in God my Saviour.

Though damped it has been many times, yet we have found Him faithful who cannot deny Himself; and blessed be His

dear name, though troubles do abound, and fears run high, yet amidst all our hardness, and unbelief, and dejection of spirit, He has kindly spoken, and said,

“Be not dejected, however oppress’d,
For God thy salvation does all for the best.”

And we have found Him faithful who has promised. Then we have forgotten our poverty, and run to meet our Lord, and proved the truth of that scripture, that “where the word of a King is, there is power.” And instead of being faint and weary, we have been refreshed, having received “beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.” This has been wonderful to us, to find He has come in the manifestation of His grace and love; I say it has been such to us that we have admired the hand that has afflicted us in mercy. His love is wondrous in that He has been to us so kind in delivering us from so much sorrow. We have seen His corrections, and they have not been grievous then. Our souls have admired and wondered, and loved the hand that has taken away, that He might give His Holy Spirit in His comforting influence. Then we have said, “If this is the way, dear Lord, lead on; and teach me to say, ‘Father, Thy way is best, and now Thy will be done; make me Thy true child, obedient and loving to the end.’”

This is, dear sister, the sanctifying effect of that grace which He puts upon His bride, being clothed with humility. Thus we hope that we shall hear His voice, saying, “This is the way: walk ye in it.” How sweet is His voice in calling us away from everything but Himself! as we have found it, and have sung with R. Robinson,

“Here’s my heart, Lord; take and seal it.
Seal it from Thy courts above.”

In Him the weary have found rest, vile transgressors are forgiven, bankrupt souls are honoured, the guilty find mercy, all through the sufferings of Jesus. It is because He delighted in mercy, and that the word that is gone out of His mouth should not return void.

CHARLES BREED.

May 24th. 1909.

We know not what place or power the gospel of God our Saviour hath in us till tribulation come; and so much of the true knowledge of Christ and of true faith in Christ we have indeed, as we have strength in such hours.—*W. Dell.*

OUR HIGH PRIEST.

My very dear Friend,—For such I feel I must call you, and will now try and redeem my promise to write again. I was so glad to get your good letter. I can well understand your feeling, both at the sweet time and now, but still,

“Whate’er thou found’st Him at thy best,
He’s at thy worst the same!
And in His love will ever rest—
Thy Husband holds His claim.”

It took me back forty-six years to the 1st of May, also on a Sunday, when I felt such a oneness with a risen, exalted Saviour, and such a penetrating within the veil; and this came so sweetly, “Whither the Forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus.”

And now I am writing, I hope it will not be wrong to tell you of a nice time I had in the night a few weeks ago. I think I had been to sleep, but was then awake, and thinking how nice it would be if I could see to read, etc., when a soft feeling stole over me, and such a sense of the love and compassion of Jesus, and that He felt sorry for my affliction, and the words came: “We have not an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities;” also about a merciful and sympathising High Priest. But as I cannot look for the words, I may not have given them just rightly. I lay and wept with the feeling I had of it; and then, I can hardly describe it, but I seemed to have such a sacred feeling of the dear Saviour’s suffering in the Garden and on the cross that I shall never forget; and that hymn of Watts’s came, verse after verse:

“Alas! and did my Saviour bleed?”

and I had the sweet feeling it was for me. It was a time that words cannot express. O for more of it! It made up for the loss of my sight.

“Bid us call to mind Thy cross,
Our hard hearts to soften;
Often, Saviour, feast us thus,
For we need it often.”

Your ever-loving Friend,

Heathfield, Jan. 9th, 1911.

M. MOCKFORD.

I find His sweet presence eateth out the bitterness of sorrow and suffering.—*Rutherford.*

REVIEWS.

THE INQUISITION : THE REFORMATION : THE COUNTER-REFORMATION. Lectures delivered under the auspices of the Protestant Institute of Scotland. By the Rev. J. R. Mackay, M.A. Inverness: The Northern Counties Newspaper & Printing & Publishing Company, Limited. Price, 6d. nett.; postage 1½d.

PRESENT DAY ASPECT OF ROMANISM. By the Rev. D. Macfarlane, Dingwall. Price, 2d., post free.*

THE revealing—uncovering—of the “Man of sin” for sudden destruction may be looked for when the “falling away”—the apostacy—shall be fully accomplished, 2 Thess. ii. 3. When that awful reality, that glorious day, will be, is not for us to say. That there are signs that God, who has for so long held in check the mighty evil, is now removing the restraint, we think no true Protestant will question. They are visible everywhere. In our own nation apostacy is met with at every turn—in the Anglican Church, in the Nonconformist bodies. In the former, Ritualism, unfaithfulness to ordination vows, and general deadness; in the latter, infidelity to the Scriptures—that is, the denial of their perfect inspiration, and consequent heresies, and utter worldliness prevail to an alarming and portentous extent. Let us say, in passing, that the rejection of the Word of God as plenary inspired, is ever followed by judicial blindness and error; “The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken; lo, they have rejected the Word of the Lord, and what wisdom is in them?” (Jer. viii. 9). Thus we account for the sad fact that many so-called Protestants see no inherent, incurable evil in Popery; which, in its priestly pretensions, is the greatest enemy to Christ’s Priesthood and sacrifice, and in its political ambitions the most desolating foe of man.

But as night precedes morning, so the “falling away,” the sitting in the temple of God of the Man of sin, and his exalting himself above all that is called God, woful a sight as it is, should not shake the saints. It is but the prelude to the

* It may interest our readers to know that the authors of these lectures are esteemed ministers in a Body known as “Free Presbyterians,” which stands boldly for the doctrines of sovereign grace as set forth in the noble Westminster Confession. Since having the privilege of knowing of this Body, and meeting with many of their ministers in different parts of Scotland, we have on several occasions been warmed and rejoiced in hearing some of them preach, and in communion with them and their people.—ED.

glorious morning. An end is coming! Babylon will fall, and "in one hour is she made desolate" (Rev. xviii. 19). For that "Wicked shall be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming" (2 Thess. ii. 8). All the power, riches, and wickedness of the "Man of sin" will then be uncovered, destroyed, and avenged. Every secret thing in this most gigantic fraud and evil that ever existed on earth will then be discovered. Transubstantiation and purgatory will then be seen to be doctrines of devils. The cruel usurpation of authority over the consciences and lives of men and women, through the confessional, will then be declared to be against natural right, against Scripture, and only simple wickedness. And the destruction shall be complete. "And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all." Then will all heaven, with the holy apostles and prophets, be invited to rejoice over her, for God hath avenged them on her, Rev. xviii. 21, 20.

What Popery is in one part of her history and working, Mr. MACKAY shows with great clearness in his lecture on "The Inquisition." One Inquisitor, the notorious Torquemada, "during his sixteen years' activity as an Inquisitor . . . burned alive 8,800 men and women, burned in effigy 6,500, and condemned to infamous penalties other 90,000." The history of the terrible "Holy Office" Mr. Mackay succinctly and clearly gives in his able lecture.

"The Reformation" is the title of his second lecture. It sets in clear light the parts God gave to Luther and Calvin, and other Reformers. "The Counter-Reformation" is the third lecture, in which is shown "Rome's efforts to regain lost ground." The blessed Reformation God gave to the greater part of Europe the Romanists will not allow to have been a Reformation. The Counter-Reformation she esteems the true one. And Mr. Mackay tells us how she sought to attain it "by definition of doctrine, by administrative reforms, by the Inquisition, by the Index Expurgatorius, by Jesuitry, and by the fanaticism of Roman Catholic sovereigns." Each subject is briefly, but clearly, dealt with.

Mr. MACFARLANE'S lectures are on different lines, but are excellent. Dealing with doctrine, this author shows that in the 16th century "the Church of Rome added twelve new

articles to the Nicene Creed, whereby she severed her connection with the Church of Christ" as it was in the fourth century. He gives these twelve fateful doctrines. After showing their unscriptural nature, he proceeds to speak of Protestantism as reviving Christianity in six particulars. 1. The Bible. 2. The ministry. 3. The parity or equality of ministers. 4. The doctrines of grace. 5. The worship of the church. 6. The *government* of the church. All these were revived. On each point Mr. Macfarlane has many good observations, all leading to exalt the one true and living God and His blessed salvation. Of course, it will not be expected that we can go the whole way with the lecturer in Presbyterianism, though we are in agreement with much.

The second lecture is devoted to the "Man of sin" and his doom, and is perfectly clear, making good each point taken up. The third lecture, "The Progress of Popery in Great Britain and the Causes thereof," places amongst the causes of its progress the passing of the *Emancipation Act* in 1829, and says, "This was the opening of the flood-gates whereby the flood of Popish error began to flow into our Protestant kingdom, and is still flowing in with increasing force." Solemnly true! And may we not add that that Act of 1829 was an Anti-Reformation Act? And as such it was the voice of the nation, saying to God that the Reformation possessed not all that value and blessing our forefathers had regarded it as fraught with.

We regard the lectures of both booklets as setting Popery in the broad light of Scripture, and therefore worthy of a large circulation and careful reading, calculated by the divine blessing to open people's eyes generally, as well as to stir up the minds of true Protestants, to inflame them with love for the inestimable blessings which the Lord gave to those nations to which He sent the Reformation. And most and best of all, the reading will have been specially useful if we find by it our faith is led to more fully realise the want and worth of Him who is the foundation of true Protestantism, so that we may more and more seek to know and be found in Him.

There is such a suitableness between the new nature that is wrought and created in believers, and the duties of the worship of God, that they will not be parted nor kept asunder, unless it be by the interposition of some disturbing distemper.
—J. Owen, D.D.

Obituary.

On Sept. 12th, 1910, THOMAS BALDOCK, of East Peckham, Kent, passed peacefully away, aged 89 years.

Our dear friend was born at Mayfield, 1820, and in the providence of God, came to live at East Peckham in 1855. He was a farm labourer, and was very fond of public-house company and dancing. On one occasion, when going home from the public-house, he felt as though the devil was following him, and had great fears that he would drag both body and soul into hell. About this time, a man, by name Weston, went to stay with them, whom our friend hated because of his religion. A few friends being met together at his house, were relating in turn their call by grace, when the arrow of conviction entered the heart of our friend. From that time he was brought into deep distress of mind on account of his sinful course, and often feared there was no hope respecting his soul's salvation, as he had lived a sinful course for upwards of thirty years. He was the subject of heart cries to God, that He would show mercy towards him. He went often in soul agony to his work, and felt he must give up and return home. As his trouble of mind increased, he ventured to fall upon his knees before God, before retiring to bed, but said, "I felt as though Satan stood by my side, and said, 'If you attempt to pray, God will strike you dead.'" On the Sunday following he went to Maidstone to hear Mr. Crouch. In his discourse, he said, "There may be some poor soul crept in here this morning whom Satan tempts by suggesting that if you attempt to pray you may be struck dead." This was a time of deliverance from the power of that temptation, which he ever remembered. At some later date our friend was set at happy liberty, whilst under the gospel's sound from the same minister.

He continued for some time in a sweet frame of mind under the manifestations of the love of Christ to his soul. Being favoured with the sweets of forgiving love, he could say with the poet,

"How high a privilege 'tis to know
Our sins are all forgiven;
To bear about that pledge below,
That special grant of heaven."

When Mr. Mockford and Mr. Allard formed the church at

East Peckham, our friend and his wife were among those that became members, and remained with us till their death.

Our friend had trials and afflictions various through life, but ever proved that,

“ When the Lord’s people have need,
His goodness will find out a way.”

About twenty years ago he poisoned his hand, and was disabled for work all that winter. His wife said to him, “ We shall have to go into the workhouse, we cannot live on my earnings, and we are imposing on the Lord’s people in accepting so much at their hands ; ” when he replied, “ The Lord has put it into their hearts to give in this our time of need, and we do not know some who give, only that the Lord has sent it.” He was not able to do much work for the last fourteen years of his life, but could get about until a few days previous to his death. The last time he was at chapel was the first Sunday in Dec., 1909. During the service, these lines being quoted abode much with him.

“ Thus souls that would to heaven attain,
Must Jacob’s ladder climb ;
And step by step the summit gain,
In measure and in time.”

It was a soul-humbling time with him at the ordinance on that day.

In the last few weeks of his life he suffered much from his chest and throat, and his end appeared very near at times ; then he would revive again. His dear wife was often afflicted at the same time with bronchitis, and it looked to him at times as though she might be taken first. He would say then, “ I have prayed that my wife may live to see my end ; what could I do without her ? ” which petition was answered, as the end proved. He would speak of God’s special care and abundant mercies to him all his life long, and say, “ Here I am still in affliction ; yet I want nothing. O how good the Lord is in supplying our every need ! Yet at times I feel the hardness of my heart to be very great. O for a heart to praise, thank, and adore the God of all mercy and grace ! ” The last time I visited them, a few days before his death, both were in bed, but seemed to be living above their afflictions. It seemed the desire of both to exalt the Lord Jesus with all the powers of their minds. When about to leave, our friend replied, “ I have said but little about the Lord’s great mercies. Had you

been here last Friday, I felt I could have told them out then, as I felt them in my heart." On Sept. 11th, a member called and found him very ill. He said, "I am dying. The Lord has not left me. I would like to tell you of His goodness; but I cannot talk." After a pause he said, "I can't half praise the Lord for His goodness and mercy. My sufferings are nothing compared to that He suffered for me. I am so thankful the Lord has kept me from complaining." On the next day, just before he died, he said, "I am now on the very top of the ladder;" and was seen to smile twice, and his ransomed spirit then took its flight to be for ever with the Lord.

G. BALDWIN.

SOPHIA BALDOCK, the beloved wife of Thomas Baldock, of East Peckham, Kent. Born July 27th, 1834, died Sept. 26th, 1910, only surviving her husband fourteen days.

Our dear friend was married very early in life, on the day previous to her 17th birthday, at which time she was a total stranger to God and godliness. The wedding was celebrated for two days and nights by drinking and dancing. I have heard her say that in after years the Lord was pleased to call by grace six persons who were present in this their ungodly pursuit. Being so young in years she was not domesticated; which often gave rise to some unpleasantness between her and her husband. When the Lord was pleased to call her by grace, she has said, "I used to pray that He would help me in my household concerns, and give me discretion to spend my husband's earnings for our mutual comfort."

When about twenty years of age she went to Rotherfield one Sunday, to witness a baptising service by the late Mr. Russell. During the service Mr. Russell quoted the lines:

"The soldiers pierced His side 'tis true;
But we have pierced Him through and through."

These words sank deep into her heart. She said, "I never forget my journey home, which was about six miles. The words sounded again and again,

" 'We have pierced Him through and through.'"

My sins were brought to light; I felt the arrows of distress, and found I had no hiding-place." An old friend of hers, a Mr. Weston, went to see her husband, and said, "Do not prevent your wife from going to chapel;" from which time she

attended Mr. Russell's ministry, and soon felt attached to it.

Some time later in the providence of God they were brought to East Peckham, and heard the late Mr. Burch, who spoke there once a month. Also later, Messrs. Mockford, Swannel, and Kevill were among those whom she highly esteemed for the truth's sake. She and her husband would entertain the Lord's servants, and felt it a high privilege to have them beneath their roof.

The last few years of her life she suffered from bronchitis and shortness of breath, and knew what it was to get low in body and mind. In the last few weeks one attack was soon followed by another. The last few times I visited her I found her very bright and cheerful. On the night before her death she gave me a brief account of the Lord's particular dealings with her in providence and grace, her countenance beaming with delight. She was very weak, yet seemed carried above weakness whilst conversing. In the early hours of the following morn she fell asleep in the Lord. G. BALDWIN.

ANN MARIA LOCK, of Hastings, on May 29th, 1910, in the 90th year of her age.

She was baptised by the late David Fenner on Aug. 23rd, 1859. A few short notes have been found which will show the exercise of her mind when young. "In the year 1840 my dear sister Sophia died, which brought great concern on my mind as to what had become of her soul. It also wrought great concern as to my own state. Although I trust the Lord had begun a work in my soul previous to this time, still I was very ignorant." I have heard her relate the distress of mind she passed through between two and three years after the death of her sister, how sometimes she was helped to hope, then again sank very low. The following is a note written by her, Sep., 1843 :

"In the providence of God I was at Margate, in great concern of soul ; and wishing to hear something to profit, I went into the Countess of Huntingdon's Chapel. Mr. Lee took for his text Psa. cxxvi. 6 ; 'He that goeth forth and weepeth,' &c. Of the sermon I do not remember anything ; but the text abode and much encouraged me ; and from other things that occurred during my stay there, which was about a month, I decided, should I be spared to return to Hastings, I would

leave the established Church, and attend Mr. Fenner's ministry. I had heard him a few times before this; also once heard Mr. Burch at Zoar Chapel, Hastings. Not many months after, an ever-to-be-remembered time came. Previous to this I had had a little encouragement from these words: 'When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.' As I was going upstairs, these words came, as if spoken distinctly: 'I have loved thee with an everlasting love.' I stood still, and said, 'That is not for me,' when to my astonishment it was repeated: '*I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee.*' Then I knew it was the word of the Lord, but for some time I did not know where to find the words; neither did I remember having seen them, but I knew they were in the Bible."

For many years hers was a path of much trial, sorrow, and affliction in body, with business and family bereavement. She had also many helps and deliverances. Not being a great talker, she said but little of her trials, but was often compelled to speak of the Lord's goodness in bringing her through. In 1871 or 1872 she passed through a very heavy trial; and being left in a very rebellious spirit, it was a great grief to her. But the Lord broke in upon her with these words, "*Be still, and know that I am God;*" and from that time she was enabled to leave the matter with Him. Referring to that trial on her death bed, she said, "I have many times been enabled to bless and thank the Lord for it, bitter as it was to me at the time." Three or four years after this she had an illness; and for the most part was very dark and tried in her mind. After she got better, she went into the country with a few old friends; and while one was reading the xlth of Isaiah, the Lord broke in upon her, and removed all her darkness and bondage. When she returned home, she was so happy and so filled with the favour and blessing of the Lord that for several days she was unable to attend to business. She often said during those days,

"Great as He is, I dare be free," &c.;

but, like Abraham, she came down from the mount, and again tribulation was her lot. But she never forgot that "precious time," as she used in later years to call it.

She was a real lover of Zion, her hand and heart ever open to help in any way she could, often depriving herself of comforts to help those in need, and seldom letting her left hand know what her right hand was doing. A close union existed between her and our late pastor Mr. Hull. In June, 1882, when our Sunday School was opened, she consented to take the Young Women's Bible Class, which caused her much prayer and exercise of mind. In 1899 she writes: "*March*. I was taken ill, and feeling old age coming on, much as I loved my class that the Lord hath given me, I felt I must give it up. I have had many helps; and as the Lord promised me at the beginning, His presence has at different times been with me. —1900. I must say the Lord has done all things well, unworthy as I am of all His favours. He told me many years ago, 'With long life will I satisfy thee, and show thee My salvation;' and now I ask for 'even life for evermore.'"

Early in 1909 she had a severe illness; no one thought she would recover. She was favoured and supported in the affliction, and much disappointed when she found she was recovering. She said to me one night, "Oh, I did think the dear Lord was about to take me to Himself. But I desire to be patient, and wait my appointed time." Circumstances now took place which compelled her to change her residence. It was a great exercise to her, fearing she might take a wrong step. She frequently said, "I feel to need the Lord's leading and guiding as much as ever I did. I beg Him to close up every way which is not in accordance with His mind and will." She was favoured to see the hand of the Lord in making a way for her, and again answering her prayers. She often said, "I am persuaded I have been led here by the Lord, or He would not favour and bless me as He does. He favours me with such refreshing sleep; and when awake in the night season, I often feel He is with me, and He gives me some sweet promise that He will be with me to the end." She retained all her faculties to the last, and spent much time in reading the Word. She loved to tell of the Lord's goodness and mercy to her during her long pilgrimage. It may truly be said of her she brought forth fruit in old age, and was fat and flourishing, to show that the Lord is upright, and that no unrighteousness is in Him.

She became very weak and feeble towards the end of April, 1910; from that time she had several severe attacks of the heart

She was calm, desiring to fall into the Lord's hands, whether for life or death. She often said, "I am not afraid to die; I 'know whom I have believed.' 'By the grace of God I am what I am.' 'I know that my Redeemer liveth.' Death has lost its sting. Oh death, thou hast lost thy sting!" The line of Swain's hymn was repeated,

"Death lost its sting when Jesus died."

She replied, "That is it; He disarmed the king of terrors." Much more might be said showing the sweet peace of her mind in the prospect of death; but we forbear. She said, "He will never leave nor forsake me.—By grace I shall endure to the end." Her pains at times were distressing to witness, each attack leaving her weaker. She often said, "My dear, blessed Lord Jesus, do come and take me to Thyself. Come quickly."

"'Yes, I shall soon be landed.'" (488)

On her being reminded how in affliction nearly thirty years before, she had requested that hymn to be read to her, she said, "I thought I was going then; but you see I had to come back, to learn more of my sin and weakness, and more of His Almighty power and grace. But it will not be long now." Two or three days before her death, she said, "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost—all concerned in the salvation of my soul." Hart's line was repeated,

"A truth from nature never learn'd."

She replied, "Known only by the teaching of the blessed Spirit."

On Saturday the 28th, she had another bad heart attack, lasting over two hours, which left her very weak. After a time she awoke audibly in prayer for those in attendance on her; and asking the Lord to favour all with a little rest, at 11.45 she fell into a quiet sleep. As we were watching her, just at one o'clock she raised her left hand, and ceased to breathe. "Absent from the body, present with the Lord."

F. M.

Our fair morning is at hand, the day star is near the rising, and we are not many miles from home. What matters the ill entertainment in the smoky inn of this miserable life? We are not to stay here, and we will be dearly welcome to Him whom we go to.—*Rutherford*.

NOTICES OF DEATH.

SAMUEL WILLIAMS, passed away, Oct. 27th, 1910, in his 81st year. He was arrested many years ago under Mr. Smart, a lion turned into a lamb, so great was the change. In bondage many years; but was kept up on this board, "Who can tell?" which was spoken so powerfully he looked around to see if anyone was about him. Hope was raised, but many storms assailed it. At his latter end he was greatly afflicted; but at last was able to venture on the blood and obedience of Jesus Christ in the face of death.

W. S. C.

MARIA SUMMERS, of West Row, entered into rest, Nov. 3rd, 1910, aged 67. She was a regular hearer for many years at Lakenheath; a lover of experimental things, but very tender lest she should assume anything above her stature. Afflicted for a long time, and much exercised lest her name should be left out; but was able to sing on her bed to her God, and crown Him Lord of all. Interred in West Row chapel burying ground. W. S. C.

On Dec. 4th, 1910, aged 77, JOSEPH RISBRIDGER, Guildford, formerly of Crawley and Newdigate, after keeping his bed about fourteen weeks. During this time he was much tried, but occasionally he expressed that Christ was his only hope. A few days before he died he said, "My life is in His hands, and it may be He will not keep it working much longer." Also he was heard several times asking the Lord, if it was His will, to take him home. As a family we have lost a praying father, but we hope his prayers will be answered. S. R.

SABINA ANNIE BERRY, formerly a member of the church meeting at Zoar chapel, Cardiff. She fell asleep in Jesus, Dec. 5th, 1910, aged 50 years. My beloved sister was a poor doubting, fearing one, often wondering how it would be with her in the swellings of Jordan, and through her long and painful illness, consumption, would often cry out in an agony, "How will it be with me in the valley? will it be dark?" and, "Do you think that the Lord will leave me at last? If He is at the other end of the valley I shall not fear." Not long before the Lord took her to Himself she said, "It is all right, I am going to one of those mansions the Lord has gone to prepare for me;" and raising her poor wasted hand, she said, "It is light in the valley, and I am going home." After offering up a prayer to God to bless me and my husband, and take us safely through the Jordan, she again repeated, "It is light," and, "The Master has come, and calleth for me." She passed away so peacefully that we could scarcely say, "She's gone," before her ransomed spirit took its mansion near the throne. Our loss is her eternal gain. E. E. SMITH.

STEPHEN SHORE, of Sizewell, Suffolk, a deacon of the Strict Baptist chapel, Aldingham, Suffolk, after a few days' illness. A well beloved brother, whose kindly manner was much appreciated by all.

"Life's duty done as sinks the clay,
Light from its load the spirit flies,
While heaven and earth combine to say,
'How blest the righteous when he dies.'"

EDWARD G. TRICKER.

PETER HENRY FINCHAM, entered into rest on Jan. 21st, 1911, in his 78th year. He was for thirty-six years a member, and acted as deacon for 15 years. In his early days he was arrested by the words, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." He was very fond of dancing, and once when dancing he was stopped; the law ploughed deep, and he lay on the fen bank with hell in his soul, and thought he should never get home. He tugged and toiled to get religion, and religious folk got hold of him; but the cut was too deep to be healed slightly, so that neither they nor himself could patch up a religion to satisfy his guilty soul. He tried all means, and failed, and was many times tempted to put an end to himself, and had arranged so to do, as to the spot and way it should be done; but thought he would go once more to the house of prayer, and then if no hope came, leave the place and end his life. But the set time came, as in Ps. xxxii. 6. He groaned as he went, "Lord, canst Thou save such a guilty wretch?" When Mr. Sargeant took his text, "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins; return unto Me, for I have redeemed thee" (Isa. xlv. 22), deliverance was wrought; the prisoner went forth from the pit; and afterwards he went to the spot previously arranged to end his life, with heaven in his soul. Thus he was one who knew and could sing that blessed hymn in Gadsby's (134):

"Hail sovereign love that first began

The scheme to rescue fallen man," &c.

He had many trials, being a small Fen farmer. Once he started to America, and after some time at sea the cholera broke out on board, and one morning the mate, with oaths and curses, came down below and said, "All on deck, for we shall all be in hell before the day is out." And they lay about the deck dead and dying, with a fearful storm raging, sails and gear of the vessel gone overboard. But the mate took compassion on Peter Fincham, and put him in his cabin and cared for him; and the vessel drifted back to Queenstown, and he got better, but never went to America. A greater than Jonah was over all this. But to come to the close of his life. He had a cancer, and the last four months was a great sufferer. The fiery trial was severe; but the Lord poured in strong consolation. He said he never knew so much of the love of Christ till he came on his deathbed; it was good to visit him. Hymn 472 (Gadsby's) was very precious; he said, "I have the substance in my soul;" also 468 (Gadsby's). The Lord hid His face on one occasion; he said it was dark, but had not taken his anchor. But the Lord came again, and assured him of everlasting victory; and he said, "It won't be for long;" and also said, "Just you think of poor Peter having a victor's song." He had many sweet morsels on his bed, though the poor body was a wreck. He was not able to take any food for over a month, yet he had sweet prospective views of his Lord and the inheritance awaiting him. He had many Canaanites within and without, but was enabled to fight a good fight. He kept the faith, and looked forward to the crown, and has now got it; his end was peace. He will be much missed in Lakenheath. W. S. C.

THE GOSPEL STANDARD.

MAY, 1911.

MATT. v. 6; 2 TIM. i. 9; ROM. xi. 7; ACTS viii. 37, 38; MATT. xxviii. 19.

“OUR LIGHT AFFLICTION.”

NOTES OF A SERMON PREACHED BY MR. NEWTON, OF TUNBRIDGE
WELLS, AT EAST PECKHAM, OCT. 17TH, 1906.

“For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.”—2 COR. iv. 17, 18.

THESE are the words of the apostle Paul, and I see in them the comparison between time and eternal things, both as to their weight and duration. There is the lightness and shortness of time things set over against the weight of eternal things, and the eternity of them.

Now, when the apostle says, “Our light affliction,” I understand he means afflictions, for as a rule there are many of them; and as many streams of water make a river, so there were many things in his life, temporal as well as spiritual, which made up his affliction; and they were not light as separated from that which follows. His was not a light cross; his pathway was not strewn with roses, so to speak; he had not silver slippers. It was very different from that, you will see if you turn to the xith chapter. There he says, “In labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in

cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches." Would you consider that a light affliction for a man to endure year after year? What would you and I think about that? I have thought a good many times, if I were called to endure similar things, unless the Lord gave me very special grace, I should turn my back on Him, on Zion, and on His cause, and fly from the rod, the lash, the prison, and all those things the apostle endured. I do not consider his a light affliction in and of itself. Neither could the apostle.

Some of us have passed through bodily sickness, and been brought near to death's door; we have known what it is to be afflicted in mind, in our measure, in a similar way. Jonah said the weeds were wrapped about his head; he went down into the belly of hell, in feeling. Perhaps if I came into your homes, and knew your secrets, if I looked into your hearts (which I do not wish to do), into those chambers of imagery, I should see dreadful things, and I could not say, "Yours is a light affliction." Very likely I should say, "What should I do if I had your trials? How could I bear or endure them?" "The heart knoweth its own bitterness." You know where your cross rubs, where it frets the sore; and you know you cannot lighten it yourselves. We would pad our cross with wool, and make it no cross at all; we would pare off the edges, we would quite alter this and that, and say, "Now we have managed things; now they will be better!" But God has said it is "through much tribulation" that "we must enter into the kingdom of God." And if He has said *much*, it is of no use for you and me to try to make it little. No; Christ said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." It is of no use our saying we will not have it. My nature has rebelled at it for forty years or more. I remember when first the Lord sent a worm to the root of my gourd, and my dreadful heart-rebellion, as it withered before me. You may have got a cross, the heaviest end of which is out of the sight of other people, and that presses night and day, so that you can have no peace or comfort. You may kick against it, and get into a dreadful spirit; but that only adds trouble to trouble. That is only half the journey out of the way, the child of God will have to *come back*. There is no walking with God with passion raging in our bosom. Two cannot walk together, except they be agreed. All the while

we are experiencing this, there is no walking together with God; but He must give the needed grace to submit to His will. "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you *in due time*." Friends, it will be in due time, if it comes on a dying bed. "Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you." Poor child of God, He cared for you before you were born, before Adam's dust was formed, before He made the world; and He took care that you should come upon the earth, and be under the teaching of the Spirit to make you wise unto salvation; and when you have suffered His will, He will take you to heaven with Himself for ever.

"Our light affliction." Have you ever had a faith's view of the sufferings of the Son of God, when He was brought into Gethsemane's garden and endured that bloody sweat? In that soul agony it was not the hand of man that was upon Him. Natural men can read and understand the sufferings of Christ to which *man* put Him.

"The pains of His body were great,
But greater the pangs of His mind."

His soul was offered as well as His body a sacrifice unto God. With His soul *God* dealt when He made Him to be sin, when He bare the sins of all His people. O what a weight! It was not a light weight. Had He been only man, as the Unitarians say, then no such burden of sin could have been laid on Him. But He was God and man; He offered as a sacrifice both His body and soul, and His divinity sustained Him. O the weight! Was it light? No, no. Infinite, boundless, beyond all creature's estimation or realisation, was the weight when the sins of all His people were laid upon Him—an intolerable load, an awful load. When the Spirit of God is pleased to set your affliction, all that you ever have suffered or will suffer, by the sufferings of the Son of God, what He endured to satisfy law and justice, it will make your scale kick the beam. Friends, when the sufferings of the Son of God are put in one scale, and you see them, and feel and realise that your sins are there, and that there is enough sin in your sin to curse the whole earth and damn your soul for ever, what then is all your affliction compared with the sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ? It is light, is it not?

When I sat in the gallery of Zoar chapel, the Dicker, when first I was brought into soul trouble, and where I first received

mercy,—then by faith I saw the Son of God nailed to the accursed tree, and saw that my sins had pierced His side. All my afflictions then were nothing, nothing.

Then these afflictions may be compared with the afflictions that await the damned. O, there is a hell awaiting the wicked! “The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.” Hell and damnation are almost left out of sermons now; if we talk about the devil or hell at all, we must talk about them in very careful language. Many hardly believe there is a hell. Friends, there is a hell for the wicked; and you will go there, if you are not saved by grace. If your affliction, for the time being, in body and mind, is compared with the afflictions of those in hell, where the wrath and indignation of an offended God fall on the wicked in an awful weight, does it not make yours light? In hell it is burning wrath and darkness, and that for ever. The damned are filled with anger, wrath, spite, and malice, with the wrath of God upon them. What must hell be? Then, friends, what a mercy to be saved from hell! If we are saved from hell, Jesus Christ the Son of God suffered our hell for us. God will in no wise clear the guilty; our guilt must fall on our own head, if it was not borne by the Substitute, the Lord Jesus Christ. I believe that every sin that ever a child of God committed was laid to the charge of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that He bore that hell which the child of God must have endured eternally, if He had not stood in his law-place and stead.

“Our light affliction, which is but *for a moment*”—a moment compared with the eternal suffering of the wicked! only a moment, a flash, a twinkling of an eye, compared to eternity! Did the word *eternity* ever overwhelm you, as referring to the awful eternity of the lost? Did that word ever rend the caul of your heart, so to speak, causing you to feel, “How ever can I grapple with eternity?” Eternity, O vast eternity! When a thousand million years have run round, eternity is the same—that vast eternity! Then, “light affliction, which is but for a moment,” compared to that dark side of eternity! Here there is a more blessed side—that of an eternity of happiness, of enjoyment, that awaits the people of God in heaven; where there is no sin, where they are never dissatisfied, never want anything. They have not yet got to the full, never to wish for a different posi-

tion, never to want more than they have, every sinful desire for ever gone, never more any trouble—for ever and ever. I like to meditate sometimes on this, and draw the comparison between an eternity in hell with the wicked and an eternity in heaven with the righteous. I know by experience a little of the dark side; and I have been brought to see what I call the bright side. I have known a little of hell. David said, "The pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow." And I believe I have known a little of the peace of heaven. I have told you how I laid on the couch in my long illness, meditating on heaven; where I should never desire anything that I had not the full possession of.

There will be one thing that will make it heaven indeed to my soul, if ever I reach that heavenly shore. Mr. Philpot said our fallen nature was like a carcass all alive with maggots and worms. Some may say, "We are not so bad as that." I leave that with you; I know how much I have felt my heart like a carcass full of worms and maggots, contrary to God and godliness, a cage of unclean birds. To be saved from that, and to be made pure, holy, and righteous, to live in an atmosphere of infinite holiness—will not that be heaven? That would not be a heaven to a wicked man who never had his heart changed. There have been times when I have had a little touch, when the tongue of every dog has been silent and every maggot still; when every evil of the heart has been subdued, and the soul brought sweetly conformable to the obedience of Christ. Then, friends, affliction is "light affliction, which is but for a moment."

Yesterday I went to see a woman, a member of Hanover Chapel; she is between seventy and eighty, and has a cancer on her temple that is something beyond tongue to describe. That woman was calm and quiet; her affliction she speaks of as only a very, very little thing. How was that? Because she was swallowed up in meditation, more or less, on the love of God to her never-dying soul, through the Lord Jesus Christ. "Light affliction," "but for a moment!" We think sometimes that religion is so small now-a-days—and indeed the power is of a small measure—but here was a religion of the same nature and power as we read of in persons who have passed away years ago. We see what the grace of God can do, and does do.

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment,

worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Compare all the suffering of your lot for month after month and year after year with an eternal weight of glory. Here we have touches of heaven, but the "weight of glory," as seen in Jesus Christ, we could not bear now. I do not think John in Patmos saw the full blaze of glory in the Son of God, though what he saw almost struck him dead; neither did Daniel nor Ezekiel see it all.

"While we look not at the things which are seen"—natural things—"but at the things which are not seen"—eternal things, which we see only by the eye of faith. "For we walk by faith, not by sight." "For the things which are seen are temporal." I understand by that word *temporal* everything that is passing away. "But the things which are not seen are eternal." That realisation of an eternal weight of glory is only enjoyed in a limited measure here by the eye of faith. Friends, one moment in heaven will so swallow up your souls in its amazing glory that you will be lost for ever to all natural ties. I do not mean that there will be no remembrance of any natural ties, but I believe all natural ties will be dissolved, cut off for ever. What would heaven be if we felt sorrow and grief? what heaven should we have? If you ever get within the portals of heaven, your will will be so swallowed up in the will of God that you will have no will that is not His. Here there is the old man and the new man when called by grace; there there will be no old nature left. Heaven is a matter for faith; "we know not what we shall be." "Absent from the body, present with the Lord."

"Our light affliction, which is but for a moment." Be of good cheer, child of God; all your sorrows, trials, and difficulties, that very, very trying worm at the root will soon cease to trouble you. God help you to look up; when you get to heaven, they will be lost for ever. You sometimes think, "How can I bear it? what shall I do?" Think that when you die, that will end, that will be lost for ever. The wicked, like others, have their trials and troubles; but when they die, their trouble begins in real earnest; it really begins when yours ends. When you die, child of God, your peace, your happiness, your joy, your glory, begin in real earnest. Try to contrast one with the other. If you are enabled to do it, you will know something of heaven.

Last Monday evening, when going to the prayer meeting, I

had a sense in a moment of God's everlasting thoughts towards me. Before I went a dozen steps I crossed the street to the darker side, so that the people should not see the tears that flowed down my face, with the feeling that God should have had thoughts towards me from everlasting. I have had a little touch of it a time or two before, but not to the same degree and measure that I then had. When I got to the chapel I sat down; it seemed more than my body knew how to bear—that the omnipotent, majestic God should have had thoughts of peace towards me from everlasting. Now, the mysterious part was that it soon passed off; this precious meditation, this sweet feeling was soon gone; and when I awoke the next morning, it seemed as if it had never been there. If I had been asked when I was quite young in grace how that was, I should have come to a wrong conclusion, and thought it was not real, it was a delusion, because the feeling was all gone; but I do not say so now. I have known similar things in my own experience, and known them through reading the experiences of God's servants and people.

"I to my own sad place return,
My wretched state to feel;
I tire, and faint, and mope, and mourn,
And am but barren still."

Here is the mercy—the Lord does not change, though we do. There will be no changing in heaven.

"Death that puts an end to life
Will put an end to sin."

May the Lord bless His own word. Amen.

THE GRADUAL WORK OF GRACE IN ESTHER MORLEY.

UNTIL the 18th year of my life, I lived in all the vanity of childhood and youth, utterly regardless of God, though often reading His Word, and trained up in the paths of morality. But sometimes a thought would go through me, that living and dying in that state, I must go to hell.

On Dec. 13th, 1833, I went to London with the determination to enter into all the vanities of life which my situation (as servant in a family) would admit of, promising myself much pleasure therein. On the 15th I went to an Episcopal chapel where the family attended. The preacher had for his

text, John xiv. 14 : " If ye shall ask anything in My name, I will do it." He spoke much of Christ being a great and gracious Saviour, willing to save and bless all who would come unto Him and ask anything in His name. The text, which was repeated many times, arrested my attention in a way I had never felt before; and I left the chapel feeling, " If I go on as I am, I must go to hell. I will now give up all the vanities of life, and turn to God, and ask the Lord Jesus to bless me." This I tried in my way to do, saying, " Lord, have mercy upon me. Lord, bless me." After a few weeks the same preacher had for his text the parable of the ten virgins. He spoke of the wise as those who, making a profession of godliness, have the real grace of God in their hearts; and of the foolish as those who make the same profession, and have no grace, and consequently, living and dying in that state, must be lost to all eternity. Solemn indeed was his warning to all such. I felt, " I have neither profession nor possession; what shall I do? Lord, have mercy upon me." Then I thought, " I will now try to repent of my sins, and leave off sinning. I will give up all the vanities of life, attend the chapel, and perform all the duties of my calling with diligence. I will now try and come to Christ for pardon." Again and again the words would come into my mind, " If ye shall ask anything in My name, I will do it." But O, I could not repent of my sins, I knew not what it meant: but having told lies to my mistress, I was obliged to acknowledge it. All I could do was to cry, " Lord, do give me repentance unto life, not to be repented of." I felt I must come to Christ Jesus the Lord for pardon; but O, how could I come? Then I cried, " Lord, help me; enable me to come. Lord, save me, or I must perish. Do give me repentance and faith; do give me Thy Holy Spirit." At night I would kneel down and try to pray, but felt I knew not how. Many frightful objects were presented to the eye of my mind, and I was afraid to close my eyes in sleep, lest I should awake in hell. In the morning I used to think, " I will try and not commit any sin this day,"—so ignorant was I of my heart sins; but alas! at night I seemed to have done little else but sin.

One night I dreamt that I saw the Lord Jesus look out from between two clouds, and He smiled upon me. Ah, it was a heart-cheering smile. This encouraged me to hope He

would save me. At another time I dreamt I was standing by a large body of still water, which I must cross; and there was no way but a narrow partition through the middle. To remain where I was was certain death; and if I ventured on that narrow way, I was afraid of falling into the water. At last I ventured, and got safely over. When I awoke and thought thereon, I was again encouraged to hope, in a venturing way, on the Lord Jesus Christ, who I read was the Way, the Truth, and the Life. I saw that the way to eternal life was a narrow one, and had a hope that I should get safe at last. At another time, beginning to read John xiv. I was much encouraged by the words, "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in Me." A calm, soft feeling came over me that made me cry, "Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief."

So I went on for several years, hoping and fearing, sometimes encouraged by such parts of the Word as, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength," etc. "Come now, let us reason together," etc. I had never heard anything about the experience of the Lord's people, nor did I know what was meant by doctrine. The preaching taught free-will mixed up (if such a thing can be) with free grace; and failing to perform the duties constantly set before me, fears often prevailed, and I would try to begin over again.

We lived in the country for part of the year, and I had a fellow servant who attended a Dissenting chapel where I believe the gospel was clearly preached. One evening the preacher read to me the ixth of Romans, and closed the Book. After we had both sat silent for a while, I said, "I cannot understand that chapter." He said, "I know you cannot; that is why I read it." He then spoke very faithfully to me about the preaching I was in the habit of hearing, telling me it was contrary to God's Word to say that the Lord Jesus died for the whole world, and that all might be saved if they would. I had often heard him speak of election as a blessed truth, and felt much perplexed to know what it meant. After this conversation my perplexity greatly increased, and I thought to learn the truth by reading, and comparing one part of Scripture with another. But I became more and more confounded; it seemed as if one part contradicted another. I read that Jesus "gave Himself a Ransom for all," and that God would "have all men to be saved," etc.,

etc. Here I laboured hard for many years, tossed between the two, and my own life hanging in doubt.

One Sabbath evening alone I opened my Bible, and read, "He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer." Here was a little encouragement for hope, and my heart said, "O Lord, I am most destitute; do regard my prayer, do have mercy upon me." In Bunyan's "Fear of God" I found encouragement for hope, although fear prevailed; and I sometimes thought myself like the pilgrim in Giant Despair's castle, and was afraid I should die there. At this time a book was put into my hands on the doctrine of the atonement, by a Scotch clergyman; and it was made the means of setting my judgment right on that matter, which was some relief. But O, I wanted to know I was amongst those for whom the atonement was made! I began again to feel a little rising of hope, and one morning the hymn was given out with this verse,

"Convince us of our sin,
Then lead to Jesus' blood,
And to our wondering view reveal
The secret love of God."

I am sure my heart responded to it in desire. The text was, "The Lord shall comfort Zion; He will comfort all her waste places." My hope rose above my fear, and I went home much comforted.

So I travelled on for some years, not satisfied, but still thinking that as I went on, my hope would become brighter, and that I should be able to live and walk more according to the Word of God, and so honour Him in my life. But instead of walking so as to give glory to the God I wished to love (with feelings of shame I write it), I fell into a cold, lifeless, hardened state of carnality, indulging in vain, light conversation, and encouraging those with whom I lived to do the same; so much so that I look back upon the time with heartfelt sorrow. I feel sure nobody could have seen any difference between me and the world (except it were that my sins were greater); only that I continued in a profession, sitting down at the Lord's table; and many times conscience told me all was not right. Yet I went on in this way year after year, lifted up with pride and self-conceit. O Lord, canst Thou, wilt Thou pardon such a sinner?

Many changes took place in the family in which I lived,

and I wished very much to leave; which I did in the year 1856, to nurse a beloved sister then sinking in consumption. She had sought the Lord many years, and had many feelings in common with myself; and during her illness was very much tried about her own eternal interests, fearing she had made a mistake and all was wrong with her; which surprised me much, as I had thought much more of her religion than I did of my own. But three days before her death the Lord was pleased mercifully to remove all her fears with these words: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." After her death I thought much about my own state; how should I meet the hour of death? but again relapsed into a sort of careless confidence, or hope, that as the Lord blessed her in her last moments, so He would bless me. Her husband was a God-fearing man, and according to my sister's wish I remained with him. We lived together as brother and sister till his death in Nov. 1861. After he had spent many years of fears and sighs and groans for deliverance from bondage, the Lord in great mercy revealed Himself to him as his God and Saviour two days before his death; and he broke out in the words of the psalmist, "Bless the Lord, O *my soul*, and all that is within me, bless His holy name," etc. And now again I hoped the Lord would show me the same mercy before I died.

The death of my brother-in-law was a great trial to me, as two aged relatives were residing with us, who had been as parents to me from my infancy. Nevertheless I felt submissive to the Lord's will, and could from my very heart say He hath done all things well. It was but a few days, and the Lord was pleased to lay His hand on one of these aged ones, and in a few weeks to remove her by death; and He graciously provided a home for the one who was left. My home was thus broken up, and I gave way to almost uncontrollable grief. My spirit rebelled, and often I had feelings like this, "Suppose there is not any God nor any eternal happiness; suppose we are like the beasts that perish, and there is no resurrection; then all our fears, all our hopes, all our prayers are vain." This was a sad state to be in, and I felt it was not right in the sight of God. Also the minister

I had heard was removed by death; and I went to hear Mr. Blanchard at every opportunity. His was a different kind of preaching from anything I had ever heard; he came into the very feelings of my heart. I often felt reproved, and at times instructed and comforted; and O, I wished I could always hear such preaching.

At the end of the year 1864, I was taken to Brighton for a few months. I wandered from one place of worship to another, until I found out Mr. Grace's chapel. Here I was satisfied with what I heard, only wishing I could call it mine. I heard Mr. Grace three times, and it pleased the Lord to lay His hand upon him, and remove him also by death. I felt that the hand of the Lord was gone out against me, and my spirit often rebelled against His will.

During another visit to Brighton, in 1866, I first heard Mr. White. There seemed in his preaching all I wanted, but I could not call it mine. My inward feeling was that my heart grew harder; and instead of becoming more holy, I felt more and more unholy. I can never forget Mr. White speaking from Mal. iii. 17, on the first or second Monday evening in the room: "They shall be Mine in that day when I make up My jewels." As he traced out the character of those, I felt I could almost say, "I am one;" I could almost say, "I am the Lord's, and He is mine." Although the word preached often made me tremble, yet my little hope was kept alive; and every time I went to hear, I hoped to be more confirmed by the Spirit in the word.

But instead of that, there sprang up within me a dreadful fear lest after all it was altogether a delusion; lest there was no truth in the Scriptures, no eternal life beyond the grave; yea, more, I seemed to call in question the very Being of God. The remembrance of it even now makes me tremble. Yet at the same time I knew those things were wrong, and I wondered greatly if ever any of the Lord's people had such a fear. I found David saying, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God;" but I could not think he meant that fool was one of the Lord's people. Something seemed to say, "What is the use of praying, if there is no God? It is only mockery." One day being on my knees with these dreadful feelings, I said, "If there is no God, it cannot be mockery; so I will go on praying. For if there is a God, it may be He will hear me." And immediately a feeling came over

me, "Perhaps it is a temptation;" and the scripture followed, "Who will with the temptation also make a way to escape." This brought back a little hope to my soul; and O, how I did try to beg of the Lord to remove these dreadful feelings altogether! But I was greatly tempted and withered up for some months. At length one night Mr. Blanchard was in the pulpit, and in hearing all those guilty, God-dishonouring fears were taken away. This text was quoted: "He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek Him;" and I felt I could and did believe that *God is*, and that He is that Rewarder. As soon as I reached home, I knelt down by my bedside, and said, "O Lord, Thou art *my* God, and I will praise Thee;" feeling that I could and would praise Him in spite of all opposition. Then again the cloud came over me—"Is it altogether a delusion? Is there any God?" But twice I was enabled to say, "Satan, thou art a liar; there is a God, and I will praise Him;" and the cloud was gone.

Some time in 1869, by degrees a felt darkness and confusion fell upon me, so that I feared my religion never began the right way, that I had never come in by the Door into the sheepfold. I went on month after month, a trouble to myself and those with whom I lived, feeling the working of self-pity, envy, and rebellion, and full of wretchedness. I thought God had not dealt with me as with others of His people; and here I proved that "the rebellious dwell in a dry land." Once I remember these words coming very strongly into my mind: "In returning and rest shall ye be saved: in quietness and confidence shall be your strength." But I felt so full of sin and every evil way and work that all seemed swallowed up again. How I acted I know not; but I was as miserable as a poor creature could be.

And now an outward trial came upon me. My own untoward conduct rendered it necessary for me to leave the house of those good people; which I did hastily on Jan. 25th, 1872. I really loved them, and to this day nothing gives me greater pleasure than for them to speak kindly to me. On retiring that night I began to think I should now have to mix more with the world in labouring for my bread; and having been in such a wretched state of sin and sorrow while sheltered in the house of the Lord's people for two years and ten months, I thought, "What will befall me now?—I shall

be swamped." David said, "The floods of ungodly men made me afraid;" but I felt it was the floods of ungodliness within that made *me* afraid. I walked the room almost in despair, when this came to my relief: "He bindeth the floods from overflowing." I remembered Mr. Freeman's sermon from those words, the many floods he spoke of, and how the Lord would bind them, so that His people might not be overcome; and once more I was enabled to look up to the Lord with a little hope and trust that I should yet praise His name. It was not many days before the Lord was pleased to provide for me a situation, and not only put me into it, but give me strength of body and mind to perform the duties required of me. He gave me also opportunity to attend the the preaching; and many times I felt my little returning hope strengthened in hearing, though fears often prevailed.

In April, 1873, I heard Mr. Newton from Isa. ix. 5: "Every battle of the warrior," etc. As he spoke of the heavenly Warrior with garments rolled in blood, which was shed for the sins of His people, I could not help hoping my sins were there; yea, and as I walked home my heart seemed lifted up with gratitude and praise for such a hope; but I wanted full assurance. In July, 1874, I heard Mr. Hazlerigg from, "What will ye see in the Shulamite?" I left saying, "If that man has spoken the truth, I am quite sure I am in the footsteps of the flock;" and my heart went up to the Lord in thanksgiving and praise for such hope and consolation, which I felt was an anchor to my soul. I spent many hours alone, and happy hours they were; I could trust my soul, my all in the hands of the Lord, feeling persuaded He would perfect that which concerneth me; though fear would sometimes molest me. At one time, after hearing Mr. Knill, and wondering what the end would be, these words fell softly on my spirit, "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him." I do feel when words drop upon me in this way, it is very different from reading them in the Bible. They are like bright little spots in my dark pathway, and happy are the moments when I feel them.

In Feb. 1888, at the prayer-meeting our pastor, Mr. Popham, read a few verses in Job, and spoke of two vital points in religion; first, of condemnation. Here I could follow him even to the very point, but not to the depths he described; which makes me often question if the work has

been of God or if it is my own work. But at this time I felt it could not be my own; for I knew and was sure that lost for ever I must be, unless saved by the blood and righteousness of Jesus, God's dear Son,—and He be just and holy still. As he spoke to the second point, I could and did follow him; but when he came to full assurance, when he said, "Until you come to this point, you are short. You may say this opens your wound; but may the Lord keep it open till He comes Himself to heal it;" then I said, "No, it has not opened it, because it never been healed; but it has probed it very deeply, and it is very painful work." O if I die without this wound being healed, what shall I do? Can it be that all I have passed through, all my hopes, all my happy moments, are altogether a delusion?

Last Sunday, Oct. 12th, 1891, I was helped when our pastor spoke of *inward* trials, and felt I was no stranger to them. And this evening in hearing from the words, "Give us this day our daily bread" in spiritual exercises, how he confirmed what I felt in going through the ordinance of baptism; for I had no bright shining of the Lord's presence, but one text came to me many days before, and abode with me through the ordinance and many days after: "Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart, all ye that *hope* in the Lord." O that little word *hope*, how sweet it was to me! Again how he described the happy time that came on me five or six years ago when I was not well, and was willing to die. O the happiness I then felt! I seemed to have a little fresh taste of it this evening, in almost (if not quite) believing it was the Lord's doing, and not my own.

Nov. 1st, 1891. I have felt greatly encouraged this morning. Our pastor asked the Lord to bless those who are just in the place I am—greatly desiring at times to know the Lord Jesus as their Saviour. O Lord, wilt Thou ever grant me such a blessing? I sometimes feel a hope that Thou wilt. The text was Heb. ii. 1; he exhorted us to give heed to the word we feel the Lord has spoken to us. How many words were brought to my remembrance, which I have hoped He has spoken to me, sinner as I feel myself to be!

Nov. 10th, 1891. "And such were some of you," etc. (Dr. Hawker's evening portion.) I felt an application of it to my soul, and a degree of assurance that brought tears to my eyes (a very unusual thing with me, except from fears).

I lay down in bed and said, "Lord, can it be true that I am justified?" and again and again the words kept coming, until I fell asleep: "Such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God;" again in the morning and until this evening. Surely this is the Lord's doing, sinner though I am. Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord Jesus, art Thou not indeed my God and Saviour?

Nov. 15th, 1891. Text, Col. i. 27: "To whom God would make known," etc. I felt greatly encouraged under the preached word. O how sweet to my soul these encouragements are!

[Thus increasingly this poor woman's hope brightened, and in Nov. 1896, the long sought assurance and Spirit of adoption were given her, and she was able to write the following testimony to the faithfulness of God.]

My dear Pastor,—I want to tell you I had such a powerful feeling come into my soul while you were speaking at the prayer-meeting last Friday, that I could and did say, "*My Father, God:*" and have been favoured and enabled to call upon Him in the name of the Lord Jesus as my God and Father again and again both yesterday and to-day. O I cannot tell you what I feel! there is so much sweetness in it, and it came so suddenly. Can it be a temptation, or the deception of my sinful heart? Do try and pray for me, that sin in me may be subdued, and that I may be made and kept very humble in the fear of the Lord. May He help and bless you with all the strength you need, is the desire of

A poor sinful woman,

ESTHER MORLEY.

[Another letter she wrote in May, 1897.]

My dear Pastor,—I did think of coming to your house, but my courage failed me. I begged of the Lord to direct me, and these words fell on my mind: "Let him that is taught in the Word communicate to him that teacheth in all good things." I did feel so greatly encouraged under the preached word yesterday that it is like a stone of help. I feel that I know something of the shame and confusion—though but little *compared* with the confusion which I have been almost lost and buried in these many years. I cannot tell you the distress this confusion has brought me into many times; but

my hearing yesterday has raised a hope that I shall yet be favoured to rejoice in my portion.

And now I want to tell you what preceded this. You will not have forgotten the sad state you found me in on the 8th of March. There was much sad fear in my heart, and I believe, much rebellion. I felt to get worse and worse until the 26th, when I took up Mr. Philpot's sermons. He spoke of high heaps made up of little helps and encouragements, and my fears were hushed; for looking back to the many little helps and encouragements I have had, they did make a high heap indeed. Last Friday evening you read and spoke upon the doctrine of predestination, and asked, "What do you say to this? do you love, or do you hate it?" I felt I could say from my very heart, "I love it;" but there was a time when I wished it was not in the Bible. So I have had a time of great encouragement; and when I try to put all these little hopes and helps together, it does make a fresh heap. I feel what I think a person would who had been sinking in deep mire, and was lifted suddenly out.—E. M.

[This great change more or less abode to the end, and Esther Morley died in the Lord, and in a most happy state of mind, on Sunday evening, May 6th, 1900, aged 84.—J. K. P.]

A PREVAILING PLEA.

"Let Thy hand be upon the Man of Thy right hand, upon the Son of Man whom Thou madest strong for Thyself. So will not we go back from Thee: quicken us, and we will call upon Thy name."—PSALM lxxx. 17, 18.

ONE of the greatest evils that the church of God can come into is an unexercised state of mind, a hard, ungracious confidence. To think our state is better than it really is, is a serious matter. It was so with Laodicea. She thought herself rich, and professed to be so; she thought she was increased with goods, and needed nothing. That was evil; but the worst was that she was deceived, that she really expected to find things better than they were. Anything is to be desired before that, and an honest man says so. "To the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet."

The church in this Psalm is in a very low and evil condition. It is likened to a vine brought by God Himself out of Egypt, planted in a goodly soil, "a very fruitful hill"—"the

horn of the son of oil" (Isa. v. 1, margin). Flourishing under the Lord's smile and protection for a time, she stretched out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river. But as she increased, she waxed fat, and kicked and rebelled against her Lord. He noticed this. He does notice our evil ways within, though we may not have evil ways before our fellows. God notices them, and will make us notice them too. This vine soon became exposed to evil from without, for God broke down her hedges. The church complains, "Why hast Thou then broken down her hedges, so that all they which pass by the way do pluck her? The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it." When God thus takes His Spirit away, when He removes all His defence from the mind, from the conscience, the mind and conscience will be wasted. O professor, you will find it so. O child of God, if He does so even for a time, you will find the evil effects of it. Samson said, when his locks were shorn, "I will go out, and shake myself as at other times;" not witting that the Lord was departed from him. A good many Christians have that surprise before them, who yet are going to heaven. They will find it an evil thing and bitter to sin against God, to walk in an ungracious confidence, and think things are better than they are.

But, however evil it is with us, if we are the Lord's people, there will be set before us, when we are convinced of our state, a way of escape. There will be given to us a Spirit of prayer, the Spirit of grace and supplications. It is part of God's blessed gospel in its administration by the Holy Ghost, to produce true conviction, honest confession, sincere petition. But it is a very piercing sight when we see those peculiarly aggravating crimes we are guilty of, the sins we have committed against the goodness of God manifested to us. This it is that pierces us. When one thinks of and remembers the convictions that have pressed on the conscience, of sins done against the love of Christ and the manifested goodness of God—it is this when brought home that will be far more bitter, piercing, and grieving than our former convictions. But how kind of God to do this! He sets our backslidings in order before us, that we may come to know that we are forgiven, and know in some degree what He has done in forgiving us. That is a great word, "But He, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not:

yea, many a time turned He His anger away." Why, it will break our hearts, when we realise it belongs to us. The sweetest tears trickle down when we realise that many a time He has forgiven us, and not stirred up all His wrath. Our neglects of prayer, departures from the Lord, unexercised states of mind in regard to His ways and services, how grieving these must be to Him! Do convictions produce good fruit and work well in us? Are we convinced we sin against Him in being unexercised at the Lord's table, not discerning the Lord's body? I would not like such things to pass from us, if we are convinced of them, without our being healed and cleansed by the blood of sprinkling.

What was Israel's chief sin? Was it worshipping the sun, moon, and stars? First, it was turning their backs on His sanctuary, and neglecting the appointed sacrifices. If Eli's heart had been set on God's service, his lips would have been opened, and words would have been spoken to reprove his sons for their conduct, instead of mildly remonstrating with them. For God says, "Them that honour Me I will honour; and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed." And the highest honour any can give God is that that is given when one's feeble faith hangs on Christ crucified, cleaves to Him, prays for union with Him, and refuses to leave the throne unblest; when the heart can say with Jacob, "I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me;" and obtains answers. We may talk about religion, and God may say, "Your calling of assemblies I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting." But we may have our lips sealed, and yet be accepted with God, because our faith is cleaving to Christ crucified, looking to Him as risen, and sitting at God's right hand.

It seems as if the church in this Psalm had something of this looking to Christ in her. She was in a poor case, but was not too poor to go to His heavenly throne. We may be too good, but we cannot be too bad. God will take care that we shall not be too full of trouble, too exercised with burdens, to pray; but that our troubles shall be the means of bringing us to His heavenly footstool. The church prays, "O Shepherd of Israel, give ear; Thou that dwellest between the cherubim, shine forth." Here was a mystery. The mercy-seat was between the cherubim, and the ark beneath it had in it the covenant; and God said, when commanding it to be

built, how it should be done, and what it should be for, "I will meet with you there." And here it is that people, when in a low, exercised state, are gathered by the Holy Ghost. May this be lodged in our hearts, that we can never be too bad, never too much convinced, never have too much sense of vileness for the throne of grace; nor can we ever be too sensible of our death to come to that throne.

Here the church cries under a sense of her death, "Quicken us, and we will call upon Thy name." What quickening some of us need! And it seems there is an amazing gathering up of her faith at the throne of grace, in the text: "Let Thy hand be upon the Man of Thy right hand." It is a prayer. The people had the hand of God on them in affliction; He had put His hand forth, and broken down the protection they once had. He had let His hand go from restraining the beast and the boar; and they having liberty given them by the Lord, had wasted this vine. God may give our enemies liberty—liberty with our circumstances; also liberty to our riches to make themselves wings; He may give diseases liberty to come and invade the body and the house. Who sent adversaries to Solomon, Assyria to Israel, Shalmaneser to take away the ten tribes? Who has taken away our health, if we have lost it? taken away some of our substance, our peace? What has been our protection hitherto, and who has taken it from us? Nature says, "So and so." Faith will say, "The Lord was our Defence, and He has done all this." "*Thou* hast broken down our hedges, we are consumed by the blow of *Thine* hand. They perish at the rebuke of Thy countenance." It is good when God is seen to be first in the trouble as well as in the comfort. It is good to do as Job did. He got through the Sabeans, through the Chaldeans, looked beyond the fire and the wind, and the only One he saw in the calamity was the most high God. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; and therefore I am bare. Blessed be the name of the Lord." May the Lord be first in our troubles, lest our mind fix on second causes. The moment it does so, that moment our heart departs from the living God, and is hardened against Him and against our fellows who have to do with the trouble. See how the church turned her eyes in another direction, away from second causes, to the throne of grace, to the Lord her God, and prayed, "Let Thy hand be upon the Man of Thy right hand." Poor believer,

“Pore not on thyself too long,
Lest it sink thee lower.”

You may pore on your death too long, on your guilt too long. Moderation should belong to us; in everything we need to be moderate—in our concerns, and in our way and measure of regarding ourselves. If we belong to the Lord, He will give us another Person to look at. We are not only to look at the badness of self—it is good to look there till we are sick of self, but God will give us another Object. Poor believer, are you pleased with Christ, as the Father is?—for in your manner and in your measure you may be. Do you plead, “Let Thy hand be upon the Man of Thy right hand, upon the Son of man whom Thou madest strong for Thyself” —honouring Him as you honour the Father? Is there another who is worthy of this honour, who has this position? No, there is no other. “I have laid help on One that is mighty, I have exalted One chosen out of the people.” What a wonderful Person is this! There is no jewel that will sparkle in our eyes as Jesus Christ does when made manifest to us; there is nothing in creation to be compared with Him. What fits one to go to Him with hope, to see Him with delight, and to receive and embrace Him in the heart? It is the sense of one’s own necessities and of His suitableness.

“Could we but with clearer eyes
His excellencies trace,
Could we His Person learn to prize,
We more should prize His grace.”

What are His *excellencies*? First, the excellencies of His *Person*. The sinning nature must be the suffering nature; but that nature alone would not suffice to bear the weight of infinite wrath. Therefore in it must dwell the eternal Son of God, and that makes the Person of our Lord Jesus to be very God, and very Man, with the whole of the Godhead dwelling in Him, and with all the excellencies God made in the first man in Eden. And this humanity spotless, innocent, and pure, being joined to the Person of the Only-begotten of the Father—that is the excellency of the God-man, and the very foundation of our faith. Those who believe not in Him miss the foundation. May the Holy Spirit bring to us the knowledge of Christ’s Person, and cause us to meditate on Him. Said the psalmist, “My meditation of Him shall be sweet.” Should the Holy Spirit open to us somewhat of the

excellencies of this Person, we should have the only foundation beneath us that God has laid in Zion.

This is the One to whom the church refers the Father. Faith is bold, simple, honest, and being an empty, necessitous grace, makes the soul use simple language when it pleads with the Father. It says, "Thy hand is too heavy for me to bear; my desolations are too great for me ever to repair them. But I see One who is able, whom Thou madest strong for Thyself. Take Thy hand off me, look at incarnate Deity, the Man of Thy right hand. Remember Him, let Thy hand be upon Him." How beautiful a sight God gives His people sometimes of the Way of life, the Way of escape from the wrath to come, the Way from bondage to liberty! Out of this pleading comes liberty in our bondage. There is life and liberty in humbly referring the Father to Jesus Christ. That is what this prayer really does. For the conscience to receive every accusation that may be charged on it, to suffer all the guilt pressed on it, and to accept all the affliction that is laid on the soul, and perhaps also on the body, and say, "Lord, I deserve it all, and hell at the end; but there is a Man before Thee, the Man Christ Jesus, who paid the heavy debt of suffering due to His people. Deal with me in Him, let Thy hand be upon Him"—this is true faith, and the true, living acting of it. It goes not with excuses, palliations, but full confessions and a bold, believing reference to Jesus Christ; in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and in whom the Father is well pleased. Now this is a very living path for us to walk in. Therefore, as one says,

"Pore not on thyself too long,
Lest it sink thee lower;
Look to Jesus, kind as strong,
Mercy join'd with power."

This is coming boldly to the throne of grace; this is gospel life; this is God's way. It pleases Him, satisfies Him, and benefits the soul that is led into it.

"Let Thy hand be upon that Man." The church of old looked forward to the incarnation of the Son of God; *we* look back. And these two actings of faith meet in the one Person, the Lord Jesus, "Whom God hath set forth to be a Propitiation through faith in His blood." For in the fulness of time "God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." No death in

us can equal in power the life that is in Christ; no guilt can prevail against the merits of Christ; no weakness can be a bar to omnipotence; no grave we are in can hold us from His resurrection power. What a blessing to have living faith in this living Man, the last Adam, who is a quickening Spirit. This faith will not let us lie down comfortably without the Lord. Its work is to cry, "Lord, I am in necessity, make haste unto me;" and as in the Psalms, "Pluck Thy hand out of Thy bosom, and come and save us." Turn us again, put us right, give us a clean lift out of this condition. Thou canst repair our desolations; none else can. Cause Thy face to shine, and we shall be saved." Begging is a good trade; may the Lord teach us to use it well, to use no flattery. He hates flattery. Let us use humble, sincere confessions; "Lord, I am vile." "For Thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great." Says God, "I will repair your waste places;" and He is faithful to His word. He says, "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of My lips"—in what case? "If his children forsake My law and walk not in My judgments, then will I visit their transgression with a rod, and their iniquity with stripes"—one says, "And make an end?" Yes, a blessed end; it is a blessed end when God visits for sins. It will make an end of our walking in the foolish things we have walked in. But what a mercy He says this at the end, "Nevertheless My lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer My faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of My lips." What a mercy He has said, "I will betroth thee unto Me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto Me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies." It is gospel-like to be able to own the charges brought upon the conscience, and then say, "Let Thy hand be upon the Man of Thy right hand, upon the Son of man whom Thou madest strong for Thyself."

But was Christ weak? Yes, He was "crucified through weakness." My dear friends, the Lord Jesus was a Man, a very Man, with an immortal soul and a body like ours; and that human nature was made strong. What made it strong? First, its union with the Son of God. Secondly, the immeasurable gifts of the Spirit. The Spirit of counsel and might was upon Him, and Christ says, "The Spirit of the

Lord God is upon Me." What a strengthening this was! See His suffering human nature in weakness, when angels came and ministered to Him in the Garden of Gethsemane. Hart says,

"When I by faith my Maker see
In weakness and distress,
Brought down to that sad state for me
Which angels can't express—

"When that great God to whom I go
For help, amazed I view
By sin and sorrow sunk as low
As I, and lower too—

O to be enabled to go on, and say,

"For all our sins we His may call,
Since He sustain'd their weight;
How huge the heavy load of all,
Since only mine's so great."

This is the Man the Father made strong; and He made Him strong for Himself. The apostle says the priest was "ordained for men in things pertaining to God," that he might offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. Therefore Christ was made strong, to be a Priest in things pertaining to God, that He might offer Himself without spot, and by one offering for ever put away sin from His people. He is the Priest, the Altar, the Sacrifice in one Person; and when He had done His work, and been crucified through weakness, He entered upon His kingdom and glory. Now He lives "after the power of an endless life." And that life is to swallow up all your death and mine.

Now faith, if it be in a person, when in trouble, guilty trouble, want of any kind, will under the guidance of the Spirit take him to this Man, lead him to call the Father's notice to this Man, this blessed Mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is more beautiful than my words can express, that this Man should be set before us *to cover an evil case*—the case of the church here; the case of one who says, "I am so dead I cannot move;" of another whose conscience is so burdened he cannot lift up his head; of another whose heart is so clogged with carnality he cannot move Godward; of another who says, "I fear the hand of God is against me for my sins; I am wrong here, afraid there; and when I look into it, and see the hand of God in the things that have come upon me, I feel I am wrong everywhere." But when faith rises, you will

have strength to say, "Lord, deal with me in Christ—not in myself, but in the Mediator. Quicken me with His life, cleanse me by His blood, sanctify me by His grace, hold me up by His power." It is great faith that brings a sinner to this point. And here is a great mercy,—the Lord puts no bar in his way. One says, "But I feel there is a bar." Yes, you may, but it is not put there by the Lord. What does He say?—a word He will never contradict: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts." If you are in spirit that man, you will find a greater, a sweeter, and a more smiling welcome at the throne of grace than you are able to conceive. Only you will get some rubs first. It is no easy thing for a wicked man accustomed to do evil, to learn to do good. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or a leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good who are accustomed to do evil." But God says, "Let this wicked man turn from his ways and return unto Me, and I will abundantly pardon." This pardon brings peace into the conscience by Jesus Christ.

Look, then, at this. "Let Thy hand be upon the Man of Thy right hand." The excellencies of His Person are infinite; they attract. And those of His work also sweetly attract poor, afflicted people. If you pray like this, pleading His Person, you have liberty in your bondage, though not the full liberty you want. But when the Lord receives you graciously, you will have the liberty you desire. You are free to pray, and O wonder of wonders, *free to refer the Father to the Son*. It is no little thing for a sensible sinner to be able to live like this. If the Lord came near to us *im*-mediately, we should be consumed for ever; but if mediately, as we beg Him to do—"Behold, O God our Shield, and look upon the face of Thine Anointed. Take Thine hand off us in reference to our guilt, and put it on Jesus Christ;" that is, "Deal with us in Thy Son in a way of love, pardon, and mercy."—He would be well pleased with us, and our evil case would be covered, whatever it is.

"So will not we go back from Thee." We look at all our backslidings, our neglects of the throne of grace, our unexercised state in observing the Lord's Supper and coming to His worship, and are afraid of His judgments. Sometimes we may feel we must give up trying to walk in His ways. Can we always sleep comfortably under these feelings? can we

rise in the morning and talk about religion glibly? If we can, the Lord approveth not. The child of God says, "No, I am not comfortable, the Lord knows; because I am in such a bad state." But what is the effect of a sight of Christ? How beautiful the change! Said this people, "We have sinned; we are consumed; the boar has wasted us, the wild beast has devoured us. But do Thou lay Thy hand upon the Man of Thy right hand, and we will not go back from Thee."

This is what Elihu taught Job,—to hearken to God speaking by him a man, representing the Mediator to him. "Behold, I am according to thy wish in God's stead: I also am formed out of the clay. Behold, my terror shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee" (Job xxxiii. 6, 7). Job had said, "Neither is there any days-man betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both." "O that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleadeth for his neighbour!" (ix. 33; xvi. 21). It was too terrible for him to contemplate an absolute God in his afflictions. Says Elihu, "I am that man: I am according to thy wish in God's stead." So faith looking to Christ sees a Mediator, and says, "Lord, if Thou wilt deal with us in Him, we will not run away; we will cleave to His blood, to His righteousness, and to Thee in Him." The Word says this, and every saint knows it. "So will not we go back from Thee." Has not a sight of Christ held us to the throne of grace? If we had more guilt than we have, with this sight we could not leave off praying. The psalmist resolved to call upon God as long as he lived, because he had found the way of access, and God had heard him. "Because He hath inclined His ear unto me, therefore will I call upon Him as long as I live." Try this business, poor, afflicted, tried believer; seek to try this before Him. Our case goes well with God when we confess our worst condition; and it goes well with us when we can pray in the Mediator; the end must be good. "Whoso confesseth and forsaketh his sin shall obtain mercy." So that confession is good, and works well; especially when we say in faith, "Lord, lay Thy hand on Christ; deal with us in Him. So will not we go back from Thee; Thy terror shall not make us afraid."

Lastly. "Quicken us, and we will call upon Thy name;" as if they said, "We get very slack in prayer, but do quicken us again; we get very far off, but do Thou bring us back,

turn us again. Wilt Thou not revive us again, that Thy people may rejoice in Thee?" "Quicken us, and we will call upon Thy name—we will bring our troubles, our distressful condition, even our dead, unfeeling hearts, our temptations, the tempter, our weakness, our failings, our confusion; we will call upon Thy name." It is a mercy to be taught to pray so.

May the Lord give us some inkling of this mystery—that there is a Man, God's Fellow, suitable to sinners,—how suitable! As we see this, it will give us right feelings towards the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and right feelings towards all praying people. May the Lord command His great and sweet blessing to rest upon us. Amen. J. K. P.

FAITH'S AIM.

DEAR Cousin,—I thankfully acknowledge your love in your kind remembrance of me upon this opportunity. Alas, you do too highly prize my lines, and my company. I may be ashamed to own your expressions considering how unprofitable I am, and the mean improvement of my talent.

Yet to honour my God by declaring what He hath done for my soul, in this I am confident, and I will be so. Truly, then, this I find: that He giveth springs in a dry, barren wilderness, where no water is. I live you know where—in Meshec, which they say signifies *Prolonging*; in Kedar, which signifies *Blackness*: yet the Lord forsaketh me not. Though He do prolong, yet He will I trust bring me to His tabernacle, to His resting place. My soul is with the congregation of the firstborn, my body rests in hope; and if here I may honour my God either by doing or suffering, I shall be most glad.

Truly no poor creature hath more cause to put himself forth in the cause of his God than I. I have had plentiful wages beforehand; and I am sure I shall never earn the least mite. The Lord accept me in His Son, and give me to walk in the light,—and give us to walk in the light, as He is in the light! He it is that enlighteneth our blackness, our darkness. I dare not say He hideth His face from me. He giveth me to see light in His light. One beam in a dark place hath exceeding much refreshment in it,—blessed be His

name for shining upon so dark a heart as mine! You know what my manner of life hath been. O, I lived in and loved darkness, and hated light; I was a chief, the chief of sinners. This is true: I hated godliness, yet God had mercy on me. O the riches of His mercy! Praise Him for me. Pray for me, that He who hath begun a good work would perfect it in the day of Christ.

Salute all my friends in that family whereof you are yet a member. I am much bound unto them for their love. I bless the Lord for them; and that my son, by their procurement, is so well. Let him have your prayers, your counsel; let me have them.

The Lord be with you. So prayeth your truly loving cousin,
Ely, Oct. 13th, 1638. OLIVER CROMWELL.

HEALING TO BE GIVEN.

A MORNING READING BY JAMES BOURNE.

MAY 7th, 1838.—Exod. xv. 26: "I am the Lord that healeth thee." We meet with many troubles, and there is no way of healing except by coming to Jesus Christ, and getting Him to speak peace. Then will the most bitter circumstance be healed. It is said in Malachi: "But unto you that fear My name will the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in His wings." Now we cannot deny somewhat of the action of this fear. We fear many things in which we see the hand of God; but then God says of Israel, "I have blessed, and cannot reverse it." Now it is our mercy to plead this with God, not in a hardened way, but with many confessions and entreaties, and not to go on in darkness. The word says, "With healing in His wings," to show how speedy and safe this healing is; as when one is racked with toothache, and it is gone all at once. So sudden and clear is God's healing. So in Psalm ciii.: "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases." There are many appearances before this Sun rises like the break of day; but He will rise, therefore let us look for it; and if we are really seeking Jesus, we must not be discouraged; for they that seek shall find.

We shall stand in need of this healing all our days. In Psalm cvii., though He sent His word and healed them, yet

again they were "minished and brought low through oppression, affliction, and sorrow." The lamb must be slain morning and evening (Exod. xxix. 38—46). Each day we shall want this sprinkling on our consciences, when we rise and when we go to bed. As long as our hearts are taken up with our business, we shall meet with nothing but sorrow and vexation in it. The only remedy is the blood of sprinkling. And if these things are not attended to, even though it should appear as if the root of the matter were in us, our end will be covered with a cloud. Also it is said, "The cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together" (Isa. xi. 7); that is, if the root of the matter be in us, that bearish temper, however constitutional, must be put off by the power of the Spirit.

CRUMBS FROM THE MASTER'S TABLE

FROM BOSTON'S "CROOK IN THE LOT," OR, "THE SOVEREIGNTY AND WISDOM OF GOD IN THE AFFLICTIONS OF MEN DISPLAYED."

(Continued from page 180.)

Question. "When may any one be reckoned to fall under sinking discouragement from the crook in his lot?"

Answer. When it prevails so far as to unfit for the duties either of our particular or Christian calling. We may be sure it has carried us beyond the bounds of moderate grief when it unfits us for the common affairs of life, which the Lord calls us to manage, 1 Cor. vii. 24. Or for the duties of religion, hindering them altogether—1 Pet. iii. 7: "That your prayers be not hindered" (Greek, cut off or cut up, like a tree from the roots); or making one quite hopeless in them, Mal. ii. 13.

3. Let us bear it profitably, so as we may gain some advantage thereby. Psa. cxix. 71: "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn Thy statutes." There is an advantage to be made thereby, Rom. v. 3—5. And it is certainly an ill-managed crook in our lot when we get not some spiritual good of it, Heb. xii. 11. The crook is a kind of spiritual medicine; and as it is lost physic that purges away no ill humours, in vain are its unpleasantness to the taste and its gripings endured; so it is a lost crook, and ill is the bitterness of it borne, if we are not bettered by it.

Isa. xxvii. 9: "By this, therefore, shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his sin."

Motives to press this exhortation:—

Motive 1. There will be no evening of it while God sees meet to continue it. Let us behave under it as we will, and make what sallies we please in the case, it will continue immovable, as fixed with bands of iron and brass. Job xxiii. 13, 14: "But He is in one mind, and who can turn Him? and what His soul desireth, even that He doth. For He performeth the thing that is appointed for me; and many such things are with Him." Is it not wisdom, then, to make the best we may of what we cannot mend? Make a virtue then of necessity. What is not to be cured must be endured, and should be with a Christian resignation.

Motive 2. An awkward carriage under it notably increases the pain of it. What makes the yoke gall our necks, but that we struggle so much against it, and cannot let it sit at ease on us, Jer. xxxi. 18. How often are we, in that case, like men dashing their heads against a rock to remove it! The rock stands unmoved, but they are wounded, and lose exceedingly by their struggle. Impatience under the crook lays an over-weight on the burden, and makes it heavier, while withal it weakens us, and makes us less able to bear it.

Motive 3. The crook in thy lot is the special trial God has chosen for thee to take thy measure by, 1 Pet. i. 6, 7. It is God's fire, whereby He tries what metal men are of; heaven's touchstone for discovering true and counterfeit Christians. They may bear and go through several trials whom the crook in the lot will discover to be naught, because by no means they can bear that, Mark x. 21, 22. Think then with thyself under it: "Now, here the trial of my state turns; I must by this be proved either sincere or a hypocrite; for can any be a cordial subject of Christ without being able to submit his lot to Him? Do not all who sincerely come to Christ put a blank in His hand? Acts ix. 6; Psa. xlvii. 4. And does He not tell us that without that disposition we are not His disciples?" Luke xiv. 26: "If any man come to Me, and hate not his father and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple." Perhaps you find you can submit to anything but that; but will not that *but* mar all? Mark x. 21, 22. Did ever any hear of a sincere closing with Christ with

a reserve or exception of one thing, wherein they behoved to be their own lords ?

Question. “Is that disposition, then, a qualification necessarily pre-required to our believing ; and if so, where must we have it ? Can we work it out of our natural powers ?”

Answer. No, it is not so ; but it necessarily accompanies and goes along with believing, flowing from the same saving illumination in the knowledge of Christ whereby the soul is brought to believe on Him. Hereby the soul sees Him an able Saviour, and so trusts on Him for salvation ; the rightful Lord and infinitely wise Ruler, and so submits the lot to Him, Matt. xiii. 45, 46. The soul taking Him for a Saviour, takes Him also for a Head and Ruler. It is Christ’s giving Himself to us, and our receiving Him, that causes us to quit other things to and for Him, as it is the light that dispels the darkness.

Case. “Alas ! I cannot get my heart freely to submit my lot to Him in that point.”

Answer 1. That submission will not be carried on in any without a struggle ; the old man will never submit to it, and when the new man of grace is submitting to it, the old man will still be rebelling. Gal. v. 17 : “For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other ; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.” But are ye sincerely desirous and habitually aiming to submit to it ? From the ungracious struggle against the crook, turn away to the struggle with your own heart to bring it to submit, believing the promise, and using the means for it, being grieved from the heart with yourself that you cannot submit to it. This is submitting of your lot, in the favourable construction of the gospel, Rom. vii. 17—20 ; 2 Cor. viii. 12. If you had your choice, would you rather have your heart brought to submit to the crook, than the crook evened to your heart’s desire ? Rom. vii. 22, 23. And do you not sincerely endeavour to submit, notwithstanding the reluctancy of the flesh ? Gal. v. 17.

Answer 2. Where is the Christian self-denial and taking up the cross, without submitting to the crook ? This is the first lesson Christ puts in the hands of His disciples. Matt. xvi. 24 : “If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.” Self-denial would procure a reconciliation with the crook, and an admit-

tance of the cross; but while we cannot bear our corrupt self to be denied any of its cravings, and particularly that which God sees meet especially to be denied, we cannot bear the crook in our lot, but fight against it in favour of self.

Answer 3. Where is our conformity to Christ, while we cannot submit to the crook? We cannot evidence ourselves Christians without conformity to Christ. "He that saith he abideth in Him, ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked" (1 John ii. 6). There was a continued crook in Christ's lot, but He submitted to it, Phil. ii. 8: "And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Rom. xv. 3: "For even Christ pleased not Himself," &c. And so must we, if we will prove ourselves Christians indeed, Matt. xi. 29; 2 Tim. ii. 11, 12.

Answer 4. How shall we prove ourselves the genuine, kindly children of God, if still warring with the crook? We cannot pray, "Our Father, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven" (Matt. vi). Nay, the language of that practice is, "We must have our own will, and God's will cannot satisfy us."

Motive 4. The trial by the crook here will not last long, 1 Cor. vii. 29—31. What though the work be sore, it may be the better comported with, that it will not be longsome; a few days or years at farthest will put an end to it, and take you off your trials. Do not say, "I shall never be eased of it;" for if not eased before, you will be eased of it at death, come after it what will. A serious view of death and eternity might make us set ourselves to behave rightly under our crook while it lasts.

Motive 5. If you would in a Christian manner set yourselves to bear the crook, you would find it easier than you imagine. Matt. xi. 29, 30: "Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." Satan has no readier way to gain his purpose than to persuade men it is impossible that ever their minds should ply with the crook; that it is a burden to them, altogether insupportable. As long as you believe that, be sure you will never be able to bear it. But the Lord makes no crook in the lot of any but what may be borne of them acceptably, though not sinlessly and perfectly, Matt. xi. 30.

For there is strength for that effect secured in the covenant, 2 Cor. iii. 5 ; Phil. iv. 13 ; and being by faith fetched, it will certainly come, Psa. xxviii. 7.

Motive 6. If you behave Christianly under your crook here, you will not lose your labour, but get a full reward of grace in the other world through Christ, 2 Tim. ii. 12 ; 1 Cor. xv. 58. There is a blessing pronounced on him that endureth on this very ground. James i. 12 : "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation ; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him." Heaven is the place into which the approved, upon the trial of the crook, are received. Rev. vii. 14 : "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." When you come there, no vestiges of it will be remaining in your lot, nor will you have the least uneasy remembrance of it ; but it will accent your praises, and increase your joy.

Motive 7. If you do not behave Christianly under it, you will lose your souls in the other world, Jude 15, 16. Those who are at war with God in their lot here, God will have war with them for ever. . . . Therefore set yourselves to behave rightly under the crook in your lot.

If you ask what way one may reach that, for direction we propose,

PROP. III. *The considering the crook in the lot as the work of God, is a proper means to bring one to behave rightly under it.*

I. *What it is to consider the crook as the work of God.* We take it up in these five things :

First. An inquiry into the spring whence it rises, Gen. xxv. 22. *Reason and religion both teach us not only to notice the crook, which we cannot avoid, but to consider and inquire into the spring of it. Surely it is not our choice, nor do we designedly make it for ourselves ; and to ascribe it to fortune is to ascribe it to nothing ; it is not sprung of itself, but sown by one hand or another for us, Job v. 6. And we are to notice the hand from whence it comes.

Secondly. A perceiving of the hand of God in it. Whatever hand any creatures have therein, we ought not to terminate our view in them, but look above and beyond them to the supreme Manager's agency, Job i. 21. Without this we

* Reason as under the powerful control of the Spirit.—Ed.

shall make a god of the creature that is instrumental of the crook, looking on it as if it were the first cause, which is peculiar to God, Rom. xi. 36, and bring ourselves under that doom, Psa. xxviii. 5: "Because they regard not the works of the Lord nor the operations of His hands, He shall destroy them, and not build them up."

Thirdly. A representing it to ourselves as a work of God which He hath wrought against us for holy and wise ends, becoming the divine perfections. This is to take it by the right handle, to represent it to ourselves under a right notion; from whence a right management under it may spring. It can never be safe to overlook God in it, but very safe to overlook the creature; ascribing it unto God as if no other hand were in it, His being always the principal therein. "It is the Lord; let Him do what seemeth Him good" (1 Sam. iii. 18). Thus David overlooked Shimei, and looked to God in the matter of his cursing, as one fixing his eyes not on the axe, but on him that wielded it. Here two things are to come into our consideration:—

1st. The decree of God purposing that crook for us from eternity; for He "worketh all things after the counsel of His own will" (Eph. i. 11), the sealed book, in which are written all the black lines that make the crook. Whatever valleys of darkness, grief, and sorrow we are carried through, we are to look on them as made by the mountains of brass, the immovable divine purposes, Zec. vi. 1. This can be no presumption in that case, if we carry it no further than the event goes in our sight and feeling, for so far the book is opened for us to look into.

2ndly. The providence of God bringing to pass that crook for us in time, Amos iii. 6. There is nothing can befall us without Him in whom we live. Whatever kind of agency of the creatures may be in the making of our crook, whatever they have done or not done towards it, He is the spring that sets all the created wheels in motion! which ceasing, they would all stop; though He is still infinitely pure in His agency, however impure they be in theirs. Job considered both these, ch. xxiii. 14.

Fourthly. A continuing in the thought of it as such. It is not a simple glance of the eye, but a contemplating and leisurely viewing of it as His work that is the proper means. We are to be,

1st. Habitually impressed with this consideration. As the crook is some lasting grievance, so the consideration of this as the remedy should be habitually kept up. There are other considerations besides this that we must entertain, so that we cannot always have it expressly in our mind; but we must lay it down for a rooted principle, according to which we are to manage the crook, and keep the heart in a disposition whereby it may expressly slip into our minds, as occasion calls.

2ndly. We are to be occasionally exercised in it. Whenever we begin to feel the smart of the crook, we should fetch in this remedy; when the yoke begins to gall the neck, there should be an application of this spiritual ointment. And however often the former comes in on us, it will be our wisdom to fetch in the latter as the proper remedy; the oftener it is used, it will more easily come to hand, and also be the more effectual.

Fifthly. A considering it for the end for which it is proposed to us, namely, to bring us to a dutiful carriage under it. Men's corruptions will cause them to enter on the consideration of it; but as the principle is, so the end and effect of it will be corrupt, 2 Kings vi. 33. But we must enter on, and use it for a good end, if we would have good of it; taking it as a practical consideration for regulating our conduct under the crook.

II. *How it is to be understood to be a proper means to bring one to behave rightly under the crook.*

Not as if it were sufficient of itself, and as it stands alone, to produce that effect. But *as it is used in faith, in the faith of the gospel*; that is to say, a sinner's bare considering the crook in his lot as the work of God, without any saving relation to Him, will never be a way to behave himself rightly under it; but having believed in Jesus Christ, and so taking God for his God, the considering of the crook as the work of God, *his God*, is the proper means to bring him to that desirable temper and behaviour. Many hearers mistake here. When they hear such and such lawful considerations proposed for bringing them to duty, they presently imagine that by the mere force of them they may gain the point. And many preachers too, who, forgetting Christ and the gospel, pretend by the force of reason to make men Christians; the eyes of both being held, that they do not see the corruption of men's nature, which is

such as sets the true cure above the force of reason : all that they are sensible of being some ill habits, which they think may be shaken off by a vigorous application of their rational faculties. To clear this matter, consider,

First. Is it rational to think to set fallen man, with his corrupted nature, to work the same way with innocent Adam ? that is, to set beggars on a level with the rich ; lame men to a journey with those that have limbs ? Innocent Adam had a stock of gracious abilities whereby he might, by the force of moral considerations, have brought himself to perform duty aright. But where is that with us ? 2 Cor. iii. 5. Whatever force be in them to a soul endowed with spiritual life, what power have they to raise the dead, such as we are ? Eph. ii. 1.

Secondly. The Scripture is very plain on this head, showing the indispensable necessity of faith, Heb. xi. ; and that, such as unites to Christ. John xv. 5 : " Without Me," that is, separate from Me, " ye can do nothing ; " no, not with all the moral considerations ye can use. . . .

Thirdly. Do but consider what it is to behave rightly under the crook in the lot ; what humiliation of soul, self-denial, and absolute resignation to the will of God must be in it ; what love to God it must proceed from ; how regard to His glory must influence it as the chief end thereof ; and try, and see if it is not impossible for you to reach it without that faith aforementioned. I know Christians may reach it without full assurance ; but still, according to the measure of their persuasion that God is their God, so will their attainments in it be ; these keep equal pace. O what kind of hearts do they imagine themselves to have, that think they can for a moment empty them of the creature farther than they can fill them with a God as their God, in its room and stead ! No doubt men may, from the force of moral considerations, work themselves to a behaviour under the crook externally right, such as many Pagans had ; but a Christian disposition of spirit under it will never be reached without that faith in God.

Objection. " Then it is saints only that are capable of the improvement of that consideration."

Answer. Yea, indeed it is so, as to that and all other moral considerations for true Christian ends ; and that amounts to no more than that directions for walking rightly are only for the living, that have the use of their limbs. . . .

III. I shall confirm that it is a proper means to bring one to behave rightly under it. This will appear, if we consider these four things :—

1. It is of great use to divert from the considering and dwelling on those things about the crook which serve to irritate our corruption. Such are the balking of our will and wishes ; the satisfaction we should have in the matter's going according to our mind ; the instruments of the crook, how injurious they are to us, how unreasonable, how obstinate, &c. The dwelling on these considerations is but the blowing of the fire within ; but to turn our eyes to it as the work of God would be a cure by way of diversion, 2 Sam. vi. 9, 10 ; and such diversion of the thoughts is not only lawful, but expedient and necessary.

2. It has a moral aptitude for producing this good effect. Though our cure is not compassed by the mere force of reason, yet it is carried on, not by a brutal movement, but in a rational way, Eph. v. 14. This consideration has a moral efficacy on our reason ; it is fit to awe us into a submission, and ministers a deal of argument for behaving Christianly under our crook.

3. It has a divine appointment for that end, which is to be believed, Prov. iii. 6. So the text.* The creature in itself is an inefficacious and moveless thing, a mere vanity, Acts xvii. 28. That which makes anything a means fit for the end is a word of divine appointment, Matt. iv. 4. To use anything, then, for an end, without the faith of this, is to make a god of the creature ; therefore it is to be used in a dependence on God, according to that word of appointment, 1 Tim. iv. 4, 5. And everything is fit for the end for which God has appointed it. This consideration is appointed for that end, and therefore is a fit means for it.

4. The Spirit may be expected to work by it, and does work by it in them that believe and look to Him for it ; forasmuch as it is a means of His own appointment. Papists, legalists, and all superstitious persons, devise various means of sanctification, seeming to have, or really having, a moral fitness for the same ; but they are quite ineffectual, because, like Abana and Pharpar, they want a word of divine appointment for curing us of our leprosy ; therefore the Spirit works

* Eccles. vii. 13 : "Consider the work of God ; for who can make that straight which He hath made crooked ?"

not by them, since they are not His instruments, but devised of their own hearts. And since even the means of divine appointment are ineffectual without the Spirit, these can never be effectual. But this consideration having a divine appointment, the Spirit works by it.

Use. Then take this direction for your behaving rightly under the crook in your lot. *Inure yourselves to consider it as the work of God.* And for helping you to improve it, so as it may be effectual, I offer these advices:—

1. Consider it as the work of your God in Christ. This is the way to sprinkle it with gospel-grace, and so to make it tolerable, Psa. xxii. 1. The discerning of a Father's hand in the crook will take out much of the bitterness of it, and sugar the pill to you. . . .

2. Enlarge the consideration with a view of the divine relations to you, and the divine attributes. Consider its being the work of your God, the work of your Father, elder Brother, Head, Husband, &c., who, therefore, surely consults your good. Consider His holiness and justice, showing He wrongs you not; His mercy and goodness, that it is not worse; His sovereignty, that may silence you; His infinite wisdom and love, that they may satisfy you in it.

3. Consider what a work of His it is, how it is a convincing work, for bringing sin to remembrance; a correcting work, to chastise you for your follies; a preventing work, to hedge you up from courses of sin you would otherwise be apt to run into; a trying work, to discover your state, your graces, and corruptions; a weaning work, to wean you from the world, and fit you for heaven.

4. *In all your considerations of it in this manner, look upward for His Spirit to render them effectual, 1 Cor. iii. 6.* Thus may ye behave Christianly under it, till God make it even either here or in heaven.

(To be continued.)

There is no possibility of arriving at blessedness without a safe conduct, nor at glory without guidance; no infallible guidance but by the counsel of God Himself. All which the psalmist is like to have had in his eye when in his humble address to God he expresseth himself in this manner, "Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory."—*Arrowsmith.*

INQUIRY AND ANSWER.

INQUIRY.

DEAR SIR,—Will you kindly reply to the following? If you do so in the "Gospel Standard," it may be of use to some church or churches. In conversation last Sunday with two deacons, a member of the church was spoken of, with whom they said they did not feel a union of spirit. One of the deacons said that when the man came before the church as a candidate for baptism, only two members held up their hands in his favour; the rest, the majority, did not feel satisfied. The deacon said, when any number of hands are held up in favour of a candidate, the matter was carried in his favour, notwithstanding the majority were not satisfied. I said I did not think that was as it should be; as the majority should be satisfied if a person is received. I would esteem it a favour if you would reply to this.

Yours sincerely, D. C.

ANSWER.

The above Inquiry brings before us a matter of more importance than appears at first sight. The question of receiving a member in the way indicated does not cover all that is involved in the case. If it did, then a few words would suffice for an answer. But inasmuch as it appears that an important principle is involved, the examination whereof may be profitable to some of our brethren, we propose giving more consideration to the Inquiry than may at first appear necessary.

The point which first of all calls for notice is the *voting*. Our correspondent speaks of two votes only being given, by which a candidate for membership was received into the church; and afterwards he mentions "the majority" as not being satisfied, meaning those who did not vote. But for the purpose of deciding any question, the majority in favour of it means the number of votes given *for* it compared with the number of those given *against* it—not with the number of voters present. Neutrals do not count, being those who wish to be left out of the question. When the number of votes in favour of a matter exceeds half the number of voters present, it is plain that there is a majority in its favour; and in that case the votes against *need not* be asked for, though they usually are. But where the most who are

present do not vote *for* a matter, it is necessary to ask for the votes against it, in order not to count them all amongst the neutrals. The comparison must be made between the actual votes given either for or against.

In the case before us it appears that those who did not vote in favour were all counted as neutrals, but perhaps were not so. Had the noes been asked for, and only one or none been given, the two would then have been the majority, and constituted a valid election. If D. C.'s letter reveals all the facts of the voting, the church has made a mistake in admitting a member without finding out on which side the majority of votes lay. And if all, except the two persons who voted, were really neutrals, their inaction could not be justifiable, as we shall show.

But a second point now comes up. How ought a member, if received on a correct majority of a few, or only two, votes to be regarded and treated? The greater part of the church, who may not have felt satisfied with his admission, should remember that he *is* a member, and that if there is wrong in that, the responsibility lies largely at their door who were neutrals. If once a person is received into a church, he is, so long as his conduct is consistent, entitled to the privilege, the honour, the friendship of membership. By abstaining from using the power of their votes, the larger part of the church deprive themselves of the right to treat such a fellow member with suspicion, or as one who has no right in the church. It would have been perfectly consistent with a gracious, tender spirit for them to have said to him when a candidate at the church meeting, "We do not wholly reject your testimony; but we are not fully satisfied with it, and our decision is that you must wait awhile. We feel for you, and we will try with you to wait on the Lord and see if He will graciously bless you more fully and clearly, and give us the satisfaction we desire." Such a course might have a gracious effect, and lead to a blessed union. We have known several instances in which such a course has led to much good and ultimate membership. And we fail to see how the greater part of the church can be justified in so far forgetting or ignoring their position, their responsibility, as to remain silent or neutral when not satisfied in so important a matter as the experience of one whom it was proposed to receive into their number. Is it not obvious what power they place in

the hands of the few, or the two, of their fellow members who may be most godly and consistent, but to whom it does not properly belong to exercise such a dominating influence?

But under all this there appears to us a point of deeper significance—a principle which it will, by divine help and mercy, be profitable to examine. With all possible brevity we look at it.

It may help to elucidate the point if we first put a question: What is a true church? For the purpose of our answer it will suffice to say, a true church is a number of persons "called to be saints," gathered together by providence into one place, and united by mutual consent and agreement under their one only King and Lord, Jesus Christ. Such was the church at Corinth, 1 Cor. i. 2; at Rome, Rom. i. 7; and such were the seven churches which were in Asia, Rev. i. 4. The primary reason for the existence of a church is that the glory of God may come that way by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, Eph. iii. 21. But how can this be? Are not the churches composed of poor sinful creatures whose foundation is in the dust? Yes. But they are "builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph. ii. 22). They are candlesticks to show forth the praises of Him who called them out of darkness into His marvellous light. They are more to Christ than Eden was; He walks among them. The world hates Him. They are His only friends in the world, Jno. xv. 15. The world is in darkness; they are as lights in it, Phil. ii. 15. Here saints have fellowship with the Son of God, 1 Cor. i. 9. The savour of Christ is known in the church, Song i. 3; here He feasts with them, ii. 4; Pro. ix. 5. These remarks are made, and these scriptures brought forth, for the purpose of showing the real greatness of a true church, and as leading to our point. What an honour to be a true church!

Growing out of the above is the natural remark, what an important thing is membership of a true church of Christ! There are responsibilities and duties belonging to union with such a church. No church is irresponsible. Therefore every member has responsibility. Christ has given to a true church the power of discipline, Mat. xviii. 17; 1 Cor. v. 13. Into such a church trouble may come from false teachers, who may raise important questions of doctrine. If it feels unable to decide in and by itself, it has power to delegate

some of its members to carry them to others who may be led to decide, and so give relief and joy, Acts xv. 2, 31. Such a church has power to receive a brother whose knowledge and faith may be weak, Rom. xiv. These scriptures are sufficient to show the very great and grave importance of membership. And they are adduced as embodying the principle that we said at the outset appeared to be involved in the Inquiry before us. It is this, that *an obligation is laid on a true church by her Lord and Head to see that the disputes, evils, errors, and persons that shall from time to time be brought before her, shall be attended to.* If this is so, what member is absolved from his or her obligation? Therefore we conclude that no member can be exempted from this solemn responsibility attaching to membership; but let every one exercise his or her power of voting as far as enabled in the fear of the Lord.

Obituary.

SARAH ANNE HALE, died, Nov. 12th, 1910, aged 77 years.

In JAN., 1867, my dear mother joined the church at Alfred Street, Leicester, over which Mr. Hazlerigg was pastor; and he has kindly given us the following extracts from her experience as given in at that time.

She said that about nine years ago she began to feel a love to the Lord's people, and an inclination to be with them. But the first sermon which she felt to impress her mind and convince her of sin, was one by our dear pastor from Isa. xlii. 3: "A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench: He shall bring forth judgment unto truth." She was raised to hope under another from John vi. 37: "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." She heard a Mr. Forman sweetly after this, when preaching about "the blade, the ear, and the full corn in the ear." Fearing that she lacked some evidence of being right, because comfortable in respect of providential things, she asked for a temporal trouble; and the Lord laid one upon her in the sickness and death of a Mr. Sturgess, to whom she was engaged. She could at one time sweetly submit to His will in the matter; then great rebellion worked. A hymn given out at the chapel at this time was sweet to her, commencing:

“ And must it, Lord, be so ? ”

Before this she had much blessing from the words : “ Call upon Me in the day of trouble : I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me.” She went on in this kind of way, up and down, in and out, condemned and comforted, and instructed under the word for some years.

In the September previous to her joining the church, she heard Mr. Godwin from the words : “ The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God.” He spoke of being bathed in that love, and she felt that was what she wanted. After this she was much blessed, and almost every sermon was made a blessing to her, especially one from Deut. viii. 2. When witnessing the ordinance in November, she felt much stirred up to come forward as a candidate for church membership, but still hung back until after the December ordinance. Then she spoke to her mother about joining the church ; a sermon upon the words : “ Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul,” also a hymn given out by her father, greatly encouraging her in so doing. The Lord having opened her mouth, greatly owned what she had done, giving her abundant blessing ; love and peace flowing into her heart. On the day after speaking to Mr. Hazlerigg, she was so full of peace, joy, and Christ that she even lost her way in the streets of Leicester, being beside herself, but alive unto God. After this, on the following Thursday, she was crowned with blessing under a sermon from Ezek. xlvii. 5 : “ Waters to swim in,” and hymn 914 (Gadsby’s),

“ Beneath the sacred throne of God ; ”

all her past, as well as present, experience being sweetly sealed to her. It appeared to her that there was an exceeding weight of glory upon her soul ; and she also said many more sweet things.

Through the last year of her life my dear mother was confined to the house by serious illness, and passed through much trouble and suffering, which she bore with exemplary patience and submission. On the Sunday before her death, she said to me, “ I shall not die, but live ; for death will mean life to me.” During the last week of her life, she was constantly saying, “ I am *so* tired, *so* weary, and longing to go, to be with my dear Lord Jesus.” The hymn,

“ How sweet the name of Jesus sounds,”

had been very precious to her for some time. To a friend she said, "I feel such peace, and have no fear of death;" and to another, "When I awake in His likeness, I shall be satisfied with it." Her last audible words were, "I am full of the goodness of the Lord." She peacefully passed away in her sleep, on Saturday evening, Nov. 12th. ANNIE B. HALE.

Mrs. Hale was a very consistent Christian and useful member of our church. As long as her health permitted, she tried to serve the Lord, and the church for the Lord's sake. I believe she had a great regard for me as her pastor, and desired to strengthen my hands in the Lord. For many years she was a most efficient teacher in our Sunday school, her prayerful aim being to bring her scholars to the knowledge of Christ, and then to lead them to give themselves to the Lord, and to the church for the Lord's sake.

G. HAZLERIGG.

On Sept. 30th, 1910, in his 84th year, SAMUEL PACK, for sixty-one years a member of the Particular Baptist Church at Godmanchester, nearly twenty-six of which he was deacon.

Born in the village of Little Stukely, Hunts, in 1826, he lived a quiet, uneventful life; until at the age of 22 years, when alone in a field, he was powerfully convinced of sin. He left the village church, and became connected with some free-will people for a short period; but receiving nothing to satisfy him, he was led to Godmanchester. There, under the preaching of the late Mr. W. Brown, he was taught truths of which, hitherto, he had been in profound ignorance. He was baptised by the pastor, Mr. Brown, in the river Ouse, and received into the church in 1849.

Such is the bare outline of his life; but I can testify to his steady adherence to the faith once delivered to the saints; his love to God's ordinances, His house, and people; his devotion to God's holy Word; and his wrestling and labouring in prayer, when he imagined he was unobserved by human eyes. It is to the last week of his life on earth that this account is mainly devoted.

On Friday, Sept. 23rd, 1910, I asked, "Have you any doubts now you are upon the threshold of eternity?" "I have neither fears nor doubts," was his reply; "and though I do not feel the sweet presence of the Lord to the extent I should like, nor have I that unbounded joy that has been experienced by some

on their dying beds, yet I rest on the finished work of Jesus Christ, and in the faithfulness of the eternal God, who has said, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee;' and I am content to wait patiently—still

“ ‘ To lie passive in His hands,
And know no will but His.’ ”

He remarked, “What a solemn thing it is to die! Though death has no terrors for me, yet I feel it a most solemn thing to realise that I am shortly about to die.”

He said he had cause to remember the first time he entered the chapel at Godmanchester, and the text of the preacher, Mr. Brown: “The law is our schoolmaster, to bring us unto Christ;” for he then heard things that he had never heard before. He noticed that Thomas made use of an expression that he did not remember any other apostle used: “My Lord and my God;”—he did not stop at “My Lord,” but he went farther, and emphatically said, “*My God*;” therein testifying his belief in the divinity of Christ. He also spoke of the everlasting covenant, and quoted David’s words: “He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure,” &c. Again and again he asserted his confidence in the faithfulness of God. He knew that He had appeared to him on many occasions, and that He would be with him to the end; for God was not a man, that He should lie. And he concluded by saying, “The eternal God is my Refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.”

On the 25th, he referred to the fact that he had had a few blessed visits since he had been lying in bed, but not any very particular shining, but he was quite certain that at the appointed time he should behold the full glory of Christ. On the 26th, he said, “I desire to wait patiently, to lie passive in His hands, and see what is the Lord’s pleasure to do with me.—Death has no terrors for me.” “Why not?” I asked. Clearly and solemnly the answer was given: “Because I believe that Jesus Christ has made an atonement for me; because I believe He has wrought out a robe of righteousness for me; because I believe and am sure that the blood of Jesus Christ has cleansed me from all sin.” Then when all were silent, as he appeared to be sleeping, he clearly repeated,

“ He saw her rolling in her filth,
More beastly far than swine,

Her only clothing sin and guilt,
Exposed to wrath divine."
"He came to save her soul from hell,
And bring her home to God ;
Her debts and guilt upon Him fell,—
He made the payment good."

He also made comments on the first two verses of the xlth of Isaiah, and said how often they had cheered and comforted him. On the 27th, he said, "I shall soon be done with time things ; the end of all things on earth will come, must come ; and I, on my part, desire to wait quietly, patiently, and submissively till that end comes with me." And a few moments after,

"Grace all the work shall crown,
Through everlasting days ;
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."

Each day the same attitude was manifested—an unshaken, unalterable, firm, and steadfast adherence to the faith he had held during the greater part of his life ; no extraordinary happiness, but a sure and certain prospect of it. On Thursday, the 29th, he expressed himself thus : "Adam sinned, and through his transgression the world was plunged in misery ; but oh, unspeakable happiness ! another Man, even Christ Jesus, brought about a reconciliation between God and His people, by His triumph over sin and Satan, death and hell."

On Friday, his last day, a short time before his death, Mr. Oldfield again heard from his lips a dying testimony of his faith in God, and his assurance of his interest in that covenant God made with David. Then he took his last earthly and affectionate farewell of his pastor, whom he loved, and had so many times delighted to hear proclaim the gospel. In the afternoon, he appeared to be unspeakably happy, and desired me to read the xviith of John. When I had done so, he feelingly blessed God for His precious Word and the unspeakable gift of His dear Son ; and prayed that each of those around his bed might receive this inestimable favour. When I returned to his bedside, after an absence of an hour, he at once noticed me and said, "I shall wear your patience out ; but, 'till He bids, I cannot die.' You have come to see a Christian finish his course on earth, and you will not have to wait long. You will not forget this dying bed, nor some of my last words ; but I want all of you to know these things

for yourselves, and not be content to see them in another." Later he suddenly called out, "Sing Simeon's song;" and after I had read the passage commencing, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace," he asked that the connecting portions might be read to him. This was done, and his comment was, "The Lord has taught His old people more than the young, because He has had them longer in hand."

A few minutes before the end, a friend came in, and asked if he should pray. "Yes," he answered, "but the time is short; you can say all that is necessary in a few words." This the friend did; and then being left with two of his daughters, he calmly and peacefully breathed his last. For "the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever."

THOMAS PACK.

What shall a man do who cannot find or obtain an experience in himself of what is affirmed in the Word? He cannot find the death of Christ crucifying sin in him, and he cannot find the Holy Ghost sanctifying, or obtain joy in believing; what shall he then do? shall he not believe or profess those things to be so, because he cannot obtain a blessed experience of them?—I answer, our Saviour hath perfectly given direction in this case, John vii. 17: "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself." Continue in following after the things revealed in the doctrine of the gospel, and you shall have a satisfactory experience that they are true, and that they are of God. Cease not to act faith on them, and you shall find their effects; for "then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord" (Hos. vi. 3). Experience will ensue upon permanency in faith and obedience; yea, the first act of sincere believing will be accompanied with such a taste, will give the soul so much experience, as to produce a firm adherence unto the things believed. And this is the way to "prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God," which is revealed unto us. (Rom. xii. 2.)—*J. Owen, D.D.*

We never love Christ till we receive precious tokens of His love.—*Berridge.*

NOTICES OF DEATH.

CHARLES BUCKLAND, aged 81 years, of Wilford, Nottingham, died, Dec. 23rd, 1910. Amongst other things which he said during his declining days were the following: "It is the good Physician that I want for soul and body." "Blessed Lord, Thou knowest how tried I am" "It is through much tribulation we enter into the kingdom of God." "I shall not be cut off at the last." "Look upon me, a miserable sinner; keep me to the end." "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness;" and, "Into Thy hands I commit my spirit." His end was peace. Also,

JANE WATTS, aged 80, of Wilford, who passed away, Dec. 24th, 1910. She was for many years a member of the church meeting at Chaucer Street chapel, Nottingham. We believe our loss to be her eternal gain.
H. T. STONELAKE.

On Dec. 31st, 1910, KATE, the beloved wife of Thomas TAYLOR, of Rhoden, Paddock Wood, a member of the church at East Peckham for five years, passed peacefully away after a long and painful illness borne with much patience, aged 55 years. G. B.

SARAH LAWTON, of Manchester, aged 83 years, entered into rest on Jan. 18th, 1911. She was for fifty-nine years a consistent member of the church at Rochdale Road, Manchester, and her end was very peaceful. She was highly esteemed by her pastor, Mr. Gruber, and by the friends generally. Further particulars will (D.v.) follow.
A. L.

On Jan. 18th, 1911, aged 89, ELIZABETH MAYERS, of Godalming, Surrey. She was for many years a regular attendant at Bethel chapel, Guildford, with her husband, who is a member. She was a poor fearing one, and said but little, but was often melted down under the word. A few weeks before she passed away Mr. Wadey visited her, and she opened her mind to him, and he felt his spirit refreshed from what she said relative to her soul's salvation. He committed her to the grave, I believe to be raised again at the last day unto everlasting life.
RD. SHILLINGFORD.

MARY BROWN, died, Jan. 20th, 1911, aged 92 years. She was the oldest member at Ebenezer Particular Baptist chapel, Churchill Street, Oldham. A few days before she died she said to a friend, "What am I waiting for?" and she answered, "I am waiting till my Saviour comes to take me to Himself." Also,

Miss NEWTON, died on the 27th of Jan., 1911, aged 83 years. She had been a member of the same church for 27 years. One morning, not long before she died, she said these words had been upon her mind with some degree of sweetness during the night:

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

DAVID MAYN.

Died on Feb. 1st, 1911, MARY REBEKAH, the beloved wife of Timothy SAWYER, Cholsey, Berks. She was a consistent member of South Moreton Strict Baptist church for thirty-four years, and was a great lover of the Lord's people and servants, and much beloved by all who knew her. Further particulars will follow (D.v.)
T. SAWYER.

THE GOSPEL STANDARD.

JUNE, 1911.

MATT. v. 6; 2 TIM. i. 9; ROM. xi. 7; ACTS viii. 37, 38; MATT. xxviii. 19.

FILLED FROM CHRIST'S FULNESS.

A SERMON PREACHED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE "GOSPEL STANDARD" AID AND POOR RELIEF SOCIETIES, AT GOWER STREET CHAPEL, LONDON, ON FRIDAY EVENING, APRIL 7TH, 1911, BY
MR. J. K. POPHAM.

"And ye are complete in Him."—COL. ii. 10.

THE awful effect of the Fall, when felt by the teaching of the Spirit, fills the soul with alarm, for there is an entrance into the truth of our complete ruin. Now, as to our legal ruin and corruption of nature, they are so complete there can be no addition to them. While we live there will be enormous additions of sins by our acts; and if we die unpardoned, there will be an inconceivable addition of misery and punishment; but there can be no addition to the Fall—that in itself is complete. And it were easy for one to show from Scripture how entirely corrupt our nature is, and how sin has power and dominion over every faculty of man. There is a completeness here; we are filled up with sin and corruption by the Fall. "The imagination of man's heart is only evil continually" (Gen. vi. 5); his understanding is darkened, blinded. And there was no necessity in the sad case, considered in itself, why it should ever be altered. What God owes to a sinner is just what His law contains, namely, a curse; what justice owes to a sinner is nothing but punishment. If, therefore, there should be an alteration in the case of any individual sinner, if it should ever be that any sinner should have his condition before God and his relationship to Him altered, that must arise *in*, and be effected *by*, God Himself. And such is the case, as we read, "According to the good pleasure of His will," &c. (Eph. i. 4—6). What we owe to infinite love we shall never fully know. Eternity will not be too long,

nor, if one may so speak, long enough to explore Infinitude, as it will let itself out in acts of free love to the church, to individual persons, chosen and redeemed by Jesus Christ. If the Lord give us fully to lay hold of this as a divine truth, it will lead us to put the crown on the right head (Rev. xix. 12), it will lead us to hate the thought of any creature sharing for a moment the honour of salvation with God the Saviour. And all this love of God, whereby He has made a great, a radical, an everlasting change in the relationship of myriads to Himself, in their condition respecting the law, in their meetness for eternity, He has been pleased to reveal in the Person of His beloved Son. Hence from the very beginning, from the first manifestation of God in corrupted Eden to the very last, when the church shall be caught up to be for ever with her Lord, her Redeemer, you find the Scriptures are full of that Person's name, and honour, and greatness, and glory. The Holy Spirit has, so to speak, taken great pains that there shall be in the Scriptures no rival to Jesus Christ; that He shall stand without a peer, that He shall be the only One trusted in, the only One regarded in respect of salvation.

The church is, therefore, as in Christ her Head and Representative, "*filled up*," as the word "complete" signifies, wanting nothing. Whatever is necessary to alter our relationship to God, to effect a change in our hearts, to fill our understandings with light, to flood our souls with life, to put happiness into the very being of those who deserve only endless misery—it is all in Christ, and His people are filled up with and from Him: "Ye are complete in Him." This, when known, takes all the strength out of a working arm, and all the boasting from a knowing mind. It makes the sinner willing to go where the Spirit leads him; his eyes are upon Him who alone has beauty worth looking at; he catches the fragrance of Him who alone has heavenly fragrance; and this makes Christ what the Scriptures say of Him, "the Chiefest among ten thousand," and "altogether lovely."

I should like, as the Lord may help me, to beat out this truth in several particulars relating to our necessities. Our necessities are very great, very painful and dreadful; only God could meet them.

I. We need a *righteousness* that shall answer to the law's demands, that shall meet with God's approval; a righteousness that shall be as perfect as the commandment, as pure

and holy as God's holy, penetrating gaze calls for. A sight of this fact, when there is heavenly light in the face of Jesus Christ shining on the understanding, brings a sinner into the dust, saying, "Behold, I am vile." No one fully knows the evil of sin by looking merely at his breaches of the law. He may realise somewhat of his danger, of his exposedness to punishment in that way; but he cannot realise the malignancy of sin. But by seeing God as He may discover Himself, either in the law or in the gospel, the sinner sees the evil of sin.

And now what a wonder, is it not, that there should be a Man, who also is God, who by His active obedience and passive death should procure, possess, and have to give and impute a righteousness that answers in all particulars to the requirements of one who is predestinated to go to heaven? Heaven and an unrighteous person could not agree, a holy God and a creature clothed with filthy garments could not be friends. A sinner could never alter his own condition. But God says to the Son, "Thou shalt be My salvation unto the end of the earth;" and the Son replies, "Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of Me), I delight to do Thy will, O My God; yea, Thy law is within My heart." The will of God was that His beloved Son should suffer in their nature the penalty of the people whom He represented. When God comes to the sinner under the law, and commands him, as He justly does, to be conformed in his nature, his thoughts, as well as his open acts, to the law, wanting nothing, what can the sinner say? But when God comes to His Son who represents such a sinner, He receives on his behalf all the law can demand; Christ answers all its requirements for everyone that believeth. When the Spirit reveals this to a condemned sinner, he receives and embraces Christ as *his Righteousness*; and then experimentally there is a filling up with righteousness imputed, the sinner being made completely righteous in Him.

II. There is, secondly, a being filled with Christ's completeness in respect of *holiness*. Saintship is a Bible doctrine, but who can be a saint? If there is to be a saint on earth, God must make him. How will He do this? By putting the Holy Spirit and the holy life of Christ into the heart of a sinner, that he may be renewed more and more in the likeness of Christ, while sin yet remains in him. By this we are

separated *actually* from our old state of pollution, as we were *eternally* in the sight of God, and have in measure that likeness to Christ in holiness which the Father must approve.

But there is, further, a *complete* holiness which we may experience in this life. Christ has holiness enough to sanctify us all; and at special seasons He fills His people with it by faith in *Himself as their Sanctification*, giving them by faith His own beauty of holiness for ashes; which causes the oil of joy to take the place of mourning (1 Cor. i. 30). "The Father loveth the Son," for the Son doeth always those things which please Him. And the Father loves all who, loathing themselves, stand by faith in His Son's holiness. Not one of the saints shall ever say that they removed by their own hands one single stain of sin's pollution, but that the whole of their sanctification they owe to Him who is made unto them Righteousness and Sanctification. So *by faith* they are completely delivered from the bondage of sin (Rom. vi. 6, 11, 14), and are filled full with Christ as their Holiness.

As I apprehend it, these two things are required to fit a person for God's friendship, and fellowship with Him—*righteousness and holiness*; righteousness, a conformity to God's revealed will; holiness, a conformity to His nature. These two requirements are laid up in the Person of Christ, their fountain and fulness; and being imputed to a sinner, and embraced by faith, entitle him to friendship and fellowship with God. Think of perfect conformity to God's pure will and nature—what it means. It requires that there shall be *no sin, no idolatry, no self-love*; God first, thy neighbour equal with thyself. All that is in Christ. Now when you look inside under the Spirit's teaching, what do you see, what do you feel? You realise you are not fit to look upon Him, not fit to think upon His name, nor to have it on your lips. But when the Holy Spirit is pleased to take of the things of Christ and show them to you, so afflicted as you are, you see that there is in the beloved Lord Jesus Christ all righteousness and all holiness laid up for sinners, and that you are "complete in Him." And so God

"Permits a vile worm of the dust
With Him to commune as a Friend;
To hope His salvation as just,
And look for His love to the end."

III. In the next place, the church is filled with *eternal life* in Jesus Christ; and as a consequence death shall never overtake her. Poor sinful worms receive this eternal life: "I give unto My sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish." Life is a powerful thing; it always manifests its own nature. If you apply this to spiritual life, you may by the help of God come at times to some conclusion about your own state. A religious life I assume most of us have. The nature of that life will be made manifest by our conduct; and when I say conduct, I do not mean only, nor principally, external conduct, but the desires, aims, wishes, motions of the heart. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature," and will act according to his new constitution and nature. It is as natural for the life Christ gives to His people to show itself in their acts, breathings, love, and longings for God as for the body to hunger, sleep, or walk. The person who is one day to be filled with the life of Christ, and now has it begun in his soul, will want, and wanting, will seek the Lord for himself. His cry will be, "Oh, when wilt Thou come unto me?" "Saw ye Him whom my soul loveth?" This holy life is acceptable to God; hence "the desire of the righteous" is said to be "only good." Being righteous in its nature, it must issue in righteous desires. The prayers of the saints are acceptable to God, because they come from the same blessed source, divine life, which is guided only by the Spirit. The people who have it too often feel empty of it. Sin has a baneful prevalence in their hearts sometimes; a grievous deadness creeps over their spirits, an untowardness in prayer, an aversion to a life of faith and dependence upon God. Nor are they able to raise themselves into activity in prayer. When they would do good, they find

"Foul envy lurk,
And lust and work
Engendering sin"

in their thoughts. But blessed be God, there is an outpouring, at times, of this life of Christ.

"He to the feeble and the faint
His mighty aid makes known;
And when their languid life is spent,
Supplies it with His own."

But here we must mark the same distinction as before, with respect to righteousness and holiness. We can never, while

here, be said actually to be "filled up" of life, because we have a body of sin and death. Yet since we are in Christ the Son of God and He is "our Life," we have the life of sons by adoption; for "God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son" into our hearts, "crying, Abba, Father" (Gal. iv. 6). Therefore we are "complete in Him" as to our life; and so the church is "the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." And all the glory of this full supply He shall have—they all wish it to be so. The glory of their righteousness they ascribe to Him, for He is their Righteousness, whereby they are made righteous. The glory of their holiness they give to Him; for He is their Holiness, and they are "accepted in the Beloved." The glory of their adoption is His, for from His Sonship theirs comes to them; and all their motions as sons they derive from their union with Him by faith. (Gal. ii. 20; iii. 26.) We have, therefore, no *real* need to be afraid of death, if we possess life. On the contrary, we have real reason to believe we shall live with God for ever and ever. If He has poured out of His life into our souls, although we often feel we have need enough to be afraid, because of prevailing death, yet we may believe He will keep us to the end, and supply our languishing life with new supplies from time to time.

IV. In the next place, "ye are complete in Him" with respect to *liberty*. Christ has made His people free from the bondage of the law as well as of sin, and this freedom begins to be known in several particulars.

First, it is known very sweetly and powerfully sometimes in free, humble *approaches to God*. What a privilege it is to pray! what a mercy to get near to God who hears prayer! to have a heart to pour out before Him all your case, to express your wishes, to confess your sins, to make known your woes, and to lay hold of His strength, believing that you shall have the things you desire of Him! But who gives us this liberty? Look at naked justice which we have outraged; it stands in the way. Look at infinite holiness, contrary to which we are; it stands in the way. Look at the law which we have broken; it stands as a barrier. God's character, His threatenings, His faithfulness to His threatenings, everything stands in the way and says, "No approach; God is holy, He is glorious; do not bring strange fire." As a sinner apprehends such a bar as this, whatever his wants may be, he says, "I may not pray;" and the enemy says, "If you do, you will offend infinite

Majesty." But when the good Spirit of Christ comes in, He effects a mighty and surprising change; not by bettering the old nature the sinner is plagued with; not by telling him he is making too much of his afflictions, too much of his sinfulness (no, the Spirit never contradicts conviction); but He turns the eyes of the sinner to Jesus and His blood, and gives him "boldness," that is, liberty "to enter into the holiest by a new and living way," which Christ has "consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, His flesh" (Heb. x. 19, 20). The Spirit gives a firm persuasion that God has opened this way for sinners, that He lays no tax, levies no toll, puts no bar in this new, this divinely cast-up way. Then the sinner is free, and goes to God with large petitions; he goes for righteousness and pardon, and all needed good for the way (Psa. xliii. 3, 4), and has a lively hope of success.

Again. The light of truth shining into the heart of a sinner, showing him some of the perfections of Christ as a Saviour, a Mediator, has the same gracious, sweet, and wonderful effect—it gives boldness. "For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. ii. 5). And this liberty to pray runs into everything that affects the life of a child of God. He has not courage to go even for bread as he realises himself to be a sinner, but he *has* courage, is filled with holy boldness, to go for heaven when he views by faith a revealed Christ as Mediator. Neither unbelief nor Satan can prevail against this heavenly courage, for it is wrought by the powerful inshining of Christ as the Way to God: hence the strong cries, the unutterable groans, spoken of by the apostle Paul, Rom. viii. 26, 27: "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities," &c.; also the prevailing plea used in Psa. lxxxiv. 9: "Behold, O God our Shield, and look upon the face of Thine Anointed." He has courage then to ask for "daily bread," for strength to overcome the devil, for holiness, for wisdom, for all he needs here, and for eternal glory. This "door of faith," once opened, is never shut again to the sinner, and at every fresh renewing he will make use of it.

Still in all this, Christ not being yet fully revealed as the sinner's own portion, the liberty is not full. That is, the claims of the law will again be *justly* felt in the conscience in some degree; although its hold may be greatly weakened, and almost ready to vanish away (Heb. viii. 13).

But there is *complete* freedom to be had in this life from the bondage of the law. "If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, ye shall be *free indeed*" (Jno. viii. 36). The law by nature is represented as our husband, and we cannot be freed from it but by its becoming dead to us. How that is done the apostle Paul shows in Rom. vii. 4—6: "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law *by the body of Christ*"—by His whole obedience and atoning work in that body,—“that ye should be married to Another, even to Him that is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.” When this perfect satisfaction of Christ is revealed as our own portion, we are immediately married to Him, and made experimentally *one* with Him—“that being dead wherein we were held.” From that blessed time we are on a new standing—of grace, not of works—where the law has nevermore any *just* claim upon us. Then we realise what Paul prayed for, “That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith;” and what Christ said, “Ye in Me, and I in you” (Jno. xiv. 20). Nothing short of being thus experimentally *in* and *one* with the Son will make us “free indeed” from the law of sin and death. (Rom. viii. 2.)

May the Lord help us to use aright this liberty which we have in Christ, to stand fast in it, and not be “entangled again with the yoke of bondage” (Gal. v. 1). He says, “Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” “I will in no wise cast out” him that cometh to Me. “Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me.” Looking on His people in their trembling weakness, He says, “I will help thee.” As they are seen at times staggering at the promises through unbelief, He says, “My faithfulness reacheth unto the heavens.” As they are afraid He will put them away because of their many provocations, He says that “He hateth putting away.” Therefore may He help us to hold and use this liberty, to use what Christ is and has done *for us*, when we are sickened and weakened by a sight and sense of what we are. May we remember that in Him we have full liberty, or boldness, to draw near, not being staggered at a sight and sense of our sin. For by His death He has blotted out as a thick cloud our transgressions, and as a cloud our sins (Isa. xlv. 32).

“Ye are complete in Him.” In this chapter the apostle

Paul exhorts the saints against all that would come in the place of Christ. He says, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy"—that wisdom that nature loves. "Let no man beguile you, as some Judaising teachers did the Galatians. Cleave close to Christ crucified. You need no additions of philosophy"—which in this case answers to what Paul calls in another place, "Science falsely so called." "*There is no empty corner in your nature which you should fill with that.* You are to be filled with Christ's fulness. All He is in your nature is put down to your account. All He did in your law place is imputed to you. Beware lest any one come to teach you what would turn you aside from the simplicity of Christ" (2 Cor. xi. 2—4). Beware of all such teachings; for they are always tainted with 'vain deceit,' 'after the traditions of men,' contradicting the inspired Scriptures;" traditions handed down from generation to generation—that vain man can help himself in respect of vital religion; that it is best for him to follow the way of natural wisdom, &c. "Beware," says the apostle, "of all these things, for the great reason that they are against Christ, in whom ye are complete; that they will turn you aside from the simplicity which is in Christ, and so bring you under the solemn word addressed to another church, 'O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?'" &c. Gal. iii. 1—4. It is a great mercy to have some spiritual apprehension and experience of these things.

IV. Fourthly, there is a completeness *to be entered upon*. That is to say, this completeness is to be completely known, fully apprehended and enjoyed. In this our short life it is here a little and there a little; to-day blessed, to-morrow tried—tried by sin, plagued by the devil, afflicted in providence. While here below we get but streams, and sweet, sweet inklings of the fragrance of Christ, to revive the fainting soul and strengthen the drooping hope. New visits and sweet manifestations are given to confirm faith. But all these are like drops, little rivulets, brooks which run for a time, and then dry up through our sins, Psa. lxxxi. 13, 14, 16. Then unbelief says, and Satan comes along with it, "There is no help for you in God." But the enemy is not permitted to prevail long at that sad business; for when you get a new

inshining, a new sense of mercy, you say, "Begone, unbelief. Satan is a liar, a murderer from the beginning. There is a God, and I know Him." How good it is to be able to say both these things! "There is a God"—yes, there is, whether we know it or not; but it is good to be able to affirm both His being and our knowledge of Him.

Ere long, as we hope, some of us will have a complete experience of this completeness in Christ. We shall be filled with what shall fill the church of Christ. "The Lamb that 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." Oh what a repletion there will be, but no cloying! there will be no weariness of the flesh there to hinder the enjoyment of what will fill the whole being.

It will be wonderful to see the Lord without the veil of the flesh between; and wonderful when the body is redeemed from the grave a spiritual body, and fitted to behold Him. It is wonderful to get a sight of Him here, is it not? You may some of you know more of that than I do. But I know this, that the sight of Him has caught my whole soul and held me fast, and made me say, "I want no creature." "Ye are complete in Him." May we, in God's gracious, His own appointed time, enter into rest, into an uninterrupted and eternal enjoyment of this great matter—the wonderful completeness there is in Jesus Christ for His people. Amen.

A MONUMENT OF MERCY.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF THOMAS RUSSELL, MINISTER OF THE
GOSPEL, ROTHERFIELD, SUSSEX.

It is with a desire to make mention of the loving-kindnesses of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed upon me, that I send forth this relation of the gracious dealings and great goodness of the Lord of Israel, as manifested towards me a fallen sinner, who was "born like a wild ass's colt" (Job xi. 12); and in that state ran the downward course to destruction.

My parents being ignorant of God, and of themselves as poor lost sinners, I never heard such things mentioned, neither at home nor in the world. My father attended the

Established Church, and as soon as I was old enough, I was made to attend too, and was always told that that was the right place to go to worship God; so that almost from my infancy I imbibed in my mind an animosity against those that dissented from her pale; for I thought none knew the way to heaven but the clergy. Oh what loving-kindness, kind compassion, and longsuffering mercy did the Lord manifest towards me when an enemy and rebellious sinner against Him! Many are cut off in their sins, but I was spared to find mercy; not because I was better than my fellow sinners, but because the Lord will have mercy upon whom He will have mercy.

Being at home one day alone, I was walking across the room, when a strange feeling seized me. My sins in a moment were brought to my view, and a heavy weight of guilt seized my conscience. My mind was filled with terror through the anger of a holy God, who I thought in strict justice was about to cut me down as a cumberer of the ground, and send me to everlasting perdition. My knees smote together, my heart quaked with fear, and I thought the cold shivers of death were upon me, and I was sinking into endless woe. The agony of my mind I never can describe. I saw God with the eye of my soul as a consuming fire, and it seemed as if He would consume me with the breath of His mouth, and that by a blow of His hand I should be consumed for ever (Psa. xxxix. 10). I had never before been the subject of such feelings, neither had my sins ever risen up to my view in such a light before, nor my conscience been so heavy laden with a sense of guilt and condemnation; neither did I ever before have such a view of the holiness and strict justice of the terrible majesty of a sin-avenging God, which like a flash of lightning darted into my soul. His word made my heart tremble: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God" (Psa. ix. 17). Truly I was now brought to the light, and my deeds were made manifest to be deeds of darkness. I saw my sins in the light of the Lord's countenance to be exceeding sinful. The Lord appeared as a swift witness against me (Mal. iii. 5); His word entered my soul as "quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow," and "a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. iv. 12).

Under these feelings I knew not how to contain myself, neither could I any longer refrain from bowing my knees before the Lord of heaven and earth, to supplicate His gracious Majesty to have mercy upon me. In the agony of my mind I proceeded to my bedroom for that purpose, and fell down by the bedside upon my knees, my heart ready to break with grief, and my eyes filled with tears. My prayer was made up in a few words, for in the anguish of my soul I groaned out, "Lord, do have mercy upon me!" I wept and cried till my strength was nearly exhausted; and all I could say was, "Lord, do have mercy!" This was the first real prayer that I offered up to the Almighty, and truly it might have been said of me at that time, "Behold, he prayeth." Necessity drove me upon my knees, and having a sight of the perilous situation I was in, made me cry aloud for mercy; but mercy seemed to be far away, and the heavens appeared to gather blackness over me, while a dreadful suspense agitated my mind what the result of this would be; "for destruction from God was a terror to me, and by reason of His highness I could not endure" (Job xxxi. 23). By terrible things in righteousness I expected God would answer me. The arrows of God had entered my soul, and the terrors of God did set themselves in array against me. My heart meditated terror, and thought destruction would swallow me up; for while I suffered the terrors of the Lord I was distracted (Psa. lxxxviii. 15).

For about an hour my feelings were indescribable, when the terror abated a little, and the agony of my mind somewhat subsided; but my trouble was not gone. I now began to think what I must do to please God, in order to gain His favour; for I was entirely ignorant of the way of salvation, and knew nothing about religion, neither false nor true; therefore I thought my prayers must be such as were made ready by other men. I vainly thought that if I repeated such prayers upon my knees, and broke off my evil deeds by self-righteousness, and became a constant reader of my Bible, I should find peace; little thinking the Lord would say, "Who hath required this at your hand?" (Isa. i. 12). Accordingly I set to work in real earnest. The terrors of the Lord drove me from my worldly companions, so that I was compelled to leave them; but how I was to pray so that God would hear I knew not. I began to search the few books my

father had, hoping to find some suitable prayers; when I found that he was in possession of "The Whole Duty of Man;" which I thought was a precious book. This, with Fleetwood's "Life of Christ," that had at the end of it, as I thought then, some beautiful prayers, then became my prayer-books; and often in the day would I retire to my bedroom with them, and upon my knees would I repeat the prayers over and over again; and sometimes with tears would repeat them, which I thought was a good sign of repentance. Here I often spent a long time upon my knees; but repeating these prayers brought no relief to my soul, for I have often come out of my room full of trouble, groaning in the bitterness of my complaint, "Lord, help me! Oh that I knew how to pray! It is because I know not how to pray that the Lord will not hear me." I now began to read my Bible, hoping to get relief; but there judgments seemed to take hold of me, and all the curses of God against the wicked I thought applied to me. I read till it became a Book of condemnation instead of comfort; for I was ready to conclude that I was too bad for any of the precious promises to belong to me. The threatenings of God took hold of me, and I thought the punishment of the wicked in endless woe would be my lot. Often I felt as if the pains of hell had got hold of me; so that trouble and heaviness came upon me, which caused me to call upon the name of the Lord. The trouble of my mind increased my bodily affliction, for I got worse instead of better; and now I quite expected it would soon terminate in death; so that every pain that I felt I concluded brought me near my end. I went to a physician for advice, but in vain; they all failed, though I tried six different doctors.

I now would seldom venture abroad by day or night, but shut myself up, hoping to get peace. I cried and wept great part of my time, and when night approached, would walk the room wringing my hands, and in the agony of my mind crying out, "What shall I do? where shall I go? Oh thou monster, death! how can I meet thee? Oh that I had never been born! Oh that I had no soul, so that at death I might be annihilated like the beasts! but my soul must be lost for ever—for ever dying, but never to die. Lord, save me! Lord, have mercy upon me!" The thoughts of a never-ending eternity seemed to rack my soul, while the word, "It

is appointed unto all men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. ix. 27), would strike me through with terror; for "how," thought I, "can I meet my Judge, who am condemned already? How can I hear the sentence, 'Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels?'" At times my trouble would seem almost gone; and then I was afraid it would go altogether, and I should not find peace.

I now found, by reading the Word of God, that there were some that had the presumption to call God their Father, whom the Saviour told were of their father the devil, and his works they would do. I found also that the apostle Paul said that those that received the Spirit of adoption were enabled to cry, "Abba, Father" (Gal. iv. 6). Now, I thought, I had done nothing all my life but the works of the devil, and had not received the Spirit of God; therefore I was afraid I was a child of the wicked one, as Cain, who slew his brother. This put a stop to my calling upon God as my Father. I now began to find fault with my prayers and books, for at the end of many of the prayers was what is called the Lord's Prayer, and this I durst not say. This led me to examine the prayers, to see what was in them; and much of the language I was obliged to alter to suit my feelings; for I durst not say it for fear of presumption. I read, "The Whole Duty of Man," and strove to fulfil the tasks that it set me, but strove in vain; for I found it impossible for me to do what that bade me. One prayer after another I was obliged to leave off repeating, till I could not find a prayer suitable to my case; and in reading the Saviour's words to the Pharisees, "In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt. xv. 9), I was convinced that a form of prayer was no good, and therefore was forced to throw aside my prayer books. The more I went to church, the more I was confounded concerning my salvation; till at times I was driven to my wits' end, wandering in a wilderness, in a solitary way, hungry and thirsty, and found no city to dwell in.

In this condition I knew not what to do; but at last necessity drove me to God again in prayer, when I felt a little softness of heart, and a little opening at the throne of grace to tell the Lord my troubles; which caused me to feel some budding of hope that peradventure I might find mercy.

This encouraged me to call upon God continually. At this time my parents had been to Cranbrook several times to hear a man that preached the doctrines of truth, and a friend that heard him called upon me and persuaded me to go; for he thought he would tell me something for my good. This was what I wanted to know; therefore when Sunday came, I went to hear him for the first time. I heard the words of truth, which seemed a strange doctrine to me. I heard nothing for my comfort, but came home again miserable, though I was wonderfully taken with the preacher. Tired and miserable, I reached home, and went to bed, lamenting over my condition both temporally and spiritually, wondering where the scene would end, concluding the little hope that I had felt when upon my knees was wrong altogether; but the encouragement that I had felt kept me still calling upon the Lord, and searching the Word of God, hoping to find comfort, though I often met with something in the Word that wounded and distressed me sorely; for I often read my own condemnation.

As I was perusing the Word of God at one time, I came to these precious words: "Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord" (Psa. xxvii. 14). My eyes saw the words, but the power of God accompanied them home to my bosom, which produced humility of soul, and brokenness of heart. It was a word that I found to my comfort; for from the blessed effects that it produced I felt sure it was spoken to me; and although I was in the midst of trouble and distress, and often concluded that it was in vain for me to seek for comfort, the words, "Wait on the Lord," raised a hope within me, and led me to believe "the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry" (Hab. ii. 3). It caused me to hope that the time would come when I should know the Lord. The precious promise brought courage, energy, and zeal into my soul to continue calling upon God, for the words were "sweet unto my taste, yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth" (Psa. cxix. 103). Yea, I found the words, and I did eat them, and it was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart; and though it was but a little help, I thought it a great deal; for it was a word fitly spoken. I had never received such a sweet token for good

before. Through this I was encouraged to watch at wisdom's gates, waiting daily at the post of her doors; and for a little while I was kept supported with the consolation spoken of in the promise, for the word had a blessed effect to strengthen my feeble heart.

But I soon lost the little comfort that I had, and my spiritual pangs, or the trouble of my mind, came on again apace. My little hope seemed swept from me, and removed like a tree when it is cut down at a stroke; fears and doubts began to spread a gloom over my sky, and the enemy came in like a flood, with a temptation that the words that I had lately found a little comfort from did not belong to me, neither did my comfort come from the Lord; for He had cast me off, never to have mercy upon one so vile. This wounded me sorely, and brought me again upon the borders of despair; so that I felt sinking in the horrible pit, and could but cry, "Let not the pit shut her mouth upon me." Oh, how I vowed again that if the Lord would spare me I would strive and be better for the future! I thought I would pray more, read more, and set a stricter watch over my words, ways, and actions. This I set about with double diligence, expecting to perform my vows, but in vain; for though, as I thought, I kept the outside clean for a little while, my vows were soon broken, and the wall that I had daubed with untempered mortar came tumbling about my ears, and I felt ready to be consumed with terrors. The rough wind of God's wrath revealed in a broken law did rend it, and I thought in His fury He would consume me, as the prophet saith: "Therefore thus saith the Lord God: I will even rend it with a stormy wind in My fury, and there shall be an overflowing shower in Mine anger, and great hailstones in My fury to consume it. So will I break down the wall that ye have daubed with untempered mortar, and bring it down to the ground, so that the foundation thereof shall be discovered, and it shall fall, and ye shall be consumed in the midst thereof: and ye shall know that I am the Lord" (Ezek. xiii. 13, 14). Again I was stripped and made bare before a holy God, which caused me much sorrow of heart, and made me cry aloud for mercy.

But now a fresh temptation set upon me, that my trouble could not be of the right sort—that is, not the spiritual trouble of a child of God; and to prove it, this scripture was

brought in: "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death" (2 Cor. vii. 10). Here I was brought to a stand again, as I could not see that my sorrow was a godly sorrow, for that worketh repentance to salvation, and I seemed to be far off from such a repentance. For though, when I was first convinced, I did continually weep and cry, I now seemed to have grown hard, so that I could not shed a tear; which caused me to think that I was left to hardness of heart, and given up to an impenitent spirit. I had read that a broken heart and a contrite spirit was a sacrifice that God would not despise. The enemy suggested I had not that, neither was my sorrow of the kind that worketh repentance to salvation, but the sorrow that worketh death; which I was ready to conclude was quite right, for I felt as if my trouble worked death and condemnation in me, instead of life and peace; and therefore I often concluded my sorrow was of that sort which needed to be repented of. "Oh," I thought, "what would I give to know if mine was a right sorrow?" "But, alas!" said the enemy, "it is not; for if it was, the Lord would have manifested salvation to you before this." At times I knew not how to answer any one; I was so bewildered and confused through this temptation that I went mourning all the day long through the oppression of the enemy; fearfulness and trembling came upon me, and horror overwhelmed me; and in this whirlpool I often thought I should sink to rise no more.

Still at times I would hope it was a godly sorrow that would lead to salvation; and for this reason would I hope, because sometimes the Lord would favour me with a little access to Him at a throne of grace, and grant me a little brokenness of heart at His dear feet, which would cause me to bless His precious name for His goodness towards me in not cutting me off and sending me to eternal perdition; though I knew not what He was about to do with me.

(To be continued.)

How doth it rejoice one to find another of his mind in a controversy; but that God and we should be of one mind, and concur in the desire of the same things—not two in the earth only agree, Matt. xviii. 19, but God who is in heaven and we to agree—this rejoiceth the heart exceedingly.—*Goodwin.*

A GOODLY HERITAGE.

PSALM XVI. 6.

My soul, when thou art moved with cares,
 Make thou thy calm retreat
 Where Love, though thou art sad, prepares
 Firm footing for thy feet.

His Word thy heritage declares ;
 Thy privilege discern ;
 And in the tempest of thy cares,
 To thy true comfort turn.

Not on the waters, as the dove,
 Canst thou thy comforts reach ;
 But in the gardens of His love
 He thee to rest will teach.

His great Decrees thy love shall win—
 How fair the flowers around !
 May'st thou—though comforts flee—within
 This garden fair be found.

His sovereign Purposes, all light
 With hues from heaven strewn,
 With love adorn'd, with comfort bright—
 Behold them all thine own.

Far-spreading garden ! all declared
 To be thy place of rest,
 With paths of peace by Him prepared,
 With flowers immortal drest.

His Love : there lies thy lot, and there
 Yet two rich regions see—
 His Power and Wisdom : these prepare
 A triple rest for thee.

In this three-bosomed garden wind
 The paths of Love divine,
 With sweets amazing intertwined—
 And comforts which are thine.

His Care, His Presence, Teaching, Choice,
 These gardens four unite,
 Wherein thy Father doth rejoice
 To give thee peace and light.

Here is thy lot, and—fair presage!—
 May here thy walks abound ;
 If this thy present heritage,
 In heaven thou wilt be found.

Say, then, hath not rich favour reign'd,
 Which made this lot thine own ?
 Lord, grant me faith, though sorrow-train'd,
 To make it better known !

Crowborough.

E. LITTLETON, JUN.

CRUMBS FROM THE MASTER'S TABLE

FROM BOSTON'S "CROOK IN THE LOT," OR, "THE SOVEREIGNTY AND WISDOM OF GOD IN THE AFFLICTIONS OF MEN DISPLAYED."

(Continued from page 234.)

"Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud" (Prov. xvi. 19).

COULD men once be brought to believe that it is better to have their minds bend to the crook in their lot than to force the crook to their mind, they would be in a fair way to bring their matters to a good account. Hear, then, the divine decision in that case: "Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud." In which words,

First. There is a comparison instituted; and that between two parties, and two points wherein they vastly differ.

1st. The parties are the *lowly* and the *proud*, who differ like heaven and earth: the proud are climbing up and soaring aloft; the lowly are content to creep on the ground, if that is the will of God. Let us view them more particularly as the text represents them.

On the one hand is the *lowly*. Here there is a line-reading and a marginal, both from the Holy Spirit, and they differ only in a letter. The former is the afflicted or poor that are low in their condition; those that have a notable crook in their lot through affliction laid on them, whereby their condition is lowered in the world. The other is the lowly or meek, humble ones, who are low in their spirits as well as their condition, and so have their minds brought down to their lot. Both together making the character of this lowly party.

On the other hand is the *proud*; the gay and high-minded ones. It is supposed here that they are crossed too, and have crooks in their lot; for dividing the spoil is the consequent of a victory, and a victory presupposes a battle.

2nd. The points wherein these parties are supposed to differ, viz. *being of a humble spirit and dividing the spoil*.

Afflicted and lowly ones may sometimes get their condition changed, may be raised up on high, and divide the spoil; as Hannah, Job, &c. The proud may sometimes be thrown down and crushed, as Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, &c. But that is not the question—whether it is better to be raised up with the lowly, or thrown down with the proud. There would be no difficulty in determining that. But the question is,—whether it is better to be of a low and humble spirit in low circumstances, with afflicted, humble ones; or to divide the spoil and get one's will, with the proud? If men would speak the native sentiments of their hearts, that question would be determined in a contradiction to the text. The points, then, here compared and set one against another, are these:

First. On the one hand, *to be of a humble spirit with afflicted, lowly ones*. (Heb.) To be low of spirit; for the word primarily denotes lowness in situation or state: so the point here proposed is, to be with, or in the state of, afflicted, lowly ones, having the spirit brought down to that low lot; the lowness of the spirit balancing the lowness of one's condition.

On the other hand, *to divide the spoil with the proud*. The point here proposed is, to be with or in the state of the proud, having their lot by main force brought to their mind; as those who, taking themselves to be injured, fight it out with the enemy, overcome and divide the spoil according to their will.

Secondly. The decision made, wherein the former is preferred to the latter; "*Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud.*" If these two parties were set before us, it were better to take our lot with those of a low condition, who have their spirits brought as low as their lot, than with those who, being of a proud and high spirit, have their lot brought up to their mind. A humble spirit is better than a heightened condition.

Doct. *There is a generation of lowly afflicted ones, having their spirit lowered and brought down to their lot; whose case, in*

that respect, is better than that of the proud getting their will, and carrying all to their mind.

I. We shall consider *the generation of the lowly, afflicted ones*, having their spirit brought down to their lot. And we shall,

First. Lay down some *general considerations* about them.

1. There is such a generation in the world, bad as the world is. The text expressly mentions them, and the Scripture elsewhere speaks of them; as Psa. ix. 12; x. 12; Matt. v. 3, with Luke vi. 20. Where shall we seek them? Not in heaven, there are no afflicted ones there; nor in hell, there are no lowly or humble ones there whose spirit is brought to their lot. In this world they must then be, where the state of trial is.

2. If it were not so, Christ as He was in the world, would have no followers in it. He was the Head of that generation whom they all copy after; "Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly of heart" (Matt. xi. 29). And for His honour, and the honour of His cross, they will never be wanting while the world stands. Rom. viii. 29: "Whom He did foreknow He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son." His image lies in these two, suffering and holiness, whereof lowliness is a chief part.

3. Nevertheless, they are certainly very rare in the world. Agur observes that there is another generation (Prov. xxx. 13: "Their eyes are lofty, and their eye-lids lifted up") quite opposite to them; and this makes the greatest company by far. The low and afflicted lot is not so very rare, but the lowly disposition of spirit is rarely yoked with it. Many a high spirit keeps up in spite of lowering circumstances.

4. They can be no more in number than the truly godly; for nothing less than the power of divine grace can bring down men's minds from their native height, and make their will pliant to the will of God. 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. Men may put on a face of submission to a low and a crossed lot, because they cannot help it, and they see it is in vain to strive: but to bring the spirit truly to it, must be the effect of humbling grace.

5. Though all the godly are of that generation, yet there are some of them to whom that character more especially belongs. The way to heaven lies through tribulation to all, Acts xiv. 22; and all Christ's followers are reconciled to it

notwithstanding, Luke xiv. 26 ; yet there are some of them more remarkably disciplined than others, whose spirit is hereby humbled and brought down to their lot, Psa. cxxxi. 2 : " Surely I have behaved and quieted myself as a child that is weaned of his mother ; my soul is even as a weaned child." Phil. iv. 11, 12 : " For I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound : every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need."

6. A lowly disposition of soul, and habitual aim and bent of the heart that way, has a very favourable construction put upon it in heaven. Should we look for a generation perfectly purged of pride and risings of heart against their adverse lot at any time, we should find none in this world : but those who are sincerely aiming and endeavouring to reach it, and keep the way of contented submission, though sometimes blown aside and returning to it again, God accounts to be that lowly generation. 2 Cor. vii. 10, 11 ; James v. 11.

Secondly. We shall enter into *particulars*. There are three things which together make up their character.

1st. *Affliction in their lot*. That lowly generation preferred to the proud and prosperous, is a generation of afflicted ones, whom God keeps under the discipline of the covenant. We may take it up in these two :

1. There is a yoke of affliction of one kind or other oftentimes upon them. Psa. lxxiii. 14. God is frequently visiting them as a master doth his scholars, and a physician his patients ; whereas others are in a sort overlooked by Him. Rev. iii. 19. They are accustomed to the yoke, and that from the time they enter into God's family. Psa. cxxix. 1—3. God sees it good for them. Lam. iii. 27, 28.

2. There is a particular yoke of affliction which God has chosen for them, that hangs about them, and is seldom, if ever, taken off them. Luke ix. 23. That is their special trial, the crook in their lot, the yoke which lies on them for their constant exercise. Their other trials may be exchanged, but that is a weight which still hangs about them, bowing them down.

2ndly. *Lowliness in their disposition and tenour of spirit*. They are a generation of lowly, humble ones, whose spirits God has, by His grace, brought down from their natural height. And thus,

1. They think soberly and meanly of themselves; what they are, 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10; what they can do, 2 Cor. iii. 5; what are they worth, Gen. xxxii. 10; and what they deserve, Lam. iii. 22. Viewing themselves in the glass of the divine law and perfection, they see themselves as a mass of imperfection and sinfulness. Job xlii. 5, 6.

2. They think highly and honourably of God. Psa. cxlv.

3. They are taught by the Spirit what God is; and so entertain elevated thoughts of Him. They consider Him as the Sovereign of the world; His perfections as infinite; His work as perfect. They look on Him as the Fountain of happiness, as a God in Christ, doing all things well; trusting His wisdom, goodness, and love, even where they cannot see. Heb. xi. 8.

3. They think favourably of others, as far as in justice they may. Phil. ii. 3. Though they cannot hinder themselves from seeing their glaring faults, yet they are ready withal to acknowledge their excellences, and esteem them so far. And, because they see more into their own mercies and advantages for holiness, and misimproving thereof, than they can see into others, they are apt to look on others as better than themselves, circumstances compared.

4. They are sunk down into a state of subordination to God and His will. Psa. cxxxi. 1, 2. Pride sets a man up against God: lowliness brings him back to his place, and lays him down at the feet of his sovereign Lord, saying, "Thy will be done on earth," &c.—They seek no more the command, but are content that God Himself sit at the helm of their affairs, and manage all for them. Psa. xlvi. 4.

5. They are not bent on high things, but disposed to stoop to low things. Psa. cxxxi. 1. Lowliness levels the towering imaginations, which pride mounts up against heaven; draws a veil over all personal worth and excellences before the Lord; and yields a man's all to the Lord, to be as stepping-stones to the throne of His glory. 2 Sam. xv. 25, 26.

6. They are apt to magnify mercies bestowed upon them. Gen. xxxii. 10. Pride of heart overlooks and vilifies mercies one is possessed of, and fixes the eye on what is wanting in one's condition, making one like the flies, which pass over the sound places, and swarm together on the sore. On the contrary, lowliness teaches men to recount the mercies they enjoy in the lowest condition, and to set a mark on the good things they have possessed, or yet do. Job ii. 10.

3dly. *A spirit brought down to their lot.* Their lot is a low and afflicted one; but their spirit is as low, being, through grace, brought down to it. We may take it up in these five things:

1. They submit to it as just, Mic. vii. 9: "I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against Him." There are no hardships in our condition but we have procured them to ourselves; and it is therefore just that we kiss the rod, and be silent under it, and so lower our spirit to our lot. If they complain, it is of themselves; their *hearts* rise not up against the Lord, far less do they open their *mouths* against the heavens. They justify God, and condemn themselves, reverencing His holiness and spotless righteousness in His proceedings against them.

2. They go quietly under it as tolerable. Lam. iii. 26—29: "It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord. It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth. He sitteth alone, and keepeth silence, because he hath borne it upon him; he putteth his mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope." While the unsubdued spirit rages under the yoke as a bullock unaccustomed to it, the spirit brought to the lot, goes softly under it. They see it is of the Lord's mercies that it is not worse; they take up the naked cross as God lays it down, without those overweights upon it that turbulent passions add thereunto; and so it becomes really more easy than they thought it could have been, like a burden fitted on the back.

3. They are satisfied in it, as drawing their comfort from another quarter than their outward condition, even as the house stands fast when the prop is taken away that it did not lean upon. "Although the fig-tree should not blossom, neither fruit be in the vine,—yet I will rejoice in the Lord" (Hab. iii. 17, 18). Thus did David in the day of his distress, "He encouraged himself in the Lord his God" (1 Sam. xxx. 6). It is an argument of a spirit not brought down to the lot when men are damped and sunk under the hardships of it, as if their condition in the world were the point whereon their happiness turned. It is want of mortification that makes men's comforts to wax and wane, ebb and flow, according to the various appearances of their lot in the world.

4. They have a complacency in it, as that which is fit and good for them. Isa. xxxix. 8; 2 Cor. xii. 10. Men have a

sort of complacency in the working of physic, though it gripes them sore; they rationally think with themselves that it is good and best for them; so these lowly souls consider their afflicted lot as a spiritual medicine, necessary, fit, and good for them; yea, best for them for the time, since it is ministered by their heavenly Father; and so they reach a holy complacency in their low, afflicted lot.

The lowly spirit extracts this sweet out of the bitterness in his lot, considering how the Lord, by means of that afflicted lot, stops the provision for unruly lusts, that they may be starved; how He cuts off the by-channels, that the whole stream of the soul's love may run towards Himself; how He pulls off, and holds off the man's burden and clog of earthly comforts, that he may run the more expeditiously in the way to heaven.

5. They rest in it as what they desire not to come out of, till the God that brought them into it, see it meet to bring them out with His good will. Isa. xxviii. 16. Though an unsubdued spirit's time for deliverance is always ready, a humble soul will be afraid of being taken out of its afflicted lot too soon. It will not be for moving for a change, till the heaven's moving brings it about; so this hinders not prayer and the use of appointed means, with dependence on the Lord; but requires faith, hope, patience, and resignation. 2 Sam. xv. 25, 26.

II. We shall consider *the generation of the proud getting their will, and carrying all to their mind.* And in their character also are three things.

First. There are *crosses in their lot.* They also have their trials allotted them by overruling providence; and let them be in what circumstances they will in the world, they cannot miss them altogether. For consider,

1. The confusion and vanity brought into the creation by man's sin, have made it impossible to get through the world but men must meet with what will ruffle them. Ecc. i. 14. Sin has turned the world from a paradise into a thicket; there is no getting through without being scratched. As midges in the summer will fly about those walking abroad in a goodly attire as well as about those in sordid apparel, so will crosses in the world meet with the high as well as the low.

2. The pride of their heart exposes them particularly to

crosses. A proud heart will make a cross to itself, where a lowly soul would find none. Est. v. 18. It will make a real cross ten times the weight it would be to the humble. The generation of the proud are like nettles and thorn hedges, upon which things flying about do fix, while they pass over low and plain things; so none are more exposed to crosses than they, though none so unfit to bear them; as appears from,

Secondly. *Reigning pride in their spirit.* Their spirits were never subdued by a work of thorough humiliation; they remain at the height in which the corruption of nature placed them: hence they can by no means bear the yoke God lays on them. The neck is swollen with the ill humours of pride and passion; hence when the yoke once begins to touch it, they cannot have any more ease. We may view the case of the proud generation here in three things.

1. They have an over-value for themselves; and so will not stoop to the yoke; it is below them. What a swelling vanity is in that, Exod. v. 2: "Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice?" Hence a work of humiliation is necessary to make one take on the yoke, whether of Christ's precepts or providence. The first error is in the understanding; whence Solomon ordinarily calls a wicked man a fool: accordingly the first stroke in conversion is there too, by conviction to humble. Men are bigger in their own conceit than they are indeed; therefore God suiting things to what we are really, cannot please us.

2. They have an unmortified self-will, arising from that over-value for themselves; and they will not stoop. Exod. v. 2. The question betwixt heaven and us is,—whether God's will or our own must prevail. Our will is corrupt, God's will is holy; they cannot agree in one. God says in His providence, our will must yield to His; but that it will not do, till the iron sinew in it be broken. Rom. viii. 7. Isa. xlviii. 4.

3. They have a crowd of unsubdued passions taking part with self-will; and they say, "He shall not stoop," Rom. vii. 8, 9; and so the war begins, and there is a field of battle within and without the man. James iv. 1.

A holy God crosses the self-will of proud creatures by His providence, over-ruling and disposing of things contrary to their inclination; sometimes by His own immediate hand, as in the case of Cain, Gen. iv. 4, 5; sometimes by the hand of

men carrying things against their mind, as in the case of Ahab, to whom Naboth refused his vineyard. 1 Kings xxi. 4.

The proud heart and will, unable to submit to the cross or to bear to be controlled, rises up against it, and fights for the mastery with its whole force of unmortified passions. The design is to remove the cross, even the crook, and bring the thing to their own mind: this is the cause of this unholy war, in which,

(1.) There is one black band of hellish passions that marches upward, and makes an attack on heaven itself; namely, discontent, impatience, murmuring, frettings, and the like. "The foolishness of man perverteth his way; and his heart fretteth against the Lord" (Prov. xix. 3). These fire the breast, fall the countenance (Gen. iv. 6), let off sometimes a volley of indecent and passionate complaints (Jude ver. 16), and sometimes of blasphemies (2 Kings vi. 31).

(2.) There is another that marches forward, and makes an attack on the instrument or instruments of the cross; namely, anger, wrath, fury, revenge, bitterness, &c. Prov. xxvii. 4. These carry the man out of the possession of himself, Luke xxi. 19; fill the heart with a boiling heat, Psa. xxxix. 3; the mouth with clamour and evil-speaking, Eph. iv. 31; and threatenings are breathed out, Acts ix. 1; and sometimes set the hands on work,—a most heavy event, as in the case of Ahab against Naboth.

Thus the proud carry on the war, but oftentimes they lose the day, and the cross remains immovable for all they can do; yea, and sometimes they themselves fall in the quarrel, it ends in their ruin. Exod. xv. 9, 10. But that is not the case in the text. For we are to consider them as,

Thirdly. *Getting their will, and carrying all to their mind.* This speaks,

1. Holy providence yielding to the man's unmortified self-will, and letting it go according to his mind. Gen. vi. 3. God sees it meet to let the struggle with him fall; for it prevails not to his good. Isa. i. 5. So the reins are laid on the proud man's neck, and he has what he would be at: "Ephraim is joined to idols, let him alone" (Hos. iv. 17).

2. The lust remaining in its strength and vigour. Psa. lxxviii. 30: "They were not estranged from their lust." God, in the method of His covenant, sometimes gives His people their will, and sets them where they would be; but

then, in that case, the lust for the thing is mortified, and they are as weaned children. *Psa. x. 17.* But here the lust remains rampant: the proud seek meat for it, and get it.

3. The cross removed, the yoke taken off. *Psa. lxxviii. 29.* They could not think of bringing their mind to their lot; but they thwarted with it, wrestled and fought against it, till it is brought up to their mind; so the day is their own, the victory is on their side.

4. The man is pleased in his having carried his point, even as one is when he is dividing the spoil. *1 Kings xxi. 18, 19.*

Thus the case of the afflicted, lowly generation, and the proud generation prospering, is stated.

(To be continued.)

ON GOD'S KNOWLEDGE.

BY STEPHEN CHARNOCK, B.D.

Died in London, July 27th, 1680, aged 52.

God knows by His own Essence; that is, He sees the nature of things in the ideas of His own mind, and the events of things in the decrees of His own will. He knows them not by viewing the things, but by viewing Himself. His own Essence is the mirror and book wherein He beholds all things that He doth ordain, dispose, and execute; and so He knows all things in their first and original cause; which is no other than His own Essence willing, and His own Essence executing what He wills. He knows them in His power as the physical principle; in His will as the moral principle of things, as some speak. He borrows not the knowledge of creatures from the creatures, nor depends upon them for means of understanding, as we poor worms do, who are beholden to the objects abroad to assist us with images of things, and to our senses to convey them into our minds. God would then acquire a perfection from those things which are below Himself, and an excellency from those things that are vile; His knowledge would not precede the being of the creatures, but the creatures would be before the act of His knowledge. If He understood by images drawn from the creatures, as we do, there would be something in God which is not God, viz., the images of things drawn from out-

ward objects: God would then depend upon creatures for that which is more noble than a bare Being; for to be Understanding, is more excellent than barely to be. Besides, if God's knowledge of His creatures were derived from the creatures by the impression of anything upon Him, as there is upon us, He could not know from eternity, because from eternity there was no actual existence of anything but Himself; and therefore there could not be any images shot out from anything, because there was not anything in being but God. As there is no principle of being to anything but by His Essence, so there is no principle of the knowledge of anything by Himself but His Essence. If the knowledge of God were distinct from His Essence, His knowledge were not eternal; because there is nothing eternal but His Essence.

NONE BUT CHRIST.

A MORNING READING BY JAMES BOURNE.

JANUARY 25th, 1841.—Isa. lxiii. 18: "Our adversaries have trodden down Thy sanctuary." This sanctuary is the heart of a sinner in which Christ dwells; and it is trodden down by sins of various kinds, but especially by unbelief. Yet he pleads, "Doubtless Thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: Thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer." Now this is the way to get Him to return—to plead, "Thou hast made me Thy sanctuary—Thou hast dwelt in my heart, Thou hast engaged my affections, Thou hast been my Friend." Now do you who have known the love of Christ plead in that way—that your heart is His sanctuary, your enemies are His enemies.

But there is a way whereby many stumble in inconceivable darkness, and say, "Well, I was not so bad to-day; I did watch a little more; I had a little help;" and so with these things they stop short of Christ; as if Christ would help them in some trifles, and yet would not apply His blood to their consciences. I cannot express the folly of such trifling, nor the danger of such a proceeding. If you would, instead of first correcting your outward walk, *first* seek to get Christ into the heart, this would correct the outward walk. There will be such wisdom when He dwells with you, such peace, you will attend to your business with such meekness, the

heart and the best affections will be so set on Christ that it will be impossible to leave a corner for sin. But a legal, self-righteous walk is what God detests. Murderers, whoremongers, all that is bad is not so evil spoken of by our Lord as those good people who will not understand that Christ came into the world to save *sinners*; and thus the conscience becomes covered with such heaps of rubbish that there are mountains between it and God that none but He can rend.

But then these pray, "Where is Thy zeal and Thy strength?"—that is, Jesus Christ, "the wisdom of God and the power of God." If they who fall into this legal way and get so scattered belong to God, He will be unto them a little sanctuary, even when they are far off. There will be a little godly fear, which hinders them from going clean into the spirit of the world; a little terror and dismay, as if all was not right; and now and then a little ray of light which increases this godly fear; till God comes (generally in some terrible way) and awakes them and leads them to seek Him with downright earnestness. But as for this patching and mending and trying to set things right *first* without Christ, it only makes things worse.

May the Lord instruct us, and teach us in His way; for whilst we walk in that self-righteous way we have just spoken of, though we entertain hopes of salvation, it is not because we have come to Christ, but because of some tenderness we think we have that may lead to Him. But it does not do that. The psalmist prays to see the face of God in Christ: "Arise, O God, into the Ark of Thy strength." "Turn not away the face of Thine Anointed." That is, "Let us see Thy glory in the face of Jesus Christ." There is no other way of ceasing from our own works and entering into rest. And the apostle says, "Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it."

I rather wish Him my heart than give Him it: except He take it and put Himself in possession of it (for I hope He hath a market-right to me, since He hath ransomed me), I see not how Christ can have me. O that He would be pleased to be more homely with my soul's love, and to come in to my soul and take His own!—*Rutherford.*

Obituary.

JAMES PATTENDEN, of Ticehurst, on June 19th, 1909, in his 83rd year.

Although the son of God-fearing parents and brought up to attend the house of God, he soon manifested that he was under the dominion and power of the god of this world. As soon as he reached the age when he could throw off parental control (that compelled him to attend the house of God, and to listen to the reading and petitions of his God-fearing friends at home), he did so, and entered upon a course of life that caused his godly father many sighs and tears, and many petitions to a throne of grace. Being the possessor of a deep, sonorous bass voice and a gift for music, he soon became a favourite in the neighbourhood. At the public house he was a welcome guest. He also became a member of the local brass band. As is often the case, those gifts that God had given him became as chains to bind him as a slave to Satan's service. He has told me that it was the love of company which led him sometimes into drink, to the great grief of his godly parents. Often his engagements with the band would keep him out all night, playing at entertainments. His poor mother so feared he would come to some bad end it would prey upon her mind so that she could not rest in bed, but would go out to listen and watch.

The death of his mother was the means used to bring our dear friend to a sense of the dreadful state he was in; and the certainty of his eternal destruction, should he be taken away, was forced upon him. A real law-work was upon him, under which he lay for about two years. Although he had sat under a gracious gospel ministry, and was well acquainted with the doctrines of grace, this afforded him no help in his time of trouble; but he laboured hard to make himself acceptable to God by a reformation of his life, and forsaking his sinful companions. He again attended the house of God; but a faithful ministry seemed only to add to his grief and condemnation. The evils of his heart were exposed, that "the thought of foolishness is sin." He vowed many times that he would keep himself from sinning in thought, word, or deed; but he was soon self-condemned again. I have heard him relate that one morning as he was going to work,

he vowed he would be more careful, and if he did not keep himself that day, then the Lord might damn him, he would try no more. Alas, before noon he was again self-condemned; and being thus caught in the trap, Satan turned accuser, and showed him that he had consented to his own damnation, and now there was no possible hope for him. He expected something would happen to cut short his life, and send him to his eternal destruction. He has shown me the wall that he had to repair at this time. There was one large stone in it, under which he had to do some underpinning. The devil assured him that was the stone that was to end his life, that it would be certain to fall and crush him; but he proved him a liar, and finished his work without anything happening. This led him to consider the matter, that it was the devil that had so impressed this on his mind, and that he had a reprieve for the present.

About this time he went with his father to hear the late Mr. Crouch, at Pell Green, but got nothing but condemnation in his conscience. His godly father had hoped that as the gospel wine and oil had run so sweetly, his poor, wounded son might have been comforted; and as they walked home, ventured to ask him if he did not think Mr. Crouch was very encouraging. But the son replied that it was not for him, he had gone too far, there was no hope for him, he was no ordinary sinner, he had sinned against light and knowledge. The good old man having trod this path, knew the position and feelings of his son; and having put up so many petitions that his son might be stopped in his sinful career, and brought to a knowledge of his state as a sinner, realised that his prayers had been answered; and with a heart full of gratitude he stopped in the middle of the road, took off his hat, and looking up to heaven with tears running down his face, said, "O Lord, who am I, and what am I, that Thou shouldest show me such favour? First my dear daughter, and now my dear boy, my only son!" This gracious outburst of gratitude and joy surprised and affected the son, and was the means of a Who can tell? in his feelings.

Shortly after this, Mr. Crouch was to preach at Hawkhurst, and he was there to hear him. The text was taken from Mat. xxi. 10: "When He was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this?" Under this discourse his hope was further strengthened. He never forgot that

evening, and spoke of it about a fortnight before his death ; also of the helps he received under several gracious ministers about that time. Evidently a gracious Redeemer, as exalted upon the gospel pole, was received into his affections as a needed and suitable Saviour.

But shortly a hill Mizar was to be raised in his experience. I have heard him relate how that having to do some work in an Asylum in the very early hours of the morning, he had just got to his work, when these words were spoken to his heart : “ *Mercy and goodness shall follow thee all the days of thy life.* ” He thought some one outside the room had spoken, and opened the door to make sure, but could see no one. He went to his work again, and the words were repeated the second and third time with increasing power. He felt it was the Lord, and was so melted and humbled under the sense of His goodness to him that it was with much difficulty that he could for tears see to do the necessary work. When he could get away, he called upon the trees and hedges to praise the Lord for His mercy and goodness to such an unworthy sinner.

This promise that was so clearly given him was many a time in his after life sorely tried. For although he possessed a powerful frame, he was denied that activity and energy of mind so necessary to a successful man of business. Consequently he was often in difficulties ; but his infirmities were over-ruled by an all-wise and faithful God ; and many were the marked displays of His providential care over him. On one of these occasions, being very low in his mind as well as in circumstances, fearing all that he had experienced was a delusion, and God was against him ; that he should have to break up his home, and tramp the country as an outcast forsaken by God and man ; while sitting at tea with his wife, he was led to review the many helps and deliverances God had wrought for him. As he recounted them one by one, he said, “ Was that all nothing ? ” Then taking up the hymn-book to find a few lines that had been much on his mind during the day, on finding the hymn (77), he read it through, and was very much struck with it.

“ Brethren, would you know your stay,
 What it is supports you still ?
 Why, though tempted every day,
 Yet you stand, and stand you will ? ”

Long before our birth—
 Nay, before Jehovah laid
 The foundations of the earth,
 We were chosen in our Head," &c.

A voice spoke to him through it, "Cannot you see those very things you have been recounting—are they not so many evidences of your election? And it is your *election* that is your ground of hope to persevere." A ray of heavenly light shone upon that truth, and turning to his wife he said, "Let what will happen to me, I shall go to heaven when I die, even if I die in a ditch." Again a deliverance was wrought for him both in providence and grace.

He had the management of the little room at Ticehurst, and gave out the hymns, for about thirty-six years. He lived to a good old age; but we are reminded of that verse of Hart's in his case :

" Their pardon some receive at first,
 And then compell'd to fight,
 They feel their latter stages worst,
 And travel much by night."

He had received many special deliverances and clear evidences in his earlier pilgrimage, but in his later stages travelled much by night.

On visiting him about a fortnight before his death, I found him in a very dark and distressed state of mind. His good wife told me it was quite distressing to see him at times. I listened to his tale of woe and the horrid temptations he was suffering under, his countenance bearing witness to the reality of his distress. While he was thus bemoaning his state, I said to him, "I know you are a great sinner; but I want to ask you a few questions. If the Lord were to appear for you as He has done in the past, unworthy as you feel yourself to be, and then take you home, would you not with all the power you possessed praise Him, and with the redeemed cry, 'Not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory'? Would eternity be too long to sing His praises? Would you not have cause to sing the loudest, and a right to crown Him Lord of all?" Instantly with tears, he cried out with vehemence, "Yes, I could, I should!" and his countenance changed. This was the last time I saw him alive. He passed quietly away on the morning of June 19th, 1909, in his 88rd year.

T. S.

JANE SMITH, died, Dec. 12th, 1910, in her 81st year. She was born at Godmanchester, of godly parents, who were members of the church under the late Mr. Brown and Mr. Godwin. She left home for service when young, and finally settled down at St. Neots, where she joined the Strict Baptists, and was baptised by the late Mr. Murrell. The following scriptures are recorded among some of her papers, dated from 1858 to 1861, as being blessed to her soul: "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." "This people have I formed for Myself; they shall show forth My praise." "Preserved in Christ Jesus and called." Also,

"In that dread moment, oh to hide
 Beneath His shelt'ring blood!
 'Twill Jordan's icy waves divide,
 And land my soul with God."

She was married at St. Neots, July 22nd, 1860, and settled with her husband at Chelsea, where they attended the ministry of Mr. Brandon, occasionally visiting Gower Street chapel to hear such men as the late Mr. Philpot, Mr. Tiptaft, and other eminent servants of God. It was about 1870 when they removed, in the providence of God, to Charing Cross, and began to attend regularly at Gower Street, where she joined the church upwards of forty years ago.

Of her earliest experience little is known by her children. She was favoured for many years with the pardon of her sins, having a full assurance of faith. She recorded in May, 1909, this promise as coming with power, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." On what proved to be her death-bed, the Lord broke in upon her soul, causing such humility and brokenness of spirit as astonished those that witnessed it. The dear Lord continuing with her till the last, many sweet and blessed things fell from her lips, which I trust may never be forgotten by those that heard them. Every mountain now became a plain, and crooked things were made straight in such a remarkable manner that we had to exclaim, "What hath God wrought!" "Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!" Now we could clearly discern in her the Spirit of Christ, with meekness and humility. Three days before she died, whilst her daughter was attending upon her, she raised both her hands and exclaimed, "Glory, glory, glory! Help me to praise the Lord, for I am going home." Shortly after

she said, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord!" She enjoyed frequent intercourse and communion with Him, that enabled her to speak of her precious Lord and Saviour. She was kept patiently waiting, in sweet resignation to His will, and passed away so peacefully that the last moment was almost unobserved, to be for ever with the Lord.

HENRY J. SMITH.

MARY HAYNES, for many years a member at Frederick Street Chapel, Birmingham, fell asleep in Jesus on Nov. 17th, 1910, in her 98rd year. She related to some friends the following account of the way the work of grace was begun in her soul:

"My parents were little farmers, and although they never professed to be religious, they hated lying. There were only two children, my sister and myself; and we were very united. I was about nineteen years of age when I entered my first situation in a gentleman's boarding school. I had not been there long before my fellow-servants induced me to accompany them to church; and although I had never been in a place of worship before, I was much interested in the preaching of Mr. Curr, and was constrained to give the dear man all my attention; for he spoke so earnestly about the worth of the soul, and really I hardly knew I had one. But not only did he preach in such a solemn way, but he looked at us so solemnly; and I began to feel concerned about what would become of my never-dying soul. When he was about to finish his sermon, he always addressed a few words to the 'beloved redeemed ones,' and I wondered what he meant by 'redeemed.' One evening I went to his house for instruction. O, I was ignorant! The good man gave me a very warm welcome, and at once asked me why I had come. I could not help bursting into tears, and sobbed out, 'I don't know, sir; but you tell us so much about some *redeemed ones*, and I feel I should be so glad if I might be one.' He then talked to me like a kind father, and his language was so simple that he made me understand who these favoured people were; and I left his study longing for the water of life. Convictions of my sinnership increased; and I never could feel satisfied until I found Him my very soul loved. Then I paid a delightful visit to my beloved pastor, for I was full of the goodness of the Lord; and the dear man heartily rejoiced

with me. Just before he let me out at the door, he put his hand on my shoulder, as if in answer to what I had said about my determination 'not to let the Lord go,' and quietly said, 'Mary, Mary, the heart is deceitful above *all* things and desperately wicked.' Legion entered into my soul, and I went away in a rage, feeling my heart was not *that* bad. However, I spake as a child and thought as a child; but after that, I found the truth of what he said from painful experience. I often think what a mercy it is when young Christians have sound convictions of their sinnership. O how good the Lord has been to me all these years!"

For over twenty years she was confined to one room, as she was very heavily afflicted with rheumatism, and had great difficulty in walking; but her contentment with her lot was a striking reproof for murmurers. Although she had no means of her own, God's promise failed not: "Thy bread shall be given thee, and thy water shall be sure." She would often say, "Bless His dear name, He has been a good God to me." Her conflicts with Satan were very trying at times, and the pains of her body often caused her wakeful hours. The following are a few remarks that dropped from her lips when visited by friends during the last few months of her life. She said she felt such a melting of spirit in the night that she wept before the Lord, as she was meditating on His goodness to her; like the psalmist when he exclaimed, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and forget not all His benefits." On another occasion when lying awake in the night, she was led to think of Mary at the cross, and of the dying thief on the cross; and what she once heard Mr. Dennett say came back to her mind—that when the Lord hung upon the cross, He had *one* friend who spoke well of Him, and he was a dying thief. In September last she said to a friend, "The Lord has renewed a promise He gave me when He first quickened my soul. It came again to me in the night, and broke my heart, and caused me to weep at the remembrance of His mercy; and I thanked and blessed Him for all His goodness to me. The promise was: 'I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.'" Referring to her great age, a friend quoted the scripture, "If by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow;" when she replied most feelingly, "It is not *all* labour and sorrow; but it is *all* mercy."

On Nov. 10th, a week before her death, she enjoyed much of the gracious presence of her Lord, and said,

“ O glorious hour ! O blest abode !
I shall be near and like my God,
And flesh and sin no more control
The sacred pleasures of my soul.”

Also,

“ And pass the river telling
The triumphs of my King.”

“ Yes, I shall soon be landed
On yonder shores of bliss ;
There, with my powers expanded,
Shall dwell where Jesus is.”

Thus our beloved friend passed into her eternal rest in the bosom of everlasting love.

J. W.

ELIZABETH FOOT, aged 81, died, January 14th, 1911.

We have heard our friend say the Lord brought her away from attending the Church of England at Collingbourne. After the singing of the hymn, “Rock of Ages,” the Lord showed her there was nothing there ; everything seemed dead. She told her mother of the matter, who advised her to go with her to Ludgershall to hear the late Mr. Mower. After a time Mr. Mower was led to meet her case ; so that after the service, she said to the deacon, “ Who has been telling Mr. Mower about me ? ” “ No one,” was the reply, “ but the Holy Spirit has directed him thus to speak.” After a time both she and her husband were baptised, and joined the church at Ludgershall. A way was afterwards opened for them to come to Isleworth, where in time they joined the church.

About six months before her death we could see her health giving way, and on Dec. 24th, 1910, her daughter took her to her home at Streatham. Three days before her death, she said to a member, “ I am on the brink of the river, and have got to cross it. I want Him to be with me.” This friend referred to a nice feeling she had on the Saturday before. “ O yes,” she said, “ it was almost too much for me, and I had to say, ‘ What ? all this for me, Lord ? a poor sinner like me ? ’ But now I want more ; I am not satisfied. I want Him to say, ‘ Soul, I am thy Salvation.’ ” The friend remarked, “ Perhaps before the day is out you may be with Him for ever.” With emphasis she said,

“ Yes, I shall soon be landed ”—
with Jesus—

“ On yonder shores of bliss ;
There with my powers expanded,
Shall dwell where Jesus is.”

After a few minutes, she said, “ Beautiful river, full river ! ”
She spoke those words again. The hymn was quoted,
“ Sovereign grace o'er sin abounding,”

when she said with much feeling,

“ On its glories
May my soul for ever dwell ! ”

Then, “ Praise Him, praise Him. Why, eternity won't be long enough, and I want to begin down here. I want to wait the Lord's time ; that is the best time.” She then said how much she enjoyed hearing Mr. Parris the last time he came. On the Thursday morning previous to her death on Saturday, she called her daughter, and said, “ I have had a blessed time with the Saviour during the night.” Referring to hymn 996 (Gadsby's), she said, “ The dear Lord has told me this wondrous river flows for me ; and I said, ‘ For a poor sinner like me, Lord ? ’ ” Her daughter said, “ What more do you want, Mother ? ” “ Yes, but I want more,” she replied. At another time, “ Do help me to praise Him for all His goodness to me all my life. I want to praise Him more and more. I have no doubt what the hymn says,

“ ‘ When I see Thee as Thou art,
I'll praise Thee as I ought.’ ”

She could by precious faith see those pearly gates opened for her. She was conscious till her death, but could not speak.

She was for years a recipient of the Poor Relief Society ; and on receiving her quarterly allowance, would beg of me to thank all the dear friends.

A. ALLISTONE.

“ What manner of love the FATHER hath bestowed upon us ! ” The love expressed by this name “ Father ” has no parallel. It had no beginning, and it will have no ending. It is from everlasting to everlasting—bringing with it out of its infinite ocean all the streams of grace which make glad the city of God, and never stopping till it return with all the happy objects of His love to the same great ocean again.—
Romaine.

NOTICES OF DEATH.

MATILDA DILLIWAY, passed away on Oct, 20th, 1910, at Heath, near Leighton Buzzard. She was the widow of the late Mr. Dilliway, of Burnham, Essex, a deacon of the little cause there. After the decease of her husband, she removed to Heath, to live with some relatives, and attended, when able, the cause at Linslade. She was a humble, godly woman, and after much affliction and conflict entered her eternal rest. According to her request, I committed her mortal remains to their last resting-place in Heath Cemetery.

G. MACE.

GEORGE BRIGNELL, of Feering, Essex, died, Nov. 4th, 1910, aged 69 years. He stood a member with us at Providence Baptist chapel, Mark's Tey, but being afflicted for some years, he was not often able to attend. He was subject to many fears respecting his interest in the blood and righteousness of Christ. Little is known of the early part of his life. But like Adam's fallen sons, he was without God and without hope in the world, till one day Job xiv. 7 was sent with power into his soul. From that time he was inquiring the way to Zion with his face thitherward; and after a time he and his wife, who predeceased him, were baptised at Thundersley, in Essex, and joined the little cause there. But after a few years they removed to Feering, and joined the church at Mark's Tey. About ten weeks before he died, he was taken with a fit, and lay in a semi-conscious state till he passed away. We hope our loss is his eternal gain.

M. W.

Feb. 2nd, at Oldham, JULIA, the beloved wife of Edwin WAKEFIELD, in her 76th year. She was formerly a member of Providence Chapel, Bradenstoke, and of Rehoboth, Swindon. Further particulars may follow.

E. W.

ELIZABETH HOLLAND, of Manchester, died Feb. 3rd, 1911, aged 60 years, after a long and painful illness. A member at Zion, Thirlmere Street, Hightown, Manchester. Her path was one of tribulation, having lost a grown-up son and daughter within the last eighteen months. The Lord graciously supported her by applying many sweet portions of His Word to her, such as, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief;" also the words of a hymn, "How can I sink with such a prop?" Her last words were:

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

Her end was peace. She leaves a husband and large family to mourn her loss, and the church loses a consistent member.

T. EMERY.

MARY HOOPER, the beloved wife of Philip Hooper, senior deacon of the Particular Baptist Chapel, Rochdale Road, Manchester, passed away, Feb. 20th, 1911, aged 71 years. She was a most consistent member of our church for 40 years, and an example to the flock. More particulars may follow. Also their youngest daughter, SUSAN HARRIET, aged 31, died within a few hours on the same day, and both were interred at Harpurhey Cemetery, Feb. 23rd.

HUGO GRUBER.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

JULY, 1911.

MATT. v. 6; 2 TIM. i. 9; ROM. xi. 7; ACTS viii. 37, 38; MATT. xxviii. 19.

REMEMBERED BY THE THREE-ONE GOD.

A SERMON PREACHED AT CRANBROOK, SUNDAY MORNING, SEPT. 8,
1878, BY DANIEL SMART.

“Who remembered us in our low estate, for His mercy endureth for ever.”—PSA. cxxxvi. 23.

I MET with a vital revival in my soul in the past week, bless God for it, in hearing the death-bed experience of Dr. Thomas Goodwin read. The dear man said, “I could not have imagined I should ever have had such a measure of faith in this hour; I am going to the Three Persons with whom I have had communion—Father, Son and Holy Ghost; with whom I have had fellowship in this lower world.” And my conscience bore me witness that I had enjoyed the same blessed communion and fellowship with those Three divine Persons, all concerned in my everlasting salvation; and that to all eternity I should enjoy that blessed fellowship and communion. How my soul rejoiced at the fact! Forty years last June my fellowship was with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ, by the divine witness and anointing of the Holy Ghost powerfully in my soul; and I have never been able to give it up, and hope I never shall. O what I have felt in my soul since then!

“Mighty enemies without,
Much mightier within.”

Oh! the floods, the blasts from hell, the vile temptations against my Christ that have assailed my soul from the prince of darkness; and yet,

“Hither by Thy help I’m come,
And I hope by Thy good pleasure
Safely to arrive at home.”

Of all the blessings my soul has ever felt, that one overtopped and over-reached the whole; and I had a feeling at

the time, and expressed it, that I should never feel the like again here, and I never have. But what an anchor it has been to my soul, "sure and steadfast, entering into that within the veil," centering in Deity Itself. O to have an eternity of such love, such peace! upon which I hope soon to enter, and begin an everlasting song to the glory of God and His Christ. How precious, how unspeakably humbling to the soul, how magnifying to the God of all grace, when He does commune with poor sinners on earth, as a foretaste of that bliss they shall have at His right hand, where the weary are for ever at rest!

At one time yesterday I felt so empty, so void, as if my poor preaching was come to an end, as if I could not attempt to begin again. How many changes the soul goes through in one day! In the afternoon I felt peace in my soul; I felt the time was hastening on (and could thank God for it) to "shorten tribulation's days, and hide me in the silent tomb." "Ah!" I thought, "the world will be as busy as ever, and my soul will be eternally happy with God." I was as happy and peaceful as a little king; death had no terrors. "Lord, preserve me to the end, welcome me home with a smile; and I want no better employ than to thank, bless, and adore the Trinity for plucking a brand from hell."

Last evening the words spoken in the text came with sweetness; so I got into the dark to muse over them, and had a little melting of heart. "*Who remembered us in our low estate.*" This is my experience,

"When lower and lower we every day fell,

He stretch'd forth His power, and snatch'd me from hell."

"Well, but," say you, "you do not mean to say you get lower and lower." I do. Is not that my tune every Sunday—a greater opening up of my fallen condition, and consequently a greater need of Christ? Sinner, if born of God—and what is that but to be quickened into life by the power of the Holy Ghost, united to the Son of God, illuminated by the Light of life?—if born of God, to thy latest breath thou wilt get worse and worse in feeling. The brightest of saints said it was a faithful saying that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, *of whom I am chief.*" He speaks in the present time. He had not forgotten the time when he was a bloody persecutor; it stopped by him; though God forgave him, he could not forgive himself. "Of whom I *am chief.*"

But what brought him there and kept him there to his dying day was what he speaks of when he says, "I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." "It slow me, slaughtered me; it wrought in me"—not in my neighbour—[to my sense] "all manner of concupiscence." "For without the law sin was dead." Now this was the leprosy within that brought him among the chief of sinners, and kept him there; and there are you, if born of God. The poor woman in the gospel grew nothing better, but rather worse; but it was a case for Jesus Christ. Did Paul tell the truth when he called himself the "chief of sinners"? Look here; if he could have heard of any, even of those gone down into the pit, worse than himself, how could he say by the witness and testimony of the Holy Ghost that he was "*the chief*"? He spake by the Holy Ghost; and though his life, after he was called, shone like a torch, yet he was determined to know nothing among men save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. And yet the apostle was kept outwardly. He spent his life in proclaiming the gospel to poor sinners, and he deeply felt, "Of whom I am chief." And I could say it, if I were dying. I deeply question, and shall to my latest breath, if there is a case in hell to overmatch mine. What do men see in the light of life? Their own deformity. Life feels it, grace bemoans it, and Christ saves them from it. The great bulk of professors are too good to be saved; they are walking in pride and formality, saying what they never felt, being led by the devil down the steep to destruction.

"The Holy Ghost must give the wound,
And make the wounded whole."

And if He wounds, it will be a fretting leprosy; and then thou comest to God by Christ, to be saved wholly of His mercy through the blood of His Son.

"Who remembered us in our low estate." Can you find anybody lower? "God hath made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions." Oh, the tempter's craft! How he injected the poison into the woman's mind! How she parleyed with the foe! How she deviated from God's eternal truth! God had said, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Satan said, "Ye shall not surely die." "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be

desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made them aprons." And the voice of the Lord was heard in the garden, "Adam, where art thou?" Then he shifted it to the woman, and the woman to the serpent. Oh, the desperate state of the Fall! Do you feel it? In my case it is, "Turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations than these." That is a wonderful hymn of Hart's, and it will be a wonderful thing if you have the experience of it:

"Lord, when Thy Spirit descends to show
The badness of our hearts"—

does he put it down to the Holy Ghost? Yes.—

"Astonish'd at the amazing view,
The soul with horror starts."

One thing I admire in him—he brings in the remedy; and what should we do without the remedy? Go to hell.

You have heard me say when God opened up the evils of my heart He ripped it up to the core, and out rushed a torrent of murderous desires I did not think were there; and it has been running ever since.

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

"Do you believe it?" say you. Yes, because I have felt it thousands of times. When I find a sinner in himself getting worse and worse, more needy, I never give him up. How I encourage him to hang on. Reason says, "If you were a Christian, you would have known more of Christ and His salvation ere this." If I get a feeling doubt I might perish at last, it gives me a pang. And in dark weather doubts will knock the door down; and come in. Some people are so shocked at others' sins; I am glad to find them shocked at their own.

"Shock'd at the sight, we straight cry out,
Can ever God dwell here?"

That is where He does dwell—with the contrite, the bruised, the harassed. I have thought a good deal of Hart's words lately:

“Come, ye weary, heavy laden,
Bruis'd and *mangled* by the Fall”

—poor sinners ready to perish, that must be freely saved by the gospel of the Son of God, or die in their sins.

“None less than God's almighty Son
Can move such loads of sin.”

But then here comes my trial again. I thought of these words in the past weeks: “Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise Him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.” But oh, this disquietude! Think of it—“God's almighty Son;” and in comes the devil, unbelief, carnal reason, and there is no more faith in Him than the Jews of old had, who said, “For a good work we stone Thee not, but for blasphemy; and because that Thou, being a Man, makest Thyself God.” And there am I hampered, perplexed, disquieted, because hell's blasts are against Christ, my only Hope. Take Him away, what is it all? A burning hell for sinners. And how the poor sinner reels to and fro! And I felt yesterday what a mercy it will be for me when my body is in the silent tomb, and my soul happy with my God in glory! Oh, what a blessed relief from temptation and indwelling sin! and to be for ever with Him I love, who remembered me in my low estate with the mercy which endureth for ever. And to make one song to be heard in blessing the Lord with countless millions of sinners plucked as brands from the burning, clothed in the merits of Immanuel, and their song, “Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory, for Thy mercy and for Thy truth's sake.”

“Who remembered us in our low estate.” To our latest breath we shall be sinners still. Soul deceivers make the road as wide and smooth as they can; and they will have multitudes with them. These soul deceivers cry, “Peace and safety,” but “sudden destruction shall come upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.” They build people up in a form of godliness; but when do you hear any confession of sin from them? They are at peace, they are very good indeed, can always pray and preach, and always try and please poor sinners by making them pleased with themselves. But if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into hell's ditch. But the people love to have it so, and

“so they wrap it up.” Millions will never have their eyes open to their state till opened in hell. They will know more about it in five minutes in eternity than you can teach them in their whole lives, if the Holy Ghost does not convince them.

How can two walk together except they be agreed? If you are gradually getting better, and I worse, I am a barbarian to you, and you to me. How can we both be going to the heavenly city, where the top stone shall be brought forth, crying, “Grace, grace to it!”? O sinner, how do matters stand with thy soul for eternity?

“Trust not to smooth behaviour;
All’s deceit,
And the cheat
Keeps thee from the Saviour.”

Erskine says, so I feel,

“He is most qualified in heaven to dwell
Who feels himself most qualified for hell.”

It is the saved sinner, the monster plucked from the jaws of death, and brought to know the love of the Trinity in Unity, that will make heaven ring with everlasting Hallelujahs to God and the Lamb.

“Who remembered us in our low estate.” “When men are cast down, then thou shalt say, there is lifting up; and He shall save the humble person.” What does God say of man in his fallen state? “The whole head is sick and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness, but wounds and bruises and putrifying sores.” The Holy Ghost witnesses that “the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.” And what do poor believers say about themselves? Agur says, “Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man.” The psalmist said, “I am as a beast before Thee.” And poor Peter, “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.”

Christ will be all or nothing in the salvation of the sinner. It is no offence to me to stand on a par with the dying thief, who said, “Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom.” Are you humble enough, base enough, low enough in your own eyes to stand on a par with that dying man, and put up that petition indited by the Holy Ghost, and answered by the Friend of sinners? Jesus answered and

said, "This day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise." When I look back upon my past life, it is with remorse; and I shall need the Lord's mercy to my latest breath, and then go to glory His own way—*mercy through blood*. When I look back on my past life, I see the snares, gins, traps, what hair-breadth escapes I have had, and how I have been left in secret to bring trouble on my poor soul; and I should have brought trouble on others if left to myself. It is a great favour to be kept feelingly the chief of sinners, without bringing open reproach on the name of Christ. Eminent saints have fallen; king David fell, king Solomon fell, poor Peter the fisherman fell. It is a very humbling thing to be left to fall openly and foully, and carry the scars to the grave. What am I (wretch that I am!), and yet to be "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation!" You see, the sinner must be nothing if Christ is to be All in all; no flesh is to glory in His presence. Do you fall in with this? I do. My soul is in love with that passage, "By the grace of God I am what I am."

"Grace reigns to pardon crimson sins,
To melt the hardest hearts;
And from the work it once begins,
It never more departs."

The apostle was for having it one way or the other: "If by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace." Now sinner, be honest; look the thing in the face. Perhaps nothing has so smudged thee, made thee sensible of thy poverty and need of Christ, as being left to bring some open reproach on the Lord's holy name. And how great the mercy to be kept!

"Who remembered us in our low estate; for His mercy endureth for ever." Never shall I forget in humility, love, contrition, meekness of soul, addressing my heavenly Father, "*Merciful Father, why pass by millions and fix Thy everlasting love on me?*" Ah! there is great blessing couched in what Dr. Goodwin spoke of on his dying bed—of going to enjoy the bliss like that he had felt in this mortal state. Here a drop of mercy makes the cup run over. Once in particular His mercy began to drop into my soul, and I began to tell the Lord my God I was an infidel, a rebel, a sinner; and the more I cried out, the more mercy kept dropping in, till I had more than I could hold; I felt as if another drop would break

the string of life and let the prisoner go. And once when He appeared to my help in providence, He so broke me with His goodness (I was alone), I felt as if I could not get out of the chair I was in, and all I could say was, "*Merciful Father, merciful Father!*" and I felt it, and He owned me as His child. I was overwhelmed with His goodness; not a hitch, not a doubt, a child calling Him "*Father,*" and He owns the relationship. Sinner, I want, if I could, to make you and myself thankful to almighty God for His sovereign grace. It was an act of love, an act of power, an act never to be reversed, passed before the world began; and that act of love fixed upon us in Christ Jesus was the cause of your and my differing from the wicked in this life and in the world to come. "*Merciful Father!*" It is an everlasting relationship. O, think of having an interest in the love and blood of the Prince of life. "*Merciful Saviour, why pass by millions and die in my stead?*" And then think of the gracious, powerful, almighty work of God the Holy Ghost, One with the Father and the Son, proceeding from Both. The Holy Ghost found us in our blood, bent on our own destruction, determined we would do our best and hope for the best; and then for Him to bid us live, touch our hearts with repentance, turn our eyes another way to Jesus and His blood, and cover the Redeemer's skirt over us! "For He was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." In all this He "remembered us in our low estate; for His mercy endureth for ever."

A MONUMENT OF MERCY.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF THOMAS RUSSELL, MINISTER OF THE
GOSPEL, ROTHERFIELD, SUSSEX.

(Continued from page 261.)

ABOUT this time, in reading the Word of God, my eyes were opened to see that the Lord had a people that He loved from everlasting to everlasting, and that they were elected "according to the foreknowledge of God the Father" (1 Peter i. 2), and blessed in Christ with all spiritual blessings from "before the foundation of the world" (Eph. i. 3, 4), and that their salvation and calling was "according to His own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus

before the world began" (2 Tim. i. 9); and this was confirmed by being preached in my hearing on the Sunday. This doctrine seemed strange to me, and I rebelled against it, for I thought it was a hard doctrine. Who could believe it? In fact, I did not want to believe it, for I thought if that was true there could be no hope for me, as it could not be such vile sinners as I that were loved of God from before the foundation of the world. This was like a mountain of brass before me; but I kicked against it, and began to search the Bible with more diligence than ever, to see if I could not prove it wrong in some parts; but, alas! the more I searched the more I found to convince me that it was the truth of the Bible; though I should have been glad to prove it to the contrary, for at that time I often thought it cut me off from all hope, and sealed my condemnation; which caused me to have hard thoughts of God, and think it hard of Him that He should save none but those whom He chose from everlasting, as vessels of mercy ordained for the Master's use. My reader may see that I was still tainted with Arminianism, for this is the very core of it—to wage war against the sovereign Jehovah; but the blessed truth of the everlasting love of God in Christ Jesus towards His chosen I found was the revealed truth of God; and look where I would in the Word of God, I could see that there were a people that were blessed, and a people against whom the Lord had indignation for ever (Mal. i. 4).

And now a fresh temptation beset me,—that if I was not chosen of God, He would not hear my prayers. "See," said the enemy, "what a sinner you are; it is in vain for you to hope that you are loved of God, and that He will hear your prayers;" so that again I was tempted to leave off calling upon God. But this I could not give up, for I felt, "cry I must, if I perish;" and sometimes I would pray in earnest for the Lord to show me whether I was one of His people or not. So powerfully has this temptation come upon me that when I have attempted to bow my knees before the Lord, I have been staggered to know what to do, and often would walk about, and in the anguish of my soul cry, "Oh that I was one whom the Lord loved!" But, alas! I thought that in His anger He would cast me down to the lowest hell, to dwell amongst those against whom He had indignation for ever. And often when I have been going up to my bedroom

to pour out my complaint before God, it would seem as if a voice spoke to me, "You are not elected, therefore it is of no use praying!" when I would burst out crying, and say, "I must, if I am lost!" But I felt as if mercy from the Lord was withholden from me because I was not one of His chosen, so that I often concluded that live under such distressing feelings I could not, and was tempted to put an end to my existence, and know the worst of it. One day as I was sitting meditating upon the deplorable condition I was in, I thought I should like to know the worst of my state, when the temptation came more violently upon me, and all hope seemed to be gone. The agitation of my mind and the horrible feelings that racked my soul at this time I never can describe. I seemed like one to whom frantic despair seemed inevitable. I ran to my bedroom to commit this dreadful deed. Now was the time that the prince of darkness seemed to be driving me, as with a flood, with an intent to drown me in everlasting misery; and this he would have done, had it not been for the interposing mercy of God; for in His mercy He showed me the awful consequences that would follow on my committing such an atrocious deed. I trembled at the thoughts of it, and fell down upon my knees instead of doing what was my intention to do; and the dear Lord, in sovereign mercy, poured out upon my soul such a Spirit of grace and supplication that my heart was open to tell the Lord my troubles, and beg of Him, if He could, to show mercy upon one so vile. The access that He granted me to Him, and the brokenness of heart that I felt, caused me to hope that He would show mercy; so that I came away from the throne of grace strengthened a little to still keep struggling on, though between hope and fear.

I remember going one day into a back room to cry to the Lord for mercy, when a strange feeling came over me. As I fell down upon my knees I felt like one falling into everlasting perdition; I thought I could see flames ready to kindle upon me, and felt as if I was sinking down fathoms into everlasting fire. I saw nothing with my bodily eyes, but the eyes of my soul beheld the bottomless pit of everlasting woe; I felt as if the pains of eternal torments had already got hold upon me, and all hope was gone. I was distracted. I knew not what to do, for it seemed in vain to cry; but "the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and

sorrow" (Psa. cxvi. 3); and therefore in the anguish of my soul I groaned out, "Lord, have mercy upon me!" when a ray of light from the Sun of righteousness shone into my soul, and dispelled for a little while those feelings. This broke my hard heart, and caused me to have a little gratitude to God that I was out of hell; and I think while memory lasts that time will never be forgotten.

About this time a friend lent me Bunyan's "Grace Abounding," which was a great help and comfort to me, for I often found the very feelings described that I thought none ever had before. But I often used to come to this conclusion, that of all that I read there were none such sinners as I, and none in hell that deserved to be there more than I did; and yet being spared from day to day would often cause me to rise from my bed in the morning and bless the Lord for sparing me in the land of the living; for I feelingly could say that it was of His mercy that I was not consumed.

About this time I had three remarkable dreams. I dreamt I was running along a narrow path which was upon the brink of a precipice; that the bottom was full of water; and as I was running along I fell over, and in rolling down the bank, before I came to the water, I caught hold of a root that grew out of the bank; and here I hung with the water beneath me. I saw my danger, but was in hopes I might escape by holding by the root till some one appeared to give me help. I made a noise as loud as I could for some one to come to my deliverance, but none came; and after hanging a while by the root, it broke, and I fell into the water; and when about to sink, I looked up and saw a man at the top of the bank. To him I cried for help, when he, looking down at me, smiled, and came down the bank a little way, and put forth his hand and caught me, and drew me to the top; which caused me to feel such gladness of heart that I blessed him for delivering me from death. In my joy I awoke, and lay meditating upon my dream, which had made a great impression upon my mind, and caused me to feel a little hope that I should not sink into eternal perdition.

While I lay meditating upon it, I fell asleep again, and dreamt I was on a journey, when I came to a large lake of water that I must cross; and over it there was a bridge made of wood, but each piece was laid so far apart that there was room for me to fall between into the water; and I knew if I

did, I must perish in the waters. Therefore, to get over safely, I lay down and crept over on my hands and knees, but had many fears lest I should fall through into the water, and sink to rise no more. At length I got safely over, when One arrayed in beautiful costume met me, and led me into a beautiful flower-garden, where the flowers were handsome to look upon, and the fragrance so sweet and refreshing that I had never felt the like before. In this garden there were many delightful little arbours or resting places; into many of them I was led, and felt much delighted with the beautiful situation. I stayed here some time, and felt much refreshed; but at length I was led into a path that I was to go in, upon the edge of a precipice; not like the other, but much higher, and below there was no water. Along this path I travelled, and thought it very dangerous; and as I was walking along, the wind arose and blew violently upon me; so that sometimes it blew me to the very edge, and I thought I must have been blown over and dashed to pieces. I laboured hard to keep myself from being blown over, and sometimes the wind would abate a little, and then I would get to the other side of the path, when another gust of wind would come, and blow me as I thought upon the brink of ruin. But at last I came to a green plain, where was a large mansion. I saw a person coming to meet me. He soon came up to me, and invited me into the mansion. I went with him, and found there was much company. They invited me in, and told me they had a calf which was for a feast. I sat down and entertained myself with them, until I got so happy that I could but rejoice; and in my rejoicing I awoke, and behold, it was a dream. This dream also encouraged me to hope that I should be delivered after all. I lay wondering at my dream, and thinking it strange that I should have two such dreams. I could not make them out, though I could but hope that they were an omen of good towards me.

I soon fell asleep again, and dreamt that I was in a room that was full of people, and on one side of the room there was a table, and a Bible on it, which I opened, and read a portion as a text, and began to preach to the people. I told them, as I thought, that the Lord had saved me, and manifested His great salvation to my soul; and as I began to preach to them the preciousness of Jesus and His great salvation, I felt in my dream as if my soul was fired with love

and zeal for the dear Redeemer; but as I was speaking of the preciousness of Christ I awoke. At that time I thought there was as much possibility of my becoming emperor of the whole universe as there was of my ever becoming a preacher of the glorious gospel of Christ.

These dreams made such an impression upon my mind that I was continually thinking of them, and wondering what they could mean; but my spiritual Joseph was my Interpreter, and He opened a little of the mystery to me, which caused me to hope and long for a gaol delivery. I had fears at times lest it was not Joseph interpreting my dreams; but as He interpreted, so it came to pass.

But to return to my narrative. I was kept in perpetual bondage through fear that I was not elected, and had not the right sorrow; for I believed that none but the chosen of God would obtain salvation: and though at times I was raised to a little hope in the mercy of God, the temptation would continually follow me that the reason the Lord did not appear for me and pardon my sins, was because I was not a chosen vessel of mercy. And my unbelieving heart seemed to be in league with the tempter, so that I was almost swallowed up with grief, and knew not how to endure this temptation. But the Lord in mercy kept me continually crying unto Him to make it known to me whether I was one of His people. I had much trouble at this time; for my bodily affliction still abode with me, and I had a wounded spirit that I found a heavy burden to bear; for "the spirit of a man will sustain infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can bear?" (Prov. xviii. 14). One thing I kept praying for from the beginning of my trouble; and that was that the Lord would never let me go back to finish my apprenticeship; for I thought the company of the ungodly I never could endure. And, blessed be His dear name, He heard my cry, and granted my request; for He searcheth the heart and trieth the reins of His people, and therefore He knew my motive in asking. What a mercy to know that we have a prayer-hearing and prayer-answering God, who has said, "Call upon Me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me."

I had many providential trials at this time that pressed heavily upon me; for I was still very poorly in body, and the doctor told me, after he examined me several times, that my affliction in body would never leave me. This was a heavy

blow, as I had nothing now to look forward to but destitution if I lived, and if I died, I was afraid I should be lost. Here was a labyrinth to be in. But the providential dealings of God with me at this time I must bury in oblivion, as it would be painful to me to speak of them, as I could not do so without exposing others. My trials in providence were many and very trying, but the Lord in mercy delivered and appeared for my help in every time of need; which caused me at times to say, "Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works toward the children of men!" For since He called me by His grace, I have been brought to hang upon His bountiful hand in providence and grace; and though I have been driven at times to my wits' end, yet, blessings crown His holy name, His charity has never failed, but He has been a present help in every time of trouble. The Lord in mercy brought me into a situation where I was much alone, deprived of all company, except the people that dwelt in the next house, as neighbours; and they were Arminians who attended the Wesleyan chapel.

I used to go into a room amongst the people that went to the chapel where that dear man of God, Mr. Isaac Beeman, laboured for many years; and most of the people that came to the room to dinner were elderly people, who I thought were venerable old saints. I used to listen whether they would say anything about religion; but seldom was religion the topic of their conversation. It would generally run upon farming, and other business, and I thought the reason they said nothing about religion was because I was there. I would often go home from chapel worse than I went, lamenting my sad fate, and thinking I should never know the Lord for myself; but one day I had been to my room to pour out my complaint before God, and was turning to my Bible with a heavy heart and sad countenance, when I opened it and read these words: "*Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*" (Matt. xi. 28). Such precious words I thought I had never seen before; it was as if some one spoke aloud in my hearing, "*Come unto Me,*" &c., and the power that they were spoken with broke my hard heart. I burst into tears, and blessed and praised the Lord for His goodness to me; for the light that shone upon the words led me to see that it was Jesus that was speaking to me—One that was able to give me rest. Never was my mind

enlightened so much before. I saw that He could take the burden from my soul, and give me rest. Now my eyes were turned to Jesus and His blood. I read the words again and again, and the more I read them the more I could see my character in them, and the preciousness of coming to Christ. I had by precious faith a view of His glorious Person, which humbled my heart, silenced my fears, and sweetly encouraged me to hope that He would give me rest. I laid the Bible down, went to my room, and fell upon my knees; and in the simplicity of my heart under the sweetness of this precious promise, said, "Bless His dear name!" for His name was as ointment poured forth into my soul. I saw His kingly power and authority, and from my heart said, "Bless the King; for He is 'King of kings, and Lord of lords!'" I now found the words of the psalmist to be truth, where he says, "Thy word giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple." I thought there could not be a more suitable promise in the Bible than this to meet my case; for I was labouring under a sense of guilt and condemnation, and fierce and violent temptations, with fears and doubts that wounded me to the heart, so that I often concluded I must sink down into endless woe. But this precious promise set me to hungering and thirsting after righteousness as I had never done before; for Christ was set before me as the only Refuge, and the only One that could ease me of the burden that I was heavily laden with. It overturned the temptations that had followed me for some time, about mine being the right sorrow and my being chosen of God; for it caused me to hope that my name was written in the Lamb's book of life. I rejoiced for about two hours under the sweet feeling that I had from these precious words.

(To be continued.)

NOT TO SIN.

"Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind; for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin." "My little children, these things write I unto you that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous."—1 PET. iv. 1; 1 JNO. ii. 1.

PART of this first verse speaks of one of the hardest things a child of God ever has to come into, ever is enabled to do,

Christ is set before us here as having suffered for us in the flesh, and the Holy Ghost has told us by Paul that this suffering of Christ was the condemnation of sin in the flesh (Rom. viii. 3). That condemnation was the curse of God; as it is written, "Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things written in the Book of the Law to do them." And that again was making an end of sin; so that Christ having died to sin once, death hath no more dominion over Him. Now if the Lord would reveal that to us—that He has suffered for us, died to sin for us, it would be heaven. But if also He would enable us to carry this in our minds as we go into the exhortation following, and the following "therefore," we should be very tried by it perhaps: "Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind." And Paul said to Timothy: "Thou, *therefore*, my son, endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." When did we resist sin? "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin," says the Spirit (Heb. xii. 4).

When God the Holy Ghost lets down His light on the inward conduct of a person, he may forget any external consistencies, not having his eye fixed on them; for he will be so wounded, grieved, ashamed by and at the sight of how he has lived in his spirit, that the uttermost he will be able to do will be this—to cry with strong crying and tears in confession for that pardon that comes through the infinite merit of the Son of God. If we look at the next clause, what can we say? For it says, "He that hath suffered in the flesh hath *ceased* from sin." He has not lost the being of sin, but ceased to be under its dominion—ceased from the persistent, willing, loving practice of it. And yet, if that be true, what must some of us say? When some foolish thought catches us, carries us away, perhaps we sit down and indulge it, suck it as a sweet. Then have we suffered in the flesh? and having suffered, then have we ceased from sin? When some revengeful thought gets hold of us, if we follow it up, meditate on it, our hearts will grow hard against our fellow creature, our minds will get to the ends of the earth in respect of the throne of grace, and God will not be in all our thoughts. We have not then armed ourselves with the same mind as Christ; we have not thought what an evil and bitter thing we are doing. Sin has not been mortified. I have seen myself to have been living much a life of inward indulgence, and therefore a life unspeakably unlike the suffering life of the Son of

God, as here set before us: "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh." What was it for? That we should indulge the flesh? No. What then? That sin might be killed in us. Hence the word: "*Mortify* therefore your members which are upon the earth"—the word is, "Kill." And if we have killed sin in that gracious, gospel sense, then we have ceased from the life of it. It has not ceased to trouble us, but we have ceased from obeying it as its servant. For whoso sinneth is the servant of sin. If we obey a silly thought, we are its servants; for "his servants ye are to whom ye obey."

This is to be the issue of not obeying, but ceasing from sin: "That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God." The will of God—what is that? First, in respect of salvation, it is God the Father's eternal election of sinners whom He gave to Christ. It was the will of God the Son to redeem all the Father gave to Him. It is the will of God the Holy Ghost to quicken them all into life. Then says old lascivious nature, "There is an end of it. What else in the will of God can you want or expect?" "O," says God, "come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters." "My will is your *sanctification*. I have called you with a holy calling. My will is that you should walk accordingly, walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called; that you should be separate from the world and from yourselves; that you should *deny yourselves*, and take up the cross." He that has suffered through the crucifying work of the Holy Ghost is no longer to live the rest of his time as a servant to those lusts he formerly and willingly served, but to this will of God.

Well, if our hearts and inward lives are put to this word, what shall we say? what must we say? If the light of life is let down on our inward conduct, what must we say? I have to go about day by day now, looking at that, till I cannot bear the sight. Then I can truly join with Hart—

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

O, it is a shaming thing when we see how we have lived in our spirits! Then we can join with the apostle in what follows: "For the time past of our life may suffice us to have

wrought the will of the Gentiles." I say, what a prayer this becomes! The Lord knows how often some of us have turned this to prayer: "O, that the time past might suffice us! that we might be as men dead to sin, who have ceased from sin, having armed ourselves with the same mind that was in Christ! that when sin comes and solicits, it may not have a welcome, not be indulged; when it is clamorous, that it may not be attended to; when it points out ways of pleasure, that they shall not be walked in!"

When the Lord empties us of self-conceit by such discoveries, empties us of our self-strength and wisdom, and gives us grace to deny ourselves, does He leave us then to our emptiness? No, He gives us comfort by the blood of Christ. And if ever a poor creature needs the blood of Christ to comfort him, it is when he can say with Watts—

"Past offences pain my eyes."

God knows they do pain sometimes. But what will make the sweetest tears? That that brings sweet peace, humility—sweet and loved humility. That will make Christ first and last and best of all. What desires will burn within for conformity to Christ, and what revenge will rise in the breast against self! What repentance and forsaking of sin will be the fruit of God's mercy! Then we shall have no quarrel with the precepts, not with those very ones the sight of which may be a conviction to us that we are not half Christians, not half what we ought to be according to our profession. Look at the years some have been professing!

"And we on the way are no further yet."

I have been grieved, shocked, amazed at my own case. Here I have been professing truth, and, what is worse, preaching about it; yet how little I have ever walked in this scripture: "Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind." Do not think that saying to sin, "I do not want you," or brushing it on one side with a feather, will slay it; do not think that not wanting it when it comes will quell the sinful thought. No; we must reckon on crucifixion, on pain that if we walk according to Christ when our sin was condemned in His flesh, we must walk in suffering. And there will be the condemnation of sin and self by our own spirit and conscience; and at times sin, not being indulged, will raise a tumult, and cause us to think, "What am I, and

where am I? Where is my face turned? and what will become of me in this conflict?" But every touch of mercy will straighten us, and put our faces to God, and let us know they are there. Every sight of Christ will strengthen us, make us feel it good to fight in this warfare, and make us long to be good soldiers of Jesus Christ.

And, moreover, we shall not then be distressed by looking for judgment, but begin *to look for the Saviour*; and that is a very different thing. How often what can we expect but judgment? But faith says, "Look for the Saviour. He is good to sinners, gracious, loves to bless them. For sinners He suffered, died, was buried, rose, and ascended to heaven. Therefore look for Him to come again; look for His love to the end." Now when He saw the covetous, evil ways of Ephraim after he was smitten, He said, "I have seen his ways, and will heal him." Should we have thought it, if He had not revealed it? But He has. Therefore faith says, "Look for the same."

The first verse of the second chapter of John's first Epistle is a very striking word, and is connected with what has preceded it. It contains a wonderful truth: "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not." It seems to be the mind of the Spirit to say this—that the natural tendency of what has been delivered in the first chapter—is to prevent the people of God from sinning; that if it has its natural effect on the "little children" of God, it will keep them from sinning. If it is so, we shall have to hide our shameful faces. This is what I would wish to bring forward—that *the natural tendency of every divine truth, as revealed and made known, is to prevent God's people from committing sin*. These are the things written in the first chapter—that Jesus Christ had been seen and heard, handled and felt by the apostle John and his brother apostles; and they were sent to testify of Him, which they did. And their testimony caused those who received it to be full of joy: "These things write we unto you, that your joy may be full." It is the effect of truth to fill those who rightly receive it with joy, called in another place "joy of the Holy Ghost" (1 Thess. i. 6). O that God would give us to understand this joy!

Then the apostle declares that whoso professes to walk in the light, but does not walk in the works of light, and come away from the works of darkness, he is deceived; he has no

fellowship with Christ. "If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth." It is the effect of knowing God to bring those who know Him into the light, and to have fellowship with Him. All the unfruitful works of darkness are broken off by this Light of life—this is the effect of it in the soul. All who really receive the Son of God into their hearts receive Him who is the Light of the world, the Light of life; who came that all who believe in Him should not walk in darkness, but should have the Light of life. The effect is *that there shall be a true walking in the light, and a real joy in the Lord*. Let us be honest in the examination of our own cases. It is not possible to say how far people in a profession may go in a knowledge of the form of sound words, and be destitute of the life of God. But there are certain scales and measures in the Scriptures—a reed to measure with—so that the people of God, led into the light by the Holy Ghost, may test themselves. Then the apostle says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." "If we say that we have not sinned," we make God "a liar." How dreadful to be in this case! And he says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Then comes this important word: "My little children"—he had a tender affection, a solicitous feeling for those to whom he wrote—"these things I write unto you" for this purpose, "*that ye sin not.*" We are told to "exhort one another daily, lest any be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin;" but we have almost forgotten this precept. I would now make a brief exhortation. First, what deep shame belongs to us who live contrary to the *effect* of divine truth received! It is a cause for very deep shame in us, and may the Lord give us grace to feel it. The apostle says, "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin." Probably if we were in the light under the influence of the Holy Ghost, by His teaching we should be led to make a comparison, a close scrutiny between what we profess and what we do inwardly. We should be deeply wounded, shocked, and more guilty than tongue can express. "That ye sin not." What a mercy to so live before our fellow-creatures that no outward inconsistency or charge of law-breaking can be laid against us! Blessed be God for that. But when we come to our inward

lives, how is it with us? When some horrid thoughts thrust themselves in, what treatment do they receive? when some corruptions of our nature spring up, how are they met? some awful thoughts of some man or some truth, and how do we act?

Grace has a method of working. The method of God will be seen by all under His teaching to be wonderful. He could, if He had been so pleased, have taken His people to heaven through the Red Sea of the Saviour's blood without exercise of any kind. But He has decreed that all whom He saves and spares and leads through the wilderness shall live a life of *labour*; and they do as far as they are healthy in spirit. "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you." What is part of that labour? Is it not that resistance of sin which is the natural effect of the truth of God as received? Is not the tendency of every truth, and the great and true effect of receiving it in the Holy Ghost, to deliver the person who receives it from the dominion of sin? "Sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace." The law provokes sin in a sinner; grace subdues it. Then where are *we*? which are we under? It is written of the Lord Jesus that in Gethsemane He sweat great drops of blood, in getting the victory over sin for us. Also that "being in an agony, He prayed more earnestly." Perhaps we may sometimes be arrested in our minds by the painful consideration that we have not had one night's sweat, or indeed any sweating at all in labouring against sin. O the compliance that sin has had at the hands of some of us! O the riotous thoughts and living that we, under a consistent profession more or less, have been guilty of before Almighty God!

We may have been sometimes distressed at the great difference between the things done in us; *really done in us*, and the things we believe and profess. And God will teach us that our internal acts stand open before Him. Once a man said inwardly, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years." All that was conduct in God's sight, and He said, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee." He did it in his heart, it was his design; and he only failed in carrying it out. We have designed many things, which are acts before God. O, that the Lord would cause us to consider

this matter more seriously and solemnly in His sight—*what is the effect of those truths we believe and hold, on our sins?* Their effect may be on our lips, but what about their effect on our sins? To talk of truth is one thing; to find the power of it on the sins of our nature forbidding them, crucifying them, is quite another. “They that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts.” If we can by the mercy of God get hold of these observations, and are enabled to walk before Him in considering the points just submitted, we shall find the benefit.

Suppose, then, we are distressed by these things, and under heavy convictions that we are spoken to by the Lord, by a voice that is heard and will be attended to, what then? We shall be distressed, but it will not end there. Further, we shall be helped: “*If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous.*” And here we are—*sinner*s. What then? “If any man sin”—or as it is said in the chapter before, “If we confess our sins”—“we have an Advocate.” The Lord will not let His confessing children despair:

“For lo, the dying Lamb
Utterly forbids despair
To all who love His name.”

And this keeps us from poring on ourselves too long, lest it sink us lower. This is His word, “Do not nourish poison; there is an Advocate.” Unbelief says, “You have gone too far.” “No,” says the Spirit, “employ this blessed Advocate; take your petitions in faith to the blessed God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Go without excuses, but go, and take confessions; go in this way.” Here lies a good deal of the true conflict of the child of God. And here lies, what is not easy to believe, *the great strength of a sinner in opposition to his sins*. If he says, “I will resist;” he does not resist, how can he? If he says, “I fear the rod will come;” that will not do it. But if he looks to the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Jesus, to be poured on his soul, convincing him and turning the eye of faith to this blessed Advocate, he will find himself strengthened. But sin and the devil will oppose this way; for it takes the very life out of sin to pray in the name of Jesus Christ; it takes the very strength out of sin to plead with the Father in the name of the Advocate. “We have an Advocate”—a righteous Advocate, “Jesus Christ the

Righteous." How can the Father turn away from His righteous Son? O the strength of Christ's righteous character and work of redemption! who can estimate it? The Father knows the strength thereof; for the Son says, "*I will* that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am." "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you" (Jno. xvii. 24; xvi. 23).

Now suppose we say, "Shall we get to the end honourably with all this sin?" and added to it, have the feeling that our sins are inveterate, that they move in us with great strength, as naturally as the heart beats and pulsates with life. I said the other morning, "Shall I get to heaven, always indulging sin? always at it in my mind?" and really but for the Advocate, one would not be able to hold on. Here God fixes His people: "*We have an Advocate*"—we who have sinned, who are brought to confess it, to feel it, to whom it is a bitter thing, we who are corrupted by our backslidings, we in our pollutions, have an Advocate with the Father; that is, the very One we hope in and love, "Jesus Christ the Righteous." Poor sinner, can you use this Advocate? Then heaven is yours; there can be no missing where faith is enabled to make use of the Advocate. There He is before the throne. Once He died for sin, now He lives to God; once was crucified through weakness, now He liveth by the power of God, and bears deeply sculptured on His heart the names of all His sinning, sinful children—an Advocate for them.

I wish we may be enabled more truly and diligently to mark the effect of every divine truth received into the heart by the power of the Holy Ghost. The proper effect really is to kill the power and take away the dominion of sin, that we may cease from it, and resist unto blood, striving against it. This is the will of God in making known to us the Saviour and Advocate for sinners.

J. K. P.

Forgiveness is a thing chosen out of God from all eternity, to exalt and magnify the glory of His grace; and it will be made to appear to all the world at the day of judgment to have been a great thing. When the soul comes in any measure to be made sensible of it, it finds it so great, so excellent and astonishing, that it sinks under the thoughts of it. It hath dimensions, a length, breadth, depth, and height that no rational soul can take or measure.—*Owen*.

WIT'S-END CORNER.

“All their wisdom is swallowed up.”—Psa. cvii. 27, margin.

INQUIRY.

Stand you at Wit's-end Corner,
 Christian with troubled brow?
 Think you on what's before you,
 And all you're bearing now?
 Seems all the world against you,
 And you must stand alone?—
 Remember Wit's-end Corner
 Is where God's power is shown.

Stand you at Wit's-end Corner
 Blinded with wearing pain,
 Feeling you can't endure it,
 You cannot bear the strain?
 Bruised through the constant suff'ring,
 Dizzy and dazed and numb,—
 Remember Wit's-end Corner
 Is where Christ loves to come.

Stand you at Wit's-end Corner,
 Your work before you spread,
 Begun, but all unfinish'd,
 Pressing on heart and head?
 Longing for strength to do it,
 Outstretching trembling hands?
 Behold, at Wit's-end Corner
 The Burden-bearer stands.

Stand you at Wit's-end Corner
 Yearning for those you love,
 Desiring, praying, watching,
 Pleading their cause above?
 Wouldst fain lead them to Jesus?
 Wouldst know if you've been true?
 He whispers at that Corner,
 “I'll win them, who won *you*.”

Stand you at Wit's-end Corner?
 You're in the very spot
 To learn the wondrous wisdom
 Of Him who faileth not.

Maybe to brighter pathways
 Your feet will soon be moved ;
 But only at that Corner
 The God of might is proved.

UNKNOWN (*altered*).

ANSWER.

Yes, oft at Wit's-end Corner
 I've proved that God is true ;
 For when bereft of wisdom,
 He's come and led me through.
 Not once in trouble only,
 But o'er and o'er again,
 I've found Him at that Corner,
 In sorrow, grief, and pain.

I've stood at Wit's-end Corner,
 And, wond'ring where to go;
 I've heard a voice behind me,
 Directing what to do.
 Then that which seem'd so crooked
 Has all been made quite straight :
 When I'm at Wit's-end Corner
 God never comes too late.

And now when at that Corner
 I know no way to take,
 I look up straight to Jesus,
 Who saith, " I'll ne'er forsake."
 With rags and heavy burdens
 I fly to Him for rest ;
 And then, at Wit's-end Corner,
 I lean upon His breast.

And more, at Wit's-end Corner,
 When sin and Satan press,
 His perfect law-fulfilling
 Becomes my glorious dress.
 And still while trav'ling onward,
 O may I keep in view
 That when at Wit's-end Corner,
 My God will bear me through !

March, 1911.

L. W. (*altered*).

FREE MERCY.

A MORNING READING BY JAMES BOURNE.

SUNDAY, March 17th, 1888 or 9. 2 Cor. xiii. 3, 4: "Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to youward is not weak, but is mighty in you. For though He was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in (margin, with) Him; but we shall live with Him by the power of God towards you." Seek ye a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to youward is not weak, but is mighty towards you? Then you must distinguish well between my weakness and foolishness and blunders as a natural man, and the wisdom and power of Christ in me towards you. For that you will find mighty through God. For He was crucified through weakness; yet He liveth by the power of God. So, as Christ fell under our sins, we fall with Him; but as He rose by the power of God, so we rise with Him. For if He had lain in the grave, we should have died without hope; but now death is become a sleep. And though I have many fears, I do feel a hope that when the time comes, it may be with me as I have seen it with many. But surely I feel what it is before God to say, "I have sinned against heaven and before Thee, and am no more worthy to be called Thy son;" but then He sees me a long way off, and meets me, and puts on me this ring of everlasting love. If we find ourselves secretly gliding to a distance from Him, there is nothing but this renewing of His mercy that will bring us back.

"For the Spirit revealeth all things, yea, *the deep things of God*" (1 Cor. ii. 10); and surely no other person knows what God is teaching to any one. None of you can in the least comprehend the mysterious dealings of God with me during the last five months. You cannot comprehend the deep sense I have had of my guilt and sin as an abject sinner before God, nor of His sweet comfort wherewith He has upheld my soul. Another "deep" thing is the providence of God we are under; which I can see, however it may end, has His blessing in it. Of that I feel assured. God has so many times instructed me in this; and it is the mercy of all you to seek His blessing. And this is another "deep" thing—how God in dealing with His people joins temporal and spiritual things, giving at the same time a sense of His everlasting love and mercy, and also wisdom, light and discretion in the dispensation we are under.

A PLACE OF REFUGE.

DEAR Mr. Newton,—Many, many thanks for your kind and sympathetic letter, which I received last night. I can truly say that most of the quotations which you give in your letter have been made good in my case. I cannot think how you came to hear of my affliction. And perhaps you would like to have a short history of it from myself. It is, however, not easy to give a report without bringing in something of that monster Self; but I would desire ever to speak well of His name who has been a good God to me.

From about the 6th of November last year I had been suffering from a tumour on the tongue, for which I consulted our doctor. He suggested its immediate removal; but as I was not very willing, he endeavoured to disperse it by medicine and other means, which promised success after four months' treatment. But at the end of July the complaint became worse; and at last took on a malignant form, and I was advised to consult a leading surgeon in London who takes special cases of the mouth, throat, ears, &c. He said that an operation was absolutely necessary to save me from future misery, and advised it at once. I went on the following day to a nursing home in London; where he came the next day and performed the operation successfully. You may imagine I had many fears for some time beforehand, and put up many, many petitions too. It was a very gradual work, bringing me down to submit entirely to God's will. But on *the* morning when the doctor came in to lead me to the operating room, which was at the top of the house with a skylight, and I saw three other doctors present and several nurses, every fear was completely taken away, and I felt as if He held me in His arms. One of them felt my pulse, and astonished them by saying that it was slow and regular. When lying on the table I could feelingly say to myself with confidence, "Into Thy hands I commend my spirit and body too; for Thou hast redeemed me, Lord God of truth." The word that was given me to rest upon was, "In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence, and His children shall have a place of refuge." Also that passage in Isaiah, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee," &c.; and I proved them both true. When I was able for my wife to come and see me, I wrote this: "I believed before, but now *I know.*"

I was able to return home in a carriage three weeks ago ; and more or less I can feel His presence with me still. I am feeling better, but have a great way to make up. I cannot talk, as my tongue has been entirely removed. I have to take my food, which is liquid, through a tube. . . .

Yours in Christian love,

Croydon, Sept. 15th, 1910.

CHARLES MOSS.

"I WILL COME TO YOU."

DEAR Friend in the Truth,— . . . Oh what a black, vile, wretched man and sinner I am ! Oh the amazing wonders of God's kindness to such an old wretch in sin and rebellion, who naturally loves the devil, sin, and destruction, and eternal death before the ever-blessed God and the ever-dearest Lord Jesus Christ ! I arose some time in the night on Saturday, at Leeds, to seek His blessed renewings in my heart, and an anointing to speak in His great Name ; and got such a blessed assurance He would be with the least babe in grace and such an old wretch in sin that, heaven of heavens ! God came down into my heart and in the place where I was, so that the glory seemed almost to overwhelm me ; and He said, " Turn away thine eyes, for they have overcome Me." " O," I exclaimed, " if the eyes of such a wretch are made so beautiful by Thy glory and presence as to overcome Thee and ravish Thy heart, what are the effects felt by me ?" The bliss and glory seemed almost too holy and great for the poor body to hold. Oh, how my face shone, my heart was renewed, and no sadness ! Indeed, I feel a little of the melting now. I know you won't begrudge a poor crow picking a few fat and good pieces up, removing a little of his habitual leanness, and the dear Spirit dispersing a little of the savour of His blessed name amongst His dear people. Yea, they knew His blessed voice, although it was through a thing that is not. Oh, brother, get near to Him, for He is all reality ; yea, while He smiles and His love is felt, I feel I could die for Him.

All blessings rest on you and yours from the upper and nether Springs, is the desire of yours in a precious, precious Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father in truth and love.

Bolton, Feb. 20th, 1911.

GEORGE NEWMAN.

CRUMBS FROM THE MASTER'S TABLE

FROM BOSTON'S "CROOK IN THE LOT," OR, "THE SOVEREIGNTY AND WISDOM OF GOD IN THE AFFLICTIONS OF MEN DISPLAYED."

(Continued from page 272.)

Now, III. I am to confirm the doctrine, or the decision of the text, *that the case of the former is better than that of the latter*. It is better to be in a low, afflicted condition, with the spirit humbled and brought down to the lot, than to be of a proud and high spirit, getting the lot brought up to it, and matters to go according to one's mind. This will appear from the following considerations:

1. *Humility is so far preferable to pride that in no circumstances whatsoever its preferableness can fail*. Let all the afflictions in the world attend the humble spirit, and all the prosperity in the world attend pride, humility will still have the better; as gold in a dunghill is more excellent than so much lead in a cabinet. For,

(1) Humility is a part of the image of God. Pride is the master-piece of the image of the devil. Let us view Him who was the express Image of the Father's Person, and we shall behold Him meek and lowly in heart, Matt. xi. 29. None more afflicted; yet His spirit perfectly brought down to His lot. Isa. liii. 7: "He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth." That is a shining part of the divine Image, for though God cannot be low in respect of His state and condition, yet He is of infinite condescension, Isa. lvii. 15. None bears as He, Rom. ii. 4, nor suffers patiently so much contradiction to His will; which is proposed to us for our encouragement in affliction, as it shone in Christ. "For consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds," Heb. xii. 3.

Pride, on the other hand, is the very image of the devil, 1 Tim. iii. 6. Shall we value ourselves on the height of our spirits? Satan will vie with the highest of us in that point; for though he is the most miserable, yet he is the proudest in the whole creation. There is the greatest distance between his spirit and his lot; the former is as high as the throne of God, the latter as low as hell; and as it is impossible that ever his lot should be brought up to his spirit, so his spirit will never come down to his lot; and therefore he will be

eternally in a state of war with his lot. Hence, even at this time he has no rest, but goes about, seeks rest indeed, but finds none.

Now, is it not better to be like God than like the devil? like Him who is the Fountain of all good, than him who is the spring and sink of all evil? Can anything possibly cast the balance here, and turn the preference to the other side? "Then better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly," &c.

(2) Humility and lowliness of spirit qualify us for friendly communion and intercourse with God in Christ. Pride makes God our enemy, 1 Pet. v. 5. Our happiness here and hereafter depends on our friendly intercourse with heaven. If we have not that, nothing can make up our loss, Psa. xxx. 5. If we have that, nothing can make us miserable, Rom. viii. 31: "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Now, who are they whom God is for but the humble and lowly? they who, being in Christ, are so made like Him? He blesses them, and declares them the heirs of the crown of glory: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. v. 3). He will look to them, be their condition ever so low, while He overlooks others, Isa. lxvi. 2. He will have respect to them, however they be despised: "Though the Lord be high, yet hath He respect to the lowly; but the proud He knoweth afar off" (Psa. cxxxviii. 6). He will dwell with them, however poorly they dwell, Isa. lvii. 15. He will certainly exalt them in due time, however low they lie now. Isa. xl. 4.

Whom is He against? Whom does He resist? The proud. Them He curseth, Jer. xvii. 5; and that curse will dry up their arm at length. The proud man is God's rival; he makes himself his own god, and would have those about him make him theirs too; he rages, he blusters, if they will not fall down before him. But God will bring him down, Isa. xl. 4; Psa. xviii. 27.

Now, is it not better to be qualified for communion with God, than to have Him engaged against us, at any rate?

(3) Humility is a duty pleasing to God, pride a sin pleasing to the devil, Isa. lvii. 15; 1 Tim. iii. 6. God requires us to be humble, especially under affliction, "and be clothed with humility" (1 Pet. v. 5, 6). That is our becoming garment. The humble publican was accepted, the proud Phari-

see rejected. We may say of the generation of the proud as 1 Thess. ii. 16: "Wrath is come upon them to the uttermost." They please neither God nor men, but only themselves and Satan, whom they resemble in it. Now duty is better than sin at any rate.

2. *They whose spirits are brought down to their afflicted lot have much quiet and repose of mind, while the proud, that must have their lot brought up to their mind, have much disquiet, trouble and vexation.* Consider here that, on the one hand, quiet of mind, and ease within, is a great blessing upon which the comfort of life depends. Nothing without this can make one's life happy, Dan. v. 6. And where this is maintained, nothing can make it miserable, John xvi. 33. This being secured in God, there is a defiance bid to all the troubles of the world (Psa. xli. 2, 3); like the child sailing in the midst of the rolling waves.

The spirit brought down to the lot makes and maintains this inward tranquillity. Our whole trouble in our lot in the world rises from the disagreement of our mind therewith; let the mind be brought to the lot, and the whole tumult is instantly hushed; let it be kept in that disposition, and the man shall stand at ease in his affliction, like a rock unmoved with waters beating on it. Col. iii. 15: "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called."

On the other hand, consider what disquiet of mind the proud suffer ere they can get their lot brought up to their mind. "They have taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity," Jer. ix. 5; James iv. 2: "Ye lust, and have not; ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain; ye fight and war, yet ye have not." What arrows of grief go through their heart! what torture of anxiety, fretting, and vexation must they endure! what contrary passions fight within them! and what sallies of passions do they make! what uneasiness was Haman in, before he could carry the point of revenge against Mordecai, obtaining the king's decree!

When the thing is got to their mind, it will not quit the cost. The enjoyment thereof brings not so much satisfaction and pleasure as the want of it gave pain. This was evident in Rachael's case, as to the having of children; and in that case, Psa. lxxviii. 30, 31. There is a dead fly in the ointment that mars the savour they expected to find in it. Fruit

plucked off the tree of providence ere it is ripe, will readily set the teeth on edge. It proves like the manna kept overnight (Exod. xvi. 20).

They have but an unsure hold of it; it doth not last with them. Either it is taken from them soon, and they are just where they were again: "I gave thee a king in My anger, and took him away in My wrath" (Hos. xiii. 11); having a root of pride, it quickly withers away; or else they are taken from it, that they have no access to enjoy it. So Haman obtained the decree; but ere the day of the execution came, he was gone.

3. *They that get their spirit brought down to their afflicted lot, gain a point far more valuable than they who in their pride force up their lot to their mind*, Prov. xvi. 32: "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." This will appear, if you consider,

(1) The latter makes out a better condition in outward things, the former makes a better man. The life is more than meat; the man himself is more valuable than all external conveniences that attend him. What therefore betters the man is preferable to what betters only his condition. Who doubts but where two are sick, and the one gets himself transported from a coarse bed to a fine one, the sickness still remaining; the other lies still in the coarse bed, but the sickness is removed, that the case of the latter is preferable? So here, &c.

(2) The subduing of our own passions is more excellent than to have the whole world subdued to our will; for then we are masters of ourselves, according to that, Luke xxi. 19. Whereas, in the other case, we are still slaves to the worst of masters, Rom. vi. 16. In the one case we are safe, blow what storm will; in the other we lie exposed to thousands of dangers. Prov. xxv. 28: "He that hath no rule over his own spirit, is like a city that is broken down and without walls."

(3) When both shall come to be judged, it will appear the one has multiplied the tale of their good works, in bringing their spirit to their lot; the other, the tale of their ill works, in bringing their lot to their spirit. We have to do with an omniscient God, in whose eyes every internal action is a work, good or bad, to be reckoned for, Rom. ii. 16.

An afflicted lot is painful, but, where it is well managed, it is very fruitful; it exercises the graces of the Spirit in a

Christian, which otherwise would lie dormant. But there is never an act of resignation to the will of God under the cross, nor an act of trusting in Him for His help, but they will be recorded in heaven's register as good works, Mal. iii. 16. And these are occasioned by affliction.

On the other hand, there is never a rising of the proud heart against the lot, nor a faithless attempt to bring it to our mind, whether it succeed or not, but it passes for an ill work before God. How then will the tale of such be multiplied by the war in which the spoil is divided !

Use 1. Of information. Hence we may learn,

1. It is not always best for folks to get their will. Many there are who cannot be pleased with God's will about them, and they get their own will with a vengeance, Psa. lxxxi. 11, 12: "Israel would none of Me, so I gave them up to their own hearts' lust; and they walked in their own counsels." It may be most pleasant and grateful for the time, but it is not the safest. Let not the people pride themselves in their carrying things that way then by a strong hand; let them not triumph in such victory; the after-reckoning will open their eyes.

2. The afflicted, crossed party, whose lot is kept low, is so far from being a loser that he is a gainer thereby, if his spirit is brought down to it. And if he will see things in the light of God's unerring Word, he is in better case than if he had got all carried to his mind. In the one way the vessels of wrath are fitted for destruction, Psa. lxxviii. 29—31. In the other, the vessels of mercy are fitted for glory, and so God disciplines His own, Lam. iii. 27.

3. It is better to yield to providence than to fight it out, though we should win. Yielding to the sovereign disposal is both our becoming duty and our greatest interest. Taking that way, we act most honourably; for what honour can there be in the creature's disputing his ground with his Creator? and we act most wisely; for whatever may be the success of some battles in that case, we may be sure victory will be on heaven's side in the war, 1 Sam. ii. 9: "For by strength shall no man prevail."

4. It is of so much greater concern for us to get our spirits brought down than our outward condition raised. But who believes this? All men strive to raise their outward condition; most men never mind the bringing down of their spirits,

and few there are who apply themselves to it. And what is that but to be concerned to minister drink to the thirsty sick, but never to mind to seek a cure for them, whereby their thirst may be carried off?

Use 2. Of exhortation. As you meet with crosses in your lot in the world, let your desire be rather to have your spirit humbled and brought down than to get the cross removed. I mean not but that you may use all lawful means for the removal of your cross, in dependence on God; but only that you be more concerned to get your spirit to bow and ply, than to get the crook in your lot evened.

Motive 1. It is far more needful for us to have our spirits humbled under the cross than to have the cross removed. The removal of the cross is needful only for the ease of the flesh; the humbling for the profit of our souls, to purify them, and bring them into a state of health and cure.

2. The humbling of the spirit will have a mighty, good effect on a crossed lot; but the removal of the cross will have none on the unhumiliated spirit. The humbling will lighten the cross mightily for the time (Matt. xi. 30), and in due time carry it cleanly off (1 Pet. v. 6). But the removal of the cross is not a means to humble the unhumiliated; though it may prevent irritation, yet the disease still remains.

3. Think with yourselves how dangerous and hopeless a case it is to have the cross removed ere the spirit is humbled; that is, to have the means of cure pulled away and blocked up from us, while the power of the disease is yet unbroken; to be taken off trials ere we have given any good proof of ourselves, and so be given over of our physician as hopeless, Isa. i. 5; Hos. iv. 17. . . .

“Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.”—1 PET. v. 6.

In the preceding part of this chapter, the apostle presents the duties of the church officers towards the people; and then the duty of the people both towards their officers and among themselves, which he winds up in one word—submission. For which causes he recommends humility as the great means to bring all to their respective duties. This is enforced with an argument taken from the different treatment the Lord gives to the proud and the humble; His opposing Himself to the one, and showing favour to the other. Our text is an exhortation drawn from that consideration, and in it we have,

1st. The duty we are to study: "*Humble yourselves* therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time." And therein we may notice,

(1) The state of those to whom it is proposed, those under the mighty hand of God, whom His hand has humbled, or brought low in respect of their circumstances in the world. And by these, I think, are meant not only such as are under particular, signal afflictions, which is the lot of some, but also those who by the providence of God are in any kind of way lowered, which is the lot of all. All being in a state of submission or dependence on others, God has made this life a state of trial; and for that cause He has, by His mighty hand, subjected men one to another, as wives, children, servants, to husbands, parents, masters; and these again to their superiors; among whom, again, even the highest depend on those under them, as magistrates and ministers on the people, even the supreme magistrate. This state of the world God has made for the trial of men in their several stations, and dependence on others; and therefore, when the time of trial is over, it also comes to an end. "Then cometh the end—when He shall have put down all rule and authority and power" (1 Cor. xv. 24, 25). Meantime, while it lasts, it makes humility necessary to all, to prompt them to the duty they owe their superiors, to whom God's mighty hand has subjected them.

(2) The duty itself, namely, *humiliation of our spirits under the humbling circumstances the Lord has placed us in*. "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time." Whether we are under particular afflictions, which have cast us down from the height we were sometime in, or whether we are only inferiors in one or more relations; or whether, which is most common, both these are in our case, we must therein eye the mighty hand of God as that which placed us there, and is over us, there to hold us down in it; and so, with an awful regard thereto, bow down under it, in the temper and disposition of our spirits, suiting our spirits to our lot, and careful of performing the duty of our low sphere.

(3) A particular spring of this duty. Therefore we must consider that those who cannot quietly keep the place assigned them of God in their afflictions or relations, but still press upward against the mighty hand that is over them,

that mighty hand resists them, throwing them down, and often farther down than before ; whereas it treats them with grace and favour that compose themselves under it to a quiet discharge of their duty in their situation. So, *eyeing this*, we must set ourselves to humble ourselves.

2ndly. The infallible issue of that course, "*That He may exalt you in due time.*" The particle *that* is not always to be understood finally, as denoting the end or design the agent proposes to himself, but sometimes eventually only, as denoting the event or issue of the action, John ix. 2, 3 ; 1 John ii. 19. So here, the meaning is not, "Humble yourselves, on design He may exalt you," but, "and it shall issue in His exalting you." Compare James iv. 10.

(1) Here is a happy event of humiliation of spirit secured ; and that is, exaltation or lifting up on high by the power of God. "That He may exalt you." Exalting will as surely follow on humiliation of spirit, suitable to the low lot, as the morning follows the night, or the sun riseth after the dawning. And these words are fitted to obviate the objections that the world and our corrupt hearts are apt to make against bringing down the spirit to the low lot.

Objection 1. If we let our spirit fall, we shall lie always at folks' feet, and they will trample on us.

Answer. No ; pride of spirit unsubdued will bring men to lie at the feet of others for ever, Isa. lxvi. 24. But humiliation of spirit will bring them undoubtedly out from under their feet, Mal. iv. 2, 3. They that humble themselves now will be exalted for ever ; they will be brought out of their low situation and circumstances. Cast ye yourselves even down with your low lot, and assure yourselves ye shall not lie there.

Objection 2. If we do not raise ourselves, none will raise us ; and therefore we must see to ourselves, to do ourselves right.

Answer. That is wrong. Humble ye yourselves in respect of your spirits, and God will raise you up in respect of your lot, or low condition ; and they that have God engaged for raising them have no reason to say they have none to do it for them. Bringing down of the spirit is our duty, raising us up is God's work ; let us not forfeit the privilege of God's raising us up by arrogating that work to ourselves, taking it out of His hand.

Objection 3. But sure we shall never rise high, if we let our spirits fall.

Answer. That is wrong too; God will not only raise the humble ones, but He will lift them up on high; for so the Word signifies. They shall be as high at length as ever they were low, were they ever so low; nay, the exaltation will bear proportion to the humiliation.

(2) Here is the date of that happy event when it will fall out. In due time, or in the season, the proper season for it. Gal. vi. 9: "In due season we shall reap, if we faint not." We are apt to weary in humbling, trying circumstances, and would instantly have up our head, John vii. 6. But Solomon observes, "There is a time for everything when it does best, and the wise will wait for it" (Eccles. iii. 1—8). There is a time too for exalting them that humble themselves. God has set it, and it is the due time for the purpose, the time when it does best, even as sowing in the spring and reaping in the harvest. When that time comes, your exalting shall no longer be put off; and it would come too soon, should it come before that time.

(To be continued.)

Obituary.

On October 25th, 1910, ANNE ARNOLD, aged 78, of Smallfield, near Horley.

Her own Account.

It was in the spring of 1849, when I was between 16 and 17 years of age, that I hope the Lord put His fear in my heart. I had during the winter before been under convictions, and I had become more moral, and left off the vain and foolish things with which I had been too much taken up; and I really thought I was getting better. But about this time Mr. Joseph Hatton came to preach at Outwood Chapel, and I went there. It was during the morning service I felt I was altogether wrong in the Lord's sight, and had been all my life. Coupled with this I had such a desire in my heart to be right, and such a love to Mr. Hatton's preaching; and oh, I felt, if I could be like him! I was glad of every opportunity to hear the preached word, and to get with those I thought were the Lord's people. But yet I felt the Lord was angry with me for my sins; I felt condemned in the sight of God, but was led to beg of the Lord to have mercy

on me, a poor sinful creature. One Sunday, not long after this, Mr. Hatton had this text, "Draw me; we will run after Thee;" which was much comfort to me. Also Isa. lxi. 3 was so suitable to me, "To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion," &c. I felt such a love to the Lord, His people, and His ways. After Mr. Hatton left Outwood Chapel, he preached first in a barn, and then in the house he lived in. In this house he formed a church, and after this I was baptised and became a member. It was so very little I said before the church I wondered they received me. After I was baptised I sank into a very dark state of soul. Truly the wild beasts of the forest did creep forth in my soul's experience. It was about four years after the Lord, I trust, began a work of grace in my soul that I was married, and for nearly eleven years I had a God-fearing husband. During much of this time I walked in much darkness, with now and then a little lift by the way. Much poverty and the cares of a family often overcame me, and I was robbed and spoiled in my soul's feelings. But at my dear husband's death I was supported under it. I was so taken up with the things and ways of the Lord that, even now, the room I slept in seems a special place to me. Many times, with not a penny to call my own, and scarcely food enough to support myself and children, yet the dear Lord's Word and way were such a support to me that very low living—a piece of bread—was sweet to me.

About twenty-six years ago, as I was going into the hop garden, I felt I could not bear up under it, if the Lord did not appear for me. The next Sunday I went into Smarts' Hill Chapel, and I hope and trust had a special time from the Lord under the late Mr. Swannel. He read Psalm lxiii. The text was 1 Thess. ii. 7, in the morning; in the afternoon, 2 Cor. viii. 12. Every thing seemed to be for me, and I was much favoured during the night and a good part of the next week in the hop garden; my affections were on those blessed things. Would to the Lord it was more so now!

About twenty-five years ago I learned more of what a dreadful state I was in, if the Lord did not keep me. It was in this way: I took a certain affair to be an answer to prayer, but it turned out not to be so. Oh the dreadful havoc this made in my poor soul! What with the great enemy and my wicked heart, I suffered through this affair for over five years. Oh, the times when alone did I deplore my wretched state

and say, "Oh, how wrong I am! what a deplorable state I am in!" And this would rise up in my heart, "What is the use of my praying to the Lord?" Yet I have been most heartily thankful the Lord did not let me have my own way; and I feel I can say with Peter, "Kept by the power of God." I feel I must be drawing near the end of my days. Oh that the Lord will be with me, and manifest His pardoning mercy to my soul! For I feel I am a great sinner. But,

"My soul, take courage from the Lord,
Believe and plead His holy Word;
To Him alone do thou complain,
Nor shalt thou seek His face in vain."

It is my desire after I am gone not to have a word said to exalt me; for if ever I am saved, it must be by free and sovereign grace alone. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

I have written an account of my dear husband's call by grace, and last days. Poverty and the cares I had kept me from doing it at the time of his death; but I feel it ought to be known for the glory of God.

ANNE ARNOLD.

December 26th, 1902.

WILLIAM ARNOLD, of Smallfield, near Horley.

My dear husband was born March 22nd, 1825; died February 28th, 1864. About the year 1845 the Lord began a work of grace in his soul. He told me he had not been used to going to chapel since he was a boy and went to Caphorne Chapel. But one Sunday morning there was to be a baptising in Outwood Chapel, and he and some of his fellow-servants went to see it. But as he was going he was so filled with shame and convictions of sin—for they were going to make fun—so great was his shame he really felt he could not go, and stopped. But his companions urged him on; so under deep feeling and exercise of mind he went. The late Mr. Westcott was reading Psalm xlviii., but so much was his attention taken up he told me he knew nothing about the baptising; and when he got out, he did not dare to say anything against it, and for shame he was afraid to speak in favour of it; so he crept behind. From that time his convictions increased greatly. This went on for some time till one day his master was having a harvest dinner and a hunt on the farm, and asked him to come and have a hunt with

them. But he refused, and went and lay down in a wood; and as he lay, his sins came upon him with such a dreadful weight he felt he must be lost. But as he lay there mourning on account of sin, there came to him just a little hope in the mercy of God. Upon that he got up and went into the hay loft, and as he lay his sins came again with dreadful force. Then in a moment the Lord spoke these words to him, "*It is I: be not afraid.*" He broke out, "What? for me, Lord?" when the words came powerfully again, "*It is I: be not afraid.*" He was so filled with the love of Jesus he could by faith see Him hanging on the cross and bleeding for him. He was sure he should go to heaven then, and for some months he enjoyed much of the Lord's presence. He was truly a very humble and God-fearing man; his walk and conduct were very consistent. He felt the Lord's presence much with him during the winter or two winters before he died, while thrashing in the barn. He was a very hard-working man, and had to experience great poverty, but was much supported under it. He suffered from consumption, and as he lay on his death-bed, the Lord brought these words home to his soul, "*Thy love is better than wine;*" which was a great comfort to him. He was a member at Smallfield for years, and was buried by Mr. Hatton.

Truly my loss was his gain.

ANNE ARNOLD.

MARY S. BALLARD, who passed away on February 16th, 1911, at Patcham, near Brighton.

It appears that our friend Mrs. Ballard had life in her soul from her very early years; but it was not clearly manifested until about two or three years before her end. She was always very nervous in a thunderstorm; and in her young days her mother once said to her, "If you so dread thunderstorms, how will you stand in the judgment day?" She said she felt much worse from that time, and often wondered what she should do. Also a card made a great impression on her, on which was printed, "This too shall pass away." In the last few years of her life she was brought into heavy afflictions through bodily suffering and increasing family trial; which were the means of bringing her into great distress of soul and fear of death. The want of a deeper sense of sin was often a trouble to her; she would say, "I have never felt my sins as I should like; and that is my great trouble."

She knew she was a great sinner, yet could not feel the concern she would have. Many a time she would say how she longed to know her sins were pardoned; and whenever she felt a sweet hope, she would believe all was right.

Her hope was twice especially revived near the beginning of her afflictions in 1908. The first time was in the beginning of August, when she was suddenly taken very ill on the 3rd, from a slight stroke. She was then much alarmed at the thought of death. Her sister says, "My poor sister was in the most dreadful distress, begging me to pray for her. I said, 'I do try to.' 'You must pray aloud, that I can hear you,' was her answer. She so continued all through the night, sometimes begging herself." On the 4th and 5th a friend who visited her writes: "I found Mrs. B. in much distress. She said, 'I have had a dreadful night. I felt I should be lost, and was afraid to shut my eyes, for fear I should awake in hell. I never shall forget it. I have had hopes before, but all seemed gone, and I could not get a word. It was as if the Lord would not hear me. I cannot die without Him. Do you think He will come to me? Have you ever been as low as I am?—But I am such a sinner; I know I deserve hell. This is a solemn place; it is no fancy.' Reading to her Psalm li. seemed to relieve her; and on speaking of the words, 'Call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee,' she said, 'Perhaps He will come to me, then. How many times has that been my language,

"The blood of atonement apply."

I asked Him to give me a little sleep, and He has given me sweet sleep; perhaps He will come to me. If He does come, I shall have cause to praise Him the loudest.'

"I went again the next morning, and directly I went in she looked up with a smile, saying, 'I am better, I have had a word.' As she was unable to speak distinctly, I only caught the words, '*It shall come: though it tarry, wait for it;*' and she added, 'I couldn't tell you how big the words, "*It will surely come,*" were; it was as if I could see them written before me in large letters. Then the verse came, oh, so sweetly,

"The soul that on Jesus has lean'd for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to his foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavour to shake,
I'll never, no, never, no, never forsake."

It was just like that—as if all hell came against me.' With a shudder she said, 'O it was dreadful! I shall never forget it, I do want to praise Him. No one need despair, since I have mercy found.' Then, looking back on her past life, she said, 'Many times I have felt sure I knew in a measure what Mr. P. was preaching about; and when I have got home, I have felt to want to be alone. At other times I have come away very cast down, fearing I knew nothing aright. How I have looked at the Lord's people, and envied them; and when one and another have joined the church, I have thought, "There is another who has the blessing; and I am still left behind." Some months ago I was walking up North St., feeling that all that was going on and the shop windows, &c., were nothing to me; and that I could say from my heart,

"Thou, O Christ, art all I want."

And for years these hymns have been my prayer,

"Prepare me, gracious God,
To stand before Thy face;"

"The Lord will happiness divine," &c.

Some years ago Mr. Hazlerigg preached from the holy waters in Ezekiel xlvi. ; and I felt I could follow him step by step till he came to the river to swim in; and then I was left behind.' "

She partially recovered from this illness; but in the October following, the painful complaint began to show itself which at length ended her life. An operation was considered needful, and being naturally very timid, she was dreadfully distressed at the thought of going through it. After it was over, a friend visiting her enquired how she had been brought through it, telling her she had tried to entreat the Lord to work in her holy, venturing faith, to leave herself in His hands. She replied with tears that He had answered the prayer; that when calling upon the Lord through the night previous to the operation, she pleaded to this effect, "Lord, if Thou dost not help me now, I must sink, I shall sink;" and while saying it, she felt strength come into her soul, and the words came,

"In fiery trials thou shalt see
That as thy days thy strength shall be,"

with such a sense of His presence that she was enabled to trust her soul and body wholly to Him, whether for life or death. When the nurse came to her in the morning, she

told her she could walk downstairs without fear; and she walked down and laid herself on the table, feeling if she did not open her eyes again, it would be well with her, and she did not mind if she lived or died. She saw all the preparations, and they were nothing to her. And now she had come through it, there was the preciousness of the looking back and the sweetness of it as she spoke; and she said,

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

She said she had never before been raised to such a hope as she had now, and how wonderful it was that her fear was then taken away, for she was so timid naturally. Also that she liked to tell it for the honour of the Lord's name, and should tell her husband and children when she returned home.

Another friend says, “She told me this afternoon (October 31st), when visiting her at the Home, that she felt God was with her *all the time* (meaning, through the operation); that a blessed promise which she hoped had been given her previously, was then fulfilled, or partly so; namely,

“I will be with thee thy troubles to bless,
And sanctify to thee thy greatest distress.”

While still at the Home she wrote the following letter:

“My dear Friend,—I tried to write yesterday, but felt so dark and miserable I could not go on. This morning I have felt such a sweet hope in God's mercies. What a difference it makes!

“‘Can He have shown such mercies past,
And yet reject my soul at last?’

No, I do not believe He will. But oh, when gloomy doubts appear, I sink so low; they do prevail so often with me. I then feel ready all hopes to forego. I can only say, ‘God be merciful to me a sinner.’

“I cannot use my hand, it is still so weak. I am hoping to go home on Saturday. There is another operation here to-day. When I think of my own, the more wonderful it seems—that a good God upheld and helped me. I can never praise and thank Him enough. And then to have a hope that I shall one day be with Him, what an unspeakable mercy! I have been feeling this morning to have almost more of His mercies than I can bear. . . . M. S. BALLARD.”

Her sister says, “In three weeks she returned home, and I nursed her for about six months. She recovered far enough

to be able to attend again at 'Galeed,' and had little helps sometimes, but was at other times much distressed, and would say, 'Suppose after all I was deceived—but I did feel it, and should not have minded dying then; but now it seems so different.'" Her faith appeared to lose the sweet advantage it had gained; and for the most part she was not able to look above her afflictions to the merciful Hand that sent them.

[*From her letters.*] March 27th, 1909 :—" I believe I can say from my heart at times I would not have been without the trial; for although I have never been in such agony of soul and never sunk so low before, yet sometimes I have felt a sweet hope that I shall be right at last; although not to the full extent I want to. The other day this verse came so sweetly :

" ' For His correction render praise,
'Tis given thee for thy good ;
The lash is steep'd He on thee lays,
And soften'd in His blood ;'

and I said, ' Lord, if it is given me for my good, I would thank Thee that Thou didst send it.' O may I not be deceived ! "

June 29th, 1909 :—" I was feeling very much cast down the other day, and O, so afraid that I knew nothing aright, when I took up Fowler's Selection, and came to hymn 287, verses 3, 4 :

" ' Think not that He'll thy suit reject,
Or spurn thy humble plea ;
He hears the groans of His elect,
And hates to put away.

" ' Though twice ten thousand fears should fill
Thy soul with sore dismay,
Christ is the Friend of sinners still,
And hates to put away.'

For a little time I could not doubt.

" ' Would He bestow such mercies past,
And yet reject my soul at last ?'

I do not believe He will; for I have had some big mercies. But these feelings do not last long; and then how I fear and doubt again ! " All through another year she was usually in a very low, sinking state of mind. One sermon she heard well was from the text: "What do these feeble Jews?" showing the almighty power of God on behalf of His feeble people, who cry to Him. On June 29th, 1910, she wrote,

"I so often feel all misery, doubts, and fears; and at times it seems impossible ever to feel anything else. Is it wrong of me to be like this, when I know I have had and still have many mercies? But I do want that one mercy,—to know that I am a child of God. Every other trouble would be much more bearable then. I am feeling weak and ill—all dark. O that the Lord would come over all my troubles, and shine into my poor, dark soul! How easily He could, if it were His will; but I cannot take comfort, unless He gives it."

During the summer of 1910, when again terrified with the fear of death, she said a word was spoken to her heart, when out in her chair, which completely delivered her from that fear. The power of it lasted to the next day, but fears again prevailed. About this time she was brought into a new and heavy family trouble, one affliction following upon another. In the providence of God a way was opened for her to return to her old home at Patcham, and at first she seemed to find some relief. On August 4th she wrote, "May I be taught to say, 'The will of the Lord be done.' I have so many mercies—a good home provided for me, and so many comforts. O how I should like to thank and praise a good God as I ought! But how backward I am in this!"

In the beginning of Oct., 1910, her complaint took a serious turn, and she was confined to her bed, and quite unable to look towards the end or accept the Lord's dealings. As her sufferings increased, so did her distress of soul. She feared being left alone, and could not bear her sister to leave her, who again attended on her day and night. In this sinking condition one morning the first part of the promise in Isa. xli. 10, was given her with some sweet power: "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God." She was enabled to claim it as her own, and to feel her heart full of praise. The power abode for some hours, and on my calling at the time, she spoke of it with full assurance. Not many days after this, her comfort seemed to leave her; although she never sank again as if she had no hope. She would at times say that certain hymns were hers; but would continually ask, "Do you think He will leave me?" The words she clung to most were,

"The soul that on Jesus has lean'd for repose,
I'll never, no, never desert to his foes."

One Sunday, on her sister's mentioning the text, "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved," and that I had said, "I think this scripture will pull in some of you doubting, fearing ones who feel outside;" Mrs. B. exclaimed, "It does pull me in—I *know* I have called." To the very end she would refer to that promise, and say, "I know I have called." The chief support she had in her sufferings was in calling upon the Lord; which she acknowledged. Once on hearing the words, "The Lord is very pitiful," she said, "I have thought He does pity me; I thought so last night." Yet for the main part she continued very sinking in mind through all her sufferings.

On the Sunday week before her end, when a friend came in, she said she felt "all doubts and fears." He repeated her own verse, which evidently touched her:

"That soul though all hell should endeavour to shake,
I'll never, no, never, no, never forsake."

She responded, "That's mine." After he left she repeated it herself, and exclaimed, "Is it not wonderful—sometimes I believe I shall be right at last?" Her sister says, "In the last few days' illness she was at times very low, but not in that dreadful distress as before. She was often in prayer, and would say, 'O Lord, I know I have sinned and sinned and sinned; but Thou art a merciful God, and

"Canst Thou show such mercies past,
And yet reject my soul at last?"'

She would sometimes ask me to read the hymn:

'How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord;'

which I did on her last night. She spoke little, but seemed sustained, and passed into rest on Thursday, February 16th, 1911." J. K. P.

This is faith's proper work, even to know that which passeth knowledge; to know that in its power, virtue, sweetness, and efficacy which cannot be thoroughly known in its nature and excellency; to have, by believing, all the ends of a full comprehension of that which cannot be fully comprehended, Heb. xi. 1. . . . So it knows things that pass knowledge: by mixing itself with them it draws out and communicates their benefit to the soul.—*Owen*.

NOTICES OF DEATH.

Died on March 1st, SUSAN BRAY, of Hitchin, aged 86 years.

W. J. BRAY.

PETER VIGAR, of Crowborough. He was a member at Jarvis Brook. Died March 3rd, 1910, aged 63. He left home the previous day to go with his daughter to Horley; all went well till on their homeward journey, when he was taken with violent pains in the chest, became unconscious, and died about half an hour after. He was one who knew law and gospel, the ruin of man by sin, and recovery by grace. Full and free salvation through Jesus Christ was the only foundation of his hope. In his early days he attended the ministry of Joseph Hatton, Smallfields, which was much blest both to his stripping and bringing down, also to building him up. I stayed at his home a short time before his death, when he told me a little of his former exercises; also how much he had enjoyed reading Mr. Hatton's Life and Sermons of late, having, he hoped, grown somewhat into the experience taught in them. He had also been much favoured in hearing Mr. Sawyer at Jarvis Brook, from John vi. 37. But he often sank very low, was much tried, and would say, "Oh for a clearer manifestation of my interest in Jesus Christ, removing the fear of death, and satisfying my mind that it will be well with me." He had a feeling that his time was short. I have known and walked in union with him for about twenty-five years. The church has lost a praying member, the widow and family a praying husband and father; each is indeed the poorer, but he the richer, their loss being his eternal gain.

S. CURTIS.

HORACE COLEMAN, entered into rest, March 3rd, 1911, aged 79. I cannot say when he was called by grace, but he has been a member at the Dicker Chapel forty-five years. His end was sudden, but sudden death was sudden glory to him. My dear father was buried by Mr. Botten, at the Dicker; the church has lost a praying member, and we as a family have lost a praying father; our loss is great, but it is his eternal gain.

ADA COLEMAN.

The Hon. WILLIAM CROYER SMITH, Waipukurau, Hawkes Bay, New Zealand, died on March 5th, 1911, aged 67. The son of godly parents, he went to New Zealand in 1862. In 1895 he was appointed to the Legislative Council, of which he was a member till his death. For over forty years the "Gospel Standard" and "Gleaner" were sent him from home, and he often expressed his pleasure at receiving them. He was a liberal contributor to the "G. S." Poor Fund. He was a humble man, who feared the Lord, and his life and conversation were in accordance with that fear. He leaves a widow, four sons and two daughters to mourn their loss. But their loss is his eternal gain, for we have a good hope that he has gone to be with Christ (whom he loved), which is best of all. To the writer he was a "brother beloved." D. S.

On March 7th, 1911, ANNA ELIZABETH KNIGHT, at Rotherfield, aged 55 years, after much suffering. She was a consistent member at the church at Providence Chapel, Rotherfield. Her end was peace. Further particulars will (D.v.) follow. J. DICKENS.

MARGARET HARVEY, aged 67 years, entered into rest on March 10th, 1911. She was baptised in the year 1881, in a stream near the chapel at Goodshawfold, of which church she has been a consistent member up to her end. She was a woman of a meek and quiet spirit, a lover of peace, a lover of Zion. Her end was peace.

—HARVEY.

SARAH ANN CARTER passed away March 11th, 1911, aged 63 years. She was a member of the church meeting at Jireh, Forest Gate, London, E. She was a lover of a free and sovereign grace gospel, and she suffered persecution for her religion. The words uttered by our Lord in Jno. xiv. 2 were a great comfort to her in her affliction. She has entered into her eternal rest, that rest that remains to the people of God.

T. G. HICKS.

On March 17th, 1911, in his 85th year, JAMES JACKSON, of Harpurhey, Manchester. He was a God-fearing man, and of a humble, quiet walk, loving the stable doctrines of free and sovereign grace, and the servants of God who preached from an inwrought experience those truths. He was baptised by the late A. B. Taylor in the early part of his ministry at Rochdale Road chapel; he loved his ministry, and was a consistent member of the church. In 1903 he joined Zion church, Manchester. When relating how he was called by grace, and speaking of the goodness of God towards him in breaking his hard heart and giving him a broken spirit, he used to say before this was done he hated election and believer's baptism so much that when his wife was called, under the late Mr. Taylor's ministry, and they could not spend their time together in the fields on the Sabbath, he used to hide portions of her clothing to prevent her going to hear the truth of God, and often said he would kill her if she did not give up going to chapel. On the day she was baptised by the late Mr. Taylor, he was so led by the devil that he sharpened a long knife to kill her on her return home; on seeing her enter the house he got up to take the knife, but could not lift it up, though he tried. A power prevented him he could not understand until several years afterwards; then he confessed it was the Lord. Never after this could he try to prevent her going to the house of God. After a time he thought he would go and see and hear for himself, unknown to anyone but God Himself. He did so, and Mr. Taylor's preaching took such fast hold upon him, he could not rest day or night, felt what a sinner he was, and that he could not be forgiven. Several portions were made a comfort to him, and gave him hope in Christ as his Saviour. He was delivered under a sermon preached by Mr. Taylor, after which he was baptised. He could speak of repentance for his sins, and pardon through blood; had nothing to plead but the finished work of his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. A good number of members, with friends from both churches at Manchester, saw his remains well laid in the grave by Mr. Emery, on March 22nd, at Harpurhey Cemetery, Manchester, Mr. Gruber being present. HENRY SHAW.

EMMA ALLEN, the dearly beloved wife of J. E. Allen, of West Norwood, who very suddenly departed this life, May 1st, 1911. "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."

J. E. A.

THE GOSPEL STANDARD.

AUGUST, 1911.

MATT. v. 6; 2 TIM. i. 9; ROM. xi. 7; ACTS viii. 37, 38; MATT. xxviii. 19.

GOD A REFUGE.

THE LAST FAREWELL SERMON PREACHED AT THE TABERNACLE, NEAR MOORFIELDS, LONDON, APRIL 1ST, 1792, BY JOHN BERRIDGE, M.A., LATE VICAR OF EVERTON, TO WHICH IS ADDED A SHORT ACCOUNT OF MR. BERRIDGE'S DEATH, IN A LETTER FROM A FRIEND WHO WAS WITH HIM THE DAY HE DIED.

“Trust in the Lord at all times, ye people; pour out your hearts before Him; God is a refuge for us.”—PSA. lxii. 8.

THIS Psalm is a very precious one, full of gospel manna, containing directions for the church, how to walk with God.

The psalmist says, “Truly, in good truth, my soul waiteth upon God; for from Him cometh my salvation.” And does he not give a good reason why his soul waited upon God? It was because all his salvation came from Him. And where should a sinner look but to Him that has purchased [procured] salvation for sinners, and brings it to them who find their need of it?

He then says, “My soul, wait thou *only* upon God.” He hath put in another word, *only*; it is but a little one, but it is very emphatical; for it is a common case with people to make Christ half a Saviour, relying upon Him and upon themselves, saying they are to be saved by faith and works. “No,” says David, “that won't do for me; I must have all my salvation from the Lord.”

“He only is my Rock”—the Rock on which my heart shall rest; that is, on Jesus. And if He is not your only Rock, my brethren, you will find the rock you trust in will slip away from you. Jesus will not suffer His glory to be diminished, nor let any steal one jewel from His crown; for He is worthy of all the honour that we can give Him, and He is jealous of His honour. Do you be jealous of His honour too, and show that you are desirous of giving Him all the praise that He

deserves ; and give Him all that you can, you will never give Him what He deserves ; you will always be defective in this to all eternity ; for while we are giving to Him our best praises, our obligations to Him increase every day.

He then says, "I shall not be greatly moved, while the Lord is only my Rock and my Salvation"—"I find Him to be as He says ; He is my Defence from time to time ; I shall not be greatly moved."

The word *greatly* is often of use to the children of God, who fall into doubts at times, ready to fear they shall fall from their confidence. "No," says David, "make the Lord all your Rock, and build upon Him all your salvation ; then you may be shaken at times, and find your confidence beginning to totter, yet you shall not be greatly moved ; the Lord will come again, and lift you up, and cause you to rejoice in Him."

But David is so pleased with the words that he hath uttered that he repeats them over again ; and he could not repeat them too often : "My soul," says he, "wait thou only upon God." Before, he had told you what was his daily use, and now he exhorts and encourages himself to go on with this waiting. "Do not be afraid of your being disappointed, continue waiting and looking for the Lord ; for He will never let them fail who trust in Him."

Now, if David encourages himself in trusting in the Lord, we have also the same occasion ; for our hearts at times are ready to sink, and to think we shall be wrong at last. Therefore take David's words : "My soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from Him."

But Satan may say, "Where will you look and go ?" What says Peter ? "Unto Him who has the words of eternal life." So we may say to our souls when they are beginning to doubt, "Where would you go ? Where would you find salvation in any other ? Christ only has the words of eternal life."

Then he adds, "The Lord is only my Defence"—"I find Him so ; while I am trusting in Him, though I am often afraid, yet He is better to me than my fears and my hopes."

Then he adds, "I shall not be moved." Thus by exhorting and waiting upon the Lord, he gets more strength. He drops the word *greatly*, which he began with when he said, "I shall not be *greatly* moved." But now he speaks

courageously: "I shall not be moved." "The Lord is my Defence; He holds me up, carries me on, and at length He will bring me to Himself in glory."

Then David goes on to the words in my text: "Trust in the Lord at all times, ye people." Now he exhorts us what to do. Good advice—the best advice; and such as all the children of God are taking, and never find themselves disappointed. "Trust in the Lord." "Make Him your confidence for all things; not only for all things, but at all times." When people are in peace and prosperity, they do not seem so much to see their need of trusting in the Lord as they did; they are ready to drop their confidence, when the Lord has given them what they want of worldly things. Now this is a shameful practice; and the Lord often takes away what He had given them, because they made a bad use of it. Has the Lord given you outward peace and prosperity? Trust in Him to preserve it, for none can preserve it but He who gave it.

But are you brought into worldly trouble, and in great distress, and know not which way to look? You have no friend, perhaps, to go to, and your heart is ready to say, "What must I do now? All are forsaking me." No; there's One that never forsakes His people. But you can see no way how you are to be relieved. What of all that? Has the Lord no better eyes than you? He can make a way for you, no doubt, if you trust in Him. But you say, "What am I to expect?" Why, that relief you want. Therefore, however difficult your worldly affairs may be, and no friend at hand to help you, there's One above always at hand; go to Him; He will not despise the poor and destitute, but will hear their cry, and will help them.

If He bids you come to Him, and trust in Him at all times, it is your business to go to Him at all times; and the more distressed your circumstances are, the more fit for God to take care of. Supposing your bosom is full of guilt, and you find trouble on the account of it; in this case you say you cannot go to Christ. That is the only reason you should go. Sinners will not go to Christ while they are at ease; but when they know themselves to be in a lost state and condition, and when they can find no help anywhere else, then Jesus says, "I am come to save the lost." Go your way to Him. He bids you trust in Him in this time, under a sense of your lost

state. If you see yourselves ruined, however deplorable and wretched your case be, it is not too hard for Christ; for He receives all that come to Him, not with frowning look, no, but with a smiling countenance. "Come unto Me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden; come, and I will give you rest."

What are you to do but to trust in Him in this time of sin and misery? Go to Him just as you are. Do not be running to some of your lusts, nor imagine you can do anything to prepare the way; but go and cast yourselves at the feet of Christ, saying, "Lord, I am come as a ruined sinner; I know none can help me but Thou; and Thou hast ordered me to trust in Thee at all times. I am come, Lord, at this time."

But, perhaps when you are dying, your adversary the devil may tell you, "Now you are sick, and lying upon a dying bed, it is too late to come now; why did you not come sooner? There was mercy to be had then, but you have out-stayed your time. Christ has been calling by His Word and by His ministers, but you would not hear them, and now He has sent His summons to you, to remove you out of this world; and you would be glad of salvation when you can have no more comfort here." Well, when these words, and words like these, are brought to your hearts, remember where they come from—the adversary of your souls. O! he does not love to see a sinner, burdened with sin, looking unto Christ.

But Satan may say, "Did you ever hear of a sinner so great as you coming to Christ, who was received by Him?" Yes, tell him; you read of a cross thief as bad as yourself, that railed on Christ when on the cross; and when he went to Christ, he must naturally think, "Will He show mercy to me?" He asked for mercy, and he received it. Go you and try, that's the only way to deal with Jesus. Mind not what the adversary tells you. If your grief is great, confess it, and tell the Lord all your trouble; and at the same time tell Him—for He loves to be told of His word with confidence and modesty; tell Him, when you go, though your heart is discouraged, and Satan distresses you, and unbelief terrifies you, yet you have got His word, "Trust in Me at all times;"—"I come at this time; 'tis late indeed, but it is in the time of life. I come to Thee, Lord, and beseech Thee to help me; show Thy mercy upon a poor sinner that is come at last. I am now come, and desire to partake of that mercy held forth

to sinners. Lord, send me that mercy, and I'll shout loudest of Thy children above."

There is nothing the Lord delights in more than to have His people, when they come to Him, to plead His word, and hold it fast. Though Satan is wanting to take it away from you, never give it up. Die with your souls deceived (if that is possible) in the hands of Christ. Tell Satan, "Though I am as vile as any in the world, the Lord has taught me to put my trust in Him. I'll go to Him and endeavour, by His grace, to trust in Him at all times." "Ah, but," says Satan, "what a poor feeble faith is thine! nothing to depend upon; sometimes hoping and sometimes doubting; dost thou expect the Lord will look upon thy little faith?" Yes, tell him; the Lord does not so much look at the greatness of our faith, when we go to Him, as at the reality of it. Though faith is weak, when we come before the Lord, He will receive it. He never sent any away for that, but He often reproves His people because they do not believe more strongly. Go to Him, and tell Him your condition; and when you call upon Him, expect an answer. Nothing pleases the Lord more than when a poor tempted and troubled soul comes to Him, as Abraham did, against hope, believing in hope. You are ready to think his was a poor hope from time to time, for about twenty-five years; but he believed in hope. And what is said of this believer in God? That he gave glory to Him. The Lord is never more glorified than when we go to Him relying upon His word, notwithstanding providences and everything else make against us. "Yet even then," says the poor soul, "the word is for me."

Christ invites sinners to come, whosoever they are. And though Abraham against hope believed in hope, the Lord did not look upon this as a poor testimony of his faith. But we see, by his not hearkening to what he felt within him, nor to what temptations the devil cast in his way, he only looked at the word of God, relying upon His word and promise, though all providences made against him. He thereby gave glory to God. And so it will be with us. When we find many things make against us, and have but a word of promise to rely upon, and yet hold it fast, then we are giving glory to God. What says the tried old soldier, Job? "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." Well said. "Though the Lord seems by His providence and dealings with me to cast me off,

and to take no notice of me, I do not mind that." The Lord says, "Trust in Me at all times." Go to Him, lie at His feet; tell Him you are come, merely relying upon His word of promise, and that you have nothing to encourage you but His word. Put your trust in Him, and you will find the Lord in due time will come and bless you.

I might mention many other times in which we might trust in the Lord, but it is all comprised in that little word *all*, and a precious word it is: "Trust in Him at *all* times." When you are full of fears, then you should bring the little word *all* unto Him, and say, "I have nothing to encourage me to come unto Thee but that precious little word *all*, 'Trust in the Lord at *all* times.'"

Now Satan is very crafty, he will tell poor souls, "Why, what do you mean by trusting in the Lord? What right have you to do so? Are you a child of God? Are you one of the elect? You are in doubt of it every day; what have you to do to trust in the Lord?" Give him this answer: "Though I am often afraid about my adoption, and cannot say I am one of the children of God, this I can say, I am one of the *people*." What does my text say, "Trust in the Lord at all times, *ye people*." You may go with this to the Lord. And though you cannot satisfy yourself that you are an adopted child, you may say, "I am one of the *people*, and will lie at Thy feet till Thou dost show me that I am Thine adopted child." Many are often discouraged in themselves, because they know not their election. Seek for it, wait upon the Lord, wait His time, and in due time He will make it manifest. For your encouragement the Lord has given you these words in our text: "Trust in the Lord at all times, *ye people*." Are you not one of the people? May you not plead this with the Lord, who commands all His people to trust in Him? Why, then, go to Him as one of the people, and expect to receive His salvation. Take notice; it is not said in my text, "Trust in Him at all times, *My people*," but "*ye people*." Thereby He gives a general order. Go to Him, then, as one of the people, and expect His help.

But let us mind the next words in my text, "Pour out your hearts before Him." This is a precious command. Many times the children of God are so burdened with grief, with sin, and worldly cares, they know not how to bear them; and their bosom is full of sorrow, so that they sit down and

mourn over their hard lot. The devil dearly loves to see a child of God sit down and say, "What a sad condition I am in!" Well, suppose you are; and you say, "I dare not go to the Lord, I am so miserable." Then where would you go? You cannot be worse for it. Others are running about from pillar to post, desiring to know what they shall do; their trials are so great they know not how to be delivered out of them, and they go and ask one neighbour and another, till they tire them all out. What does the Lord say to them? He gives good advice. Instead of making your neighbours your counsellors, go to Him, who is the chief Counsellor and able to tell you what to do, and willing to relieve you at all times. Go to Him and say, "Lord, I am come with a heart laden with grief, and with worldly cares, and know not which way to turn myself; what must I do?" The first thing He tells you to do is, "Pour out your hearts before Me." You have been pouring them out before your neighbours, and what have you got there? Why, nothing. "Then come and pour them out before Me."

The word *pour* plainly signifies that the heart is full of grief, and almost afraid to empty itself before the Lord. What does He say to you? "Come, and pour out all your trouble before Me." He is never weary in hearing the complaints of His people, therefore you should go, and keep nothing back; tell Him everything that hurts you, and pour all your complaints into His merciful bosom. That is a precious word, "Pour out your hearts before Him." Make Him your Counsellor and Friend; you cannot please Him better than when your hearts rely wholly upon Him. You may tell Him if you please you have been so foolish as to look to this friend and the other for relief, and have found none; and you now come to Him, who commands you to pour out your heart before Him.

But perhaps your heart is burdened, not only with worldly cares, but with sinful lusts and corruptions. A sore burden indeed. And you are afraid and ashamed, perhaps, to go and tell the Lord all your trouble. But you need not be afraid of going, when He commands you. He knows everything in your heart, all worldly cares, all sinful burdens; and when the heart is quite full, He says then, "Pour out all before Me." Here is great encouragement for you; take the encouragement which the Lord offers, go and tell Him your grief and burdens.

“ Ah ! ” says the poor soul, “ I have been to the Lord again and again, but I find I am sinning against Him daily, and I am ashamed to go to Him. Now my conscience accuses me, and the devil tells me I am impertinent ; how shall I appear before Christ, to pour out my heart before Him ? ” Go and pour out your heart before Him, till that crafty devil leaves you. You have the best reason in the world to go to the Saviour. He that knows what you are, what burdens you are bearing, and what sins you have committed, even He says, “ Come and pour out your hearts before Me.”

But I may add, further, “ Does not the Lord command us in His Word and in His prayer to say, “ Forgive us our trespasses ” ? And does not this plainly intimate that trespasses are to be forgiven *daily* ? Where are you to bring them, but to the Lord ? Go, therefore, and tell Him you are come, according to His Word, to acquaint Him with your sins and trespasses. “ Ah, but,” you say, “ I have gone so often already that I am ashamed to go.” What does the Lord say to Peter ? “ If thy brother trespass against thee seven times a day, thou shalt forgive him.” And Peter had not a little forgiven him. Go to Christ every day for pardon. If you keep your guilt in your bosom, it will only make it rankle. Tell Him you are weary and ashamed of yourself, and you are come to tell Him all your grief, and to beg that He will come and deliver you from guilt, and save you more and more from the power of sin. Whatever burden, therefore, you have upon your heart, the Lord would not have you to suffer it to rest there ; for if you do, it will make you feeble by and by. But when you find your breast full of trouble, remember His kind word to you : “ Come, poor soul, and pour out your burdens before Me.” Pour out your whole hearts, and let Him know everything that distresses you.

But what follows are the last words of my text, “ God is a Refuge for us.” O ! these are precious words. We look round about us again and again for a place of refuge, for a person to apply to for help ; and we shall find ourselves frequently, if not continually, disappointed. Therefore the Lord tells His people for their comfort that God is a Refuge for them. Are you poor ? The Lord is rich. Can you find no refuge in your fellow-creatures, and have you nowhere to fly to ? Go to the Lord.

It is very strange, when the Lord has all things in His

hands and all love in His heart, and advises His people to come to Him, telling them that He is a Refuge for them, they so often delay to come; they had rather find refuge in a fellow-creature than from their God. They who have learned to trust in the Lord know what precious words these are, "God is a Refuge for us." Come and try, and you shall find Him so too.

The devil will often be telling you that are the people of God, "There is no help for you, even in your God; you have been seeking for help a long time, but have found none; what will you do now?" Why, tell him you will go to Him that says, "God is a Refuge for us." But the devil will say, "You are so poor and despicable a creature; what, can you think that Christ will take any notice of you? Why, your own brethren are ready to overlook you, and the world despises you; and yet you think Christ will take notice of you!" Tell the devil, "Yes, He never fails them that trust in Him." Whatever your circumstances may be, though you may look all around you, this and that way, and find no place to flee to, no refuge for your souls, yet God, the faithful God, says He is a Refuge for you. Trust Him, go to Him accordingly, look unto Him at all times. Let your condition be what it may, be it ever so deplorable and wretched, yet the Lord tells you, when you go, "I am a Refuge for you." Hear it, ye poor, burdened sinners, and thank Him for His kind word. Go to Him, to have His promise fulfilled time after time. Yet a little while, and He will bring you to His kingdom, where you shall live and reign with Him for ever.

Are you sick, and in great distress, and without any friend to apply to, ready to say, "What must I do now?" Why, my text tells you what you are to do at all times. Whatever your case is, whether sick, poor, naked, or wretched, come to the Lord; He says, "I am a Refuge for you." But you say, "Lord, I have been sinning against Thee time after time." "I know it," says Christ, "but if you come weary of sin, and desirous of gospel rest, you shall find that I am a Refuge for you." But you say you come so often that you are ashamed to come. That may be a good argument to keep you from your fellow-creatures; you have been knocking often at their doors, and they are ready to say, "You came to my house the other day." "Well," say you, "may I not come every day?" No; you find no such help from man.

But Christ never complains of your coming too often, but is better pleased with those that are oftenest knocking at His door, and looking to Him for the help which He has promised.

And you that are poor in spirit, who cannot find relief in yourself nor from your fellow-creatures, go to Christ, and He will be ready to help you. "God is a Refuge for you." O think of these words whenever troubles enter into your mind. Repeat them again and again, and shame the devil out; tell him, "Though everything looks black, yet 'God is a Refuge for me.'" Are you to believe the devil or God? Keep these words always in your mind, for all of you will be in such circumstances at times as not to know where to go nor what to do; then these words come sweetly into the bosom, "God is a Refuge for me." He loves to help the helpless, to heal the poor wounded soul, and to save the guilty sinner; while He is doing this He is acting the part of a Saviour, and brings glory to Himself.

But I might add that no one knows the compassion which is found in the heart of Jesus but Himself; therefore, when you go to Him, do not entertain any unkind thoughts of Him, for He invites all sinners to come to Him, all poor and wretched sinners; and He that invites us to come has blessings to dispose of. Keep the last words of my text evermore in your mind. They will be of use to you, living and dying, sick or well; whatever circumstances you are in, you may find the want of such words as these, "God is a Refuge for us." Take heed, when you go to Him, to do as David did; plead His word with Him. This is one part of the Christian's duty which he often neglects. David says, "O keep my soul, and deliver me." What then, David? Why, says he, "For I trust in Thee." He pleaded the Lord's word, and so may you.

The promises in the Bible are free for all who see their need of them; and the Lord has told thee, if thou trustest in Him, thou shalt never be confounded. But perhaps you are thinking, "If I trust in the Lord, I shall be confounded;" and suppose you are, you will be no worse than before, you will lose nothing by your trusting, even though it should not be fulfilled. But remember that the Lord will never suffer His promise to fail: "Faithful is He that hath promised." Though you may often doubt of His performing, yet He

never did nor ever will fail. Therefore, "trust in the Lord at *all* times, ye people; pour out your hearts before Him" in every time of your trouble.

I do not know a more precious verse in the Scriptures than my text: "Trust in Him at *all* times, ye people." Though at present you may not know whether you belong to the family of God, yet trust Him, you are of the people; here hang, till He gives you better support. And when you find your poor bosom laden with cares and grief, whatever causes your distress, the Lord knows very well that if you keep it back, it will make you worse; therefore do as the Lord says, "Pour out your heart before Me,—tell Me all your griefs, make Me your Counsellor and Friend; and you shall find what a Counsellor I am, and I will remember to comfort you in the worst state that you can be in."

In health and in sickness, in life and in death, this will apply to JESUS: "He is a Refuge for us." What could you wish for more? Go, then, unto Him, doubt no more; cast away your doubts and fears, trust in Him. If you cannot do it with full assurance, do it with some assurance, with a little faith, and expect more. Remember, the Lord loves to increase what He has given, and to build you up in faith and holiness.

I would say a little more, but I find my strength begins to fail. I am glad and I am thankful that the Lord has held me up hitherto, blessed be His name. When I begin to totter, and when I experience infirmity, I am ashamed that I should ever entertain a doubt of Him. May these words be impressed upon my heart: "God is a Refuge for me;" and may He fix it on all your hearts. And now I conclude my subject. I came up to you trembling, but the Lord has carried me through, blessed be His name; and I look to Him to carry me home, for I have no feet of my own to walk with. But the Lord can hold me up till I have done my work, and then He will put an end to my labours. Thanks be to His name for calling me to preach out of doors. It is the glory of a creature to publish the fame and salvation of God.

I must now speak a little by way of taking leave.

Lord, I beseech Thee to pour Thy blessing constantly upon this congregation; Thy power and glory, let it be made manifest among them. Open the eyes of those that are spiritually blind, deaf, and dead. Comfort the mourner, strengthen the

weak to go on their way. Build up Thy church on their most holy faith. May this house be filled with Thy presence. Bless every hearer that attends here from time to time, and may the Lord delight in them to bless them, and may they excel in His blessed service. May this ever be an house for God, kept from error, kept in union, going on their way, looking and longing for the coming of their dear Lord.

Bless all the ministers that labour here, occasionally and stately. Fill their mouths with Thy truth. Warm their hearts with Thy love. Keep them evermore in the faith, zealously disposed to exalt the honour of the dear Redeemer, and to promote the salvation of sinners.

And may the Lord bless the trustees. Lengthen out their days. We bless Thee that they have been faithful and true to their trust. Give them, Lord, the comforts of Thy Holy Spirit. Enable them to go forward yet for a while, and bless their labours, and may they see that the people honour them for what they have done. May there never be wanting faithful men to succeed them, nor faithful ministers to labour among them. And as one of the trustees has been lately removed from them, the Lord direct them in the choice of another. Be gracious to their partners in life; impress their souls with Thy precious love, strengthen them, quicken them, and build them up; may the Lord delight in them and water their souls from time to time, causing the seed of grace that hath been sown in their bosom to bring forth fruit to life eternal.

The Lord remember all the children for good, causing them to receive a blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of their salvation,

And now, Lord, I must take my leave of this chapel, which I have long visited. O keep them continually in Thy fear, and bless them abundantly with all spiritual blessings. May they evermore delight in the Lord, and the Lord delight in them to heal them.

I know not whether I shall ever return any more, nor is it needful for me to know; but this I know, if the Lord continues my life, and allows me some measure of strength, I shall crawl up again. In the meantime, think of a poor crawling creature when you are upon your knees, and put up a short petition to the Lord that He would bless me, pardon me, sanctify and prepare me for His kingdom and glory. Amen and Amen.

May the peace of God that passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and in the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. And may the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be among you, and remain with you always. Amen.

“THE MEMORY OF THE RIGHTEOUS IS BLESSED.”

My dear Friend,—You will be ready to say, “What tidings brings this messenger, which follows the other so close?”* My friend, heavy tidings; or at least from the subject of a much afflicted heart this evening. This afternoon, about three o'clock, our dear pastor, Mr. Berridge, exchanged this mortal life for an eternal, unchangeable state of bliss. Oh that the Lord, whom he now beholds without a veil, may in mercy think upon his little flock, and provide for it!

We had a meeting this evening for prayer—an affecting sight! I believe not a dry eye in the place, while we sung (or attempted to sing) a hymn suited to our distressed state, as a people or flock now destitute of an under-shepherd.

I saw him this morning, but he was not able to speak, nor has he spoken anything to signify since last Sunday.

He has been very happy during his illness, being well assured he was drawing very near his beloved Father's house, sometimes using this and the like expression—“Yes; and my children, too, will shout and say, ‘Here's our father coming.’”

His Christ was very precious to his longing soul. And now all his desires are granted respecting himself. May his and our compassionate Lord grant his desires and answer his prayers for his mourning flock.

Potton, Jan. 22, 1793.

Yours, &c.,

J. BELLMAN.

A MONUMENT OF MERCY.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF THOMAS RUSSELL, MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL, ROTHERFIELD, SUSSEX.

(Continued from page 301.)

WHEN I returned to my own place again, a gloom came over my mind, and a horror of great darkness began to gather upon me. I opened the Bible, and read the words

* The person had received a letter from his friend on the Saturday before, in which he informed him that Mr. Berridge was very ill.

again, but they did not seem like the same. I thought, "How was it that I had read them just before, and got such comfort from them?" I read and read till I was full of confusion, and wondered how it was my comfort was so soon gone, when it was forcibly suggested by the enemy that because my joy was of such short duration, that was a proof that it was nothing but the joy of a hypocrite, and like that of the stony-ground hearers, who soon withered away. I began to tremble lest it was a false joy; and the enemy came in like a flood, sweeping everything before him; and the temptation was that it was nothing but an act of presumption in my laying claim to such a promise. Presumption, he said, was the great transgression, and therefore I had sinned past the reach of mercy. I thought, "How could I be such a fool as to think such a precious promise belonged to me?" and yet, mysterious as it may seem, I could but hope that it did, though at times I was driven to my wits' end, through fear that I was guilty of the great transgression, and had sinned past the reach of mercy. Now my prayer was, "O Lord, if I am deceived, do undeceive me, and lead me by a right way;" and many times in the night would I arise and go upon my knees; for the thought of being a deceived, presumptuous sinner was more than I knew how to bear. Therefore the language of my heart was, "Hear me speedily, O Lord: my spirit faileth: hide not Thy face from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit. Cause me to hear Thy lovingkindness in the morning; for in Thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto Thee" (Psa. cxliii. 7, 8). I thought it was strange that I should read the words in the way that I had, and that they should fill me with such joy and peace that I could but weep for gladness; and yet now, the more I read them, the more I was filled with confusion, terror, and trembling, for I thought it was too good news for one so vile as I. I tried to pray, but I felt too confused to pray. I could not rest in-doors or out, but was tossed up and down like the locust, and groped for the wall like the blind at noonday.

But although the enemy suggested it was in vain to hope, yet I was compelled to hope against hope; and I could not forget the blessed effects that the promise produced in my soul. I clung to the word, and could not give it up, and the

language of my heart before God was, "Remember the word, O Lord, upon which Thou hast caused me to hope." It was like a nail driven by the Master of assemblies, and fastened in a sure place, for it was a word that entered and sunk deep into my soul; and therefore at times it would rise up to my view, and cause me to hope that the Lord would yet be gracious. But the Lord was very gracious in causing me, at times, to have some sweet enlargement of heart at a throne of grace, and now and then favouring me with a glance at King Jesus in His beauty, causing a ray of light of the glorious gospel of Christ to shine into my heart, which drove back the enemy, and blessedly encouraged me to hope that the Lord was leading me by a right way, and though weeping might endure for a night, yet joy would come in the morning.

But now a strong temptation beset me. I had been one day to my bedroom to supplicate the Lord for mercy, and had got to the top of the staircase to go down, when the enemy darted into my mind that there was no heaven, no God, and no hell. I stood still, and trembling said, "I know there is! I know there is!" but so forcibly did the temptation continue that I was afraid I should fall in with it; but this I could not. I stood still, and cried and wrung my hands, saying, "I cannot believe it; I know there is." I was afraid to leave off repeating that, for fear I should be left to say, "It is right: there is none." The dear Redeemer had to combat with the powers of darkness, for He was "tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin;" and He it was that upheld and succoured me, or I must have been driven away with the floods of temptation.

I returned from the staircase, and went to a throne of grace to supplicate His gracious Majesty to rebuke the enemy who was ready to devour me; and, bless His dear name, He held out His succouring hand, and administered divine consolation to my soul, which confirmed me more than ever that Satan was a liar. For I proved that the Lord reigneth, for by His mighty power He had driven back the enemy, and again caused me to hope that I had an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, that pleaded my cause against the accuser of the brethren. I would never have believed that the temptations of Satan were so powerful, had I not experienced them; for this temptation shook my frame

and caused my lips to quiver ; but as the Lord manifested His mercy I felt my mind composed, my heart softened and broken, and a contrite spirit produced ; my mouth was filled with arguments, and a spirit of grace and supplication poured out upon me, which enabled me to come with a little humble boldness to a throne of grace, that I might obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. The Lord caused His goodness to drop like dew into my heart, which dissolved it in thankfulness, and caused a sweet hope to spring up in my soul that He would yet be gracious. I cried and wrestled in prayer with Him, and like Jacob of old, thought I could not let Him go except He blessed me there ; for I was sure that, unless the Lord did bless me, destruction was certain. It was a time of trouble, and I wanted Him to be a present help. I kept crying to Him in my room till I thought I heard a footstep below, which seemed to stop it all. I arose from my knees, and went to see if anyone below was listening to me, but there was no one ; but it had disturbed me, and driven away the feeling I had when upon my knees. I tried to bring back the same feeling, and to cry with the earnestness and energy that I did before, but in vain ; but the temptation to believe that there was no God never returned with such force again.

Such was the state of my mind that I could not be long in company without leaving, and going into some private place to call upon God. Often when I went to bed I was afraid to go to sleep and afraid to lie awake ; so that I was never at rest, for night and day I wanted to be continually calling upon God for Him to have mercy upon me, and reveal His dear Son unto me. My life was truly miserable, except at intervals when the Lord was pleased to grant me a little release, and cheer my heart with a little divine consolation ; and then hope would arise in expectation of better things. But besides the Lord supporting me in my soul, He mercifully provided in providence in feeding me and clothing me. My food, it is true, I had of my parents ; but I was cast upon the Lord to clothe me, which He mercifully did ; which often surprised me, and caused me to bless His gracious name. I was tempted that He never would manifest mercy to my soul, and was tried and afflicted in my mind about the little comforts I had at times been favoured with. Still I was kept hungering and thirsting after righteousness, crying

for the Lord to reveal His dear Son to me in love and mercy, as One that pardoneth iniquity, transgression, and sin, and make known to me His great salvation; for nothing else would satisfy my troubled heart.

As I was one day in my bedroom, supplicating the dear Lord for this, a suffering Saviour was revealed to me in a way that He had never been before. It is written, "They shall look upon Him whom they have pierced." By faith I saw Him upon the cross, His head hanging down, and the blood streaming from His side. I gazed upon Him till my heart was broken with grief, and my eyes flowed with tears. "When," I thought, "was there ever any affliction like unto His affliction?" Surely He bore the grief and carried the sorrows of His people, for He looked like a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief. Here I beheld what sin had done in afflicting the Lord of life and glory. I gazed upon Him as the Victim lifted up upon the cross, a sacrifice for sin; for "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness," so was "the Son of Man lifted up." I think while memory lasts I shall never forget this solemn sight. I felt as if I was at the foot of the cross and looking up, saw a crucified Saviour; and as I looked, I was lost in wonder at the amazing love, condescension, and mercy of the holy Jesus to bear His people's sins upon the tree, and to bear the wrath due to their transgressions; to be made a curse for them, that they might go free. "Oh," I thought, "thrice happy people who are interested in His love and mercy!" seeing that God withheld not His only Son for them, but was pleased to bruise Him, to make His soul an offering for sin; and Jesus willingly offered Himself up for divine justice, to be punished "the Just for the unjust." "Surely," I thought, "no people could be more blest than those for whom Jesus died, to redeem from sin, death, and hell." But though I clearly saw the great sacrifice for sin, and the blessing of those that were interested in His death, yet I had not the assurance that I wanted—that He had redeemed me. "Oh," I thought, "that I but knew that He died for my sins, and that I had an interest in His death and sufferings! Oh that He would make it known that He bore the curse for me, and that He had blotted out my sins by His precious blood!" for I wanted to say, "For me He died—for *me*;" but this I could not until the blessed Spirit bore witness of the truth of it in my heart,

and by the Spirit of adoption led me to cry, "Abba, Father." I got up from my knees, and came out of my room weeping over Him that died for sin, and crying out, "Oh, what a precious Christ! Oh, what did He suffer! How precious to those who are enabled to believe He died for them!" For some time I could not cease from weeping at what I saw, and felt my spirit was made contrite and my heart broken; and I thought, "Oh that my head was a fountain of water, that I might weep day and night over a crucified Saviour!" for hope was mingled with my sorrow that the Lord was about to make known to me that I had an interest in His great salvation.

But soon this feeling left me, and the enemy assaulted me again with his fiery temptations, and suggested to my mind that the Lord had revealed this to me to show me how His people were saved, but that I had no interest in it, or He would have made it known to me at the time. "Oh," I thought, "is it so? Have I had a sight of the death and sufferings of Christ only to aggravate my misery?" I sank again fathoms in my feelings, and was tossed up and down through fear that I had no interest in the dear Redeemer; and would often cry out, "Oh, precious Jesus, did I but know Thee as mine! Oh that Thou wouldst reveal Thyself to me, and show me that Thou didst die for me!" Many times would I walk the room, crying, "Oh that I did but know Him, and that He would manifest Himself as my Saviour!" I thought I could endure and bear all things then without a murmur. The language of my heart at this time was, "Give me Christ, or else I die!" for I was painfully brought to know that

"None but Jesus
Can do helpless sinners good;"

and I felt as if nothing was worth knowing but a knowledge of Him whom to know is life eternal: "And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent" (John xvii. 3). I wanted to be enabled to say feelingly with John, "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life" (1 John v. 20).

At this time I often thought, if the Lord dealt with me as my iniquity deserved, and banished me for ever from His

presence, that I could not, as the wicked will do, look up and curse Him; for the Lord of life and glory had won my heart, and my soul was often filled with jealousy and suspicion for fear I never should enter the marriage union. It was not the punishment for my sins that caused me the greatest grief, but the thoughts of being banished for ever from Him "in whose presence is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Psa. xvi. 11). Under this I was often sunk with fear, lest I should never be permitted to appear with the Lord in glory; but the time drew near that the Lord was about to say, "Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee."

About a week before the Lord delivered me, I had such an uncommon spirit of prayer and supplication poured out upon me that I spent many hours upon my knees that week, beseeching the Lord with tears to have mercy upon me, and make known to me His great salvation. Night and day I felt as if I could not rest without being at a throne of grace, to supplicate His divine Majesty to reveal His dear Son to me; for I could not forget the solemn sight that I had had of His death and sufferings, but I wanted to know that it was done for me. At the end of the week, as the Lord did not appear, my heart sank within me through fear I should never find the Pearl of great price. I went to chapel on Sunday filled with grief and sorrow, and came away as bad or worse; and on the road home, I could not refrain from weeping, and crying out, "O precious Jesus, did I but know Thee! Oh that I could say, 'Thou art mine, and I am Thine!'" When I arrived home, which was with some difficulty, for I felt ill in body and much cast down in my soul, my body felt worn out through affliction, and my soul was weary of her complaint. When getting to bed I thought, "What a forlorn wretch I am without a knowledge that Jesus shed His precious blood for me! and if I die, I do not know whether I am going to heaven or hell!" My sorrow was great, and my heart was full of grief; and as I lay down I felt as if I never could arise from my bed again, unless the Lord would speak peace to my soul: I soon fell asleep, yet awoke early in the morning in anguish and distress, looking upon myself as a lost sinner without mercy.

In this state I felt as if I could not lie in bed, but must arise to call upon God to have mercy upon me. I got up on

my bed, and fell upon my knees to beg for mercy; and the Lord, who has promised to "regard the prayer of the destitute and not despise their prayer" was near at hand; for I had not been upon my knees long before the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ shone into my heart, and filled me with joy unspeakable and full of glory. My guilt, sins, and fears were all taken away, and sunk from my conscience like lead in the mighty waters, under the precious flowings into my soul of the blood of Christ that cleanseth from all sin. My conscience was purged from sin, guilt, and iniquity by the sprinkling of atoning blood; and in the full assurance of faith I drew near the Lord, and cried, "Abba, Father, my Lord, and my God," the Spirit bearing witness with my spirit that I was a child of God; and if a child, then an heir of God, and a joint-heir with Christ (Rom. viii. 16, 17). The peace of God that flowed into my heart is indescribable. The love of God was shed abroad in my heart, my soul was filled with gladness, and a new song put into my mouth. I felt overcome with pardoning love and mercy to me, so vile a sinner, that my heart was broken with goodness; so that I wept like a child for the mercy I had found. I looked up, and thought I was in a new world; my soul was led to view that precious covenant ordered in all things and sure. Such a glorious view did I have of the blessed covenant of grace as I never shall forget. I felt lost in wonder; for it was as if I was with my Lord, and He was showing me that covenant wherein He chose my soul as a vessel of mercy, and how He had secured my salvation from eternity, and blessed me with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. I saw that my covenant Head, Christ Jesus, was set up from everlasting as my glorious Deliverer, and One that had redeemed me from sin, death, and hell. The blessed Spirit, I beheld in this covenant, had engaged to be my Quickener, Enlightener, and blessed Interpreter, and One that would take of the things of Jesus, and reveal them to my soul (John xvi. 14). Thus I saw the love of the blessed Trinity was set upon me from everlasting. I wept and cried, blessed and praised the covenant God of Israel, when the whole of my experience was brought to my view, and I could see the infinite wisdom of the Lord Jehovah in His dealings with me; and in feelings of joy and gladness, blessed His precious name for

leading me by a right way to a city of habitation. The way the dear Lord had led me, I saw was a right way. His preserving, shielding, and encouraging mercies, that had been manifested towards me in times of trouble, were brought to my view; and in all could I trace the finger of God; which broke my heart with gratitude and thanksgiving to the best of all Beings. I cried out, "It is a right way, Lord, Thou hast led me; for Thy chastening was for my profit, that I might be a partaker of Thy holiness."

My soul was now brought to mount Zion, the city of the living God; peace and pardon flowed in; and the Lord said, "Fear not; for I have redeemed thee; thou art Mine" (Isa. xliii. 1). My soul was filled with rapture; and feeling the love of God, in a holy ecstasy of praise I broke out in blessing and praising the Lord. I sat down on the bed, and said, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name. Praise Him, birds; praise Him, everything that hath breath; praise Him, ye hosts of heaven: let everything bless His holy name. Bless Him, O my soul." I sat on the bed with tears rolling down my cheeks, and cried, "Bless Him! bless Him!" &c., till my strength was nearly exhausted. I looked for my sins, my trouble, and the fears that I had on account of them, but they were gone, no more to return, and I enjoyed the sweetness of the Lord's promise to Israel: "In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve" (Jer. l. 20). Everything was calm and serene; not a dog of fallen nature was suffered to move his tongue against me; and my precious Redeemer, with garments dyed, glorious in His apparel, travelling in the greatness of His strength, spake in righteousness, as One mighty to save (Isa. lxiii. 1). With my heart I believed in Him, and with my mouth made confession unto salvation. I viewed Him as my blessed Intercessor, Mediator, and High Priest; as One that had satisfied the righteous law of God for me, and gone to the end of it for righteousness (Rom. x. 4). I beheld Him as One that had paid all my debts, cancelled the whole sum, and blotted out the handwriting that was against me in the law of Moses; and through believing in Him, I found myself justified from all things, from which I could not be justified by the law of

Moses (Acts xiii. 39). Before this I could not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation ; but now I could do no other but believe, for I was no longer shut up, but by faith was come to believe in Him. I looked upon Him whom I had pierced, and mourned, and was in bitterness for what my sins had done ; and with weeping said, "Precious Jesus, what didst Thou suffer ! my precious Christ, what didst Thou endure, that I might be saved ! O Thou lovely Jesus, what hast Thou gone through to redeem my soul from hell ! Oh, precious death, that conquered all my foes ! yes, death, and him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. Oh, glorious resurrection ! My precious Lord was with me now in communion sweet ; His love filled my heart, while with my mouth I blessed and praised Him, and called Him by all the endearing names that I could think of. I wanted no more company than this, for it was as if my heaven was begun below. I was swallowed up in such overwhelming love that I stayed in my bedroom till late in the forenoon, blessing and praising the covenant God of Israel ; sometimes crying, sometimes singing, and sometimes laughing. Never did I feel such hatred to sin and love to holiness, and I cried out, "Oh, that I may never sin any more against such a gracious God, who has manifested love and mercy to so vile a sinner !" I fell upon my knees, and said, "O Lord, take me to heaven, that I may never sin again ! O my precious, adorable Redeemer, let me die, and come to Thee : for I felt I would rather die than sin against my precious Lord."

(To be continued.)

HOW THE JUST LIVE.

"Now the just shall live by faith : but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him."—HEB. x. 38.

FROM this text it is clear that some do draw back ; and that means that they had first gone forward. To draw back is to send oneself back. It is therefore clear that apostacy arises from within ; it is one's own sin, self murder, and has its rise from the fearful depravity of our nature. If there is no work of the Holy Ghost, that nature of enmity and ignorance will rise and prevail ; and no mere profession will be stronger than that fire—the fire of those sins of awful depravity

within. If God will make and keep us true Christians, what an eternity we shall need to praise Him!

In the text there is a quotation from the Old Testament, an assertion how a child of God lives: "The just shall live by faith." First of all, what a mercy to be a *just* person! What makes one a just person? Nothing less than the justness of Another imputed to him. There is but One who is naturally, inherently, universally just—"Jesus Christ the righteous." There is but One whose practice was absolutely just; that is, "the just One," that blessed One who always did those things that pleased His Father. Of every other man from Adam fallen to the present day this is true: "There is none that doeth good; no, not one." (Psa. xiv. 3). Therefore, to be just is to be interested in, and have imputed to us, the justness, that is, the righteousness of Jesus Christ. To be just is to be perfectly straight with the revealed will of God, that there shall be no flaw in our obedience, that we cannot be justly charged with any defect. That holy law God has declared in the Scriptures must be fulfilled. Christ conformed Himself in all respects to that revealed will; and He did it for others, was made sin for others, that they might be "made the righteousness of God in Him." That was, and ever will be, the righteousness of all that are interested in Him; and that makes them just. The Lord does not ask for, and will not receive at the hand of a sinner, the least possible atom of goodness, the smallest act, for justification. And if there is a doctrine that offends a proud heart, this does. Who likes to be absolutely indebted to another? But grace makes its subjects willing to be saved by grace, willing to live by the cross of Christ, to find *that* their heaven that was death and hell to Jesus Christ.

"Hell was our just desert,
And He that hell endured."

His taking away their hell and perfecting them by His whole obedience and sacrifice, makes them just in God's sight. And they become just in experience when they receive Christ into their hearts. This is true experience; yet there is much experience among people that may seem right, but that does not issue in this blessed justification. May we mind the issue of exercises; many followed Christ, but did not receive Him. Therefore be this our greatest aim, that whatever exercises about ourselves or eternity may move our

hearts, the issue may be to receive Christ. For "as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name."

This reception of Christ is not aided by any intellectual or human effort. It is the receiving by faith of a revealed Christ—revealed in a two-fold way. First, in the Bible; if we receive anything that is not here, but from dreams or visions, &c., it is wrong. Second, in a revelation by the Holy Spirit to the soul of what is in the Bible; wherein and whereby Christ is so seen, apprehended, known, received, felt, loved, and trusted in as to become the justness, holiness, righteousness of the person so blessed. What a simple thing to be a Christian, yet what a hard thing!—simple, because nothing is mixed with it of nature; hard, because all the powers of nature are opposed to it. It is a great thing to be just. Some can tell God they are just, can say,

"We are clean, just God, we're clean;"

because they have received the Lord Jesus into their souls, and been plunged into the fountain of His merit. And sometimes God tells them, "Thou art all fair, My love; there is no spot in thee." May He bring this righteousness to us. He is a Christian who is built on Christ, takes the form of the Foundation, in whom Christ is revealed, who possesses His Spirit, and possessing that, must follow Him. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God"; and whither the Spirit moves, they will move. "The Spirit of the living creature was in the wheels." So one may say wherever the Spirit leads a child of God, there he will go. And certainly every movement of that Spirit will be Godward—to Christ for righteousness, for His blood, for sanctification, for all. Loving Christ, he will desire to be found in Him, not having his own righteousness, but "the righteousness which is of God by faith."

Now, when we are thus just—just by imputation through receiving Jesus Christ, we are alive, and have to live. It is not that we have a life given, and then nothing further is to be done. We have to live in a body or nature unfriendly to Christ; to live as a man rowing in a boat who has his face turned the contrary way to where he is going. We are sometimes afraid to move, not always knowing there is One at the helm whose face is in the right direction. The sight of Him at the helm is re-assuring. Well now, the just man has to

live. What is he to live on? Take him to gold to satisfy him; that will not do. Take him to the world; that is death to him. To himself; he is worse off there. How is he to live? Why, says the Lord, he must be like the merchant-man, who brings his food from far. But how can he go? How shall he trade when he gets there? God has given him a grain of faith; and this grace will tell him how to go, and what to do when he gets there. It is a great thing to have faith. The man does not live on his faith, but on what his faith brings to him.

What is the food? It is something suitable to the new nature of a child of God, the hidden man of the heart. These bodies are nourished by food suitable to their constitution; and the soul born of God must have food suitable to its new nature. It is divine, and must have divine food provided for it. Nor are we in doubt as to the food: "I am the Bread of Life." "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." (John vi. 35, 53). That is Christ's positive word. If we live on what we have in ourselves, it is death to us; and if we try to live on the world, we try to live on God's enemy. But if by faith we are led out to Christ's righteousness, we get nourishment.

This faith is opposed; it finds great difficulties in the way. It has load and labour to contend with: it has mire and mud from the devil; it is uphill work. Rutherford said he never thought it would be such sweating work as he found it. Go to Bunyan; he says of the hill Difficulty,

"This hill, though high, I covet to ascend;
Its difficulty doth not me offend."

Why did it not offend him? Because he would be at the top, where he would find rest and all he needed. And the child of God sees everything in Christ that his heart can crave for time and eternity. Then he says, "These difficulties, though they prove my weakness, do not so offend me as to turn me back." He takes joyfully the spoiling of his goods, for he knows there is enough in God, that he has "in heaven a better and an enduring substance." The whole of nature is against faith. There may be some not able to receive this; but it is true. Hence the conflict. Some have only one nature, and have no conflict; but some have both natures; and at times the old seems the stronger, and it

seems faith must give up, and not take another step. Sometimes difficulties come in the way not only from external things, but from within. Some have a proud, unbending will; others, a mind always analysing, sifting, trying to get to the bottom of things, as if they could fathom or comprehend Deity; another is so interested in his business he has no time to think of the way to heaven or to look at the Bible. He may have good reasons, as he thinks. Has he not a family? These depend on him, so he works. Another is drawn away of other lusts; but all the difficulties prove this to those who encounter them,—in us dwells no good thing; therefore out must go faith to Another. I know it is hard for the heart to go on beating Godward with all nature against it. As Luther says, we are to slay the proud beast Reason every day. We are to struggle on, our feet are to tread down the lofty city, which God lays low by the power of the Spirit. A little longer, and some will be in heaven, where they long to be.

Now what does faith do with these difficulties? She looks straight on, Prov. iv. 25; she will never be persuaded to stuff her mouth with gold, to hope in, or hang on anything short of Jesus Christ—"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." Blessed Jesus!

Now what is the burden of this Epistle to the Hebrews? The food of faith. What is the burden of it? The Person, the work and office of our great High Priest, greater than all that went before Him. His Person and work must be our food, faith must go there. 1. To His Person. His Person is important. It was not anyone that could be a priest; under the law of Moses God confined the priesthood to one tribe. And in the new covenant it is only God's own Son, the only begotten Son, who was appointed and fitted to that office by the Father. Heb. v. 5, 6. What a Person is our High Priest! What has He to do? Offer Himself to God a sacrifice. And He attends to all the cases of the people, has to do with all their diseases. Leprosy, think of it. That shut out the subject of it from all his companions, told him he was doomed; he must have a covering on his upper lip, and proclaim his loathsomeness to all who, in ignorance of his case, might be approaching him. And that person, excluded from all others, not only might, but must come to the priest. Go, poor sinner, to Christ. It is His business to

look at the leprosy. How glad I am that a leper may go to Him! Faith takes him to that One when burdened with a sense of his leprosy; he says, "I have no hope but in that One." A natural feeling of leprosy will drive one into oneself for relief; but where the real thing is, where there is a spiritual sense of evil, of deadly sin or leprosy, faith will point out the way, descry the Person of Jesus, and say, "There is One to whom you may and must go." There is no medicine growing out of the earth for leprosy; but there is a Man appointed of the Father to stand our High Priest, and receive lepers. Go to Him, and faith will find life there.

Faith will also go to Him for nourishment, or there is none, and no renewing of strength. Strength to deny oneself, to give up our will, comes from the strength of Christ. Hating oneself, submitting to trials, comes from Christ. Faith has gone to Him for righteousness; she must also go for strength. We must have strength from Him to say in trouble, "The will of the Lord be done"; and wait at His footstool to get strength to commit body, soul, family, and all to Him. Then we live. "The just shall live by faith." If we do not live so, we shall find our souls languishing in a kind of death. But if we prevail there, our strength is renewed; and young men grow into fathers. May the Lord teach us to leave self behind, to get self and proud understanding under our feet. The Lord help us to give up and lose these things; to go needy, naked, undone, and poor, for Him to give out of His fulness the things we need for nourishment. The hardest rub we ever get is to live like this. We think we should be more willing to go if we felt lively or strong, than lame and hobbling; but this is His wise decree, that we are to come poor and needy, that we may learn we are broken creatures, that He may be to us the Chiefest among ten thousand, the altogether Lovely, giving to, and doing for us what we need. In this respect we shall live before God for justification all our days, and I believe it is harder in some respects to live so after 40 years than at the beginning. At the beginning what had you? Rags. And afterwards what have you? Rags, and worse. But then we think we ought to have something better after all that time, after all we have seen of God's kindness and mercies; and then just to find ourselves worse than we used to be, and to have to go in that state, this is hard. Yet who

does not wish to be at that pass—utterly to renounce all, and have nothing but the Person, and righteousness, and atonement of Jesus Christ to live by ?

And faith will live on Him for *wisdom*. “Wisdom is profitable to direct ;” it is needed in all matters. None like to be bereaved of their common sense, but there is such an experience as finding it will not stand us in any stead, as it used to do. We used to think we could form a judgment, order this, and go on ; nor shall we walk rightly without using the wisdom and intelligence He has given. He does not take that away, but makes us less able to depend upon it ; and we want Him in a way we did not before. We must live for everything on the Son of God, place all our dependence on Him for pardon, for justification, for acceptance of our persons, for the presentation of us without fault before the Father with exceeding joy. We must live by the faith of the Son of God ; and every approach to the Father that is acceptable to Him and successful on our part will be in that way. His word is, “If ye shall ask anything in My name, I will do it,”—anything that shall be for your good here, or the furtherance of the gospel in you. “Ask in My name”—What a name for us to go in, for us to plead ! If it were not for this emptying, confusing, hardening unbelief of our nature, we should be running that way continually. But this unbelief binds us. Yet we must live this way ; there is no other. It is not needful we should have the sense of strength, which we like to be filled with : weakest souls can best wield the weapon of prayer. When we have got to the end of ourselves, our own wisdom and strength, we shall find Christ will begin to be something to us. O bless God for Jesus Christ, for this kind way He has ordered we should live in ! It is a good way, kindly cast up, though difficult. “The just shall live by faith.” Whatever other life the church appears to have, it is death.

One more word. This faith is not a hard, speculative thing that stands alone or works by itself. It is a soft, depending, softening, precious faith, always accompanied by love. “Faith worketh by love.” “But if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.” A man who draws back puts himself away in the strength and love of sin, turns from Christ. But the man who cleaves to Him, though he may not be sure of his interest in Him, yet has some love, and says,

“ How sweet the name of Jesus sounds ! ”

“ Jesus, let Thy pitying eye
Call back a wandering sheep.”

What is this but the exercise of true, gracious faith of the operation of God, working by love, that affectionate, tender grace that would entwine its arms about the Person of Jesus? How faith hangs about the fountain of His blood that cleanses and gives life, and goes out in love, crying,

“ Put me in with Thy own hands,
And that will make me well.”

A believer is a praying, affectionate person, having love to Jesus Christ. A religion is not worth keeping if devoid of faith and love. We cannot separate them; the measure of the one is the measure of the other. A believer cleaves to the righteousness of Christ, as Paul renounced everything for this one. He saw by that he should be conformed to the image of Christ, and attain to the resurrection of the dead. Thus by faith we see Christ's complete redemption, and live thereon.

J. K. P.

THIRST FOR LIVING WATER.

“ He brought streams also out of the rock, and caused waters to run down like rivers.”—PSALM lxxviii. 16.

Dear Lord, refresh my weary soul,
With streams of life divine;
I greatly need their blessed power
To cheer a soul like mine.

From the full river of Thy love
May living waters flow
Into the desert of my heart,
To make Thy graces grow.

Alas, how faith and hope and love,
And every grace decline!
O may the waters from above
Softener a heart like mine!

In bygone days, dear Lord, I've proved
The soul-reviving power
Of mercy's streams to cheer my heart,
In many a trying hour.

And now, O blessed God of grace,
 A favour I implore ;
 Those blessed joys of former days
 Do Thou to me restore. GEO. PLUMMER.

GOD'S COUNSEL.

MORNING READINGS BY JAMES BOURNE.

MARCH 18th and 20th, 1898 or 9. Psalm lxxiii. 24: Such grieve the people of God when they tell them that they do pray and get no answer. David says, "Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel." What counsel is that? *Beware of the spirit of the world, a religion without communion with God.* Beware lest God leave you to judicial darkness; the more you are left to that, you think your case the safer. But oh, when death comes, this religion will do you no good. The counsel is therefore to *give God no rest* till He bring you out of it. David says, "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? And what is there on earth I desire in comparison of Thee?" O that you who have no such feelings, no such desires, could feel the awful condemnation of those words! But if God chastens you and you cry to Him, do not say you know nothing, but hope in the Lord.

His counsel is, "*Therefore be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh*" (Matt. xxiv. 44). "*Take ye heed, watch and pray; for ye know not when the time is*" (Mark xiii. 33). When God sends to gather His people, the gathering is sometimes tremendous by terrible dispensations, and no head knowledge will stand then; nothing but the witness of the Holy Spirit. It will be well for us if, when the Lord comes, He finds us mourning, seeking, watching, praying that He would be our Help and Friend; I say, praying and confessing, because He has made us honest. What is the use of any prayer when we never have the testimony of His approbation and His friendship, and if our hearts never rejoice in His beauty? Be sure of this—if you pray and have not the tokens of His approbation, that is a token of His disapprobation; and do you lay that to heart. Take heed, therefore, that your hearts be not overcharged with cares of this life. The devil is always aiming at this—to stuff your heads with cares, that you may be surfeited; and nothing but Christ in your hearts can preserve you.

“Thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth. For Thou hast made of a city an heap.” (Isa. xxv. 1, 2). Satan does not try to build up God’s people in the *old* way, but in something religious, some way of spiritual pride. But God will again and again bring this to the ground; for He will come with terrible judgments if we are His. You will each have them in turn, depend upon it; but be not dismayed; none who ever had them were sorry for them. There must be this fire and water; but it leads to a wealthy place; and there is no other way to Christ than this. What judgments I have had for five months, and yet I am swallowed up under a sense of His faithfulness!

CRUMBS FROM THE MASTER’S TABLE

FROM BOSTON’S “CROOK IN THE LOT,” OR, “THE SOVEREIGNTY AND WISDOM OF GOD IN THE AFFLICTIONS OF MEN DISPLAYED.”

(Continued from page 324.)

DOCT. I. *The bent of one’s heart, in humbling circumstances, should lie towards a suitable humbling of the spirit, as under God’s mighty hand placing us in them.* We shall consider,

I. *What things are supposed in this.* It supposes that

1. God brings men into humbling circumstances. Ezek. xvii. 24: “And all the trees of the field shall know that I the Lord have brought down the high tree.” There is a root of pride in the hearts of all men on earth that must be mortified ere they can be meet for heaven; and therefore no man can miss, in this time of trial, some things that will give a proof whether he can stoop or no. And God brings them into humbling circumstances for that very end. Deut. viii. 2: “The Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart.”

2. These circumstances prove pressing as a weight on the heart, tending to bear it down. Psa. cvii. 12: “Therefore He brought down their hearts with labour.” They strike at the grain of the heart, and cross the natural inclination; whence a trial arises whether, when God lays on His mighty hand, the man can yield under it or not; and consequently, whether he is meet for heaven or not.

3. The heart is naturally apt to rise up against these

humbling circumstances, and consequently against the mighty hand that brings and keeps them on. The man naturally bends his force to get off the weight, that he may get up his head, seeking more to please himself than to please his God. Job xxxv. 9, 10: "They cry out by reason of the arm of the mighty; but none saith, Where is God my Maker?" This is the first gate the heart runs to in humbling circumstances, and in this way the unsubdued spirit holds on.

4. But what God requires is, rather to labour to bring down the heart than to get up the head, Jas. iv. 10. Here lies the proof of one meetness for heaven; and then is one in the way heavenward, when he is more concerned to get down his heart than to get up his head, to go calmly under his burden than to get it off, to bow under the mighty hand than to put it off him.

5. There must be a noticing of the hand of God in humbling circumstances: "Hear ye the rod, and Him who hath appointed it" (Mic. vi. 9). There is an abjectness of spirit, whereby some give up themselves to the will of others in the harshest treatment, merely to please them, without regard to the authority and command of God. This is real meanness of spirit, whereby one lies quietly to be trampled on by a fellow worm, from its imaginary weight; and none so readily fall into it as the proud, at some times, to serve their own turn. These are men-pleasers, Eph. vi. 6, with Gal. i. 10.

II. *What are those humbling circumstances the mighty hand of God brings men into.* Supposing here what was before taught concerning the crook in the lot being of God's making, these are circumstances,

1. Of imperfection. God has placed all men in such circumstances under a variety of wants and imperfections, Phil. iii. 12. We can look nowhere, where we are not beset with them. There is a heap of natural and moral imperfections about us; our bodies and our souls, in all their faculties, are in a state of imperfection. The pride of all glory is stained, and it is a shame for us not to be humbled under such wants as attend us; it is like a beggar strutting in his rags.

2. Of inferiority in relations, whereby men are set in the lower place in relations and society, and made to depend on others, 1 Cor. vii. 24. God has, for a trial of men's submission to Himself, subjected them to others whom He has set

over them, to discover what regard they will pay to His authority and commands at second hand. Dominion or superiority is a part of the divine image shining in them, 1 Cor. xi. 7. And therefore reverence of them, consisting in an awful regard to that ray of the divine image shining in them, is necessarily required, Eph. v. 23; Heb. xii. 9. The same holds in all other relations and superiorities, namely, that they are so far in the place of God to their relatives, Psa. lxxxii. 6; and though the parties be worthless in themselves, that looses not from the debt due to them, Acts xxiii. 4, 5; Rom. xiii. 7. The reason is, because it is not their qualities, but their character, which is the ground of that debt of reverence and subjection; and the trial God takes of us in that matter, turns not on the point of the former, but of the latter.

Now, God having placed us in these circumstances of inferiority, all refractoriness in all things not contrary to the command of God, is a rising up against His mighty hand, Rom. xiii. 2; because it is mediately upon us for that effect, though it is a man's hand that is immediately on us.

3. Of contradiction, tending directly to balk us of our will. This was a part of our Lord's state of humiliation, and the apostle supposes it will be a part of ours too, Heb. xii. 3. There is a perfect harmony in heaven, no one to contradict another there; for they are in their state of retribution and exaltation; but we are here in our state of trial and humiliation, and therefore cannot miss contradiction, be we placed ever so high.

Whether these contradictions be just or unjust, God tries men with them to humble them, to break them off from addictedness to their own will, and to teach them resignation and self-denial. They are in their own nature humbling, and much the same to us as the breaking of a horse or a bullock is to them. And I believe there are many cases in which there can be no accounting for them but by recurring to this use God has for them.

4. Of affliction, Prov. xvi. 19. Prosperity puffs up sinners with pride; for it is very hard to keep a low spirit with a high and prosperous lot. But God, by affliction, calls men down from their heights to sit in the dust, plucks away their gay feathers wherein they prided themselves, rubs the paint and varnish from off the creature, whereby it appears more in

its native deformity. There are various kinds of affliction, some more, some less humbling; but all of them are humbling.

Wherefore, not to lower the spirit under the affliction is to attempt to rise up when God is casting and holding us down; and cannot fail, if continued in, to provoke the Lord to break us in pieces, Ezek. xxiv. 13. For the afflicting hand of God is mighty.

5. Of sin, as the punishment of sin. We may allude to that, Job. xxx. 19. All the sin in the world is a punishment of Adam's first sin. Man threw himself into the mire at first, and now he is justly left weltering in it. Men wilfully make one false step, and for that cause they are justly left to make another worse; and sin hangs about all, even the best. And this is over-ruled of God for our humiliation, that we may be ashamed, and never open our mouth any more. Wherefore, not to be humbled under our sinfulness, is to rise up against the mighty hand of God, and to justify all our sinful departings from Him, as lost to all sense of duty, and void of shame.

III. *What it is in humbling circumstances to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God.* This is the great thing to be aimed at in our humbling circumstances. And we may take it up in these eight things:

1. Noticing God's mighty hand as employed in bringing about everything that concerns us, either in the way of efficacy or permission, "And he said, It is the Lord; let Him do what seemeth Him good" (1 Sam. iii. 18). "And the king said, The Lord hath said unto him, Curse David; who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so?" (2 Sam. xvi. 10). He is the Fountain of all perfection, but we must trace our imperfections to His sovereign will. It is He that has posted every one in their relations by His providence; without Him we could not meet with such contradictions; for "the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord as the rivers of water; He turneth it whithersoever He pleaseth" (Prov. xxi. 1). He sends afflictions, and justly punishes one sin with another, Isa. vi. 10.

2. A sense of our own worthlessness and nothingness before Him, Psa. cxliv. 3. Looking to the infinite majesty of the mighty hand dealing with us, we should say, with Abraham, Gen. xviii. 27, "Behold, I am but dust and ashes;" and

say amen to the cry, Isa. xl. 6 : " All flesh is grass," &c. The keeping up of thoughts of our own excellency, under the pressure of God's mighty hand, is the very thing that swells the heart in pride, causing it to rise up against it. And it is the letting of all such thoughts of ourselves fall before the eyes of His glory, that is the humbling required.

3. A sense of our guilt and filthiness, Rom. iii. 10 ; Isa. lxiv. 6. The mighty hand doth not press us down but as sinners ; it is meet, then, that under it we see our sinfulness ; our guilt, whereby we shall appear criminals justly caused to suffer ; our filthiness, whereupon we may be brought to loathe ourselves ; and then we shall think nothing lays us lower than we well deserve. It is the overlooking of our sinfulness that suffers the proud heart to swell.

4. A silent submission under the hand of God. His sovereignty challengeth this of us, Rom. ix. 20, " Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God ? " And nothing but unsubdued pride of spirit can allow us to answer again under His sovereign hand. A view of His sovereignty humbled and awed the psalmist into submission, with a profound silence, Psa. xxxix. 9 : " I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because Thou didst it." Job i. 21 : " The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away ; blessed be the name of the Lord." And xl. 4, 5 : " What shall I answer Thee ? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken, but I will not answer ; yea, twice, but I will proceed no farther." And Eli, 1 Sam. iii. 18 : " It is the Lord ; let Him do what seemeth Him good."

5. A magnifying of His mercies towards us in the midst of all His proceedings against us, Psa. cxliv. 3. Has He laid us low ? If we be duly humbled, we shall wonder He has laid us no lower, Ezra ix. 13. For however low the humble are laid, they will see they are not yet so low as their sins deserve, Lam. iii. 22.

6. A holy and silent admiration of the ways and counsels of God, as to us unsearchable, Rom. xi. 33. Pride of heart thinks nothing too high for the man, and so arraigns before its tribunal the divine proceedings, pretends to see through them, censures freely and condemns ; but humiliation of spirit disposes a man to think awfully and honourably of those mysteries of providence he is not able to see through.

7. A forgetting and laying aside before the Lord all our

dignity whereby we excel others, Rev. iv. 10. Pride feeds itself on the man's real or imaginary personal excellency and dignity; and being so inured to it before others, he cannot forget it before God. Luke xviii. 11: "God, I thank Thee I am not as other men." But humiliation of spirit makes it all to vanish before Him as doth the shadow before the shining sun, and it lays the man, in his own eyes, lower than any. "Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man" (Prov. xxx. 2).

8. A submitting readily to the meanest offices requisite in, or agreeable to our circumstances. Pride at every turn finds something that is below the man to condescend or stoop to, measuring by his own mind and will, not by the circumstances God has placed him in. But humility measures by the circumstances one is placed in, and readily falls in with what they require. Hereof our Saviour gave us an example to be imitated, Phil. ii. 8: "Being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death." John xiii. 14: "If I, then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet."

Motive 1. God is certainly at work to humble one and all of us. However high any are lifted up in this world, Providence has hung certain badges for humiliation on them, whether they will notice them or not, Isa. xl. 6. Now, it is our duty to fall in with the design of Providence, that while God is humbling us, we may be humbling ourselves, and that we may not receive humbling dispensations in vain. . . . (Phil. ii. 12, 13).

2. God by His providence may force down our lot and condition without us, but the spirit must come down voluntarily and of choice, or not at all; therefore, strike in with humbling providences in humbling yourselves, as mariners spread out the sails when the wind begins to blow, that they may go away before it.

3. If ye do not, ye resist the mighty hand of God, Acts vii. 51. Ye resist in so far as ye do not yield, but stand as a rock keeping your ground against your Maker in humbling providences, Jer. v. 3: "Thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; Thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction. They have made their faces harder than a rock; they have refused to return." Much

more when ye work against Him to force up your condition, which ye may see God means to hold down. And of this resistance consider,

(1) The sinfulness; what an evil thing it is. It is a direct fighting against God, a shaking off of subjection to our sovereign Lord, and a rising in rebellion against Him, Isa. xlv. 9.

(2) The folly of it. How unequal is the match! How can the struggle end well? Job ix. 4. What else can possibly be the issue of the potsherds of the earth dashing against the Rock of ages, but that they be broken to pieces? All men must certainly bow or break under the mighty hand of God, Job xli. 8.

4. This is the time of humiliation, even the time of this life. Everything is beautiful in its season; and the bringing down of the spirit now is beautiful, as in the time thereof; even as the ploughing and sowing of the ground is in the spring. Consider,

(1) Humiliation of spirit is, in the sight of God, of great price, 1 Pet. iii. 4. As He has a special aversion to pride of heart, He has a special liking of humility, chap. v. 5. The humbling of sinners and bringing them down from their heights, wherein the corruption of their nature has set them, is the great end of His Word and of His providences.

(2) It is no easy thing to humble men's spirits; it is not a little that will do it; it is a work that is not soon done. There is need of a digging deep for a thorough humiliation in the work of conversion, Luke vi. 48. Many a stroke must be given at the root of the tree of the natural pride of the heart ere it fall; oftentimes it seems to be fallen, and yet it arises again. And, even when the root stroke is given in believers, the rod of pride buds again, so that there is still occasion for new humbling work.

(3) The whole time of this life is appointed for humiliation. This was signified by the forty years the Israelites had in the wilderness, Deut. viii. 2. It was so to Christ, and therefore it must be so to men, Heb. xii. 2. And in that time they must either be formed according to His image, or else appear as reprobate silver that will not take it on by any means, Rom. viii. 29. So that whatever lifting up men may now and then get in this life, the habitual course of it will still be humbling.

(4) There is no humbling after this, Rev. xxii. 11. If the pride of the heart be not brought down in this life, it will never be; no kindly humiliation is to be expected in the other life. There the proud will be broken in pieces, but not softened; their lot and condition will be brought to the lowest pass, but the unhumbleness of their spirits will still remain; whence they will be in eternal agonies through the opposition betwixt their spirits and lot, Rev. xvi. 21.

Wherefore, beware lest ye sit your time of humiliation. Humbled we must be, or we are gone for ever; and this is the time, the only time of it; therefore, make your hay while the sun shines; strike in with humbling providences, and fight not against them while ye have them, Acts xiii. 41. The season of grace will not last; if ye sleep in seed time, ye will beg in harvest.

5. This is the way to turn humbling circumstances to a good account; so that instead of being losers, ye would be gainers by them, Psa. cxix. 71. "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." Would ye gather grapes of these thorns and thistles? set yourselves to get your spirits humbled by them.

Humiliation of spirit is a most valuable thing in itself, Prov. xvi. 32. It cannot be bought too dear. Whatever one is made to suffer, if his spirit is thereby duly brought down, he has what is well worth bearing all the hardship for, 1 Pet. iii. 4.

Humility of spirit brings many advantages along with it. It is a fruitful bough, well laden, wherever it is. It contributes to one's ease under the cross, Matt. xi. 30; Lam. iii. 27—29. It is a sacrifice particularly acceptable to God, Psa. li. 17. The eye of God is particularly on such for good, Isa. lxvi. 2: "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My word." Yea, He dwells with them, Isa. lvii. 15. And it carries a line of wisdom through one's whole conduct, Prov. xi. 2: "With the lowly is wisdom."

6. Consider it is a mighty hand that is at work with us, the hand of the mighty God; let us then bend our spirits towards a compliance with it, and not wrestle against it. Consider,

(1) We must fall under it. Since the design of it is to bring us down, we cannot stand before it; for it cannot mis-

carry in its designs. Isa. xlv. 10; "My counsel shall stand." So fall before it we must, either in the way of duty or judgment. Psa. xlv. 5: "Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies, whereby the people fall under Thee."

(2) They that are so wise as to fall in humiliation under the mighty hand, be they ever so low, the same hand will raise them up again, James iv. 10. In a word, be the proud ever so high, God will bring them down; be the humble ever so low, God will raise them up.

I. *General Directions.*

1. Fix it in your heart to seek some spiritual improvement of the conduct of Providence towards you, Mic. vi. 9. Till once your heart get a set that way, your humiliation is not to be expected, Hos. xiv. 9. But nothing is more reasonable, if we would act either like men or Christians, than to aim at turning what is so grievous to the flesh unto the profit of the spirit; that if we are losers on one hand, we may be gainers on another.

2. . . . Let your humbling circumstances move you to this, that while the creature dries up, you may go to the Fountain; for it is impossible to reach due humiliation under His mighty hand, without faith in Him as your God and Friend, Heb. xi. 6; 1 John iv. 19.

3. Use the means of soul-humbling in the faith of the promise, Psa. xxviii. 7. Moses, smiting the rock in faith of the promise, made water gush out, which otherwise would not at all have appeared. Let us do likewise in dealing with our rocky hearts. They must be laid on the soft bed of the gospel, and struck there; as Joel ii. 13: "Turn to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful;" or they will never kindly break or fall in humiliation.

(To be continued.) *

THROUGH MUCH TRIBULATION.

My dear Friend,—Thank you very much for your kind letter and wishes. Job said, "Friends have forgotten me, and mine acquaintance are estranged from me." What a painful case his was; it makes me feel ashamed sometimes to speak of my trouble by the weight of his afflictions—stripped of everything, disease in his body, the cruel reproaches of his

friends, who did not understand his case. Through mercy this has not been our lot; but Job's prayer in that affliction suits us, does it not? "Oh that I knew where I might find Him! that I might come even to His seat! I would order my cause before Him, and fill my mouth with arguments." Are there not times when it is true, our mouths are filled with arguments? What a conflict is caused by prayer seeming to be unheard, or rather not regarded in a gracious way. I was under this feeling much a time back, but thinking upon these words seemed to give me a lift: "And went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words."

But what can I say of trouble but this, "You brought it on yourself. You prayed to be delivered from a lukewarm state, and to be led in the same path as one of your afflicted friends, that you might possess a measure of the same grace, whatever it might cost. You did this on Tuesday evening; the news of your trouble was on the table next morning, when you came down to breakfast." When I read it, I inwardly exclaimed, "Affliction, but not *this*, Lord." Then these words came with power, spoken in my heart, "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because Thou didst it." Some would say, "You were quiet then, you had peace." No, far from it; such a trembling came over me that I felt my knees shake together. I felt condemned, and that God's hand had gone out against me. Something added, "It will be the same, whatever you turn your hand to." This made me feel to be one alone. I felt need to do what Hezekiah did, "Turned his face to the wall." It was as though the only cure—a sense of His love. For I had the sickening sense of my own idolatry, the emptiness of time things, and uncertainty of them. I seemed to weigh things in a scale. I seemed to get help on Sunday, which did me good; but it was as but for a moment. It said, "Wait on the Lord," and that in the face of all things.

I am afraid I must have wearied you; such as it is I will send it.

Yours affectionately,

Brighton, Feb. 18th, 1905.

MARTIN PIPER.*

Where sin of any kind is precious, Christ cannot be so.—
Berridge.

* An Obituary of Martin Piper was in the Jan. No., 1908.

THE EXCELLENCY OF CHRIST.

AN EXTRACT FROM COLLINGE.

IN Christ's excelling graces, which dwell in Him eminently and essentially, there is such a lustre and brightness and glory that to make the soul take a complacency in Him, there needeth no more than that it be enlightened to see, know, and understand Christ. Hence it is that many a soul convinced of the filthiness of sin, and of the fulness of that excellency which is in Christ, before ever it have received Him so as to apprehend its interest in Him, yet loves, admireth Him, passionately desireth a part and portion in Him; saith within itself, "Oh that my soul were brought unto Christ! Oh that this Christ were my Christ, my Jesus!" . . . Now every child of God is apprehensive enough of the proportion which the name of Christ bears to the wants, the various wants it hath. It wants a Mediator, a Saviour, an Advocate, an Intercessor; and this that soul is sufficiently sensible of, and therefore its heart cleaveth unto Christ, and crieth out, "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? or what have I on earth to be compared with Thee?" This soul seeth that there is nothing in heaven or earth that so suiteth the soul of a child of God as Christ doth. Hence his love to Him is stronger than the grave, and his jealousy burns like fire.

Obituary.

SUSANNA WHITING, of Luton, passed quietly into rest on Sabbath evening, February 5th, 1911, aged 69 years.

My dear wife was born of very godly parents at Great Brickhill, Bucks, on February 3rd, 1842. Many times during the 48 years of our married life has she spoken of the time when she believed light shone out of the darkness into her heart. She was occasionally left at home on a Sunday evening in charge of the younger children, while her father and mother went to chapel. On their return home one evening, it being dark, they found her in the house without a light. To their enquiries she replied, "Yes, father; but I feel to be darker in myself than the night." This was an unexpected answer to her father, who said, "Bless the Lord for giving

you light enough to see your own darkness." She was then 14 years of age, and from that time she ever felt a tender conscience against sin and evil. When 18, according to her parents' wishes, she joined her two elder sisters, who were already engaged at Luton. The three sisters attended the late Mr. Cooke's ministry, and she felt the word at times to drop as the rain, and would dread the return of Monday morning. Shortly after our marriage she joined the church at Great Brickhill, August 5th, 1866. During the latter part of her life she was at times in dark spots and places, and would often be heard to say,

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

But the Lord was graciously pleased to draw near and bless her on several occasions. After our removal to Luton she was much blessed in hearing Mr. Popham, of Brighton, at Bethel Chapel, from Jude 8. This was on November 26th, 1906, and three years later in the same place the Lord again appeared, as Mr. Webb, of Plumstead, gave out hymn 173 (Gadsby's):

"Jesus, before Thy face I fall."

These two seasons she never forgot; for she felt they made Christ's love better than wine to her soul.

Coming to her last days upon earth, the Lord made Himself increasingly precious to her. Her health had been failing for several months; and stricken with a painful, internal malady, her sufferings during the last few weeks were most intense. All this time she was most sweetly blessed with enduring faith and patience. She remarked, "I am in the Lord's hands, and am made willing for Him to do His pleasure." On Thursday, February 2nd, she repeated,

"Welcome, sweet day of rest!"

The following day was her birthday, and on waking from a short sleep, she said in broken accents, "Won't it be nice when I get to heaven? Safe in the arms of Jesus!" And again afterwards, "Safe in the arms of Jesus.—'Underneath are the everlasting arms.'" After suffering great pain she said, "Praise and bless the Lord for relieving me; I cannot praise Him enough." We felt the end was drawing near, and remained in the room through the night of Saturday,

February 4th. On waking after a short sleep on Sunday morning, the patient sufferer repeated as well as she was able :

“Alas, and did my Saviour bleed,
And did my Sovereign die ?
Would He devote that sacred head
For such a worm as I ?”

She looked very happy. About 5.30 a.m., she responded to her son, “He does not leave me, nor forsake me;” and about 8.30, “His mercies are great, precious.” At 11.45 she repeated, “And you hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins.” At 3 p.m.,

“Soon shall I pass the gloomy vale.”

The last audible words she was heard to say were,

“Hinder me not, ye much loved saints;”

and at 6.40 her redeemed spirit left its tenement of clay to be for ever with the Lord.

W. WHITING.

On May 7th, 1911, ELIZA BEAVEN, of Zion Chapel, Trowbridge.

She was called by grace early in life. She became very miserable on account of her many sins, and felt the guilt of sin laid with such power on her conscience she often had to turn aside and pray for mercy and forgiveness. She began going to many chapels at Trowbridge, to see if she could get help, but to no avail. At last in the providence of God she was led to Zion Chapel, her hope seeming almost gone; but the minister there told her all her very feelings, and opened up the riches of the blood of Christ, a crucified Saviour for a guilty, self-condemned sinner, so that it all seemed for her. She found it was food for her soul; and such were her feelings after the sermon she could eat no dinner, but said like the woman at the well, “Come, see a man that told me all things that ever I did;” and with dear Ruth, “This people shall be my people, and their God my God.” She was baptised by Mr. Schofield in the year 1888, on July 1st, with fifteen others. She lived and walked her religion.

Her husband died, and left her with a family to bring up. In her deep trouble and bereavement, when in prayer about it (for she was very poor), the Lord told her He would be a Husband to the widow; which greatly comforted her many times after. On her death-bed she told me one night she had

only just a tiny fire, all the coal gone, not a crust of bread in the house, the dear children all sitting round wanting something, and she had nothing to give them. She was obliged to go to God in prayer, and remind Him with tears and deep feeling of soul of the above promise. She came down, and in a few minutes a dear friend walked in with bread for them; and many other helps, by the way, she had. She had great faith, also great trials. The latter part of her life she kept her bed, and lived with her daughter, Mrs. Stevens, who was indeed kind to her mother.

The last month the dear saint gradually got weaker and weaker. Several sweet and refreshing visits I had with her during the past four months, when she was speaking of her trials and her deliverances. A fortnight before she died, she said, "Ah, I do feel so dark, and the devil has been at me all night. I wonder if I am deceived after all." She prayed earnestly to be made right, and did beg for the Lord to come once more. I tried to encourage her, but left her, as she was much cast down. A few days later, when I got to the top of the stairs, she said, "It is all right now; He has come again." I said, "When did He come?" She replied, "In the night." "What did He say to you this time?" She replied so earnestly,

" 'When through the deep waters I call thee to go,
The river of death shall not thee overflow.' "

She took my hand then, and quoted the following verse with deep feeling and tears:

"Corruption, sin, and worms
Shall soon destroy this flesh,
Till thy blest spirit does return,
And put it on afresh."

This was the last time I saw her alive. She quietly breathed her last on Sunday morning at nine o'clock, on May 7th, to be for ever with Christ. Our loss is her eternal gain.

S. CHAMPKINS, Pastor.

MARY REBEKAH SAWYER, of Cholsey, Berks, entered her eternal rest, February 1st, 1911. Aged 65 years.

Our dear mother was born of God-fearing parents, but like all others, walked according to the course of this life. How I cannot say, but we have abundant proof that a change did take place early in life. In a diary, in 1869, she wrote,

“Read last night Psalms lxi. and lxii. O I would say, ‘Evermore lead me to the Rock that is higher than I.’ What a good thing it is to me to have a little light into, and love for the Word of God! It is almost a continual trial that I cannot go to it with that longing for the blessing of the gospel to be imparted to the comfort of my heart that I have heard and read the dear child of God is blessed with; so that when I am a little favoured in this way, I prize it I can say beyond any creature gift. And this fact sometimes encourages me to hope I am not out of the secret of those that fear His name.” At this time the late Mr. Collinge’s ministry was much blessed to her soul; and after hearing him on one occasion she sought solitude, when to her surprise Mr. C. met her, and asked after her. It appears that she told him all her heart, which resulted in her being baptised at the Abbey Chapel, Abingdon, in March, 1870. In a letter written at this time she says, “I trust at times I have a hope in the Lord’s mercy, and I know He has been merciful or I should not be here; but I want daily and hourly to feel my interest in it, as much so as at the first time I felt there was hope for me—mercy for me, full and free. My heart which had been so hard was then soft, and full of love to the Lord, His ways, and people. I had such a sense of His love I seemed bathing in it. I can never express the mingled feelings of my heart; it was truly humbling, nothing to be had in comparison, no love equal to it; but this did not last long. O how I wished to be as little as I felt! Your text was, ‘Salvation is of the Lord’; it sent a thrill through me. I could not stay at chapel or go home, but wanted to hug and keep the blessing for ever. Never till then could I bend my knees to offer my many petitions. . . . For a very long time previous to this I could not get beyond desires and secret wishes to know if there was under the word any hope for me, but felt I must give all up; and my feelings were so acute that I sometimes could not help showing it.” In another letter she writes: “Is it possible any should be so vile, so insensible to the Lord’s goodness and mercy as I am? Sin is a daily trial. I asked the Lord to make it a burden, that I might not sin cheaply, but walk more in His fear and love. Yesterday I had such a sense of His longsuffering, goodness, and mercy, and again this morning, such sorrow and love, that it made me long to leave all here, never to sin and grieve any

more. This sweet season lasted some time ; it was from the application of these words : ‘ Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.’ ”

In November, 1872, our dear mother was married ; from which time to her death she was called to pass through some waves of affliction, but was enabled to hold fast her profession to the end.

A short time before her last illness she said she never felt so weaned from all earthly things as then. Another time, in bidding farewell to her son Caleb, she quoted with feeling the words : “ Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before.” About a fortnight before her death she wrote thus : “ The Lord is all-sufficient to sustain beneath the heaviest load ; and I can say till now I have been helped to tread the thorny way. I am poor and helpless. He is a Helper of the helpless ; then may I hope I have an interest in His power and love.

“ None but Jesus
Can do helpless sinners good.’ ”

The day before she was taken ill a sermon of Mr. Ashdown’s was read to her from the words : “ My flesh and my heart faileth ; but God is the Strength of my heart and my Portion for ever ; ” which was greatly blessed to her. Quoting the following lines, she commented on them in a blessed way :

“ Prayer is the Christian’s vital breath,
The Christian’s native air,
His watchword in the hour of death ;
He enters heaven by prayer.”

It was one of the days of the Son of Man to her soul, and friends about her remarked how unusually happy she appeared. Early the next morning she was seized with paralysis, taking away her speech, which never returned. She remained conscious, however, for the most part to the end of her illness, which lasted ten days. At times the enemy seemed to assault her ; but sometimes peace and serenity were written upon her features. On our dear afflicted father’s being brought into the room, and saying, “ We shall meet in glory,” her face at once lit up with a radiant smile ; and when her niece added, “ You’ll crown Him, won’t you ? ” she raised her hand in a triumphant manner. She was buried in the grave-yard at South Moreton, of which church she has been a peace-seeking member for 34 years.

HERBERT SAWYER.

NOTICES OF DEATHS.

MARY ANN KINGHAM, of Luton, Beds., passed away at Croydon, Nov. 13th, 1910. Aged 82 years. She was for many years a member of the Strict Baptist chapel, at Westoning. When quite young she was brought into deep concern of soul, and at the age of 16 was led to beg of the Lord, that He would teach her a right prayer, one that He Himself would answer. Soon after this she went to hear a Mr. Searle, at Chelsea, near Leighton. When asked how she liked his preaching, she said she could compare it to nothing else than Mr. Searle's seeing a poor man half-way down a deep ditch, giving him a kick to send him to the bottom. Not many years after she was brought to value and prize such preaching, and was greatly favoured in hearing Mr. Warburton, Mr. Kershaw, and others of that time. She lived a godly and consistent life, and adorned the doctrine of God her Saviour in all things; her path was one of much tribulation, but tribulation wrought patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope that maketh not ashamed. She would say, if she reached heaven, it must be with the publican's prayer, "God be merciful to me a sinner." On Sunday morning, the day she died, she had this promise. "Thy sun shall no more go down; . . . for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended." To her daughter who stood by her, she said, "O that the sun would shine brighter and brighter on me this Sabbath day." Her desire was granted, and she is now where she longed to be, praising her Saviour. Truly we can say, "'Tis with the righteous well"; and our loss is her eternal gain.

F. R.

W. H. Pocock, for 37 years a much respected minister of the gospel, passed away on March 27th, 1911, aged 74 years. His unexpected death leaves a blank among the churches in Wiltshire and adjacent counties, which will not easily be filled up. He was an example of patience, humility, and longsuffering. The blessed fear of the Lord was manifest in his life and ministry. He was very cautious in making friendships, but most kind and faithful to those with whom he felt a union of spirit, especially to those commended to his conscience as fellow-labourers in the gospel. His lowliness of mind was very apparent in intercourse with such. Ever ready to sympathise with others' trials, he bore his own (often far heavier ones) in patient silence. "The meek and quiet spirit" was his. The beautiful words on his memorial card are expressive of his experience in life and death:

"O Christ, He is the Fountain,
The deep sweet Well of love!
The streams on earth I've tasted,
More deep I'll drink above.
There to an ocean fulness
His mercy doth expand,
And glory—glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land."

For him "to live was Christ," and to die, gain. Christ was his "All and in all." His last words were, "*All is straight and I am*

ready." Many faithful souls greatly regret his removal, and will sorely miss him for a long time to come. Further particulars may follow.

E. C.

ELLEN N. CARR, widow of the late Henry Carr, of Trowbridge, died on March 29th, 1911. Aged 62. She was a member of the Strict Baptist cause meeting for worship at the Halve, Trowbridge. She was much afflicted for several years, and deeply tried both in providence and grace. The death of her husband, whom she survived about two years, was also a severe trial to her. Though the subject of many fears as to the reality of a work of grace in her soul, she was not without helps and encouraging tokens of the Lord's goodness and favour towards her. A few days before her death she was much comforted by two lines of hymn 664 (Gadsby's selection) resting with power and sweetness on her mind,

"O may I patiently endure
My heavenly Father's will."

The day before her death she said she was quite resigned to her heavenly Father's will, and asked the dear Lord to take her home. The end came, and she passed peacefully away. "Absent from the body, present with the Lord."

J. L.

SARAH VARNEY, aged 86 years, of Torquay, passed from this vale of sin and sorrow on April 1st, 1911, to be with her precious Jesus, of whom she often spoke during her short illness. She had several sweet visits from the Lord in her illness, and her dear face shone with the glory that she realised. Our loss is her eternal gain. It was through much tribulation she entered the kingdom. Further particulars (D.v.) may follow. A FRIEND.

ALFRED COX entered into rest, April 2nd, 1911, aged 69. A member, for many years, of the Strict Baptist cause at Alvescott, Oxon. He was well taught in the things of God, knew there were two sides to true religion, a dark one as well as a bright one. The Lord was pleased to lay His afflicting hand upon him for some time before He took him to Himself. His sufferings were very great, but many times he felt much of the presence of the Lord, and he would not have one thing altered. Mercy was mingled with the affliction. At one time he sank into a low place, when these words came with divine power, "I go to prepare a place for you, . . . that where I am, there ye may be also;" and the 472nd hymn was precious to him, especially the seventh verse:

"Sweet in the confidence of faith
To trust His firm decrees;
Sweet to lie passive in His hands,
And know no will but His."

He was a man of prayer; therefore a pillar is taken away from the church. May God raise up many more, to show forth His praise.

C. CARTER.

On April 7th, 1911, ELIZA LEWIS. She was called to pass through many trials and afflictions, but the dear Lord gave her strength according to her days.

"Her sufferings now have reach'd a close,
And heaven affords her sweet repose."

E. PARZELL.

THE GOSPEL STANDARD.

SEPTEMBER, 1911.

MATT. v. 6; 2 TIM. i. 9; RÔM. xi. 7; ACTS viii. 37, 38; MATT. xxviii. 19.

THE POWER OF PRAYER.

A SERMON PREACHED ON SUNDAY MORNING, SEPTEMBER 24TH,
1879, AT CROYDON, BY MR. COVELL.

“Thou shalt make thy prayer unto Him, and He shall hear thee: and thou shalt pay thy vows. Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall also be established unto thee; and the light shall shine upon thy ways.”—JOB xxii. 27, 28.

WHAT a blessing is a throne of grace! And we are privileged and encouraged to “come boldly unto it, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” The Son of God says, “Ask, and it shall be given unto you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you;” and again, “Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name He will give it you;” and God by the prophet says, “Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.” The Holy Ghost says, God “is rich unto all them that call upon Him.” Now prayer is asking God to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves. The Son of God, in order to show us that nothing is too great for God to do, tells us that He could ask the Father presently to give Him twelve legions of angels, and it would be done; but then how would the Scriptures be fulfilled? So, in our praying, there are these two things to be considered by us: first, will it be for our good? and secondly, will it tend to God’s glory? and if it is for our good, it will result in God’s glory. If it is for our good, there will be submission to God’s will; and in your right mind you would not desire that God should do anything that would be hurtful or injurious to you. If there is one way better than another, that is the way God will take, although it may be crucifying to our flesh or mortifying to our feelings, and the very thing nature would not have. Paul the apostle prayed that God would take away the “thorn in the flesh;” but there was a better way to bless

him than that, and that was to give him more grace. God could see the best way to keep him walking humbly. "My grace is sufficient for thee;" and Paul saw, too, that it was the best way: "Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

This is the great thing for us to consider in our prayers—are they merely lip service, or do we pray as poor, destitute creatures? If you notice, there are many times when you are not in that condition, you are not praying hungry and thirsty. Real prayer is not saying prayers, but it is calling upon God and finding Him near. Now, I have reason to be persuaded that if you pray as a poor destitute creature, God will soon answer that prayer: "He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer." I know what it is to go upon my knees very often during a month, but not to pray hungering and thirsting; but one thing I can tell you, the more you are led to pray, calling upon God, the more delight you will find in it, the more sweetness you will find in it, and the more earnestness and fervency will be felt in your soul. Our flesh does not like it; you let flesh have its own way, no forcing to the work will do it; but the child of God having proved God to have a hand and heart to answer, finds a sweetness and pleasure in pouring out his heart to God, telling Him all his troubles, and all his desires, having a sweet persuasion in his soul that God will hear him. I tell you what real prayer is—it is felt want, a desire for help, and a grain of faith to believe that God will answer. If you know anything about praying, if you have prayed that way to God, God will answer you whatever it may be, He will grant your request; if not in the very thing you prayed for, it will be something as good or better. I am certain from the Word of God that however long God may be before He answers, no true prayer can ever be lost. Harken to His Word, that cannot deceive us. It is said, the Holy Ghost "maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." That prayer may be lodged in heaven and in the mind of God for years, but it will be answered ultimately. It was said to Cornelius, "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God." What a mercy to have such a God that will not only hear, but answer! God promises that He will pour upon His people the Spirit of grace and of supplication. I daresay that amongst the various experiences of

God's people here present, each one has his or her own case. The Scripture says, "Ask, and ye shall receive;" although no doubt you fear whether God will do it.

Now, how many prayers have you uttered and never looked to see whether God has answered them or not? You look one way, and if God does not come that way, you conclude He will not answer; but if you watch, you will soon be answered in some other way. Sometimes we pray, as the Scripture saith, that we may consume it upon our lusts. I hope there are none here that do so; but sometimes people pray, not for God to take away their sins, but they pray, and think that will be an excuse for their sins; they pray, and think God will accept such prayers; but "be not deceived, God is not mocked." You pray to God morning and night, but you do not pray for Him to take away your sins. Say you, "I pray to God to pardon my sins;" but you do not pray for God to root them out, to subdue them; you do not want them rooted out; they are idols too much beloved for that. "Lord, take me to heaven," say you; but you do not cry to God to make you holy. It is not this: "Lord, I would be holy; for Thou art holy." Oh no, that is not your prayer. Then you are not likely to be answered. God must give you a better spirit, and teach you more what you are in His sight. God says, "They shall seek Me, and find Me, when they seek for Me with all their heart." "If they turn from their evil ways, and pray unto Me, then will I hear from heaven, My dwelling-place, and when I hear, I will forgive." Do not think that your prayers in the morning will be any excuse for your sins during the day, and when you pray at night, that God will accept that as reformation. No, the heart of man is very deceitful; it has deceived thousands, who have never found out the cheat until the flames of hell have discovered it to them.

Real prayer springs from a knowledge of sin; the man is made sensible of his state and condition before God. God and his conscience are brought close together; it is accompanied by searching work; it makes the man search as to why and wherefore, as to whether there is any sin in his hand, whether there is any forbidden thing; it makes him look close to the words of his mouth, as to whether he is praying according to the will and mind of God. Prayer is humbling work; it brings the man into the dust, and shows him his shortcomings, undeservedness, and his many failings,

sins, and weaknesses. Do you know it? It is not "saying prayers," rehearsing what others have said or written. "They poured out a prayer when Thy chastening was upon them."

And I am persuaded that there is nothing too great to ask of God. God, as I have said often, can as easily give thee talents as farthings; as easy for God to make a king as a beggar. He can take the poor prisoner from the dungeon, and cause him to ride in the second chariot of Egypt. He can take David from feeding sheep, and make him the greatest man in Jerusalem; for, as regards the things of this life, David, no doubt, had abundant riches. But what God does will be for our good and His glory. You would not have God give you anything that would hurt you or make you miserable. Prayer is a wonderful weapon; so to speak, God can do nothing against the prayers of His people. I speak with reverence: it binds God fast; it holds back His hands. God said to Moses, "Let Me alone; the children of Israel have done very wickedly; I will smite them off the face of the earth." "But what wilt Thou do for Thy great name?" said Moses. "Pardon the iniquity of this people, according to Thy great mercy." And God said, "I have pardoned according to thy word." You can see what prayer does; it so holds God it brings in mercy. God said, "Pray not for this people;" as though Jeremiah was likely to overcome God. The Angel of God wrestled with Jacob until the breaking of day, and He said, "Let Me go, for the day breaketh;" but Jacob said, "I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me;" and He blessed him there. You can see, at times, that while you are praying God answers. Yea, He says, "Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." So there are times when God is quick to answer, while at other times He will keep us waiting for months, yea, years, in order to exercise our patience; but in the end He proves to us that He does hear and answer prayer, and this endears Him to our heart. The more God answers you, the more prayerful it will make you; and the more you prove God ready to hear and answer, the more readily will you go to Him for everything. This scripture has been a great comfort and encouragement to me, "In *everything* by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." We are apt sometimes to think this or that too small to ask God for; but if you are going on a

journey, do you not say, "Now, Lord, do take care of me; grant me journeying mercies, and bring me home again safely"? If going to market, you say, "Lord, give me wisdom, honesty of purpose, and direct me with Thy counsel in all my intercourse with the world around me. Lord, give me wisdom how to act and manage in all the affairs of this life." When you need medicine, you say, "Lord, give the doctor wisdom to prescribe the physic, and Thou, Lord, bless it to my good." Before you go to rest, you say, "Lord, guard and watch over me during the darkness of the night; rock me gently to sleep, and enable me to say in the morning, with a grateful mind, 'When I awake I am still with *Thee*.'" When you eat your food, you ask God to bless it; for you know not how soon it might choke you. I know a good man, who is now preaching the gospel, who had been in one or two hospitals, and came out as incurable; he returned home feeling that his was a hopeless case; but he said, "Lord, I have tried all means and none of them seem to do me any good; I will try water, and Thou canst, if Thou wilt, bless the water;" so he took to water, and God blessed the water, and the good man is now in health still preaching the gospel of God. You take my simple advice, go to the Lord daily thus,—“Now, Lord, give me favour with my customers and others in my business, open their hearts towards me; do, Lord, appear for me, and help me to bring up my family, and render to all their proper due.” My friends, there is nothing too small to ask God for; Jesus said, “When ye pray, say, . . . Give us this day our daily bread.” Better employment than this you will never find, and I tell you something else; I know now the most profitable trading under the canopy of heaven is praying. Better than working; it will do more than all other doings. The most profitable thing is to be a beggar at the throne of grace, whatever it may be for; and you will find it the most fruitful; and you will be able to say when you come to die, “For these things I prayed, and God hath granted me my requests.” God always crowns praying souls with glory.

Some of you are praying to God that He would open your eyes, and show you that it is His work in your heart; that no doubt you are changed men and women; and that it is a sovereign change. You do not dispute the fact that you see things now differently from what you used to see them,

but is it divine life, sovereign light? This is what you want to know. If this presses upon your heart and becomes to you the one thing needful, you will give God no rest; I tell you how it will be. The eyes of your understanding being enlightened to see that you are a sinner, is by the teaching of the Holy Ghost, the blessed Spirit; and what you see and feel of the sweetness and suitability of the Son of God is from the illuminating power of the same blessed and Holy Spirit; what you see of your need of mercy is by the teaching of the same good Spirit. A sovereign change has been wrought in your heart causing you to cry to God, not ceasing until He satisfies your soul. You will find many obstacles and many things working within and without, if possible, to stop your calling upon God; but if the one thing needful lies with weight upon your heart, you cannot be put off under any circumstances or for any consideration. "Shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily."

We read, "Then spake Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon! And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. . . . So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day. And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man; for the Lord fought for Israel." So we find it equally wonderful that the Son of God should stand still, that a poor creature of earth might obtain his desire. Here we see the wonderful power of prayer. Blind Bartimeus sat by the wayside begging when Jesus of Nazareth passes by, and hearing the multitude he asks what it meant. "Jesus of Nazareth," say they, "passes by;" and he cried saying, "Jesus, Thou Son of David, have mercy upon me." The multitude bade him to hold his peace, "but he cried the more, saying, Thou Son of David, have mercy upon me." And the Son of God *stood still*. Prayer, you see, brought the eternal Son of God to a stand-still; this poor beggar, so to speak, held Him tight, and the people say, "Be of good comfort; He calleth thee."—"What wilt thou that I should do for thee?" "Lord, that mine eyes may be opened;" and Jesus said, "According to

thy faith be it unto thee ;” and his eyes were opened. O what praises, I have no doubt, he heaped upon God’s dear Son ! and so will you when God answers you ; it will be just like Hannah,—“ For this I prayed, and God granted me my request.”

Some may be seeking and praying for better health. Well, but better health might so feed your flesh that you very likely would be getting into some mischief or other ; and would you not sooner be upon a bed of affliction and have sin kept under, than have sin rankling in your soul, and you walking contrary to God ? “ Yes,” say you, “ I should ; but still I should like to have my health, if it was God’s will.” Now if God’s chastening is best for you, He is not going to consult your flesh. If a weak and sickly body keeps you more out of mischief, your feet from sin, your heart from vanity, your flesh from pride,—do I hear you say,

“ Choose Thou the way, but still lead on ” ?

“ O yes,” say you, “ at times I would rather fall into His gracious hands who sees the end from the beginning :

“ Too wise to be mistaken, He, too good to be unkind.”

You will have to say in the end, “ Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life.” “ He hath led me by a right way, that I might go to a city of habitation.” Some before God may be up to the chin in poverty. “ O,” say they, “ if God would but give me more, bless me with more, what a deal of good I could do with it in helping God’s people.” But God can help His people without you ; He does not require your puny arm to help Him in taking care of His dear people—O, dear no. “ I could go and visit the sick,” say you ; but God can do that without you. Suppose you were out of the world. Why, He supported the sick and nourished the afflicted of His dear family before ever you came into it, and it is a very sure case that He will do it after you are gone. Ah, my dear friends, it is a very poor, lame plea, for the excuse of asking for riches ; that only comes from our treacherous hearts. After all, perhaps, if you got riches you would not part with a penny—O no. If God saw it needful and good for you, you would find silver and gold to come in fast enough. But what does this poverty do for you ? It keeps you down—keeps down that abominable pride that lurks within. Riches, as a rule, bring pride ; and as humility is

the greatest of all graces, so pride is the greatest of all sins; it is a sin we so readily slip into before we know it. Would you not sooner walk humbly before God than like Hezekiah, who got such a reproof as he did on account of his pride, when he showed the great things of his house? How apt we are, my friends, to fall into this particular sin at the present day! Beware that God does not punish you for it. "The proud in heart He will abase." In the case of this dear man, as riches increased, they drew his heart from God; see where he got on account of his pride. O, this pride! you cannot tell what it might lead you to. Depend upon it, the poor in pocket are often in a far more enjoyable position than the rich of God's people. They have other riches—more of God's love and His sweet presence in their souls. Is not that far better than all earthly riches?

It is said of Jehoshaphat that "he walked in the first ways of David his father." And what were those ways? Why, walking humbly and tenderly. "It was God," he said, "who delivered me out of the paw of the lion and out of the paw of the bear." The first ways of David were expressed in his own words that he was but as a dead dog—*nothing* before the Lord. Now see, when riches increase, if you walk in the *first* ways of David—if your prayer is, "Keep me healthful in soul, bless me with a praying heart—alive to the things that make for my peace, and dead to the world." I know God can do it; but it wants a great deal of grace. So take my simple advice: if God blesses you with plenty, you be often on your knees before God, crying, "Hold Thou me up, that I slip not;" you be much in prayer, if you have plenty. And if you are in a low place as regards the things of this world—God helps such more than He does the world. There is no people the world hates so much as God's people, and none that God loves so much as this people; the world hates them because they are good, and God corrects them because they are not better. God's people are near and dear to Him; He takes a delight in appearing for them in every providential trial. I ask, then, does not your being straitened in circumstances keep you more watchful? and when God makes His goodness pass before you in these circumstances, does it not cause you to say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul"? And is not this worth a bag of gold? If I know anything of it, and I think I do—only let His goodness come in when you fall into

any trouble and know not what to do, if you do not run into some secret place and bless God for it, I cannot understand your religion. How glad you and I are to get alone and bless and praise God for His delivering hand! "Whoso is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord." Better, then, than gold or silver it is to know that God listens to our poor, broken, feeble cries, and that He has a regard to such creatures as we are. This strengthens our hope and helps us to believe that He will surely feed and support our bodies, hold up our soul in life, hear our prayers, and take us to heaven at last.

"With heaven and earth at His command,
He waits to answer prayer."

I just drop these few things to show what straits God will at times allow His people to come into in soul exercises and temporal trials, and then to show you what His own right hand and holy arm can do, while He blesses your soul with faith in His power, mercy, and love. You can see this in the case of Peter. Herod pleased the Jews by killing James; so he shut up Peter, intending to bring him forth after Easter; but the night before, the Angel of the Lord appeared in a light above the brightness of the sun, smote off Peter's shackles, opened the prison gates, and brought him forth free; and this wonderful thing was brought about while a dozen, more or less, of godly people were joined in prayer together on poor Peter's behalf. "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven." You put your prayers into the hand of the Christ of God, and you will see what He can do. And these poor people still praying, Peter knocked at the door. Ah, if it were possible, I should think this would knock their unbelief out of them for that time at least; but unbelief *is* such a stubborn thing. "It is Peter!" Then the brethren knew that God had delivered him from the expectation of the Jews. I remember reading of one of our old divines who was called upon to visit a sick person, and when he entered the room, his friends were all weeping, and praying, and crying to God; and the good man said, "Lord, if Thou dost not hear this, Thou wilt hear nothing; when I see the people here weeping and crying to Thee, I know if these tears and ories do not move Thee, nothing I can say or do will." It reminds one of Hezekiah,

who turned his face to the wall, and wept; and God's pity and compassion were moved, and He sent Isaiah to say unto him, "I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears; and behold, I will add unto thy days fifteen years."

"Thou shalt make thy prayer unto Him, and He shall hear thee, and thou shalt pay thy vows. Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee: and the light shall shine upon thy ways." Amen.

A MONUMENT OF MERCY.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF THOMAS RUSSELL, MINISTER OF THE
GOSPEL, ROTHERFIELD, SUSSEX.

(Concluded from page 356.)

I NOW had the witness within that I was saved with an everlasting salvation, and that my God was my faithful, unchangeable Friend: "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever" (Heb. xiii. 8). Under this sweet union I was led into blessed communion with my dear Redeemer, so that I talked to Him as a man would with his friend; and the precious promises dropped from His mouth into my soul, which made me esteem the words of His mouth more than my necessary food. His banner over me was love, and the kisses of His mouth were most sweet. He embraced me in the arms of everlasting love, and kissed me with the kisses of His mouth; which caused me to say, "His mouth is most sweet; yea, He is altogether lovely. This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend, O daughters of Jerusalem" (Song v. 16). Under the sweet anointing of the blessed Spirit, by precious faith I was brought to put on the righteousness of Christ, in which I had the witness that I stood justified before God without spot or stain of sin; and could say with the apostle, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Rom. viii. 33, 34). Now I knew, through this blessed change wrought in my heart by the power of God, that "the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Rom. xiv. 17). I also knew that those that are

brought from death to life, from condemnation unto salvation, and from bondage into the glorious liberty of the children of God, are brought to say with John, "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ." This was the feeling of my heart, for truly I had access by faith into the glorious covenant of grace, and rejoiced in hope of the glory of God: and could say, "The Lord liveth, and blessed be my Rock, and let the God of my salvation be exalted."

I stayed in my bedroom till all were gone from below, and then came downstairs blessing and praising God, while I thought the whole creation showed forth the praises of its Maker. As soon as I got down, I went to my Bible, and behold, all things appeared new; for "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. v. 17). The Word of God appeared full of promises; and oh, the heavenly consolation that flowed into my soul as I read the precious Word! for it all seemed to testify of Christ; as the Saviour Himself says, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me" (John v. 39).

Under this anointing and heavenly visitation of the Lord to my soul I walked for some time, though not always filled with that rapture of joy, but possessing a stable peace in my heart, and having precious intercourse with my God; and oh, what heavenly delight and joy filled my heart as He talked with me by the way! I thought I was ripening for heaven, and that my precious Lord was about to take me to Himself, and would soon say, "Come up higher." My soul longed to leave the world, and enter into the joy of my Lord; for death had lost its sting, and I could look upon death with pleasure and delight, and say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ." My prayers were now turned into praise; for when I went upon my knees for that purpose, instead of asking the Lord for anything, I blessed and praised His dear name for what He had done for my soul. He anointed my head with oil, so that I could say, "My cup runneth over;" and these words were exceedingly sweet to my soul: "For Thou, Lord,

wilt bless the righteous ; with favour wilt Thou compass him as with a shield " (Psa. v. 12) ; for I could see that the Lord had compassed me about with favour, so that my mountain stood strong, and I thought never more to be moved.

One day, being in my room upon my knees, blessing the Lord for His goodness and mercy towards me, I asked Him to let me die and come to Him, when these words were powerfully spoken to my soul, " Thou shalt not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord " (Psa. cxviii. 17). This at once put a stop to my desiring to die, for I clearly saw that the Lord had a work for me to do. I then asked the Lord that He would be with me, and make me useful to His people, and bring glory to His dear name ; and I think I never shall forget the blessed assurance that He granted me that He would be with me, even unto the end. The dream that I had was brought to my mind, and I at this time fully believed that the Lord would call me to declare His works ; though, had human reason been suffered to rear its head, it would have said it was impossible. But faith was triumphing over the world and unbelief, I believed the word the Lord had spoken ; and all things are possible to him that believeth.

For some time all was well, no trouble did I know. I was kept in communion with God from off the mercy-seat, and He that shines forth from between the cherubim shone into my soul as the perfection of beauty ; so that I did arise and shine, for my light was come, and the glory of the Lord was risen upon me. For my God was become my glory, and I was receiving out of His fulness, grace for grace, and was sure that my God would supply all my needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. I kept drinking of the streams of that river that make glad the city of God, and sucking at Zion's breast milking out, and was delighted with the abundance of her glory (Isa. lxvi. 11). I could but wonder at the discriminating grace of God towards me, so vile a sinner ; for as sin had abounded unto death, so now did grace much more abound ; therefore I could say that it was " to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved ; in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace " (Eph. i. 6, 7). My

glorious Christ was precious to me in the offices and characters that He sustains; and in many of the types and shadows in the Bible could I see Him shine forth. In sweet meditation by the hour has the blessed Spirit led me into these things; so that I have seen Him as my precious Rock, upon which my soul was built by love and blood, and founded by an eternal union that the gates of hell can never prevail against. Yes, I saw Him as the glorious Foundation upon which my soul was built, and the Foundation of all my hope, peace, and happiness, the Foundation of my righteousness and acceptance before God. I saw I was "built upon the Foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief Corner-stone" (Eph. ii. 20). I have seen Him as my precious Door (John x. 9), or the only Way of entrance into the green pastures of the everlasting love of God, and the only Way whereby I could have access to the Father; and through Him have I entered by precious faith into that rest that remaineth for the people of God. Yes, through Him at this time did I have access by faith into the holy of holies; to the mercy-seat, there to commune with God as a reconciled God and Father; and being, through my precious Christ and Shepherd, led into such rich pastures, it has caused me to rejoice, and say, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake." This was a time ever to be remembered—a time of love, a time of embracing, a time of delight, when wisdom's ways were ways of pleasantness, and all her paths were peace; for He crowned me with goodness, and His paths dropped fatness into my soul. I sat down under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste; and in the multitude of my thoughts within me, His comforts delighted my soul. I felt sure I was written amongst the living in Jerusalem, and that my Redeemer lived, and I should see Him for myself, and one day appear amongst that multitude that no man can number, who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; for their song I had begun to sing below: "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, . . . to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." Oh, what astonishing

love and mercy to so vile a sinner and the greatest of all rebels, that ever the almighty Jehovah should condescend to pick me out from the ruins of the Fall, and by His almighty power bring down my proud heart, and reveal His dear Son in me! Sure I am that He will have mercy upon whom He will have mercy, and that all His children shall be brought to know Him, from the least unto the greatest.

[Mr. Russell lived many years as minister of the gospel at Rotherfield, Sussex, and preached at various places round, the word being blessed to many. He was taken home after a long and painful affliction, on July 26th, 1868. When near his end, his wife asked him if he was happy. He said, "Quite happy. I am going to heaven, blessed be God!" And his ransomed spirit took its flight to be for ever where sorrow is known no more.—J. K. P.]

THE SPIRIT'S SEALING.

Now I have found a Friend,
 Jesus is mine;
 His love shall never end,
 Jesus is mine;
 Though earthly joys decrease,
 Though human friendships cease,
 Now I have lasting peace,
 Jesus is mine.

Though I grow poor and old,
 Jesus is mine;
 He will my faith uphold,
 Jesus is mine;
 He shall my wants supply,
 His precious blood is nigh,
 Nought can my hope destroy,
 Jesus is mine.

When earth shall pass away,
 Jesus is mine;
 In the great judgment day
 Jesus is mine.

O what a glorious thing
 Then to behold my King,
 On tuneful harp to sing,
 Jesus is mine!

Farewell, mortality !
 Jesus is mine ;
 Welcome, eternity !
 Jesus is mine.
 He my Redemption is,
 Wisdom and Righteousness,
 Life, Light, and Holiness—
 Jesus is mine.

Father, Thy name I bless,
 Jesus is mine ;
 Thine was the sovereign grace,
 Jesus is mine.
 Spirit of holiness,
 Sealing the Father's grace,
 Thou mad'st my soul embrace
 Jesus as mine.

UNKNOWN.

THE FITNESS OF OUR HIGH PRIEST.

“ For such an High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.”—Heb. vii. 26.

THE Person of this Priest is exalted in the Scriptures, and particularly in this wonderful Epistle, above the passing priests and their changing priesthood. Certain great differences are noticed between His priesthood and theirs. This one Man whose unchangeable priesthood is set before us, is ordained after the order of Melchisedec, of whom it is said, “ Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life ; but made like unto the Son of God, abideth a priest continually ; ” and therefore his priesthood passed not from one to another, for he was made like unto the Son of God, *whose priesthood is unchangeable*. That becomes us, suits us, fits us. And because this our High Priest is *of another tribe* than that of Levi, one of which Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood, of a royal tribe, that of Judah, therefore there must of necessity be a change of that law which was administered by the priests of Levi. And that change becomes us ; for it is a change to the glorious gospel of Christ. Again. The old priests were made without an oath, and could be dispensed with without breaking one,

whenever God pleased; but our Priest was made *with an oath*: as David testified, "The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." (ver. 21). And this becomes us, to confirm our faith. And our great High Priest was distinguished from all other priests by this also; that whereas they offered sacrifices taken to them, He *offered Himself*, was Himself the Sacrifice, the Altar, the Priest. He sealed the covenant and confirmed it by His own death and precious blood; and so made it sure, and the promises sure to all the seed. And this becomes us, suits our case. "For such an High Priest became us."

Under the old dispensation God stamped one truth on the minds of the people, and had it constantly carried out; this namely, that every approach to Him by an Israelite or a proselyte must be made, was made, by the priest. How becoming then was the priesthood to the people! No priest, no coming to God—this was a type; and the great and beautiful antitype is, *there is no coming to God but by Jesus Christ*. And the reality and truth of a sinner's coming to God by this great High Priest is most blessed. Through, in, and by Him His people draw nigh to God. In this respect our High Priest becomes us. Would we pray? This is the way. Would we bring an offering? It must be through Jesus Christ. Would we be accepted? It must be by His blood. Would we have life? It must be through His life offered. He "offered Himself without spot to God." May the Lord help us for a few minutes to meditate on this great subject.

If we have life divine in our souls, we cannot be happy apart from God. I lay that down as a vital and everlasting truth to be known and experienced. We must go to Him, there is a necessity for it in our spiritual being, a great and abiding necessity. A man of God must have God, make approaches to Him, come to Him, seek unto Him. Never will the magnetic needle rest out of its proper point; and never will the life of God let those rest in whom it is, apart from God. What a great thing to know that! What a blessed thing to believe it! But how can sinners come to God? This question exercises every new-born soul. Un-purged sin is discovered; therefore, there is separation from God, the curse is deserved, and there is reason why we should not come to Him. "But," says the blessed God, "there is a

new way, a living way, and that is through the rent veil of the flesh of the blessed Jesus." It seems that the true working of the Spirit of Christ in the saints is chiefly to exercise their hearts about and towards God; instructing them that whereas sin has put them wrong, God only can make them right; whereas sin has cursed and made them damnable, grace must fit them for blessedness and felicity; that as sin has made them unlike God, grace must be given to make them like Him, and take away their vile disability for union and communion; and all this He will show is effected by this High Priest. The influence will be this—they will make approaches by Him; and this word will grow in their hearts: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." This teaching will detach us from self and make outside things very small compared with this one matter, although they have a proper importance in their place. This will be of such paramount importance that it will be as if we had no outside things at all sometimes. The one thing needful will be to be united to God, to have His friendship, to come to Him. All this is in, through, and by our great High Priest. So He becomes us.

On the other hand, *sinners become Him*; He should not be a Priest if there were no sinners. What a mercy to be suitable to Him! If we read carefully the history of the Levitical priesthood, we shall see the continual traffic that was carried on between the priests and the people, and that because they were sinners there were priests. And in the antitype, because we are sinners, God will have a Priest. Because all the perpetual uncleannesses we are contracting are to be taken from us and atoned for, therefore there is a Priest, a Sacrifice; and because God will have communion with us and give Himself to us to be our God; because also He will have us give ourselves to Him and will accept us, therefore there must be a Priest. He becomes us, and we become Him. How wonderful the mercy that comes to any of us, that for us sinful persons God has given a great High Priest! And in His priesthood He becomes us, because He possesses everything requisite in respect of God's character to bring us to God; and He is "ordained for men in things pertaining to God."

Many people talk about sin whose talk is evidently not derived from the knowledge of God, by which only we are made to understand the nature of sin. Vague notions of

punishment which is to follow sin, must be said to form the bulk of most people's religion and talk about sin. But how different when a sinner sees the character of God to be "holy, holy, holy," and enters into what is written of the cherubim: "Each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly," in adoration and obedience (Isa. vi. 2). When God's character is a little known in the heart, the sinner enters into this—he must cover his face, as if unfit to look upon God—not fit to look on Him. It is so awful, holy, glorious; and what worthless worms are we! How can we approach this great and dreadful God? Why, He gave out of His bosom His true and only begotten Son, bless God for it; gave Him our nature, and in this made Him a Priest; and with an oath sware, "Thou art a Priest for ever," to offer Himself for us that He might satisfy justice, and to present His offering before the throne of God for ever.

Two things are said of Him. One was that God was *in* Him. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." "My Name is in Him." The second was, God was *with* Him; as Peter said, "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him" (Acts x. 38). These two things make Him most eminent as the Man Christ Jesus, the Priest and Substitute of His people; for He only had an offering that could be acceptable to the Father. "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin;" and being made sin, He poured out His soul unto death. May we remember He is very God and very Man, true, almighty God and as real a Man as ever stood on this earth. His human nature is a great reality; and here is one Person of two natures made our great High Priest. The moment faith gets a view of Him, He fills the eye, the thoughts, and the heart. The *eye*—did we ever see another like Him? another Jesus, a priest whose priesthood and office we could think of by the side of Jesus Christ and His office? He fills the *thoughts*, "fillet all in all." Paul says, "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.

"Till God in human flesh I see,
My thoughts no comfort find."

"But if Immanuel's face appear,
My morning is begun."

And He fills the *heart*. How becoming He is to our renewed judgment and affections! So Paul tells the Colossians that they had put on the new man, where "Christ is all, and in all" (iii. 11). "Such an High Priest became us."

Now what is He able to do? For He has an ability, being a Priest. He is "*able to save to the uttermost* all that come unto God by Him"—to the uttermost of their sinfulness, think of it, sinner; to the uttermost of all their unrighteousness. That is a great stretch. See where some of us have gone in unrighteous thoughts; and there the Priest must go for us, to save us. See where we have gone in idolatry, and where our Priest must go for us, to save us. See where we have gone in sins, in our evil propensities. Let us not try to get beyond "*uttermost*;" there is quite enough inside that word. And who will limit the power of this blessed One to save to the uttermost? Bad thoughts indulged, infidel thoughts nursed, sin sucked as a sweet thing, evil delighted in—one says,

"In evil long I took delight;"

doubts of the Holy One of Israel, prayerlessness, aversion to prayer, gadding after vain things, hugging the world, and rejecting the Son of God,—these are things belonging to the "*uttermost*." Do we know them? Because Jesus Christ is a Priest, He has ability to save, is "*able to save to the uttermost*." How far did He go in suffering? He poured out His soul unto death. Wrath, the wrath of God, came on Him to the uttermost; and O child of God, tried by your uttermost sins, when you have got to the uttermost limits of them, and of your bad case, God the Holy Ghost will make you know there is something beyond that. That is, *the merits of our great High Priest*. Blessed be God, He is able to save from uttermost sins; and what a wonder He will fill up the utmost capacity of the soul with holiness and happiness! He went to the uttermost in suffering, going down to the gates of death and hell, as it were, to bring up sinners to the throne of God in heaven. What ability was there! and the whole of it lies in this—that He had a life to give, and gave it.

What a song the people of God will sing in heaven! with what fulness, harmony, rapture, joy, everlasting felicity, and glory they will unite in that song the substance of which is in Kent's hymn:

"Sovereign grace o'er sin abounding."

And were it permissible to speak so (as it is poetically), will not each be surprised to find himself there? And each feel, "Who should sing as loud as myself? What? Such a sinner get to heaven, such a nature, such sins, such pollution overcome, idolatry broken up? Such a one made a new creature in Christ?" O, what we owe to sovereign grace we must die to understand! Blessed souls that are there, that can never backslide, that are ever worshipping, ever praising! We may well wish to be there, but would patiently wait, like Job, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." May the Lord give us grace not so to backslide as to grieve and quench the Holy Spirit. And all this grace is in its great Fountain and Source, almighty Jesus, the Prince of peace, the Lord of life, our great High Priest.

One word more. Being exalted at the right hand of the Father, He has received the promise of the Father; and having received it, He sheds it on His children, pours out of His Spirit. The Holy Spirit enlightens them, teaches them, extends His mercy to the uttermost bounds of their unrighteousness, and justifies them in the righteousness of Christ. Does not this fit us, dead as we often are? Bless God, there is no quarrel sometimes between us and Christ; His smiling face and a soul longing for it, a full Christ and an empty creature, what a fitting in with Him there is!

"Such an High Priest became us." Let us look at His character! "*Holy.*" This must be sung to Him as it is sung to the Father, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty;" that is, both in respect of His divine nature, His glorious Person as the Son of God, and in respect of His human nature. What a loathsome thought is it that Christ had a capability of sinning, how awful! He is the *Surety* of the new covenant, the better covenant, established on better promises (Heb. viii. 6). The Father was pleased with His undertaking to be a Surety for sinners; and how could He have stood in that position if there had been a possibility in Him to sin? His nature would not have been perfect. We had that lack (shall I call it?) in Adam, a capability of falling; but One who is a Surety for sinners with the Father must go beyond that, and have an impeccable nature. Bless God for a holy Christ, "holy, *harmless.*" Can we venture on Him with all we have? cast a look on Him on whom we feel

too unworthy to look? Listen to His kind word: "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden." The meek and lowly Jesus will receive all that come. "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out." "Holy, harmless, undefiled." So He said, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me." But when he comes to us, what a fruitful soil he finds to cast in the seed of some foul temptation! "*Separate from sinners,*" yet having to do with them; "undefiled," yet eating with them: "This Man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them," making them fit to be the guests of God.

Well now, uttermost sinner, God give you mercy to see beyond your sinfulness and sins One of infinite merit; and beneath all your soul sinkings, that mighty One pouring out His soul unto death; and to see Him now standing before the throne of God in heaven interceding for sinners; so that however depressed, you may say to your soul;

"Why should I, then, poison cherish?
Why despair of cure, and perish?
Look, my soul, though stung to death."

J. K. P.

OF GOD AND OF THE HOLY TRINITY.

FROM THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH, 1647.

THERE is but one only¹ living and true God,² who is infinite in Being and perfection,³ a most pure Spirit,⁴ invisible,⁵ without body, parts,⁶ or passions,⁷ immutable,⁸ immense,⁹ eternal,¹⁰ incomprehensible,¹¹ almighty,¹² most wise,¹³ most holy,¹⁴ most free,¹⁵ most absolute,¹⁶ working all things according to the counsel of His own immutable and most righteous will,¹⁷ for His own glory,¹⁸ most loving,¹⁹ gracious, merciful, longsuffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin,²⁰ the Rewarder of them that diligently seek Him;²¹ and withal most just and terrible in His judgments;²² hating all sin,²³ and who will by no means clear the guilty.²⁴

¹ Deut. vi. 4; 1 Cor. viii. 4, 6. ² 1 Thess. i. 9; Jer. x. 10. ³ Job xi. 7—9; xxvi. 14. ⁴ Jno. iv. 24. ⁵ 1 Tim. i. 17. ⁶ Deut. iv. 15, 16; Jno. iv. 24; Lu. xxiv. 39. ⁷ Acts xiv. 11, 15. ⁸ Jas. i. 17; Mal. iii. 6. ⁹ 1 Kings viii. 27; Jer. xxiii. 23, 24. ¹⁰ Psa. xc. 2; 1 Tim. i. 17. ¹¹ Psa. cxlv. 3. ¹² Gen. xvii. 1; Rev. iv. 8. ¹³ Rom. xvi. 27. ¹⁴ Isa. vi. 3; Rev. iv. 8. ¹⁵ Psa. cxv. 3. ¹⁶ Ex. iii. 14. ¹⁷ Eph. i. 11. ¹⁸ Pro. xvi. 4; Rom. xi. 36. ¹⁹ 1 Jno. iv. 8, 16. ²⁰ Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. ²¹ Heb. xi. 6. ²² Neh. ix. 32, 33. ²³ Psa. v. 5, 6. ²⁴ Nah. i. 2, 3; Ex. xxxiv. 7.

II. God hath all life,¹ glory,² goodness,³ blessedness⁴ in and of Himself; and is alone in and unto Himself all-sufficient, not standing in need of any creatures which He hath made,⁵ not deriving any glory from them,⁶ but only manifesting His own glory in, by, unto, and upon them. He is the alone Fountain of all being, of whom, through whom, and to whom are all things;⁷ and hath most sovereign dominion over them, to do by them, for them, or upon them whatsoever Himself pleaseth.⁸ In His sight all things are open and manifest;⁹ His knowledge is infinite, infallible, and independent upon the creature,¹⁰ so as nothing is to Him contingent or uncertain.¹¹ He is most holy in all His counsels, in all His works, and in all His commands.¹² To Him is due from angels and men and every other creature whatsoever worship, service, or obedience He is pleased to require of them.¹³

III. In the unity of the Godhead there be Three Persons of one substance, power, and eternity; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.¹⁴ The Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father;¹⁵ the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son.¹⁶

STRAIGHT PATHS.

A MORNING READING BY JAMES BOURNE.

MARCH 31st, 1838 or 9.—Heb. xii.: "Lay aside every weight." This weight is the spirit of the world in all directions, speaking and doing as we like, pleasing ourselves. The only way of putting it off is by looking to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross. Now I feel so many things in the world desirable, whatever is offered is so suitable to my natural inclinations that it is hard to put it off; but this is the cross, this we must do. And this is the work of faith—to deny those things which are so sweet. It is the conflict not of one day,

II. ¹ Jno. v. 26. ² Acts vii. 2. ³ Psa. cxix. 68. ⁴ 1 Tim. vi. 15; Rom. ix. 5. ⁵ Acts xvii. 24, 25. ⁶ Job xxii. 2, 3. ⁷ Rom. xi. 36. ⁸ Rev. iv. 11; 1 Tim. vi. 15; Dan. iv. 25, 35. ⁹ Heb. iv. 13. ¹⁰ Rom. xi. 33, 34; Psa. cxlvii. 5. ¹¹ Acts xv. 18; Ezek. xi. 5. ¹² Psa. cxlv. 17; Rom. vii. 12. ¹³ Rev. v. 12—14.

III. ¹⁴ 1 Jno. v. 7; Matt. iii. 16, 17; xxviii. 19; 2 Cor. xiii. 14. ¹⁵ Jno. i. 14, 18. ¹⁶ Jno. xv. 26; Gal. iv. 6.

but of every hour and every day. And if we do deny these things by confession and prayer and coming to the blood of sprinkling, God will never find fault with us for having those inclinations. For this is the conflict of the two natures.

Now whatever comes upon us, it is our mercy not to say it is from this or that man, but, "Here is the hand of God," and to listen and tremble; not to choose a way of our own, but to commit our way to Him, for we should be sure to choose wrong. The way to be enabled to this is by the Spirit of adoption, witnessing we are no more servants, but sons; for if we have this sweet testimony on our hearts, it will enable us to bear every cross. "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord." Do not forget in any chastisement that you are still children. "Make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way, but let it rather be healed." How is this done? Why, whatever is amiss or crooked, see that it be not overlooked or forgotten, but confessed and healed by an application of the blood of Jesus Christ. Do not let the vanities and cares of the world drown the voice of the Spirit in your conscience. For be assured that God does not forget, and that there is no other way of healing. I do not mean to say that every sin can be remembered, for my iniquities are innumerable; but you must come to this—to cry, "God be merciful to me, a sinner," and get some sweet look or word from Him which shall speak peace and reconciliation to your souls; and not go on heaping heaps upon heaps without this.

Then these chastisements will yield the "peaceable fruits of righteousness" by making us more watchful against those things which draw away our hearts from God. For it all comes to this one focus—that the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ be sprinkled on our consciences, which does not cry out like that of Abel for vengeance, but for mercy. "See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh." He speaks by the motions of His Spirit on our hearts, by the convictions of the Spirit, in family worship, and in the public ordinances; and we shall find a sad account if we disregard these things. But if we are enabled to tremble and listen, it is because God has opened our ears and we have His Holy Spirit; for He only can give us this grace to serve Him with reverence and godly fear.

CRUMBS FROM THE MASTER'S TABLE

FROM BOSTON'S "CROOK IN THE LOT," OR, "THE SOVEREIGNTY AND WISDOM OF GOD IN THE AFFLICTIONS OF MEN DISPLAYED."

(Continued from page 378.)

II. Particular Directions.

1. ASSURE yourselves that there are no circumstances that you are in so humbling but you may get your heart acceptably brought down to them. 1 Cor. x. 13: "But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." This is truth, 2 Cor. xii. 9, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for My strength is made perfect in weakness." And you should be persuaded of it with application to yourselves, if ever you would reach the end. Phil. iv. 13: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." God allows you to be persuaded of it, whatever is your weakness and the difficulty of the task. "For our sakes this is written, That he that ploweth shall plow in hope; and he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope" (1 Cor. ix. 10). And the belief thereof is a piece of the life of faith, 2 Tim. ii. 1. If you have no hope of success, your endeavours, as they will be heartless, so they will be vain. "Wherefore lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees" (Heb. xii. 12).

2. Whatever hand is, or is not, in your humbling circumstances, do you take God for your party, and consider yourselves therein as under His mighty hand, Mic. vi. 9. Men in their humbling circumstances overlook God; so they find not themselves called to humility under them; they fix their eyes on the creature instrument, and instead of humility, their hearts rise. But take Him for your party, that ye may remember the battle, and do no more, Job xli. 8.

3. Be much in the thoughts of God's infinite greatness; consider His holiness and majesty, to awe you into the deepest humiliation, Isa. vi. 3—5. Job met with many humbling providences in his case; but he was never sufficiently humbled under them till the Lord made a new discovery of Himself unto him, in His infinite majesty and greatness. He kept his ground against his friends, and stood to his points, till the Lord took that method with him. It was begun with thunder, Job xxxvii. 1, 2. Then followed God's voice out of

thō whirlwind, chap. xxxviii. 1, whereon Job is brought down, chap. xl. 4, 5. It is renewed till he is farther humbled, chap. xlii. 5, 6: "Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

4. Inure yourselves silently to admit mysteries in the conduct of Providence towards you which you are not able to comprehend, but will adore. Rom. xi. 33: "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" That was the first word God said to Job, xxxviii. 2: "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?" It went to his heart, stuck with him, and he comes over it again, chap. xlii. 3, as that which particularly brought him to his knees, to the dust. Even in those steps of providence which we seem to see far into, we may well allow there are some mysteries beyond what we see. And in those which are perplexing and puzzling, sovereignty should silence us; His infinite wisdom should satisfy, though we cannot see.

5. Be much in the thoughts of your own sinfulness, Job xl. 4: "Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer Thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth." It is overlooking of that which gives us so much ado with humbling circumstances. While the eyes are held that they cannot see sin, the heart riseth against them; but when they are opened, it falls. Wherefore, whenever God is dealing with you in humbling dispensations, turn your eyes, upon that occasion, on the sinfulness of your nature, heart and life, and that will help forward your humiliation.

6. Settle it in your heart that there is need of all the humbling circumstances you are put in. This is truth, 1 Pet. i. 6: "Though now for a season (if need be) ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations." God brings no needless trials upon us, afflicts none but as their need requires. Lam. iii. 33: "For He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men." That is an observable difference betwixt our earthly and our heavenly Father's correction, Heb. xii. 10: They, "after their own pleasure, but He for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness." Look to the temper of your own hearts and nature, how apt to be lifted up, to forget God, to be carried away with the vanities of the world; what foolishness is bound up in your hearts! Thus you will see the need of humbling circumstances for ballast,

and of the rod for the fool's back; and if at any time you cannot see that need, believe it on the ground of God's infinite wisdom, that does nothing in vain.

7. Believe a kind design of Providence in them towards you. God calls us to this, as the key that opens the heart under them. . . . As long as the suspicion of an ill design in them against us reigns, the creature will, like the worm at the man's feet, put itself in the best posture of defence it can, and harden itself in sorrow; but the faith of a kind design will cause it to open out itself in humility before Him.

Case. "O, if I knew there were a kind design in it, I would willingly bear it, although there were more of it; but I fear a ruining design of Providence against me therein."

Ans. Now, what word of God, or discovery from heaven, have you to ground these fears upon? None at all, but from hell. 1 Cor. x. 13. What think you the design towards you in the gospel is? Can you believe no kind design in all the words of grace there heaped up? What is that, I pray, but black unbelief in its hue of hell, flying in the face of the truth of God, and making Him a liar? Isa. lv. 1; 1 John v. 10, 11. The gospel is a breathing of love and goodwill to the world of mankind sinners, Titus ii. 11; iii. 3, 4; 1 John iv. 14; John iii. 17. But ye believe it not, in that case, more than devils believe it. If ye can believe a kind design there, ye must believe it in your humbling circumstances too; for the design of Providence cannot be contrary to the design of the gospel; but contrariwise, the latter is to help forward to the other.

8. Think with yourselves that this life is the time of trial for heaven. James i. 12: "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him." And therefore there should be a welcoming of humbling circumstances in that view. Ver. 2: "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations." If there is an honourable office, or beneficial employment to be bestowed, men strive to be taken on trial for it, in hope they may be thereupon legally admitted to it. Now God takes trial of men for heaven by humbling circumstances, as the whole Bible teacheth; and shall men be so very loth to stoop to them? I would ask you,

(1) Is it nothing to you to stand a candidate for glory, to be put on trial for heaven? Is there not an honour in it, an honour which all the saints have had? James v. 10, 11: "Behold, we count them happy that endure," &c. And a fair prospect in it?—2 Cor. iv. 17: "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Do but put the case that God should overlook you in that case, as one whom it is needless ever to try on that head; that He should order you your portion in this life with full ease, as one that is to get no more of Him; what would that be?

(2) What a vast disproportion is there between your trials and the future glory! Your most humbling circumstances, how light are they in comparison to the weight of it! The longest continuance of them is but for a moment, compared with that eternal weight. Alas! there is much unbelief at the root of all our uneasiness under our humbling circumstances. Had we a clearer view of the other world, we should not make so much of either the smiles or frowns of this.

(3) What think ye of coming foul off in the trial of your humbling circumstances? Jer. vi. 29, 30: "The lead is consumed of the fire; the founder melteth in vain; for the wicked are not plucked away. Reprobate silver shall men call them, because the Lord hath rejected them." That the issue of it be only that your heart appear of such a temper as by no means to be humbled; and that therefore you must and shall be taken off them, while yet no humbling appears—I think the awfulness of the dispensation is such as might set us to our knees to deprecate the lifting us up from our humbling circumstances, ere our hearts are humbled, Isa. i. 5; Ezek. xxiv. 13.

9. Think with yourselves how by humbling circumstances the Lord prepares us for heaven. "Giving thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light," Col. i. 12; 2 Cor. v. 5. The stones and timber are laid down, turned over and over, and hewed, ere they be set up in the building; and not set up just as they come out of the quarry and wood. Were they capable of a choice, such of them as would refuse the iron tool would be refused a place in the building. Pray, how think ye to be made meet for heaven by the warm sunshine

of this world's ease, and getting all your will here? Nay, sirs, that would put your mouth out of taste for the joys of the other world. Vessels of dishonour are fitted for destruction that way; but vessels of honour for glory by humbling circumstances. I would here say,

(1) Will nothing please you but two heavens, one here, another hereafter? God has secured one heaven for the saints, one place where they shall get all their will, wish, and desire; where there shall be no weight on them to hold them down; and that is in the other world. But ye must have it both here and there, or ye cannot digest it. Why do you not quarrel too that there are not two summers in one year; two days in the twenty-four hours? The order of the one heaven is as firm as that of the years and days, and ye cannot reverse it; therefore, choose ye whether you will take your night or your day first, your winter or your summer, your heaven here or hereafter.

(2) Without being humbled with humbling circumstances in this life, ye are not capable of heaven. 2 Cor. v. 5: "Now He that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God." You may indeed lie at ease here in a bed of sloth, and dream of heaven, big with hopes of a fool's paradise, wishing to cast yourselves just out of Delilah's lap into Abraham's bosom; but except ye be humbled, ye are not capable,

(1) Of the Bible heaven, that heaven described in the Old and New Testaments. Is not that heaven a lifting up in due time? But how shall ye be lifted up that are never well got down? Where will your tears be to be wiped away? What place will there be for your triumph, who will not fight the good fight? How can it be a rest to you, who cannot submit to labour?

(2) Of the saints' heaven. Rev. vii. 14: "And he said unto me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." This answers the question about Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the saints with them there; they were brought down to the dust by humbling circumstances, and out of these they came before the throne. How can ye ever think to be lifted up with them, with whom ye cannot think to be brought down?

(3) Of Christ's heaven. Heb. xii. 2: "Who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the

shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." O consider how the Forerunner made His way! Luke xxiv. 26: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?" And lay your account with it, that if ye get where He is, ye must go thither as He went. Luke ix. 23: "And He said, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me."

10. Give up at length with your towering hopes from this world, and confine them to the world to come. Be as pilgrims and strangers here, looking for your rest in heaven, and not till ye come there. There is a prevailing evil, Isa. lvii. 10: "Thou art wearied in the greatness of thy way; yet saidst thou not, There is no hope." So the Babel-building is still continued, though it has fallen down again and again; for men say, "The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones; the sycamores are cut down, but we will change them into cedars" (Isa. ix. 10). This makes humbling work very longsome; we are so hard to quit hold of the creature, to fall off from the breast and be weaned; but fasten on the other world, and let your hold of this go; so shall ye be humbled indeed under "the mighty hand." The faster you hold the happiness of that world, the easier will it be to accommodate yourselves to your humbling circumstances here.

11. Make use of Christ in all His offices, for your humiliation under your humbling circumstances. That only is kindly humiliation that comes in this way. Zech. xii. 10: "And they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn," &c. This you must do by trusting on Him for that effect,

(1) As a Priest for you. You have a conscience full of guilt, and that will make one uneasy in any circumstances, and far more in humbling circumstances; it will be like a thorn in the shoulder on which a burden is laid. But the blood of Christ will purge the conscience, draw out the thorn, give ease, Isa. xxxiii. 24, and fit for service, doing or suffering. Heb. ix. 14: "How much more shall the blood of Christ . . . purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God?"

(2) As your Prophet to teach you. We have need to be taught rightly to discern our humbling circumstances, for

often we mistake them so far that they prove an oppressive load; whereas could we rightly see them just as God sets them to us, they would be humbling, but not so oppressive. Truly we need Christ, and the light of His Word and Spirit, to let us see our cross and trial as well as our duty, Psa. xxv. 9, 10.

(3) As your King. You have a stiff heart, loth to bow, even in humbling circumstances; take a lesson from Moses what to do in such a case. Exod. xxxiv. 9: "And he said, Let my Lord, I pray Thee, go amongst us (for it is a stiff-necked people), and pardon our iniquity and our sin." Put it in His hand that is strong and mighty, Psa. xxiv. 8. He is able to cause it to melt, and like wax before the fire, turn to the seal.

Think on these directions in order to put them in practice, remembering, if ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. Remember humbling work is a work that will fill your hand while you live here, and that you cannot come to the end of it till death; and humbling circumstances will attend you while you are in this lower world. A change of them ye may get; but a freedom from them ye cannot, till ye come to heaven. So the humbling circumstances of our imperfections, relations, contradictions, afflictions, uncertainties, and sinfulness, will afford matter of exercise to us while here. What remains of the purpose of this text I shall comprise in,

Doct. II. *There is a due time, wherein those that now humble themselves under the mighty hand of God will certainly be lifted up.*

1. Those who shall share of this lifting up must lay their account, in the first place, with a casting down. Rev. vii. 14; John xvi. 33: "In the world ye shall have tribulation." There is no coming to the promised land, according to the settled method of grace, but through the wilderness; nor entering into this exaltation, but through a strait gate. If we cannot away with the casting down, we shall not taste the sweet of the lifting up.

2. Being cast down by the mighty hand of God, we must learn to lie still and quiet under it, till the same hand that cast us down raise us up, if we would share of this promised lifting up, Lam. iii. 27. It is not the being cast down into humbling circumstances by the providence of God, but the

coming down of our spirits under them by the grace of God, that brings us within the compass of this promise.

3. Those who are never humbled in humbling circumstances shall never be lifted up in the way of this promise. Men may keep their spirits on the high bend in their humbling circumstances, and in that case may get a lifting up, Prov. xvi. 19; but such a lifting up as will end in a more grievous fall. "Surely Thou didst set them in slippery places; Thou castedst them down into destruction" (Psa. lxxiii. 18). But they who will not humble themselves in humbling circumstances, will find that their obstinacy will keep their misery ever fast on them without remedy.

4. Humility of spirit in humbling circumstances ascertains a lifting up out of them some time, with the goodwill and favour of heaven. Luke xviii. 14: "I tell you this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." Solomon observes, Prov. xv. 1, that "a soft answer turneth away wrath; but grievous words stir up anger." And so it is, that while the proud, through their obstinacy, do but wreathe the yoke faster about their own necks, the humble ones, by their yielding, make their relief sure. 1 Sam. ii. 8—10: "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. . . . He will keep the feet of His saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail. The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken in pieces." So cannon will break down a stone wall, while yielding packs of wool will take away its force.

5. There is an appointed time for the lifting up of those that humble themselves in their humbling circumstances. Hab. ii. 3: "For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry." To every thing there is a time, as for humbling, so for lifting up, Eccles. iii. 3. We know it not, but God knows it, who hath appointed it. Let not the humble one say, "I shall never be lifted up." There is a time fixed for it as precisely as for the rising of the sun after a long and dark night, or the return of the spring after a long and sharp winter.

6. It is not to be expected that immediately upon one's humbling himself, the lifting up is to follow. No; one is not merely to lie down under the mighty hand, but to lie still, waiting the due time; humbling work is longsome work; the Israelites had forty years of it in the wilderness. God's people must be brought to put a blank in His hand as to the time; and while they have a long night of walking in darkness, must trust. Isa. l. 10: "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of His servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God."

7. The appointed time for the lifting up is the due time, the time fittest for it, wherein it will come most seasonably. "And let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal. vi. 9). For that is the time God has chosen for it; and be sure His choice, as the choice of infinite wisdom, is the best; and therefore faith sets to wait it. Isa. xxviii. 16: "He that believeth shall not make haste." Much of the beauty of anything depends on the timing of it, and He has fixed that in all that He does. Ecc. iii. 11: "He hath made everything beautiful in his time."

8. The lifting up of the humble will not fail to come in the appointed and due time, Hab. ii. 3. Time makes no halting, it is running day and night; so the due time is fast coming, and when it comes, it will bring the lifting up along with it. Let the humbling circumstances be ever so low, ever so hopeless, it is impossible but the lifting up from them must come in the due time.

(To be continued.)

AFFLICTIONS AND CONSOLATIONS.

A LETTER BY WILLIAM ABBOTT, OF MAYFIELD.

DEAR Friend and Brother in Christ Jesus,—I was glad to hear from you, and found my spirit refreshed in reading your account of the Lord's dealings with you. It came at a time when I was cast down on account of my wife's affliction, and was just about to leave home to go to Eastbourne and Hailsham, with doubts in my mind, whether my going there, leaving my wife very poorly, and the labour of preaching three evenings together, would prove to any good purpose.

I say, I considered it of the Lord that your letter should come to me that morning; and as is said of Paul, at the sight of some of the brethren, "He thanked God, and took courage," so this was an encouragement to me in my journey.

We read that "men do not gather figs of thistles, nor grapes of brambles." But it may be noticed that somewhat is to be gathered, among the family of heaven, one of another. Yet some of them may think that nothing good can be gathered from them; but so it is. I was at Rochester this autumn, where I met with a young man that had been in a zealous profession under Mr. Slatterer (an Independent minister at Chatham), and was considered to be a fit person to go out as a village missionary. But the Lord was pleased to throw him down into the depths of distress, when he found his preacher to be a physician of no value. This young man appeared to me to have been in deeper waters than any I have met with for some years, but is now raised to hope. This first took place in reading the preface to Hart's Hymns, and about the same time, Mr. Jenkins' Letter to Mr. Huntington. Though he labours under much hardness, enmity, and unbelief, yet I gathered something from him—which was a sense of the goodness of God in not forsaking old England (as some are ready to suppose), but in calling and separating here and there some from the common bulk for Himself, to show forth His praise.

I met with a gentlewoman at Bourne* who gave me a sweet account of the Lord's dealings with her. She lived at Mayfield when I came first into these parts four years ago, and told me of the goodness of God in blessing the word from my mouth to her soul; so that I gathered something there. This was "as bread cast upon the waters, found after many days."

You say you have heard that I have been much tried of late, and wish to know some of the particulars. The report is true. I certainly have experienced a considerable shaking, but am not moved from the hope of the gospel.

This onset took place about three months ago, at one or two o'clock on the Lord's day morning. I was raised up from my sleep in a dark, confused state, as though I was about

* This lady, I believe, subsequently became the wife of the late Mr. John Grace.

to leave the body. It was some time before I could find out where I was, and I was low and uncomfortable most of the day. I had been meditating the day before on the words, "Who is among you that feareth the Lord?" etc., Isa. 1. 10. I spoke in the morning from the beginning of the verse, and found liberty of speech for about an hour, and then concluded in much darkness and bondage of mind. I was too much distressed and perplexed to eat dinner, but finding a little springing up of faith and hope, attended with peace, I was encouraged to go again in the afternoon. I then spoke from the middle part upon darkness, and intended to go on to the last part, but was so weak and low that I concluded without doing so. Satan was suffered to thrust sorely at me, and sharp conflict I had most of the week following. On the Saturday I went to Maresfield, to Mr. Thos. Knight's. When bed time came, being in much heaviness, and unbelief very prevalent, I had but little hope of sleep. Distressing exercise by temptation continued, my spirit sank, and earnest cries went forth for deliverance. In this state, away from home and none to speak to, the Lord was pleased to appear as my Helper and my Friend.

I found first several suitable passages of Scripture come to my mind, which encouraged me to look up; when all at once I found peace flow into my soul like a river. I had the sweetest satisfaction in my mind that the God of love and peace was with me; and I lay meditating upon His goodness, and inwardly singing Hart's hymn upon judgment and mercy, until about four o'clock. I then sank in sleep until six, and sweet sleep it was.

I was at Five Ash Down in the morning, but was weak in body and did not preach an hour; but at Rotherfield in the afternoon was stronger, and had a good time from these words: "I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted and the right of the poor."

This battle was not only the means of reviving the good work in my soul, but I have conversed with several to whom I have reason to believe the word has been made a blessing. Thos. Lee, whom you know, told me the Lord brought him out of a wretched state the first sermon after, at Five Ash Down; and the month after, if I mistake not, another enjoyed the word in the same manner. The next time after that, a woman waited on the Down to inform me of the con-

solation she had received that morning under the word. It was little she could say, but she had that sense of the goodness of God that she was dissolved in tears of love and gratitude. Thus, says the apostle, whether we are afflicted or comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation. So that I think my motto must still be, "Conflicts and Conquests," however contested.

Still I can but wonder that the Lord should make use of one so insignificant and one so unworthy. But He will do as He wills, let who may disapprove.

I enjoyed much peace for several weeks, but now have my changes again as formerly. *My chief concern is to live under a continual sense of interest in the Saviour's blood and righteousness, to be favoured with a firm confidence in the everlasting love of God, and have the testimony of the Spirit of adoption, crying, "Abba, Father."*

I am glad that you are enabled to commit your way to the Lord, and that you are satisfied in what you are about as to a change, and above all, that spiritual things are at times uppermost. I have reason to believe the Lord will appear further on your behalf in this, and will lead you on in a growth in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

My wife has been much afflicted of late, and is in a very weak condition. We have our trials and burdens, but the Lord still appears our Helper and our Friend. His kind hand is with us, and His goodness daily passes before us. As there is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who can be so safe and happy as those who put their trust in Him?

Yours affectionately in the bonds of Christian charity,

To Mr. Cozins.

W. ABBOTT.

Mayfield, October 31st, 1822.

HOPE IN GOD.

My dear Friend,—This is the last month of another year—the month in which I was born, a constant and solemn reminder of the end of my life. As sure as this last month has come, so sure will the last month, and the last day, and the last minute of my mortal life come, and then the soul will be in an eternal state, either to live with God in heaven, or to dwell with devils in hell. No annihilation there. A person may

destroy and take away his natural life, but his soul will live for ever; and my great and chief desire is to live with God, to live with Christ, to live with angels, to live with saints; to spend my eternity in that glorious world in singing and praising, telling and admiring, the wonders of redeeming love and grace and mercy; in adoring the God of my salvation. What a company will there be, all washed and made clean from every sin and every fault in the blood of the Lamb! and all clothed in white robes—covered with the righteousness of Christ, and palms of victory in their hands! No more pains in our poor bodies, no more sorrow about our circumstances, no more fears about our state. The victory will be over all our enemies, all our sins, all our troubles. What a wonderful salvation it will be! It often seems too good and too great for a poor thing like me; but it is a good God and a great God that we have to do with, and His salvation is like Himself, both great and grand.

I am pleased to know that your mind has been led to ponder over the text in 1 Cor. iii. 9. It has engaged my thoughts and tongue for the past three weeks, and it still continues with me. What a mercy it will be if we are the tiniest, smallest seeds or plants in God's husbandry! God does not despise the day of small things. David, though a king, said, "I am small and despised, yet do I not forget Thy precepts." It is said, "Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase." My dear friend, religion does not consist in natural knowledge and well-placed sentences.

"Happy the men that fear the Lord;
They from the paths of sin depart,
Rejoice and tremble at His word,
And hide it deep within their heart."

Let us try to be thankful if the Lord has made us but as bruised reeds and smoking flax; and I do know that my heart has often felt bruised and hurt and pained both on account of sin within and troubles without. And I do know that there is something within me that does aspire to God. I do want God to bless me, and to be with me, to keep me, to comfort me, to teach me, and to make me right; and I want to be found right at last. I hunger and thirst and long for the sweet indwelling of the Holy Ghost; but after all, what a little fire, and what a lot of smoke! I often feel cast down, and "the troubles of my heart are enlarged." But this is my

hope, and has many times been my comfort—that the Lord will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax; but He will send forth judgment unto victory. And Christ said, “Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”

May the Lord enable us to walk in love one towards another, and to bear and forbear with each other, and to pray one for another, and seek the peace and prosperity of Zion. We are both placed in positions of trust and responsibilities, and we need grace and wisdom in our walk and talk and actions. We know that the Lord in His unerring wisdom has appointed a path of tribulation, and in that path we must travel. However much we try to make a nice, feathery nest, it will sooner or later be disturbed; at least I have proved it so. Dangers seen and unseen lurk about us by day and by night, and troubles come in ways and from quarters we little expected.

“From sinner and from saint
We meet with many a blow.”

The apostle says, “Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you, but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings, that when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you.”

On Thursday I go to Pemberton to preach and to baptise. Last time I was there the person I am to baptise received the blessing which she had long been waiting for, and has been before the church to relate the dealings of God with her soul. I wish I could see more coming forward at Bury, to lisp a few words concerning their souls.

The Lord bless you all.

Yours sincerely,

Freetown, Bury, Dec. 1st, 1903.

ROBERT MOXON.

Where is the man who is sick of love for Christ? This blessed disease (or soul’s health rather) is two-fold; either in pining hunger for the manifestation of His love, as Cant. v. 8, or in the overwhelming sweetness of His manifested love, Cant. ii. 5. If you know nothing of either of these, your carcasses may be well, but your souls do not prosper.—*R. Traill.*

Obituary.

ESTHER OVENDEN, of Mayfield, who passed away on March 2nd, 1911, aged 74.

In conversation with a friend upon eternal matters she said she had no concern about her soul until she was 17 years old. She attended "Bethel" Chapel, Rotherfield, where the late Mr. Thomas Russell then preached; and on one occasion after reading his text, he said, "These words are spoken to the children of God." This proved to be an arrow of conviction; it caused her to tremble, so that she could hardly keep her seat. Her distress was very great for a long time, feeling she was not one of God's people. The first ray of hope she had was given her while walking from Mayfield to Rotherfield to chapel, when the Lord was pleased to speak the words to her, "I will be with thee through life and in death." She was after a time united to the church at Rotherfield, being baptised by Mr. Russell, and was for many years a valued and consistent member. She was transferred to the church at Mayfield on February 16th, 1881, and was highly esteemed by all her fellow members to the end of her days. She was greatly blessed once at Heathfield chapel while hearing the late Mr. J. Parish from Psalm lxi. 2: "Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I." This she frequently referred to, it being a special time to her soul. Later on she was much encouraged and refreshed in hearing a sermon from Deut. viii. 2, 3. Nothing short of realising the power and blessing of the Lord could satisfy her. On one occasion after hearing a sermon from John i. 12, 13, she was favoured with the sweet witness that she was born again; and when leaving the chapel, she said to a relative, "Are you born again? I know I am,"—a matter upon which she was afterwards much tried, fearing she had spoken presumptuously. The work of grace was carried on amidst much opposition from Satan and a body of sin and death; but its genuineness was proved by her enduring unto the end. She loved the house of God, and almost the last Lord's day that she was able to get there, October 30th, 1910, the Lord was pleased to favour her soul. She had for sometime previous been in much darkness. After the morning service, when she came in she burst into tears, and said, "The Lord has once more appeared for me, and

blessed my soul. I was afraid He would never come again." In November she took to her bed. She had a long and painful illness, during which she was kept for the most part very calm, her mind being almost always taken up with the things of God. She was many times helped, once especially. Hymn 481,

"Descend from heaven, immortal Dove,"

was very sweet to her. Her end came peacefully, and we believe she is "for ever with the Lord." R. BROOKER.

CLARA HARRIS, died on Jan. 3rd, 1911, aged 65 years. For thirty years a member at Frederick Street Chapel, Birmingham. She was the widow of the late Thomas Harris, whose obituary appeared in the "G. S." for Nov., 1908.

My dear mother was born at Birmingham, on May 2nd, 1845. She attended amongst the Wesleyans until she became acquainted with my father, when through his conversation with a godly friend, she went one Sunday evening to hear the late Mr. Dennett at Frederick Street. The word was sealed home with power to her heart, and she was persuaded the truth preached there was in accordance with the Word. My father asking her how she had got on, she replied, "This people shall be my people, and their God my God." I have heard her say she believed the Lord quickened her soul when a child, and convinced her of sin; and she could look back and see that God had heard and answered her prayers many times when amongst the Wesleyans, before the Lord brought her to see the truth as it is in Jesus. She always looked upon meeting my father as in answer to prayer, and received him as a gift from the Lord. Her having to work very hard to support her father and mother, often caused her to cry to the Lord for help. In the year 1880 she was exercised about joining the church. My father had been before the deacons, and she felt a desire to do so too, when the Lord powerfully spoke the following words to her: "Go thou, and do likewise" (Lu. x. 37). She was enabled to give in a clear testimony of what the Lord had done for her soul. On one occasion hymn 1103 was very sweet to her, particularly the words:

"Thy Maker is thy Friend."

At another time being much cast down in spirit and very

tried in providence, while endeavouring to commit her case into the Lord's hands, she had the following words: "My grace is sufficient for thee;" which were so blessed to her as to lift her up out of herself, and enable her to look alone to the Lord. On another occasion the two following lines were a great help to her:

"I'll bless His name, He'll bring me through,
And He'll have all the glory too."

In a long illness about the year 1888, the Lord spoke the following words to her: "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction" (Isa. xlviii. 10), which proved indeed to be the case: for from this time onward she had many seasons of affliction, often being confined to the home for three, six, and nine months together. She had many times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord in her own home during these seasons. She wrote thus: "I have not had a visit from my best Friend this week, and feel very lonely; for there is nothing like enjoying the Lord's presence The dear Lord has been very precious to me. I have had sweet converse with Him, and the verse was confirmed in my experience that I hope I have had many times before:

"His sweet communion charms the soul,
And gives true peace and joy,' &c.

I wondered if He was about to take me, and felt to have no will in the matter, but wanted to know how it would be with me, and felt I could say, 'He comforteth me in all my tribulations.' It is a narrow way to heaven and a rough and thorny road; but it does not matter what the cross may be, if the Lord speaks, there is a calm peace, and we are willing to sink into nothing that He may be All in all."

Sometime during the year 1907 the following lines were applied to her:

"When, and where, and by what means
To His wisdom leaving." (306.)

She had not long to wait to see their meaning; for at the close of the year the Lord very suddenly removed by death her beloved husband. She was wonderfully supported under the severe trial, and realised the fulfilment of the words, which were again blessed to her: "Thy Maker is thy Friend."

About July, 1910, she was taken ill with severe pains in her head, which proved to be the commencement of her last

illness; for she never came downstairs again. When she was very ill one day, she replied to a remark,

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

I said, “ That is the only safe place. ” “ Yes, ” she said, “ the Lord has given me many sweet promises. He once said to me, ‘ Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself, ’ &c. (Isa. lx. 20). Also, ‘ I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee ’ (Heb. xiii. 5). ”

At different times during this last year of her life she wrote as follows : “ My mind is kept calm in a great measure, with much desire for the Lord's felt presence in my soul; but I get so little. ‘ My soul thirsteth for God. ’ He has indeed been good to me, and I sometimes feel a thankful and broken heart for all His mercies to me; and then again there is a change, and all is gone. No access to Him, and the question comes, ‘ Will it be well with me at last ? ’ but, through mercy, a little hope springs up, and some verse comes which leads my mind to still call upon God and plead His promises. It is only when the Lord shines within that the crooked things are made straight, and the rough places plain; but the Lord has hid His face, and for several weeks I have felt very cast down, and my cry is, ‘ Give me Christ, or else I die. ’ In looking back I feel He has been better to me than all my fears, and at times I can say,

“ ‘ Choose Thou the way, but still lead on. ’ ”

“ *Dec. 23rd, 1910.* Feeling very ill causes fresh cries to the Lord for faith to trust Him, patience and submission to bear all His will, and grace to endure unto the end. Twenty-three years ago He gave me this promise: ‘ My grace is sufficient for thee; for My strength is made perfect in weakness; ’ and I need it now as much as ever: but the Lord lives to fulfil all His promises. ”

On Dec. 28th dear mother, after being upstairs six months, had a stroke which took away the use of her left side, but did not affect her mind or memory; and she was conscious to within five hours of her death, though at times it was rather difficult to understand what she said. On the 29th I said to her, “ Have you had a visit from your best Friend ? ” She answered, “ No; but He will come. ” Later on Mr. Wilcox called, and she repeated the lines :

“ My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesu’s blood and righteousness.”

She then quoted the verse commencing,

“ Yes, I shall soon be landed.” (488.)

Also began,

“ I feel this mud-wall’d cottage shake.”

Mr. W. said, “ And can you finish the verse ? ” She replied with emphasis, “ Yes ;

“ ‘ And long to see it fall ;
That I my willing flight may take
To Him who is my All ; ’ ”

and said, “ For me to die is gain.” About 12 p.m., when asked, “ Do you think the Lord is about to take you to Himself ? ” she replied, “ I cannot say ; I don’t know.” *Dec. 30th.* She said, “ He is the only Refuge ; ” and then quoted,

“ Jesus is precious, says the Word,” (174.)

and asked me to read the hymn,

“ A fulness resides in Jesus our Head,” &c. (184.)

A friend remarked, “ You will soon be home now.” She said, “ I hope so, but cannot say. I am willing to wait His time.” *31st.* My wife went in to see my mother about 9.30, when she said this verse had just come into her mind :

“ The time is now fix’d, and soon it will come,
When Christ will His messenger send,
To fetch him from Meshech and carry him home ;
And then all his sorrows will end.” (591.)

Jan. 2nd, 1911. Found my mother very ill, and her breathing very hard. We could often only just understand what she said. She again quoted the verse commencing, “ I feel this mud-wall’d cottage shake,” &c. A friend calling in said, “ You have trusted in the Lord, and will soon be with Him.” She answered, “ I hope so ; I want to be with Him.” I said, “ You told us on Thursday that for you to die would be gain. Can you say so still ? ” She replied, “ Yes.” *3rd.* I remarked, “ Job said, ‘ All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come ; ’ and you can say the same.” She answered, “ Yes ; ” then, “ This is hard work, but I do not want to complain.” She was now gasping for breath, and it was very painful to witness her sufferings, her head being racked with pain ; but not a murmur escaped her lips, nor did she take any interest in time

things. I said, "I believe the Lord is with you now;" to which she replied, "Yes." My sister quoted:

"On the Rock of ages founded,
What can shake thy sure repose?"

She said, "Yes, *yes*." About 5.15 she held up her hand as though wanting to be raised. I did so, and she then said, "*The Master is come, and calleth for me. Jesus is mine.*" My sister said, "Can you see Him?" She answered, "Yes." Her youngest son coming into the room, she said to him, "*The Master is come, and calleth for me.*" He replied, "Is He?" She answered, "Yes." She then asked the time. We told her 5.15. She said, "Is it morning?" We answered, "Yes." At 9 o'clock my brother leaving home to go to business, she wished him good morning. After this she was unconscious, and gradually sank till she passed away at 2.10 p.m. to be for ever with the Lord. We feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

W. HARRIS.

MARY HOOPER passed away, February 20th, 1911, aged 71 years, for forty years a member at Rochdale Road Chapel, Manchester.

She was born in the village of Salaton, Ottery St. Mary, Devon, in 1839. Her parents were church people, and brought up their children to a high standard of morality. Mary went out to service at a very early age, and lived in a clergyman's family for several years. About the age of 22 she was, in the providence of God, removed to Devonport. Some time afterwards she became acquainted with a young person who attended a little chapel where the truth was preached, and who repeatedly asked her to go. She excused herself many times, saying she thought all Dissenters were wrong. At last, to please her friend, she decided to go but once; and the Lord met with her that night, and sent the arrow of conviction into her heart, so that she felt herself to be a lost, guilty sinner. She had no need to be asked to go to the chapel on the next Sunday. The conviction was very severe, so that she feared she had committed the unpardonable sin. How long she was in that state is not known, but in the Lord's own time and way she was delivered, and led to join the church. Later, the subject of Believer's Baptism by immersion was laid on her mind; and although the people she had joined were not Baptists, she made a request to them

to be baptised. A chapel was hired for the occasion, and she, with several others, was baptised about the year 1866. Shortly afterwards, in the providence of God, she was removed to Manchester, and married in the year 1867. She was a perfect stranger in that city, and went to many places of worship to find the truth, until she found the Rochdale Road Particular Baptist chapel. At once she felt at home with the people, and joined them as a member in March, 1871. Her path was a rough one. She brought up a large family, and was for many years a great sufferer, but seldom complained.

About twelve months ago, her youngest daughter was taken seriously ill. She nursed her for several months, and finally broke down herself, and had to take to her bed. This proved to be her last illness. Both mother and daughter were suffering together for many weeks in the same room, each doing her best to comfort and cheer the other. In the early part of her illness, the mother said very little, but passed much of her time in prayer, and prayed that she might be raised up again, if it was the Lord's will. Later, when her daughter was given up by a specialist, the desire to be raised up again left her, and her prayer to God was that they "might be taken home together." Those who nursed her found her most patient in her sufferings, and most grateful for any little kindness shown to her. At one time she was heard to say,

" No more than others I deserve,
Yet God has given me more."

Another time, when in great pain, she asked God to ease her a little. Her daughter-in-law said, "I do wish I could do something to ease you, mother;" to which she replied, "I do not deserve it; His sufferings were far greater than mine." Many times when in great pain she would exclaim, "How long, O Lord, how long?" and, "Lord Jesus, come quickly." Then she would ask Him to give her patience to await His coming. She would pray most earnestly to God to ease the sufferings of her dear child, and many times she would ask Him to answer her prayers on her children's behalf. The xxiiiird Psalm was made a special blessing to her. One night she told her sick daughter that the devil was tempting her to give up her hope; and her daughter raised herself up in bed, and earnestly exhorted her not to give up her only hope in Christ. Her husband then said, "You *cannot* give up your hope, can you?" and she answered "No," and repeated the lines:

“ Did Jesus once upon me shine?
Then Jesus is for ever mine.”

Two days before they died, they were both very ill, and were given up by the doctor. The day after (Sunday), we saw a great change come over them both, and it was doubtful which would pass away first. Their sufferings through the Sunday night were terrible. Her daughter became unconscious several hours, and passed peacefully away at five a.m. Her mother was informed shortly afterwards, and although unable to speak, we could see by her countenance that she knew her prayer was answered, that they might be taken home together. All pain seemed to have gone now. Her husband repeated the hymn to her,

“ Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God,” &c.;

also Gruber, the xxiind Psalm. She was asked by her daughter if she was comfortable and happy, and replied in the affirmative, nodding her head. At nine o'clock (four hours after her daughter) she passed peacefully away without the least struggle, to be for ever with the Lord. Both mother and daughter were interred on the following Wednesday by Mr. Gruber, “in sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection to everlasting life.”

P. H. H.

OBED MORTIMER, pastor at Broughton Gifford, born, April 24th, 1841; died, Jan. 7th, 1911.

Of his call by grace and his call to the solemn work of the ministry no particulars are left. From the church book it is gathered that he was baptised by Mr. Blake, who was then pastor at Broughton Gifford, July 28th, 1861; and he commenced preaching in 1864, and became the settled minister of the same church in Jan., 1873; reference being made to it in the church book as follows: “The Church of Christ meeting to worship God at Broughton Gifford, in the year of our Lord 1872, gave our friend and brother, Mr. Obed Mortimer, the unanimous invitation to become our pastor, which he accepted; to enter upon his labours, Jan., 1873; and that he shall maintain and preach the doctrines—those only supported by God's Word,” &c. He preached his first sermon at Hilperton, and was for 41 years a constant supply at Malmesbury. Many family and business trials fell to his lot; yet he was by the Lord brought through. He was also a supply at Zoar Chapel, Reading, for many years.

The writer occasionally rendered him some little help by attempting to fill his place when he was away; and often coming in contact with him, esteemed him as one who contended for right things, and who sought the spiritual good of those he ministered unto. One cannot but desire of the Lord on behalf of this bereaved church, that the fruit of their late pastor's labours may yet appear, knowing that it was a grief to him that he saw so little of it.

On Jan. 7th he was to all appearance as well as usual, and in the evening was reading, meditating, and occasionally talking to his wife and daughter. All of them retired to rest by 10 o'clock, but as he lay down by the side of his wife, she heard him breathe two gentle sighs, and he was no more; enabling his friends to say, "He was not; for God took him."

H. S. P.

ELIZABETH, the beloved wife of Thomas PAGE, who died at Swindon, Jan. 22nd, 1911. Aged 48 years.

In a very mysterious way in God's providence we were brought to be united in marriage. But the time for us to be joined together was but short. My dear wife was never very strong, and had been brought very low in two or three severe illnesses. Her last illness was only about a week. The doctor gave no hopes of her recovery; but she was quite resigned to the Lord's will. When one of our ministers, Mr. Chappell, called, she told him that she had no fear of death; she hoped it was not presumption, but said she could not give herself fear. A short time after this she said,

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

A few hours after, when I asked if there was much pain, the answer was, "Not much.

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Soft as downy pillows are."

Just before she departed she said, "This is death. Good-bye," three times; so was conscious to the last. "Absent from the body, present with the Lord."

My dear wife was baptised when about 20 years of age, and for many years was a member of Mr. Picknell's church at Redhill. She expressed a wish to be laid in the grave at the Dicker, in Sussex, her former home; which has been carried out.

T. PAGE.

NOTICES OF DEATHS.

On Oct. the 29th, 1910, MARTHA BANNING, aged 83, widow of the late Henry Banning, deacon at the Old Baptist chapel, Pewsey, Wilts. She loved the Lord's servants, highly esteeming them for their work's sake. She was never baptised, therefore not in the visible church fellowship at the Lord's table. But she knew the truth, and loved it, but often feared she might be deceived after all. Her one prayer was that the Lord would show her clearly that her sins were pardoned. She looked for pardon by the blood of Jesus, and for justification in His righteousness. She passed away rather suddenly without being able to testify of the Lord's presence, or any sweet deliverance; but we are well satisfied from an intimate acquaintance with her that she entered into the joy of her Lord, when she exchanged worlds. The church loses a praying soul, and appears to us the weaker.

O. G. SELLWOOD.

HANNAH AYLIFFE, the wife of Thomas Ayliffe, of Highworth, died, April 11th, 1911, aged 75 years. She was a great sufferer nearly all her life through taking a chill when a young woman. When she was brought to feel herself a lost and ruined sinner I cannot tell, but she was from that time in bondage more or less for a short time before her death, when she was comforted with this portion of Scripture, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want" (Psa. xxiii. 1). And when in great soul trouble at another time, shortly before she died, the word, "My grace is sufficient for thee," was spoken to her. Being very deaf, and through her mind being very wandering, it was my great grief she could neither hear me read the Word of God nor pray; but she was one that feared God above many, and the Bible and the "Gospel Standard" were her companions. Our loss we believe is her eternal gain.

THOMAS AYLIFFE.

BESSIE, the beloved wife of Seymour FARMER, Baptist minister, Malmesbury, fell asleep in Jesus at the Royal Victoria Hospital, Montreal, Canada, on April 11th, 1911, aged 56 years. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matt. v. 8).

S. FARMER.

JOHN TOMLIN, died, May 12th, 1911, aged 64 years, a deacon of the Wallingford cause for the last ten years. His last illness was short and severe. Although he could not speak, it was evident he was at times holding sweet communion with his dear Lord, the tears rolling from his eyes. We mourn his loss, but have a good hope he is now with Christ, which is far better.

A. TOMLIN.

ELEANOR EMERY, of Manchester, the beloved wife of Thomas Emery, minister of the gospel, who departed this life on the sabbath, May 28th, 1911, aged 63. She seemed as usual that morning, and was preparing for the courts of the Lord's house, when she was stricken with an internal rupture. Her husband being at Folkestone, was unable to reach home before her death, which took place at 11.30 the same night, after a long day of intense agony. I have no record of her first convictions, as she was a woman of very few words on divine things, being afraid of

presuming to be what she was not. She was a lover of real experimental preachers sent of God, and when living in London frequently attended Gower Street, to hear some of those blessed men who are now in glory. The Lord spoke many times to her; once in particular He applied Psa. xxiii. 1, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." Also,

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

She was one that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name—Mal. viii. 16. Our path has been one of deep tribulation for over 45 years, known only to the Lord and ourselves.

THOMAS EMERY.

WILLIAM DINGLE, aged 72, entered into rest, June 9th, 1911, after a short illness. My father had been a regular reader of the "Gospel Standard" for many years; he also took great interest in Huntington's works, Gadsby's and Covell's, and I can truly say my loss is his gain.

On June 15th, 1911, RACHEL BEECHER, the widow of the late Thomas Beecher, aged 83 years, passed peacefully away. Some of her last words were,

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

and, "I feel I am the Lord's, either to live or die;" and, "How long, dear Lord, how long?" During the last hour or two she was heard to say, "Not my will, but Thine be done." E. T.

ELIZABETH SPRINGALE, passed away, June 22nd, 1911, aged 63. She was a consistent member of the church worshipping at Zion chapel, Tonbridge. Christ was the Bread of life and the Water of life to her; He was the Chief among ten thousand, and the altogether Lovely. She knew the difference between the letter that killeth, and the Spirit that gives life. She was swift to hear and slow to speak; one that walked humbly with her God. She was a great sufferer for years, but proved again and again the promise, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be;" and was through grace enabled to "hear the rod," and His voice in it who had appointed it. She often spoke of the Lord's goodness to her as a God of providence as well as of grace; there was no lack; He supplied all her needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. She is now blessed for evermore, where she can sing everlasting praise and crown Him Lord of all. Our loss is her eternal gain. "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace."

F. RUSSELL.

HANNAH BARSBY, the last member of the old cause at Billesdon, Leicestershire, was called to her eternal home, June 24th, 1911, aged 83. In the last letter I received from her she made the following remarks: "'I feel this mud-wall'd cottage shake;' the Lord knows best when it will fall. I wish to leave all in His dear hands; He is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind. The clouds may be dark, but it is brighter on before." Her end was peace. I could bury her in sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection.

W. WARDLE.

THE GOSPEL STANDARD.

OCTOBER, 1911.

MATT. v. 6; 2 TIM. i. 9; ROM. xi. 7; ACTS viii. 37, 38; MATT. xxviii. 19.

A STRONGHOLD FOR THE PRISONER OF HOPE.
A SERMON PREACHED BY MR. OLDFIELD, OF GODMANCHESTER,
AT WALGRAVE, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE, ON JULY 20TH, 1911.

“Turn you to the Stronghold, ye prisoners of hope: even to-day do I declare that I will render double unto thee.”—Zec. ix. 12.

In the afternoon we read the preceding verse, and noticed the covenant—the covenant of grace, of peace, of love, and the blood of that covenant by which it was ratified and confirmed. “For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator” (Heb. ix. 16). God in the Person of His Son incarnate, died. As God He could not die, or suffer, but He took our nature into union with His divine Person. Had He not been God as well as Man, His blood would not have availed for His people’s redemption, nor yet for cleansing. His divinity gave that virtue to His blood which made an adequate price of their redemption, and such mighty efficacy in cleansing for their sanctification. We then just hinted a little at the following effects: “As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant, I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water.”

You will see that God speaks to the church in the past tense. He tells us what He has done. But the question may arise in some minds, “How can this be, for the blood at this time was not actually shed?” My dear friends, in the mind of God it was shed from all eternity; Christ was “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” The Old Testament saints were taken to heaven on credit, so to speak. God the Father could credit the Son, and the Son could credit the Father; and neither of Their confidences was betrayed or shaken. Oh, no. When the time came for the Surety to actually shed His blood, He met the Creditor, and said,

"Father, the hour is come." What hour? Why, to pay that debt—to shed His blood. Usually speaking, creditors have to remind their debtors; but here is the Debtor reminding the Creditor. Oh, how the Son honoured the Father, and how the Father honoured the Son!

Now, He says to His people, "By the blood of thy covenant"—that covenant you are interested in, which was made with Christ, and with you in Him; that covenant which you believe in, which you love; that covenant which you look to for salvation—"by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water." What do we infer from this? That every one of the true people of God in every period of time has been in experience a prisoner. God does not say here, "By the blood of Christ I have sent forth all men out of the pit wherein is no water." Ah, how many millions are left in this pit! They lived in it, they died in it, and were utterly ignorant of their being prisoners there.

Now, what is this pit? The Adam Fall. All men were in Adam as their covenant head and representative when he sinned. All men fell in him when he sinned—fell into a pit. The pit was deep, second to none for depth but one, and that is the pit of hell. My dear friends, deep is the pit into which Adam fell; it is down as low as hell's doors. Who can tell how deep is the pit of the Adam Fall? It is the pit of death—"In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." But then people say he did not die. The Scriptures say he did; that is, he died as to the fear of God, as to any affection for God, any faith in God, any hope in Him, any love to Him, for anything temporal or eternal; he died to God. O what a death! He did not fear God after the Fall, did not desire Him, did not seek Him afterwards, till grace was given him. He had no hope in God; he made a covenant with death, and an agreement with hell. He broke God's covenant, and then entered into one with the devil. This language is not too strong to describe the pit of the Adam Fall. As a matter of fact, I do not think it is strong enough; words do not go far enough, do not give full expression to this awful pit—the pit of death, the pit of darkness, soul darkness. The mind is blinded to God and godliness. It is the pit of bondage—bondage to sin and Satan, and under God's broken law. And it is the pit of

misery; for there is no real joy in unregeneracy. People say they will have this pleasure and that; but something mars and spoils them all. They say, "But for this it would have been nice; and but for that it would have been pleasant." Ah, friends, there is no real joy, no real comfort, but in the Lord.

Now, how is this pit illustrated in the Scriptures of truth? There is *Egypt*. You know that is a striking figure of this "pit wherein is no water." You know how the Scriptures speak of Egypt. "For the land whither thou goest in to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt from whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs. But the land, whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven" (Deut. xi. 10, 11). Egypt may be taken as a type of the Adam Fall, as Canaan is a type of salvation by Jesus Christ, or of the gospel. What a pit was Egypt to the Israelites! How they groaned and sighed and cried in their bondage! but leave it they could not. No, not till the Lord delivered them. He heard their sighing and groaning, and He came to their deliverance. There is perhaps, also, some allusion to Babylon, which was another pit to the Israelites. Could they sing the songs of Zion there? Ah, no. It was misery to them in Babylon. "How can we sing," say they, "the Lord's song in a strange land?"

The psalmist, too, speaks of a pit. He says, "Let not the pit shut her mouth upon me." All these things go to show man's fallen state and helpless condition, and that salvation must be by free, rich and sovereign grace.

"Wherein is *no water*." There is mire and clay, but there is no water for cleansing, no water for drinking, for quenching the thirst; no water for healing, for invigorating; no water of love, no water of peace. "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God;" *but it is not there*. "And He showed me a pure river of water of life," said John; but not from Adam, whence only death comes down to us, but "proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." The sovereignty of God, is what the throne there means, the sovereign will of the King of kings and Lord of lords. "Out of the throne of God *and of the Lamb*"—there is the mediation of the Lamb, the obedience and blood-shedding of the Lamb. That is the water, friends.

And so you read, "When the poor and needy seek water,

and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst"—who are these? Why, they are the *prisoners* indeed; they are those whose souls are quickened, whose minds are enlightened, so as to see and feel what the Adam Fall is, and what their sins and transgressions have done for them. These are the ones, they are the prisoners. God does not save people experimentally before He gives them the knowledge of their need of salvation. We must be dead before we are made alive; that is, in our feeling we must know our blindness before He opens our eyes; we must feel our bondage before we can enjoy His freedom; we must cry by reason of our bondage before He comes to our rescue. "Now," says God, "I have been doing this from Adam's day to this"—that is how I understand the text, "I have sent forth thy prisoners"—Christ's prisoners, the church's prisoners,—Adam, Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and so on. All these are among the number whom God has sent forth out of the pit wherein is no water. And if God sends us out of that pit He will send us where there is water. Has He not done so for some of us here present?

Our text is in the past tense. Well, it may be that some of you here cannot speak in the past tense, and say He has done it for you. Then to you we may try to speak a little; for God goes on, and says, after telling what He *has* done, "Turn you to the Stronghold, ye prisoners of hope; even to-day"—not only in the past, but "even to-day do I declare that I will render double unto thee." What a mercy for us that God continues to save, and to save in the same way! It is not now another way of saving sinners, different from that He had in olden times. O no, grace saves now by the blood of the covenant, first making them feel their need of salvation by causing them to know what it is to be prisoners.

In making a few remarks from these words we will notice, i. The character: "Ye prisoners of hope." ii. The communication or injunction: "Turn you to the Stronghold." iii. The promise: "Even to-day do I declare that I will render double unto thee."

i. The characters: "*Ye prisoners of hope.*" Are we prisoners? Well, what is a prisoner? In a literal sense a prisoner is first a living man; in the second place, he is an arrested or a convicted man; in the third place, he is shut up whence he cannot get out. Now take it in a spiritual

sense. Those who are called "prisoners of hope" are persons who are not "dead in trespasses and sins." God is not speaking to people dead in trespasses and sins; He is speaking to living men in a spiritual sense, to those who have been quickened by the Holy Ghost, in other words, who have been born again. Life divine has come to them. In the first instance, it is never a man's going to God; it is always His coming to a man. As in the case of Saul of Tarsus, it is God's coming to the man first.

In my own case God spoke to my soul, breathing life into my heart, making me conscious of my true state and condition. I shall never forget the first time I bent my knee before Him while I live. I was a rebellious youth. But one night God dealt with me, and I went into a dark place, and down on my knees I fell. I believe I began to pray that night, and I have never wholly left off, but from that moment I felt myself a prisoner in a cell. As time went on light entered into my mind to show me the horrors of my cell, and of my state and condition before God; and for a while I was not a prisoner of hope, but without hope; that is an awful word, is it not—*without hope*? In some sense nobody is without hope; but the hope of some is no better than a spider's web, and the Holy Ghost will not recognise it. He says, "*without hope.*" And then I had no power to accomplish anything for myself. O the despair and unrest I sank into! But God will not leave one of His children there long; no, He cannot, as Joseph could not long refrain from his brethren. He kept them in the dark for awhile as to who he was and what he was going to do. So the Lord sometimes deals with His people; He keeps them in the dark about His intentions, but His love is so great He must come, He does come, and drops a word of encouragement into the drooping spirit, the desponding heart. That was how it was with me. Then when Christ in His substitutionary work began to be opened up to my mind, hope flourished. O how it sprang up! how it went to Christ, to His blood and to His righteousness. As time went on the Lord granted me a most blessed deliverance from myself, *or from my cell*. Then I thought I was going to have the freedom of a prince all my life. But I was like one, so to speak, only out of the cell, but within the walls and gates of a prison, where I am to this day. And where shall I be? where do I expect to be

whilst in this world? but as it were within the walls and gates of a huge prison, the doors and walls of which I carry about with me—this body of sin and death. And whilst we are liable to Satan's assaults, Satan's depredations, and whilst we are the subjects of afflictions and trials of various sorts, what can we say? Have *you* entire freedom? I do not expect to have it until I get to heaven.

O then, ye prisoners of hope, first hope for deliverance from sin, hope for the blessing of pardon, for the sealing of justification, for manifestations of the Lord to your soul. Prisoners of hope may suffer by reason of temptation, but will hope for the Lord to appear and deliver. How many traps, snares, and sins we get into, but what a blessed word is that for prisoners of hope: "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor. x. 13). He will open the prison door.

Then, again, ye prisoners of hope *shut up under affliction*. I have invariably found, when the Lord has laid His afflicting hand upon me, at first bondage, darkness, death; but the blessed Spirit of God has encouraged my soul to hope, to wait, to pray; and eventually deliverance has come. But the full and final deliverance will not come until the cell of this mortal body is broken up and we leave this world.

Here is the *invitation or injunction*: "Turn you to the Stronghold." What is this turning? There is a turning and a turning. There is a trying to turn ourselves, like Ephraim did. You know, he turned from this to that and the other, Hos. v. 13, and at the end he was no better than a cake not turned, vii. 8: burned on one side, and dough on the other, good for nothing. But when he found his own turning in the flesh profited nothing, he was brought to this, "Turn Thou me, and I shall be turned; for Thou art the Lord my God" (Jer. xxxi. 18). Now I believe the Lord means us to turn gospel invitations and injunctions into *supplications*. Of myself I can no more accept the invitations of the gospel or perform its precepts than I can keep the moral law. But, my friends, when my God enables me to turn what He commands or bids into supplications, then it is done; His biddings become enablings. Then we can say, as

one said, "Give what Thou commandest, and command what Thou wilt." If God gives what He commands, what does it signify what He commands? It may be a little thing, or it may be a big one; if He gives what He commands, then the thing is performed. "When I was turned," said Ephraim, "I repented; I smote upon my thigh." How he confessed! how he prayed! O what a little child he was, at his Parent's feet now! That is turning.

"Turn you to the Stronghold." Turn the eye of your mind from self to Christ, from worldly powers to the powers of heaven. Christ is this Stronghold. We may say that there are other strongholds; so says Paul, "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds" (2 Cor. x. 4). Now when a poor sinner is enabled to turn to Christ, then the stronghold of sin is pulled down, the strong hand of sin loses its grip, and lets it go; the stronghold of Satan loses its grip, and to the Lord the soul flies. There are many strong hands which hold very strongly, but there is no hand like Christ's; no man can pluck out of His hand, sin cannot, Satan cannot. He is a stronghold for you, sensible sinners, and will save you from the curse of the law, from a tempting devil, and from a bewitching world. Christ as a Stronghold is shadowed forth by the cities of refuge. These cities were not like our towns, villages, and hamlets; they were cities with high walls and massive gates. They were to signify Christ the great Stronghold, who is proof against all the forces of the artillery of earth and hell. "Turn you to the Stronghold, ye prisoners of hope."

I must hasten to notice the promise: "Even to-day do I declare that I will render double unto thee." What a great promise this is! We may look at it, perhaps, without violating the text, in one or two senses. First, as you read of Joseph, who had two portions; one was a portion in this life. When his brethren sold him, they did not care if he never got another crust; if he died, they did not care. But there was One that cared—his God cared for him. Joseph was enabled by grace to turn unto God; but God had turned unto him first. When Joseph went with the Ishmaelites, God went with him. God was with him in Egypt, went with him to the prison, provided for him, and gave him what was needful of common things for this life. But he had

another portion, one for the soul as well as for the body. Is it not wonderful, I have thought so many times, how God provides for many of His poor people? The psalmist said, "I have been young, and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." It is a rare thing to see a true child of God having to beg his bread from door to door—very rare indeed. It is marvellous how God undertakes for His children. I could keep you for another hour, showing you God's interpositions; but I must not do that.

Well, then there is the other portion; and a child of God, if he has more than other people, is afraid of having all his good things in this life. I remember once going to see a woman, I think the poorest woman I ever saw. Her bed was only a piece of sacking. A lady friend went with me, taking a few comforts, and said to her, "These are for you." "For me?" exclaimed the poor woman, "all these good things for me? I hope I am not one of those who are having all their good things in this life."

"I will render double unto thee." Then we may look at it in another sense; as, "He will give grace and glory"—the present life of grace preceding the life of glory. What is the grace given? The fear of the Lord, hope in the blood of atonement, faith in a precious Christ, love to God, to His truth, His people, and His ways. Ah, my friends, I hope the Lord has given me this portion, and I hope He has given it to many of you. You that have been enabled to turn to the Lord must not expect to have every one the same measure of grace. Some have not the favours manifested that others have; yet they hold on. They are something like poor people who never had a sovereign to call their own; yet one meal comes after another, their needs have been supplied, they have been kept going, kept alive. So it is with many of God's dear children; they hold on their way—that is the uttermost they can say. And "the righteous shall hold on his way." It does not say he shall have luxuries, but hold on his way—"faint, yet pursuing." You have not turned back, poor thing; you have not given the matter up. "Turn back?" you say, "I could not." You cannot do that, because the Lord will not let you. I have known some who have had a life like this, who, when they have come to die, have had a more than brilliant death. And I have

known many who have been signally favoured only in their lives. God holds the balances in His hands.

“Our sorrows in the scales He weighs,
And measures out our pains.”

He will render double unto His people in giving them grace and glory; He will see them safely landed, and eternally housed in heaven above.

A FEW GLEANINGS FROM THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF THE LATE MARK SALTMARSH.

AFTER I left school, I was apprenticed about the age of fifteen (in 1852) to a printer and bookbinder; and here a sad course of temptation was opened up for me, for the elder apprentice was a most ungodly man, and suggested to us younger ones many evil things with great gust and pleasure. About this time I fell very ill, my malady being accompanied with fits of melancholy and great depression of spirits; and I became so miserable that I longed for and courted death. I used to expose myself to draughts, trying to avoid the guilt of direct suicide; and many were the temptations at this time to make off with myself. I often wonder that I did not meet death by one of these. But the reason is clear to me now, bless the Lord's dear name of mercy. These temptations were greatly weakened as I regained health; but the solemnity and certainty of death took possession of my mind, and I began to feel very uncomfortable about matters. I felt a separation from my companions, and it deepened. My fears continued to increase, and the certainty and perhaps near approach of death distressed me greatly. These words struck me like a hammer, “What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?” Thus I began to see and feel the necessity of making an effort to save my soul, having yet to learn,

“Not the labour of my hands
Can fulfil Thy law's demands.”

Then the dread of sudden death fell upon me, and I feared I might not have the chance, as I termed it, of making my peace with God.

The impressions left upon my mind by the death of my father-in-law and others known to me, continually aroused my

conscience ; and the law was doing its work in the hands of the blessed Spirit, making me earnestly cry for salvation. I continually promised God amendment of life, and watched with a jealous care over my temper and spirit to get some good works together to gain His favour. I took to reading all the best books I could lay my hands upon, especially alarming tracts, and also the Bible. However, I had some sad failures, and made big holes in my good manners at times ; so that I was not quite the saint I hoped to be. Then I tried to pray more earnestly, and thought I was deficient somewhere, but should find it out. Also Satan showed me how each repeated failure aggravated the guilt of the case, and was sealing my doom the more surely. Truly my poor clothes of stinking righteousness abhorred me, and I was continually thrust into the ditch.

The minister I sat under was the Rev. P. Lyon, B.A. He continually urged the necessity of coming to Christ, and illustrated it by the acts of a natural man going to receive a gift. I was therefore led to think I had the power to believe, and could do so at any moment. He tried to frighten people out of putting it off, by saying, "The way to hell is paved with good intentions ; come *now*, or the day of grace will be gone." After this, a Revivalist came to the chapel ; and then there was religious excitement there without doubt. He roused me up, and many more, alarming and frightening us with terrors. Then he urged all most earnestly to obtain salvation that very moment, for Jesus was there waiting to bestow it. I stayed behind at his invitation to get this salvation, and my tears fell copiously at the recollection of my sins and my miserable and helpless condition. He prescribed his nostrums, and said, "Only believe." I kept looking within to find this power, and wondering how I should and ought to feel, longing for it to come, and trying to produce it.

I came away miserable indeed. I knew and felt I must appear before God ; it was no fiction, no idle tale, or cunningly devised fable, but a reality. I cannot say that I was arraigned for any particular sin ; no, I was all sin within and without. Thus I was greatly bowed down, and could in no wise lift myself up. My bodily health failed, I refused food, or rather, could not eat. I was driven to that degree of fear to be afraid to lie down at night. This was my darkest time, just before the break of day. I retired one night in this

awful condition ; O how I sighed and groaned, pacing the room in an agony of spirit ! I took up the Bible, but it was sealed ; besides, I was too vile to look into that holy Book. I kneeled to pray, but the heavens were brass and the earth iron, and the throne of mercy was evidently shut against me. "What shall I do ?" I groaned out ; and then I lay almost breathless, expecting to drop into the burning pit for ever.

Suddenly I had opened to my view a vision of the dear Redeemer crucified on the right side of my bed ; and so near did He appear that it seemed I could have put out my hand and touched Him. He looked on me so sweetly, though with a look mingled with pain and sorrow, and I heard Him say to me, "*It is finished ;*" and He vanished from my gaze. I immediately understood the import of those blessed words as applied to my own special case ; and what was more, *I believed them.* This I know by the effect they produced in my soul ; for I realised my interest in them, and could rest upon and trust in them, and they brought the knowledge, power, and grace of salvation to my poor soul. My fears and doubts were gone, my sins atoned for, and heaven was to be my eternal home. Thus in a living faith's view of Christ and Him crucified, I found remission of all my sins—past, present, and to come, a righteousness to justify me, and a title to glory everlasting. I could not help believing now. O the inexpressible joy and glory that filled my soul ! no tongue can describe it, it was truly unspeakable. Heaven was begun with me. O the transporting bliss that ravished my soul ! I feasted on it, and cried out, "My God, remove Thy hand or strengthen me to bear this heavenly rapture, for I cannot live unless."

After enjoying my blessed deliverance, and fearing to go to sleep and part with it, exhausted nature succumbed, and I dropped off. When I awoke in the morning, I found Jesus in my heart, and again drank sweet draughts from this living Spring of love, joy, and peace. These blissful feelings remained with me for some days, and made me totally unfit for business. I longed to leave this sinful, vain world, so uncognial to my state of mind. I wanted to go to Jesus, and enjoy His presence without interruption. The first time I heard the expression of the poet,

"I looked for hell ; He brought me heaven ;"

I said, "That is my experience briefly stated, and is how

I shall always describe it." I felt now that I had done with sin for ever, that all my inward foes were slain to rise no more, and I should never again be plagued with unbelief. I wished every day were Sunday, and lost no opportunity of attending the place of worship. I had but little discrimination for sound doctrine then, and thought that all who named the name of Christ must be good and truth-loving people. The Song of Solomon seemed to suit me best. Truly this was the time of my espousals; and I, being married to the Lord, was enjoying my honeymoon. I could pray when I liked, and read the Word of God with comfort and delight.

But the time expired, and grace must be tried. I think I was privileged thus for six weeks or three months, after which I was deeply assailed by the enemy of my soul, and brought very low. I was always glad to go early to bed, and would be ruminating on God's mercy, often shedding tears of sweet joy, and thus fall asleep. But one night something spoke loudly inside, and told me it would never last, it was mere excitement, and I should go back to the love of the world and my former pleasures. I cannot describe the pain I felt at this thrust of Satan. I could lie still no longer. I jumped out of bed, and kneeled down, and truly I prayed and groaned to God not to let it be so. He heard me, and stilled my poor, distressed heart with these words, "*My grace is sufficient for thee.*" I felt comforted, and got into bed much more sober for this first encounter. I shall never forget that prayer: I cried, "O Lord, do help me! O God, rather than I should go back into the world and into sin, take my life now; and if the work begun in my soul is not a genuine work of grace, O do begin it now!" I have since read an account of a cock-fighting, swearing coal miner, who was arrested by grace and forsook his evil ways. His mates said to him, "You will go back to your old ways again after a bit." He thereupon fell down on his knees before them, and prayed, "Rather than that, Lord, take my life first;" and he dropped down dead.

It was not long before the attack was renewed, and the foe was successful in bringing great grief into my heart, and marring most effectually for some time my enjoyment of the things of God. While dressing and undressing, I used to have the Bible open before me, and read snatches as I could. I was sitting on my bedside, when all at once a flood of

profane and filthy words and blasphemies rose in my mind, and I thought I must be compelled to utter them aloud; and truly I felt defiled. I was just about to pray, but it was more than I could dare attempt. Then said the arch foe, "Does God dwell here? Why, you are the man that the devil was cast out of, and now seven spirits more wicked are come in, and they will keep their abode with you." But deliverance was at hand. I heard a sermon from, "Then was Jesus led into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil;" and the preacher remarked, "It could not have been a sin in Jesus to be thus tempted. Had He yielded, that would have been a sin; but He hated the temptation." "Yes," I almost said aloud, "I hate this temptation, I would be free from it; God knows my heart." Thus the snare was broken, and my soul like a bird escaped.

Truly I was sincere as far as I had light, but very legal, full of Arminianism, and very ignorant of the glorious doctrines of grace. This may appear strange; but my experience was better than my creed, and I was not yet brought out from nominal professors. They had noticed my changed demeanour, though I fancied I was keeping it all from those about me. The chapel folks told me I ought to join the church; it was my duty to do so. I waited for nine months, and they induced me at last to consent, telling me it would be a preservative, etc. Thus I became a member of the Congregational Church, Tunbridge Wells. I had some very solemn feelings next Lord's Day at the Sacrament, as they termed it; and when they sang the hymn,

"Why was I made to hear His voice?"

I was for the time a real free-grace worshipper.

I had been a member of the church eighteen months when a great change took place—almost, as I sometimes say, a third birth. I was engaged to lead a Bible class at the Y.M.C.A., and was led to select the subject of the leper. At that time we had a carpenter at work of the name of Beeching. He used to take in the "Gospel Standard," then edited by Mr. Philpot; and he lent me one to read which contained a Review of Binney's book, "Making the best of both Worlds." I did not understand it, but on showing it to my friends, they expressed great horror at the whole thing; and so I shared in their opinion and returned the book. I told Beeching I was going to conduct the Bible class, and was looking up

books on the subject of the leper. He offered to lend me a sermon by Mr. Philpot entitled, "The Leper Diseased." I thanked him, and sitting down to read it, I marvelled—so strange, so unanswerable, such unfolding of the Word of God, so different from the lectures called sermons I had been accustomed to hear. I was arrested, chained, and determined to examine this matter by the Word of God, and to test this new doctrine by all for whose opinion I cared. I went to the class, made a clean breast of the matter, and gave them the pith of the sermon; especially did I dwell upon the terms *spurious* and *genuine* faith. They were dumb, but the best man among them was away. I felt strengthened in the doubt which now possessed my mind, that they were wrong and Philpot right. Beeching then lent me Philpot's sermon on "The Child of Light walking in Darkness," etc. My understanding was by this precious sermon further enlightened; and as I read more, and compared it with the Word of God and my own experience, I felt it was truth, and that all besides was dross. Beeching lent me many good books—Romaine's Works, Booth's "Reign of Grace," Huntington's "Epistles of Faith." These latter became real food to my soul; and when I got a copy of Hart's Hymns, I determined to learn them all by heart, so precious, sweet, instructive, and comforting to my poor soul did they become.

All this time I was contending for the faith once delivered to the saints. What I paid altogether in buying the glorious truths which I now so delight and glory in, no one but God and my own soul know. "Buy the truth, and sell it not," says the Word; and I paid for it in many sighs, groans, sleepless nights, loss of appetite, headaches, ill-will, and persecution. Some cautioned the young men against speaking to me for fear of contamination, and told them I held damnable doctrines of the most horrible nature. My dear mother begged of me not to go on so, but to be quiet, and less fond of contention, for it would ruin my health and prospects too; for I was making enemies fast on all sides.

I now began to slip occasionally into the Baptist Chapel, Hanover Road. They were then under a twelve months' engagement with a Mr. Jones. The Congregationalists had given these people a bad name, and the deacons declared they were Antinomian professors, and determinately blind to a portion of the truth. However, I determined to hear for

myself. One Lord's Day evening I went into Hanover Chapel. Mr. Jones took for his text, "And the great trumpet shall be blown," etc.; and the clear way in which he handled the subject so commended itself to me that though I had no soul sweetness, yet it being so superior in doctrinal truth to what I had been hearing, I was drawn to the place, and determined as often as I could to come and hear more.

Soon after I was separated from the Congregationalists, one of the members came to my shop, and said, "So you have left us?" "Yes, Madam." "Well, you know best, I suppose; here is an old book I have no regard for; you may have it, it seems something of your sort." And she laid upon the counter a valuable volume of Dr. Gill's, "Body of Divinity." I thanked her. It was, indeed, a treasure to me just then, and became quite a companion to me in a severe illness I had shortly after this. Thus the Lord gave me a book, and leisure to read it, and grace to profit withal, I trust.

I had the fear of dying come upon me about this time, and was greatly afraid my religion would leave me then. This fear was removed in the following manner. I was seized with a most violent pain, and had to take to my bed. It was what is now known as appendicitis. O! the suffering I endured! I could not have existed, had it continued longer, I am certain. I became delirious, and the Doctor said his skill was exhausted, and if the pain did not cease, I must die. My poor mind was dark, and no God to comfort me was near. How I did cry unto Him, "Lord, appear for me, help me, forsake me not." He heard my cry, and the pain suddenly left me; but I was very, very weak. And as suddenly did my fear of death vanish, and the hymn of Watts' was like glory in my soul:

" There is a land of pure delight
Where saints immortal reign,
Where infinite day excludes the night,
And pleasures banish pain."

I longed to go there, and be with my precious Jesus, who had revealed Himself to me. I felt that such would be the case, I seemed too weak to survive. I thought it might be that mortification had set in. However, I rallied, and my grief at feeling I was coming back again to this unsatisfactory world, and the disappointment at not going to my dear Lord were quite a trouble to me. Thus was the fear of death not

only taken away, but death was even welcomed. And have I not sometimes been so sweetly melted under a visit of my adorable Lord that I have asked the favour of dismissal from this vile tenement of clay, where I can do nothing but sin, sin, sin? This blessed experience was very much sanctified to me. All the pain I suffered I felt I deserved. These words, "Shall a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sin?" were much on my mind at the time.

I have had some sweet seasons, never-to-be-forgotten hill Mizers. They have generally preceded some heavy trial, or have succeeded and been born of them. I was once going for a job of work at Frant, and was singularly blessed along the road; and half way up Frant Hill my tears flowed freely at the grateful recollection of the Lord's saving and preserving mercy to my soul. These words seem to clench it, "Thou hast put my tears into Thy bottle: are they not in remembrance before Thee?" Never did I feel safer for glory. I had the witness within, and my record was on high.

Conclusion.

Mr. Saltmarsh held the office of senior deacon at Hanover Chapel, Tunbridge Wells, for nearly 40 years. He preached regularly nearly the whole of that time, and was very useful in assisting many little causes, taking little for his ministerial labours. He was also useful in giving counsel where needed, being possessed of good business qualifications. I believe his ministry was increasingly acceptable in his latter days, and his prayers were observed by myself and others to be more weighty and solemn and acceptable. The following letter he wrote one month before his death:

"My dear Friend and Brother in Christ Jesus,—I hope Satan has not been taking advantage of my delay in replying to your kind, spiritual letter, to try and separate chief friends,—though I believe that expression applies more especially to Christ, the chief Friend, and His blood-bought ones; at least so I continually find it, if indeed I am bought with such an astounding price.

"The Lord has indeed brought me into darkness of affliction, and not into light, and is exercising me most solemnly. We talk, and read from the Word, and pray about such a matter; but to be in it indeed, as Hart says of sin,

" 'Cuts deep beyond expression!'

Yet God's blessed Book furnishes the best language of groan-

ing and desire. The sympathy of my dear brethren in the Lord is most highly prized by me; but none but Jesus fully knows my sore, and He alone can afford effectual relief. I am like dear Hezekiah, with my face turned to the wall. My sins and guilt stop my mouth; I sigh, but cannot pray. Yet

“ ‘Prayer is the burden of a sigh;’

and I am comforted a little at times to find that I am not left destitute of feeling and desire and hope in measure, though faint. The desire to serve Him by serving His dear people remains, and even increases; but His hand is upon me, and so He forbids. I pray for grace to kiss the rod, and know who has appointed it. What am I? You used a wrong pride-raising expression when you called me ‘a learned man.’ Never to my feeling was anything more untrue in all senses; and I am made willing to be nothing and less than nothing,

“ ‘If Jesus on me pity show.’

“ ‘I’d creep beside Him like a worm,
And see Him die for me.’

“You are quite correct when you speak of it as a *chastisement*; and as such I would not be without it; for it implies the relationship I so desire to realize, viz.: ‘Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth;’ and so on. Neither do I dare cast away my little confidence. I look at His wonderful forbearing mercy to me for so many years, and in so many mysterious and peculiar circumstances, through which He has led me these nearly 74 years; during 55 of which I was (if not deceived) a living soul. This verse, notwithstanding, suits me:

“ ‘And are we rebels still alive?

And do I still rebel?

That mercy must be great indeed

That keeps me out of hell.’

“The workings of my heart under grace and sin are more than language can begin to express. I can only say I have been an unprofitable servant, and anything *good* was from Him; and to Him alone be all the praise. Of His own have we given Him. I find—and I know you are not a stranger to His dealings—they are all to make us sick of self and fond of Jesus. I have not been troubled much with the bubbling up of enmity; but His terrors have been in my soul, and the hidings of His face at the remembrance of my base backslidings. Oh, that I could come near Him! Poor

Job's experience has been and is mine still; and I hope his deliverance may be mine too. Your remarks about the emptying and humbling experience of a living soul describe it well; you walk that path too. Such an experience is the black background that makes the Saviour's blood and merits, work and sympathy, stand out in bold relief.

"I begin to think that the Lord has no further need of me, but is allowing me a pause; as He did Israel of old before they crossed Jordan into the promised land. 'Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God hath led thee.' Like dear old Jacob, 'few and evil' have the days of my life been. 'I am no better (worse I fear) than my fathers,' says tried Elijah. 'Vanity and vexation of spirit,' saith the preacher. It is sovereign grace, wonderful and free indeed, that can save a presumptuous wretch like me. Oh, how I see the need of the blood of God's dear Son, and its preciousness— invaluable blood! Had I not that to plead, each sight of my past and what dwells within would sink me to despair. I dare not belittle its power to save even so vile and filthy a wretch as I am; and when applied it does me good. Now and again my heart is broken, hard as it is; and nothing else can do it but superabounding grace in Christ Jesus. I do love those 'who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth.' The grace I see shining in them ravishes my heart at times.

"I am much concerned for the future of God's causes of truth. Oh, what a day of declensions we are witnessing! My prayer is that He will raise up preachers after His own heart, to feed and teach the flock of slaughter.

"This verse is ever with me:

"O glorious hour, O blest abode!
I shall be near and like my God;
And sin and hell no more control
The sacred pleasures of my soul."

I believe He sent it to support my soul.

"O may we live to reach the place,
Where He unfolds His lovely face!"

"The yearning of my soul is to see Him as He is, and serve Him as I would.

"Best wishes to you and yours for time and eternity.

"Yours affectionately,

"M. SALTMARSH."

Our friend Saltmarsh passed peacefully away on Nov. 25th, 1910, aged 78. His last words were, "Very comfortable—peace—no pain." He leaves a large family, who much respected their father, and a widow to mourn her great loss. They had been married over fifty years. "Blessed are the dead, which die in the Lord." J. NEWTON, *Pastor*.

COVENANT SECURITY.

Why should a ransom'd sinner sigh?
 Believer, raise thy languid eye,
 A covenant God to view.
 Ere time began to run its race,
 He made thee His in bonds of grace
 Unalterably true.

Christ was the cov'nant Head design'd;
 In Him the parts are all combined,
 And ratified by blood.
 He law and justice satisfied,
 And sin atoned; for when He died,
 He made thy peace with God.

He in unchanging union join'd
 The human nature and divine,
 The Church's Head to be;
 Thus He our elder Brother is,
 And thus by union we are His
 To all eternity.

Nor death nor hell the bond can break,
 We are beloved for Jesus' sake,
 Firm as His throne we stand;
 Loved with an everlasting love,
 There's no created power can move
 Or pluck from Jesus' hand.

Engraven on His heart He wears
 The names of all the blood-bought heirs
 Of everlasting rest;
 More happy they who see His face,
 But not more safe; each child of grace
 Shall be as fully blest.

Then must we to the end endure ;
 The promise is for ever sure,
 Yea and amen in Christ.
 Then shout salvation rich and free,
 Till all unite to sing with thee,
 " Hosanna in the highest."

WILLIAM HOUSE.

PRAYER.

"For Thou, O my God, hast told Thy servant that Thou wilt build him an house : therefore Thy servant hath found in his heart to pray before Thee."—1 CHRON. xvii. 25.

THIS remarkably beautiful word is the fruit of God's favour to David who utters it. It is a word of confidence well built— if we speak of confidence, we must have good reason for it; it is a great word, built on a great God, expresses a great, a sweet, a wonderful condescension on the part of God to His servant David. And it speaks of David, or rather David speaks of his sweet hope, and gives a reason for his intimate approach to God, his familiarity, and his boldness. He found it in his heart to pray this particular prayer, because something had been said to him by the Lord. What I would make some observations on is the great subject of approaching God; that is, the great matter of *prayer*.

Prayer is the Christian's breath. He begins his spiritual life by prayer, and ends it by prayer. Prayer is the life of a beggar; it is the worship of a subject loyal to his King, the adoration of a believing soul, the expression of spiritual affection; it is the confession of sin, the prostration of a soul before God, the humble approach of a sinner to the great God. A prayerless soul is a dead soul. Prayer is God's delight, as it is the sinner's sweet exercise; not always sweet, yet always living. I mean not that *all* prayers are living; but there are prayers which are a living exercise in people, and which are God's delight. Happy the man who has prayer in him.

Prayer has for it great reasons. One is, God will have all flesh come to Him; all kinds of sinners, high and low, rich and poor, Jew and Greek, shall come to Him. "O Thou that hearest prayer, unto Thee shall all flesh come." Bless God

for a way, a new and living way to Himself, through the rent veil of the sacred flesh of Jesus Christ.

I would like to cast what I have to say, by the Lord's help, into three particular points. i. What is prayer? ii. How is prayer formed? iii. Who is it that prays?

i. *What is prayer?* It is the approach of a sinner to God, the expression of his feelings about himself, and his desires toward God. It is the representation of a case, whatever it is; a case that is real, important to the person who represents it. It is the falling before Almighty God of a rational creature, an exercised, troubled creature, a sinner; a poor sinner whose understanding is instructed, enlightened to perceive the case he is in as a sinner; whose heart is affected to God as God is represented to him, whether in the law or in the gospel. It is the complaint of a soul under opposition; the want of a soul empty; the fear of a soul expecting and fearing what he deserves—the heavy hand of God in judgment on him. It is the enlightened soul's adoration of Almighty God, as His character and nature are revealed to him: "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious." It is a secret exercise not to be restrained. "Examine yourselves," says the apostle. Have we any prayer? Do we pray? David went in, and sat before the Lord to pray. Saul prayed in the street called Straight: "Behold, he prayeth." How many are engaged in this exercise continually in all the world!

Such is prayer. It may be connected with a certain form, or it may not. We have one. Christ instructed His church how, for substance and matter, to pray: "Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name." For matter, substance, manner of spirit, feeling of relationship, and expression of affection, that is the very pattern to be observed. May the Lord cause us so to pray. Prayer is a putting forth of the energy of the soul; as when one has a task to perform, a burden to carry, a difficult thing to do, the whole energy of the body is put forth. Prayer is like that—a putting forth of every bit of life and energy the soul has. The Scriptures say, "Pray without ceasing;" that is, let it be the perpetual attitude of the soul. Sometimes people are set upon a particular business with the Almighty; and until it is accomplished there is a ceaseless activity of spirit. This God calls for; and there is no ceasing until the matter is settled.

Prayer is the life of a beggar ; it is a good trade when carried on on the knees with God. God's liberality and the sinner's necessity meeting in the soul with faith, how it thrives ! By begging we get out of Christ's heart grace to help in time of need, tastes of His love. If we could beg better, we should be better off. The prophet Elisha told the king of Israel to shoot, and said, "The arrow of the Lord's deliverance from Syria." And Elisha said to the king, "Smite upon the ground;" and he smote thrice and stayed. Then said Elisha, "Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times ; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it ; whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice " (2 Kings xiii. 14—19). So if we prayed more, we should find ourselves better off, and more often overcome our enemies. May God give us mercy to take advantage of the gracious invitation, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden."

Well, if we pray, we are not ignorant of God ; we have some knowledge of Him to whom we pray. If we know not God and attempt to pray, we are idolaters ; it does us no good. But if we pray with some true apprehension of who God is, of what self is, and of what we want, then we shall make some acceptable and successful approaches to God. A praying man is like a merchantman who brings his food from afar. His prayer is well directed, having the Bible for a compass ; it does not go without any end, it has God in view, and the land of promise. It is guided by the movements of faith. Its cry is, "Give me righteousness, give me heaven ; give enough in providence and contentment ; give prudence in matters, and grace to walk uprightly." If we had more prayer, if we did more business with heaven in secret, we should be more godly. I speak not of praying in public ; praying is not to be gauged by what one speaks before others. A gift to speak in prayer may grow in one who uses it ; but when we are alone, having only God's eye on us, then to pray and feel we approach God and speak with Him, to feel there is One with us to whom we may speak, and do, One we would adore, and do—that is a different thing, and has a living spring.

ii. *How is prayer formed ?* If we are upon earth, and God the Object of prayer is in heaven, how can it reach Him ? Prayer to be acceptable must have in it that which will please Him. To be acceptable it must be urged in that way, and

pleas used, which He the great God will regard favourably. Then how is it to be formed? Our troubles alone will not form prayer; our sins, if we look at them, will keep us from it; if we look at our failures, we shall be ashamed; if at our difficulties, we shall never get to pray; if at our distractions, we shall say, "It is of no use trying;" if at our enmity, "We cannot pray in that spirit;" if at our atheism, "There is no one to pray to." And if sometimes we look at our unanswered, unsuccessful prayers during the course of our profession, we say we have never prayed aright; and as we feel then, of what use is it to try?

The Holy Ghost is the One who must form, create, and order prayer in the soul. Of this we are informed by the apostle Paul. He tells us, "We know not what we should pray for as we ought"; but the Spirit "helpeth our infirmities," and "maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." He comes and writes on a sinner's heart *somewhat of God's character*; whispers somewhat of His grace; opens a little of His well-pleased face in Jesus Christ; and gathering up the thoughts that arise on these operations, He forms within the soul desires and longings, hunger and thirst, feelings of the want of God, and desires for Him. And He says, "Take with you words, and turn to the Lord." And He gives energy, courage, puts in pleas that are to be used, and that God will attend to. Thus He forms the prayer. He it is whose teaching guides, whose light instructs the sinner, and causes him to stretch his empty hand towards God.

Let us look at this point. It is very great and important; let us examine it therefore. This moving of prayer in the soul sometimes is large; it grows, and again is diminished. Often there is a sovereignty with regard to these changes that is mysterious. It is as if the Holy Spirit should come down sometimes when the sinner would conclude from his dead state that He would not come. When the sinner sees himself so averse to God that he must have provoked Him to leave him; when his courage has failed, and impossibilities rise like mountains; when it appears too late, and he feels himself too vile or no believer, then in striking sovereignty He comes, and forms new prayers, new arguments, which astonish the subject of them. Sometimes also in respect of His withholding or withdrawing He acts in a way of sovereignty;

but He will make a man know when he has quenched the Spirit, and what a solemn thing it is to disregard His holy promptings. How solemn it is to reverse Christ's order: "Seek ye *first* the kingdom of God and His righteousness." He will say, "I will go and return to My place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek Me early." Let us not presume on the sovereign visits and return of the Holy Ghost in forming prayer. Let us remember He is a jealous God; and if we quench His operations, He will go for a time. This is true. Let us remember that He quickly resents that quenching of Him, and doing Him despite, which, alas, some of us have to confess we are most vilely guilty of.

But He does form prayer; and that is sometimes more by showing God's character in the face of Christ, and revealing the blood of Christ, than by showing the sinner his own sins and needs; for it seems that this part is necessary to give a sinner courage. It was said by the servants of King Benhadad that the kings of Israel were merciful kings; therefore they said, "Let us put ropes on our heads, and go to the king; peradventure he will save thy life" (1 Kings xx. 31). They went, and got what they wanted. And if the Spirit gives us to believe God is merciful, and shows us His character in Christ, that will affect our hearts exceedingly, and make us say, "I will go in my poverty and guilt, and who can tell but He will be merciful to me?" Do we get this spiritual representation in our hearts of the greatness of God's mercy in Jesus Christ?

Another thing the Holy Spirit does in forming prayer in the heart, is to show the sinner *his own wretched case*. What a solemn thing to be a sinner! That is quite enough to make a case for a merciful God—a *depraved nature*. We are apt to lose sight of this awful root-cause of our failures. If we could live an hour without an act of sin in thought, look, or word, we should have enough then to prostrate ourselves before God in shame and degradation, because of what our nature is. Often the older God's people get, the more they are led by the Holy Spirit to consider the root of things than in their earlier days.

Now if we have these two things in the heart—the knowledge of God and of self, by the Holy Spirit, we have that that will form prayer. Blessed formation, formed out of a lively sense of God's mercy and the sinner's misery, Christ's

righteousness and the sinner's unrighteousness, Christ's fulness and the sinner's emptiness, Christ's love and the sinner's hatred, Christ as the living and true God and the sinner as a dead thing in his nature, and wicked in heart and life! These two uniting and fitting in the mind, and forming thoughts which neither of them alone could do, these are the means used to cause a sinner to pray.

Also our circumstances come into the matter of prayer. His people are much afflicted—one in his family, another in his person, another in his business, perplexed here, distracted there, and feeling he will never get through honourably; others wondering whether what they have God will continue to them. Just in the same way the Holy Spirit comes with divine power, wisdom, fulness of supply, patience to bear with the sinner; and as these are all set out before his faith, he says, "What I want is there; if I can but succeed on my knees, I shall come through." So prayer is formed. The Holy Spirit whispers, "Be careful for nothing; go to God, represent your case to Him, put it into His hand. Jesus is to be employed, the Intercessor to be used; seek supplies from Him. Go to Him. By prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto Him."

Again, with regard to temptation, that also the Spirit will supply grace for, give prayer for. He may say, "One was tempted before you, that He might succour them that are tempted; go to Him." He did no sin; He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. He said, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me." But because He was tempted, He is able to succour. Thus prayer is formed.

iii. Now, *who is it that prays?* It is a sinner. The Pharisee was not the man. It is said he prayed, but had no success; there was no ear in heaven open to him. He prays who is led by the Spirit; and if we look in the Scriptures, we see encouraging examples of this truth. How wonderful to see a sinner prostrating his soul before God! Take Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, David, all the Lord's people mentioned in Scripture as praying. They were sinners, and they came before God as such. It is not necessary that we should be conscious of sincerity in order to pray; we may have to pray to be delivered from hypocrisy. It is not necessary we should be clear from any particular sin in order to pray; but we may

have to pray to be delivered from one. Nor is it necessary that we should find our hearts and eyes ever and fully turned from vanity; one prays, "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity." Nor is a *sense* of union with Christ necessary; we may have to pray for it. "Unite my heart to fear Thy Name." In a word,

"Sinners can say, and none but they,
'How precious is the Saviour!'"

This is the point—there is a place where God and sinners meet; a place where sinners approach with humble faith, and the golden sceptre is held out to them. The sinner prays led by the Spirit; the Saviour receives that prayer, takes him by the hand, and conducts him to the Father. Or as Hart puts it,

"The Spirit his petition writes,
And Christ receives, and gives it in."

We must not whitewash or pare off our bad things, try to make angularities altogether even, crooked things straight. We must come with the case as it is; we are best fitted to pray just as the case is. The Lord says, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden; and I will give you rest."

Now there are two points I would notice here. First, is there a warrant for a sinner to pray who may say, "I am unbidden, uncalled. I feel no power working within, no gracious prompting"? Emphatically *yes*, there is. In the holy Scripture there is seen, as we have eyes, a blessed God, "a just God and a Saviour;" and He says, "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." I call that a general warrant; it meets those who think, whoever has a broken heart or a right to come, *they* have none. We are not to judge the Lord by what we see or feel, but venture wholly on Him with a bad heart, a bad character, a bad case; with hard feelings, it may be; with a dreadful gloom, an impenetrable cloud of guilt, everything against us, death ready to seize us, an icy chill from the fear that God will have nothing to do with us. In such a case the Lord help us to venture, and pray on that blessed warrant founded not on our fitness, but on *Christ's atonement and justifying righteousness*. If we pray so, not I, but the Scripture says, if we never get any access or success, we shall find some scripture broken. God having said, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out,"

what would He do with His word, with His great name? What would the enemy say? Then let us take courage, and go to Him as lost—that is the case warranted to come. We are often, when at a stand and thinking prayer is of no use, much more under that inveterate sin of unbelief and the influence of the devil than it is possible to believe. What a blessed God we have! and He has given this great, sufficient warrant for a poor wretch lost in himself, to go and pray.

But there are some people who can pray on other grounds, not leaving these out, but having something added; and it corresponds to the case of David before us. He went on the ground of the communication made to him. That is something added to the general warrant. We who have other reasons added, as a promise or some communication, we ought with all our hearts, souls, and powers to go and thank God for His great kindness to us. To some He has said, "I will help you." To some, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness." To some, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as of silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ." To some He has given, O wonderful mercy! a revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ. To some a sense of union with Him, holy liberty, a broken heart, a purified conscience, a humble spirit, a touch of His goodness. In some His precious love has been shed abroad by the Holy Ghost. And to some He has made a promise of heaven. Well then, such may go to Him and say, "Thou hast spoken to Thy servant after the estate of the great men of the earth, of a better state than that of kings; Thou hast promised to make him a house for a great while to come." That is said of David as a type of Christ, "whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end" (Heb. iii. 6). What? has God spoken of us as building us up for an habitation of Himself through the Spirit? Has He built us "upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief Corner-stone" (Eph. ii. 20—22)? When the enemy says we are getting far off, and conscience begins to accuse, then let us go on that special warrant He has given us, and say to Him, "Didst Thou not claim me? was not my heart brought into sweet union with that claim? Did not I make a deliberate choice to be Thine? Wast Thou not to me Chief among ten thousand, yea, altogether lovely?"

Didst Thou not tell me Thou wouldst be mine for ever?
O come,

“ ‘ Dwell in me, fill all my soul,
And all my powers by Thine control.’ ”

Take up Thy gracious abode, the crooked put straight. I live much in the dark, far from Thee; bring me to the light, guide me right, and bring me through.”

It is a truth that some have a warrant to go to God added to the general, big warrant, the immovable warrant, for those who have no other. God has given to some a particular thing on which they may go and speak to Him particularly. As many as have that, O avail yourselves of it, go to Him with it. It seems to me a very great, a wonderful thing, that God should deal with sinners, and make some holy, sweet communications that convince them it is well with them. He has said to some, “ I will bless you, settle you in Mine house and in My kingdom for ever ” (1 Chron. xvii. 14). This was what brought out David's prayer. “ Then went King David in, and sat before the Lord.” It brought out his own unworthiness, “ Who am I, and what am I? ” Here was a broken, humble man. But did he go on only saying, “ I am not fit, I am not worthy ”? No, he agreed with the Lord's word to him, received and embraced it: “ Do as Thou hast said.” “ Therefore Thy servant hath found in his heart to pray before Thee ; ” not, “ Therefore I have brought myself to this pitch ; ” no. “ I found it in my heart, bubbling, rising, springing up, overcoming opposition.” How different from praying because conscience is lashing the sinner! Let us, then, examine whether prayer is a sweet spring, a holy life, a blessed power coming down and rising within us, that causes us to pray: whether it is with a holy fervour, making us say, “ I come unto Thee, my exceeding joy. Unto Thee, O my God, will I sing.”

Now if these things are according to Scripture and gracious experience, may we note them, and the Lord give us wisdom to lay them up in our hearts, follow them out, and continually call on His name.

J. K. P.

Men's hearts are best known by their prayers; and by the same way we may know Christ's heart. Whosoever would know how deeply His heart is concerned in the saving of His people, let them read this prayer, John xvii.—*R. Trull.*

THE WAY OF THE PRUDENT.

A MORNING READING BY JAMES BOURNE.

OCTOBER 26th, 1840.—Prov. xxii. 3: "A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself." It is said, "Blessed is the man who feareth alway." We are never safe but in this trembling posture; and if we want this prudence, Christ is described as Prudence: "I Wisdom dwell with Prudence," (viii. 12); and He has the fulness of it. And if any man lack this wisdom, we must ask it of Him (Jas. i. 5). Now in Exodus it is said, "He that feared the word of the Lord took warning, and hid his servants and his cattle" (ix. 20). So we may be sure that heaven and earth shall pass away, but the Word of God shall stand. Christ is the only Hiding place; and they are blessed who feel that every other refuge will fail, and hide themselves in Him. All who tremble at His Word are invited to come to Him. Whatever our perplexity or case be, He is the Friend of sinners, and will overrule all things for us, if we go to Him in godly simplicity. That is His work. For "the evil" will surely come, unless we are made so prudent as to foresee it and hide ourselves.

The apostle writes to the Thessalonians, "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief" (v. 4). If this is so with you, how then do you show it? For some of you seem quite asleep; your conversation has no savour, you have no feeling sense of your very great danger, no spiritual energy. You show by continuing in this place you are asleep—not by words, but deeds; and every now and then God darts a light, a conviction into your minds to show you this danger. Now if these darts are slighted and disregarded, the result will be terrible, it will be tremendous. I cannot express the danger of not cherishing these things, and bringing them to a clear issue in the blood of Christ, but going to sleep again. If you feel you want this energy, go to Him and beg of Him to quicken you. I am sure you will not beg in vain; only persevere. I feel the importance of these things, and as I speak, eternity is before me. These things should be well examined into. Therefore let us watch and "be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love;" that is, going to Christ, and bringing all our troubles, temporal and spiritual, to Him; for by doing this we show that "God hath not appointed us unto wrath," as the apostle here says,

“but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us” (1 Thess. v. 8, 9).

When I was young, I went simply to Him, and He guided me most wonderfully; and if you can but get a smile from Him in this way, there is eternal life in it. Therefore, whatever you have to do, seek to make Him your Friend, and to have His blessing and guidance in all things. Noah showed this prudence, (Heb. xi. 7); “by the which he condemned the world”—as all of you who hear and tremble at these things, and find power to obey them, condemn those who do not;—“and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.” So did Abraham, who “went out, not knowing whither he went.” And especially we show this prudence by cherishing the light and convictions which God gives, examining soberly into them, and hiding ourselves in Christ Jesus. If we want to be happy, we must get God to show us His way, and make us willing to walk in it, and not in our own way.

The Lord in the midst of judgment always thinketh on mercy to His people; but when trouble comes on us suddenly, it is hard to believe this. Therefore beg of God to give you a sanctified memory beforehand, that when trouble comes and He seems angry with you, you may remember to get a sight of that mercy which He comes with.

CRUMBS FROM THE MASTER'S TABLE

FROM BOSTON'S “CROOK IN THE LOT,” OR, “THE SOVEREIGNTY AND WISDOM OF GOD IN THE AFFLICTIONS OF MEN DISPLAYED.”

(Continued from page 414.)

II. *Particular Directions.*

A WORD, in the general, to the *lifting up abiding those that humble themselves.* There is a twofold lifting up:

1. A *partial* lifting up, competent to the humbled in time, during this life. *Psa. xxx. 1:* “I will extol Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me.” This is a lifting up in part, and but in part, not wholly; and such liftings up the humbled may expect while in this world, but no more. These give a breathing to the weary, a change of burdens, but do not set them at perfect ease. So Israel in the wilderness, in the midst of their

many mourning times, had some singing ones, Ex. xv. 1; Num. xxi. 17.

2. A *total* lifting up, competent to them at the end of time, at death. Luke xvi. 22: "It came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom." Then the Lord deals with them no more by parcels, but carries their relief to perfection, Heb. xii. 22, 23. Then He takes off all their burdens, eases them of all their weights, and lays no more on for ever. He then lifts them up to a height they were never at before; no, not even at their highest. He sets them quite above all that is low, and therein fixes them, never to be brought down more. Now, there is a due time for both these.

(1) For the *partial* lifting up. Every time is not fit for it; we are not always fit to receive comfort and ease, or a change of our burdens. God sees there are times wherein it is needful for His people to be "in heaviness," 1 Pet. i. 6; to have their hearts brought down with grief, Psa. cvii. 12. But then there is a time really appointed for it in the divine wisdom, when He will think it as needful to comfort them as before to bring down. 2 Cor. ii. 7: "So that contrarywise ye ought rather to forgive and comfort him; lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow." We are, in that case, in the hand of God as in the hand of our physician, who appoints the time the drawing plaster shall continue, and when the healing plaster shall be applied, and leaves it not to the patient.

(2) For the *total* lifting up. When we are sore oppressed with our burdens, we are ready to think, "Oh! to be away, and set beyond them all." Job vii. 2, 3: "As a servant earnestly desireth the shadow, and as an hireling looketh for the reward of his work; so am I made to possess months of vanity, and wearisome nights are appointed to me." But it may be fitter, for all that, that we stay awhile, and struggle with our burdens. Phil. i. 24, 25: "Nevertheless, to abide in the flesh is more needful for you. And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all, for your furtherance and joy of faith." A few days might have taken Israel out of Egypt into Canaan; but they would have been too soon there, if they had made all that speed; so they behoved to spend forty years in the wilderness, till their due time of entering Canaan should come. And be

sure the saints entering heaven will be convinced that the time of it is best chosen, and there will be a beauty in that it was no sooner. And thus a lifting up is secured for the humble.

If one should assure you, when reduced to poverty, that the time would certainly come yet that you should be rich ; when sore sick, that you should not die of that disease, but certainly recover ; that would help you to bear your poverty and sickness the better, and you would comfort yourselves with that prospect. However, one may continue poor, and never be rich ; may be sick, and die of his disease ; but whoever humble themselves under their humbling circumstances, we can assure them from the Lord's Word they shall certainly, without all peradventure, be lifted up out of, and relieved from, their humbling circumstances ; they shall certainly see the day of their ease and relief, when they shall remember their burdens as waters that fail. And you may be assured thereof from the following considerations :

The nature of God duly considered ensures it. Psa. ciii. 8, 9: "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide, neither will He keep His anger for ever." The humbled soul, looking to God in Christ, may see three things in His nature jointly securing it.

1. Infinite *power*, that can do all things. No circumstances are so low but He can raise them ; so entangling and perplexing but He can unravel them ; so hopeless but He can remedy them. Gen. xviii. 14: "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" Be our case what it will, it is never past reach with Him to help it ; but then, it is the most proper season for Him to take it in hand, when all others have given it over. Deut. xxxii. 36: "For the Lord shall judge His people, and repent Himself for His servants, when He seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up, or left."

2. Infinite *goodness* inclining to help. He is good and gracious in His nature, Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. And therefore His power is a spring of comfort to them, Rom. xiv. 4. Men may be willing that are not able, or able that are not willing ; but infinite goodness, joining infinite power in God, may ascertain the humbled of a lifting up in due time. That is a word of inconceivable sweetness, 1 John iv. 16: "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us.

God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." He has the bowels of a father towards the humble. Psa. ciii. 13: "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." Yea, bowels of mercy more tender than a mother to her sucking child, Isa. xlix. 15. Wherefore, howbeit His wisdom may see it necessary to put them in humbling circumstances, and keep them there for a time, it is not possible He can leave them therein altogether.

3. Infinite *wisdom*, that doth nothing in vain, and therefore will not needlessly keep one in humbling circumstances. Lam. iii. 32, 33: "But though He cause grief, yet will He have compassion according to the multitude of His mercies. For He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men." God sends afflictions for humbling as the end and design to be brought about by them; when that is obtained, and there is no more use for them that way, we may assure ourselves they will be taken off.

The providence of God viewed in its stated methods of procedure with its objects, ensures it. Turn your eyes which way you will on the divine providence, you may conclude thence that in due time the humble will be lifted up.

Observe the providence of God in the revolutions of the whole course of nature, day succeeding to the longest night, a summer to the winter, a waxing to a waning of the moon, a flowing to an ebbing of the sea, &c. Let not the Lord's humbled ones be idle spectators of these things; they are for our learning. Jer. xxxi. 35—37: "Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; the Lord of hosts is His name: if those ordinances depart from before Me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before Me for ever." Will the Lord's hand keep such a steady course in the earth, sea, and visible heavens as to bring a lifting up in them after a casting down, and only forget His humbled ones? No, by no means.

Observe the providence of God in the dispensations thereof about the Man Christ, the most noble and august Object thereof, more valuable than a thousand worlds, Col. ii. 9. Did not providence keep this course with Him, first humbling Him, then exalting Him, and lifting Him up? first bringing

Him to the dust of death in a course of sufferings thirty-three years, then exalting Him to the Father's right hand in an eternity of glory? Heb. xii. 2: "Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Phil. ii. 8, 9: "And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him." The exaltation could not fail to follow His humiliation. Luke xxiv. 26: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?" And He saw and believed it would follow, as the springing of the seed doth the sowing it, John xii. 24. There is a near concern the humbled in humbling circumstances have herein.

This is the pattern providence copies after in its conduct towards you. The Father was so well pleased with this method, in the case of His own Son, that it was determined to be followed, and just copied over again in the case of all the heirs of glory. Rom. viii. 29: "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the First-born among many brethren." And who would not be pleased to walk through the darkest valley treading His steps?

This is a sure pledge of your lifting up. Christ in His state of humiliation was considered as a public Person and Representative, and so is He in His exaltation. So Christ's exaltation ensures your exaltation out of your humbling circumstances, "Thy dead men shall live, together with My dead body shall they arise; awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust" (Isa. xxvi. 19). "Come, and let us return unto the Lord; for He hath torn, and He will heal us; He hath smitten, and He will bind us up. After two days He will revive us; in the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight" (Hosea vi. 1, 2). "And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. ii. 6). Yea, He is gone into the state of glory for us as our Forerunner. "Whither the Forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an High Priest for ever" (Heb. vi. 20).

His humiliation was the price of your exaltation, and His exaltation a testimony of the acceptance of its payment to the full. There are no humbling circumstances ye are in, but ye

would have perished in them, had not He purchased [procured] your lifting up out of them by His own humiliation, Isa. xxvi. 19. Now, His humbling grace in you is an evidence of the acceptance of His humiliation for your lifting up.

Observe *the providence of God* towards the church in all ages. This has been the course the Lord has kept with her, Psa. cxxix. 1—4. Abel was slain by wicked Cain, to the great grief of Adam and Eve, and the rest of their pious children; but then there was another seed raised up in Abel's room, Gen. iv. 25. Noah and his sons were buried alive in the ark for more than a year; but then they were brought out into a new world and blessed. Abraham for many years went childless; but at length Isaac was born. Israel was long in miserable bondage in Egypt, but at length seated in the promised land, &c. We must be content to go by the footsteps of the flock; and if in humiliation, we shall surely follow them in exaltation too.

Observe the providence of God in the dispensations of His grace towards His children. The general rule is, 1 Pet. v. 5: "For God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." How are they brought into a state of grace? Is it not by a sound work of humiliation going before? Luke vi. 48. And ordinarily the greater the measure of grace designed for any, the deeper is their humiliation before, as in Paul's case. If they are to be recovered out of a backsliding case, the same method is followed, so that the deepest humiliation ordinarily makes way for the greatest comfort, and the darkest hour goes before the rising of the Sun of righteousness upon them, Isa. lxvi. 5—13.

Observe the providence of God at length throwing down wicked men, however long they stand and prosper. Psa. xxxvii. 35, 36: "I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree; yet he passed away, and lo, he was not; yea, I sought him, but he could not be found." They are long green before the sun, but at length they are suddenly smitten with an east wind, and wither away; their lamp goes out with a stench, and they are put out in obscure darkness. Now, it is inconsistent with the benignity of the divine nature to forget the humble to raise them, while He minds the proud to abase them.

The Word of God puts it beyond all peradventure, which, from the beginning to the end, is the humbled saint's security

for a lifting up. Psa. cxix. 49, 50: "Remember the Word unto Thy servant, upon which Thou hast caused me to hope. This is my comfort in my affliction; for Thy Word hath quickened me." His Word is the great letter of His name, which He will certainly cause to shine. Psa. cxxxviii. 2: "For Thou hast magnified Thy Word above all Thy name;" and in all generations hast been safely relied on, Psa. xii. 6. Consider,

1. The *doctrines* of the Word, which teach faith and hope for the time, and the happy issue which the exercise of these graces will have. The whole current of Scripture to those in humbling circumstances is not to cast away their confidence, but to hope to the end; and that for this good reason, that it shall not be in vain. See Psa. xxvii. 14: "Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord." And compare Rom. ix. 33; Isa. xlix. 23. "For they shall not be ashamed that wait for Me."

2. The *promises* of the Word, whereby heaven is expressly engaged for a lifting up to those that humble themselves in humbling circumstances. "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up" (Jas. iv. 10). "And he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Matt. xxiii. 12). It may take a time to prepare them for lifting up; but that being done, it is secured. "Lord, Thou hast heard the desire of the humble; Thou wilt prepare their hearts; Thou wilt cause Thine ear to hear" (Psa. x. 17). They have His word for deliverance, Psa. l. 15. And though they may seem to be forgotten, they shall not be always so; the time of their deliverance will come. "For the needy shall not always be forgotten; the expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever" (Psa. ix. 18). "He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer" (Psa. cii. 17).

3. The *examples* of the Word sufficiently confirming the truth of the doctrines and promises. Rom. xv. 4: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning; that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." In the doctrines and promises the lifting up is proposed to our faith, to be reckoned on the credit of God's Word; but in the example it is, in the case of others, set before our eyes to be seen. Jas. v. 11: "Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of

the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord : that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." There we see it in the case of Abraham, Job, David, Paul, and other saints, but above all, in the case of the Man Christ.

4. *The intercession of Christ* joining the prayers and cries of His humbled people in their humbling circumstances, ensures a lifting up for them at length. Be it so that the proud cry not when He bindeth them ; yet His own humbled ones will certainly cry unto Him. Psa. xlii. 7, 8 : " Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of Thy water-spouts ; all Thy waves and Thy billows are 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." And though unbelievers may soon be outwearied, and give it over altogether, surely believers will not do so ; but though they may, in a fit of temptation, lay it by as hopeless, they will find themselves obliged to take it up again. Jer. xx. 9 : " Then I said, I will not make mention of Him, or speak any more in His name. But His 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." They will cry night and day unto Him, Luke xviii. 7, knowing no time for giving it over till they be lifted up. Lam. iii. 49, 50 : " Mine eye trickleth down, and ceaseth not, without any intermission ; till the Lord look down, and behold from heaven." Now, Christ's intercession being joined with these cries, there cannot fail to be a lifting up.

Christ's intercession is certainly joined with the cries and prayers of the humbled in their humbling circumstances. Rev. viii. 3 : " And another Angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer ; and there was given unto Him much incense, that He should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne." They are by the Spirit helped to groan for relief, Rom. viii. 26 ; and the prayers and groans which are through the Spirit are certainly to be made effectual by the intercession of the Son, Jas. v. 16. And ye may know they are by the Spirit, if so be ye are helped to continue praying, hoping for your suit at last on the ground of God's word of promise ; for nature's praying is a pool that will dry up in a long drought. The Spirit of prayer is the lasting Spring, John iv. 14 ; Psa. cxxxviii. 3 : " In the day when I cried, Thou answeredst me,

and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul." Truly there is an intercession in heaven on account of the humbling circumstances of the humble ones. "Then the Angel of the Lord answered and said, O Lord of hosts, how long wilt Thou not have mercy on Jerusalem, and on the cities of Judah, against which Thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years?" (Zech. i. 12). How then can they miss of a lifting up in due time?

Christ is in deep earnest in His intercession for His people in their humbling circumstances. Some will speak a good word in favour of the helpless, that will be little concerned whether they speed or not: but our Intercessor is in earnest in behalf of His humbled ones, for He is touched with sympathy in their case. Isa. lxiii. 9: "In all their affliction He was afflicted." A most tender sympathy, Zech. ii. 8: "For he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of His eye." He has their case upon His heart, where He is in the holy place in the highest heavens, Ex. xxviii. 29, and He keeps an exact account of the time of their humbling circumstances, be it as long as it will, Zech. i. 12. Moreover, it is His own business; the lifting up which they are to have is a thing that is secured to Him in the promises made to Him on the account of His blood shed for them, Psa. lxxxix. 33—36. So not only are they looking on earth, but the Man Christ is in heaven looking for the accomplishment of these promises. Heb. x. 12, 13: "But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool." How is it possible, then, that He should be balked? Moreover, these humbling circumstances are His own sufferings still, though not in His Person, yet in His members. Col. i. 24: "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for His body's sake, which is the church." Wherefore there is all ground to conclude He is in deep earnest. Again,

His intercession is always effectual. John xi. 42: "And I know that Thou hearest Me always." It cannot miss to be so, because He is the Father's well-beloved Son. His intercession has a plea of justice for the ground of it, 1 John ii. 1. "We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Moreover, He has all power in heaven and earth

lodged in Him, Matt. xxviii. 18. And finally, He and His Father are one, and Their will one. So, both Christ and His Father do will the lifting up of the humble ones, but yet only in the due time.

(To be continued.)

DIVINE TEACHING.

My dear and much esteemed Friend,—After long silence through many circumstances, I now try to write a few lines in answer to yours of November 1st. I have had it on my mind many times to write, but having so many engagements, much correspondence and travelling, with very little grace and wisdom, my soul is often in straits. What a mercy our treasure is stored up in the Lord Jesus, and not left in our leaky vessels at a peradventure. Our life is “hid with Christ in God;” also grace to help in time of need is treasured up in Him.

My text last evening was Rom. i. 4: “Declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.” How the prophets declared Him to be the Son of God. God the Father declared Him to be the Son of God at His baptism and on the mount of transfiguration; the apostles declared Him to be so; and His resurrection declared it, when He burst the bands of death, triumphed over sin, devils, and the grave, and led captivity captive, bringing in eternal redemption for His elect. Thus the proclamation will resound through the church militant until the last elect vessel of mercy is gathered in and meetened for eternal glory.

Then I spoke of the evidences of His being the Son of God with power to us individually. All His elect are under the dominion of death, until His almighty power is put forth in raising the dead to life. One evidence of His resurrection power is, the will is raised by the Spirit of holiness, so that the believing soul can say, “To will is present with me, but how to perform I find not.” Hence the many fears and conflicts. The heart and affections also are raised by the same power, so that the believing soul loves the saints, the truth of God, the power of godliness; and he goes after the Lord in longing desires: “My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God,” &c. Thus the Holy Son of God takes possession of

the heart, faith lays hold of Him, saying, "O that Thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my heart." Hope centres in Him, and the affections entwine around Him; and then the day comes when this believing soul is enabled to say, "He is the Chiefest among ten thousand, yea, He is altogether lovely. This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend, O ye daughters of Jerusalem." Thus the Spirit of holiness sanctifies the will, the heart, and the affections, and His blessed Majesty is well pleased with the fruits of His own grace and Spirit in the heart.

Every lesson He gives bears this inscription: "Without Me ye can do nothing;" but we are such dull scholars, and are often trying what an arm of flesh can do, or a little human wisdom or fleshly prudence. Then, when His gracious Majesty blows upon it, it all vanishes like smoke, and we seem in ruins, in fears, and in death, and oftentimes rebel and fret against the best of all friends; and was His mercy not from everlasting to everlasting we might well say, as you do in yours, "Woe to me! my leanness, my leanness!" But we prove our leanness makes room for His fatness, our poverty for His riches, our ignorance for His wisdom, our guilt for His blood, our lost estate for His redemption, our weakness for His power, our waywardness for His patience, and our ruins for His palace, to be set up for the King of kings in our poor tabernacles. But we need much discipline to bring us to be reconciled for Him *always* to wear the crown, for Him *always* to be esteemed as Lord, *always* to lead captivity captive. Flesh, lust, and pride will never submit to Him. Therefore you and I, my dear friend, are often "in the furnace," to purge this worse than nothing from us. Therefore says Peter, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you," &c. We feel at times determined not to give up, and our dear Lord seems as much determined that we shall, and come to nothing and beggary. It is rare that I pass a week but I am in this very spot. So necessity compels me on the one hand, and the constraints of His love on the other, to let Him wear the crown, and be King of kings and Lord of lords. "Amen," says the poor humbled soul under His mighty hand, "the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

I shall not have the pleasure of seeing my dear Yorkshire friends this year, having lost some of our old standard bearers.

They are pressing harder in the south ; and having so many calls, I cannot conveniently visit the north. May grace be with you and all the dear friends ; give my love to them.

Yours in the best of bonds,

Burgess Hill, April 15th, 1880.

E. ASHDOWN.

To Mr. Butcher, Halifax.

THE SOVEREIGN BALM.

ER, my Brother,—God forbid I should keep anything back from you, such a friend, such a brother, such a spiritual instructor. I had no thought of that little outline being seen in print.* I did not tell half the business done on that memorable eve, neither could I. I owed my dear brother C. a letter. God has made His gospel through his mouth life and power. I was years before I could tell him, but God opened a way for our mutual correspondence, so that now we are like two lovers ; we never tire of telling our simple stories respecting our best Beloved, and our eternal home.

I have seen the blessed habitation three times, twice in dreams ; but this last one, on December 26th, 1910, was no dream. Jesus Christ was with me in the room, and He showed me the heaven and the glory, besides His dear hands and feet and bleeding heart. I beheld His Majesty, His glorious Person, and my heavenly home. Bless you, this world was nothing to me ; I knew nothing of this world, nor did I desire another moment in it. Now, my dear brother, I can't tell you a tithe of what Christ and His glory is ; I think dear Watts in his beautiful poetry must have seen Him as I did, or he could not have described Him in such glorious and majestic strains as he does.

But now, dear brother, I feel persuaded you ministers of Christ, equipped with your credentials about you (like the bells on the high priest), and your armour bright, and glistening with brilliant stones of varied hue and colour, and a sharp sword in your hand, are wonders in the earth ; having the Holy Ghost in your hearts directing your thoughts, and with unerring wisdom fixing your eyes on Christ, and anointing you with holy and anointing oil, letting it run down all your robes ; for if I must tell you the truth, there have been

* See the letter by J. Turton in the Feb. No. this year.

ministers (holy men of God) that I have pictured like Aaron in mitre and vestment. Oh brother, the glory of the gospel and the excellency of its ministers are wonders in the earth, excelling all the Queen of Sheba saw in Solomon and his ministers, and the setting of his table. What was that compared with our tables with the wine and bread, and glorious, inspired Word? "Take, eat; this is My body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of Me. In like manner also He took the cup when He had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in My blood; this do ye in remembrance of Me, as oft as ye drink it; for as often as ye do this, ye do show the Lord's death till He come." This puts all the old ceremonial in the shade. O brother, I have eaten Him and drunk Him at our table with faith in my soul, joy in my heart, gladness in my mind, and holy tears in my eyes, really discerning the Person of my glorious Christ. How is it with you as you handle the sacred emblems? Often I feel for the holy man, if his heart feels dead and his affections cold, and eyes dim that he cannot behold the glorious ALL, the Lion of Judah, the Shiloh, the Stone of Israel, the Lamb slain, and the exalted Lamb. Oh I do often try to pray for the dear servants of Christ, that the Holy Ghost will warm their hearts and illumine the understanding, and make them green as the olive, tall as the cedar, strong as the oak, and rich as the palm tree. I think I pray more for them than for myself; for I have an impression if we have a revival, it will begin in the pulpit, or pulpits. I am afraid I shall weary you, and yet I must fill you another sheet or two to answer your sweet, savoury, far-reaching letter.

You compare my present and my past. You say when I was serving the customers and doing the trade in the old place, I was poor compared with now. True, the fires I have been subjected to have burned off all the shales and rust, and the waters of affliction have tempered the gold to a brightness I knew not then; but, brother, these things have killed my dear wife. But I grieve not now; she is only gone to the glory a little before me. I grieved while she lived, but not now. She was a godly woman when I married her, no talker but a liver. The morning after we married, after breakfast, I read Proverbs v., and Dr. Hawker's Portion suited, and I shed a tear at the goodness of my God in giving me such a wife. We enjoyed the gospel in all its sweetness

for twenty-five years, when the calamity came, the Sabceans fell upon me, and there was neither camel, sheep, ass, nor anything left. Then began our long, deep trial, year after year, worrying, tearing, killing. One night my poor dear wife said to me with tears in her eyes (and just at that time we were in want of underlinen, we had no fire, and a girl that had been ill three years, and we were in debt besides), she said, "Do you think God cares for us now?" "Yes," I said, "He loves you and me as much as He loved Abraham and Sarah;" and I kissed her dear cheek to try and console her, and read her Job's trials, and talked of other men's deep trials, mockings, and scourgings, and imprisonment for following the truth. I said, "Try to think we are a king and queen compared with them," and this little talk and reading, and a short prayer for help from the God of heaven, acted like magic. We went to bed cold and hungry, and the Lord gave us a long, sweet sleep, and we got up with thankful hearts. Thus, brother, I have told you one of the keen rubs out of many we have had these last eighteen years.

God bless you all at Park Grove.

JAMES TURTON, *Sparrow Alone.*

123 Blackbrook, Haydock, 6th Feb., 1911.

Obituary.

On August 23rd, 1910, MARY, the faithful, loving wife of James TURTON, of Haydock.

I believe God put His fear in her heart when a young woman; she was in Christ before me. I married her in 1867. We both claimed as our spiritual father instrumentally the late Thomas Bradbury, pastor at Grove Chapel, Camberwell. In those marvellous times, when God the Spirit lit up our souls by His glorious light, we heard many good men, who were very dear to us; among them, Smith, Vaughan, Kershaw, Collinge. My dear wife was a poor fearing thing all her days; and the heavy trials we passed through told upon her strong frame (for she was a strong, powerful, hard-working woman). Sometimes God so favoured her in hearing that she thought she would never fear again; but often ere she got home, the sweetness had gone. The last five years of her life she was afflicted in her feet and legs, and could not go

to chapel; but the Bible, hymn-book, and the "Gospel Standard" were her little library, and here I know she found the balm of Gilead sometimes, which brought health and cure to her soul. That hymn was one of the sweetest to her,

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds."

The name, the blood, and the love of Christ were sweet sounds in her ears. Sometimes I had reason to believe the Lord made our reading of His holy Word and our simple prayers of service to us both. In times of despondency she used to look at me with a burdened heart and eyes full of tears, and say, "Ours is all *down* and no up." "Nay," I would say, "try to remember all those pleasant years we passed in prosperity, when the candle shone upon us from the Lord. Look at this, and learn God's sovereignty." "Well," she would reply, "I cannot see it as clearly as you do." I would try to show her that God had given us 27 years of prosperity before our adversity came. I would read the most suitable portions I could think of, to comfort and help her. One would not wonder at her despondency if one knew the adversity we experienced in the last 18 years. Her affliction of body was not all we had to contend with; in addition we had deep, deep, trying poverty. Year after year we could not see what the next day would bring,—worrying fears, dismal dreams of bailiffs in the house; and indeed had it not been for kind friends and brethren, the Union must have been our home. This she greatly feared, but God in mercy spared us that trouble.

Coming to her last days. She lay in bed for thirteen weeks, but her health had been failing for over two years. God gave her resignation to His dealings with us. This I had long prayed for. One day she looked at me and said, "Did you ever see a pelican of the wilderness?" "Eh," I said, "I see one now." "Pray for me, if you can," she said. The night before she died I read to her the lxth chapter of Isaiah: "Arise, shine, for thy Light is come," &c.; and we talked of it, for it was good to our souls. Her end was near, and she hoped that the Lord would give her that crown of righteousness which she so much desired, though she felt so unworthy. I spoke to her of the blood, the mercy, and the grace that God has freely given us in His Son. She seemed to drink it all in, and lifted her hand. When she could scarcely speak, fixed her eyes on something, and said in a distinct voice, "What

glorious Light!" I took her hand and said, "Is it that Light I read of last night?" "That's it," she said. A while before she expired she exclaimed, "Lord, keep me." She never took her eyes off the Light she saw. I feel she is in heaven.

JAMES TURTON.

On July 19th, 1911, CAROLINE LAVENDER, aged 76, of Tunbridge Wells.

She had attended Hanover Chapel for over fifty years. She suffered from cancer in a very malignant form, which increased rapidly the last few weeks, and her sufferings were very great. She was one of few words. She said she had had many helps and encouragements under Mr. Newton's ministry, but was never assured of her interest in the Lord Jesus. As the end drew near her anxiety increased with her affliction. She told me the words, "At evening time it shall be light," had been very helpful and encouraging to her. A week or two before her end I asked her as to her feelings in prayer. She said she feared she could not call her's prayer. What with the agony of her body, the strain and consequent confusion of her faculties, she felt she could not put her feelings into words as she wished. I told her it was not so much a question of words, but of the feelings of her soul. Asking if I should read a few verses, and try to pray with her, she earnestly replied, "I wish you would." This I did. Rising from my knees, she said, "You have prayed just what I wanted to pray, but I could not put it into words." A day or two later we went through the same again; and again she expressed her feelings of agreement with what had been spoken, though not with quite as much feeling. A day or two later, she appeared too weak and sinking to speak or listen much. I told her I hoped to pray for her at home, as she was evidently unable to hear it; and with a few words of hopeful sympathy I left.

Her relative, Mrs. Jones, who lived with her, said she heard her scream loudly, and going near, she found it was partly from agony of body and partly from anguish of soul. She appeared to be contending with Satan, and said, "The Lord has told me, 'I have redeemed thee, and thou art Mine;' and how can you say that I am thine?" She then seemed quieter, and repeated several different verses. Later she said,

"Happy songsters!"

three times over ; adding,

“ When shall I your chorus join ? ”

Then she looked upwards, and said, “ O, how happy ! ” and dozed again. A little later the pains came on, and she screamed, and said, “ No, no, ” and seemed to be withstanding Satan. Mrs. Jones asked her, “ Do you see the Lord ? has He come ? ” She replied, “ Here He is, ” pointing to the right hand with her finger ; “ yes ; He is coming ; He is precious ! ” After again dozing awhile, she said, “ This world and all its vanities, what is that to me ? ” and said she had been mercifully preserved from it for many years. She continued in much the same strain, then, pointing to the right, said, “ He is coming. ” As the end drew very near, a person with her heard her repeat the verse,

“ Rock of Ages, cleft for me, ”

distinctly all through, putting much stress on the last lines ; which was the last she spoke distinctly. As they were bathing her hands and face to refresh her a little in the evening, she seemed to thank them, opened wide her eyes, and her spirit had gone, we trust, to eternal rest. At different times during the day she had spoken many encouraging things respecting the Lord’s kindness and mercy to her in her deep sufferings, with various verses of Scripture and hymns, which her friend could not remember ; but it appeared that the Lord did abundantly confirm His promise, and gave her light at evening-tide.

C. J.

On May 5th, 1911, ROBERT FOSTER left off weeping, ceased praying, and entered into the joy of his Lord, being one of those who by precious faith gave thanks to God that he was made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.

He was a member with us at Plumstead Tabernacle for thirty-two years, and being first proved, filled the office of deacon the last twenty-one years, and purchased to himself a good degree and boldness in the faith, being, by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, enabled to walk by the rule in 1 Tim. iii. 8—10 ; and we walked together in love all those years without an ill feeling or unkind word. It was his constant theme,

“ Jesus is the one thing needful,

Sinners in corruption’s pit,
Know they greatly need Him.”

His experience is summed up in Song i. 5, "I am black, but comely." The following is by his sorrowing widow:

"About a fortnight before his death he felt his end was drawing near, and hymn 471 (Gadsby's) suited his case more than ever:

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

In the middle of the night of April 26th, he called his wife, and said, 'He is everything to me now. Jesus is precious to my soul,' and quoted lines of hymn 174,

"'Jesus is precious, says the Word;'

afterwards said, 'His mercy endureth for ever; it is from everlasting to everlasting.' During the next day he was continually quoting texts and lines of hymns, and especially desired the friends at the prayer meeting to sing hymn 328:

"'Afflicted saint, to Christ draw near.'

On the Sunday before he died he said, 'Once you have had a taste of His preciousness and love, you want nothing more, and can say like Jacob, "It is enough." He is everything to me now, I want no more; I feel I can leave everything in His hands, and know no will but His. At one time I wanted to stay a little longer, but now it is all gone, and I am resigned to Him, to do with me just as He thinks best.' The last few days he could scarcely speak, but was continually talking to his Lord, and we could hear sentences such as, 'Come, quickly come!' 'Never forsake.' 'All shining and singing.' Once he said, 'Begone, unbelief;' then after a while,

"'Mighty to save is Christ the Lamb.'

On the Tuesday he said, 'Oh to be "absent from the body, present with the Lord."' The night before his death he roused sufficiently to repeat the verse:

"'Come, Thou almighty Comforter,
And bring upon Thy wing
Sweet consolation to each soul,
That we may praise and sing;'

adding, 'I do want to praise Him; and have we not all great cause to praise Him?' A little later, 'He has promised to give strength to His people, but we want those promises made over and over again.' When asked how matters stood with him, he said, 'All is well.' The end came on Friday evening, May 5th, and truly it can be said his end was peace."

ROBERT WEBB.

NOTICES OF DEATHS.

JOSEPH EVANS, died on Feb. 2nd, 1911, aged 70 years. For over thirty-four years a member, and the last few years a deacon, of the Strict Baptist church, Westoning, Beds. The Lord was pleased to convince him of his state as a sinner about forty-eight years ago; and after being kept in bondage for over nine years, he was brought into the liberty of the gospel by a revelation of Christ to his soul, as One who had redeemed him from all iniquity. We as a church have lost a praying member and deacon, a simple, God-fearing man, and a true lover of Zion. His end came suddenly. Being at our prayer meeting on Feb. 1st, he read the xxxviii Psalm and engaged in prayer, and after praying earnestly for the church and pastor and his afflicted wife and family, he was concluding, when he was taken in a fit. He regained consciousness early the next morning, and speaking of the goodness and mercy of God to him, and of the sweet assurance of his interest in His love and blood, passed peacefully away in the presence of two of his daughters and myself, to be forever with the Lord. It may be truly said of him:

“No trust in self, on firmer ground he stood;
His only refuge was a Saviour's blood.”

“Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace” (Psa. xxxvii. 37). J. FIELD, Junr.

HANNAH WILLIAMS, of Naunton Parade, Cheltenham, widow of the late James Williams, of Swindon, passed into her eternal rest after prolonged suffering, May 30th, 1911, aged 72. Particulars to follow (D.v.). J. E. BRIGNELL.

On June 7th, 1911, ADA JANE, widow of the late Shadrach GEORGE, died at Heathfield, aged 70 years. For many years a hearer at Ebenezer chapel, Heathfield. W. W. WEST.

On June 21st, 1911, JOHN WHITE, died at Turner's Green, Warbleton, aged 76 years; a hearer at Ebenezer chapel, Heathfield. W. W. WEST.

THOMAS WHITE, for many years a much esteemed deacon of the church at Ebenezer, Hastings, peacefully entered into rest on June 25th, 1911, aged 75. R. BROOKER.

On July 6th, 1911, SARAH JANE HAYWARD, died at Heathfield, aged 53 years. Her end was peace. W. W. WEST.

On July 8th, 1911, JAMES MAYERS, aged 85, of Godalming. He was an honourable member of the church, Bethel chapel, Guildford, for 27 years. We as a church have indeed lost a pillar, but our loss is his eternal gain. When nearing his end he said he was on the Rock, and the devil could not shake him off it. R. SHILLINGFORD.

On Aug. 19th, at Hitchin, ANN, widow of the late T. H. ADCOCK, of Haynes and Shefford, Bedfordshire, aged 84. She was the oldest surviving member of the church at Haynes, having been baptised about 59 years ago by Mr. Solomon King, the first and much esteemed pastor of the church. Having spent the last sixteen years of her life at Hitchin, she attended, as long as able, the ministry at Bethel chapel. J. W. ADCOCK.

THE GOSPEL STANDARD.

NOVEMBER, 1911.

MATT. v. 6; 2 TIM. i. 9; ROM. xi. 7; ACTS viii. 37, 38; MATT. xxviii. 19.

SPIRITUAL WORSHIP.

FROM A DISCOURSE BY STEPHEN CHARNOCK, B.D.

“God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.”—JOHN iv. 24.

Prop. 6. The service and worship the gospel settles is spiritual, and the performance of it more spiritual [than that of the law]. Spirituality is the genius of the gospel, as carnality was of the law; the gospel is therefore called spirit. We are abstracted from the employments of sense, and brought nearer to a heavenly state. The Jews had angels' bread poured upon them; we have angels' service prescribed to us; the praises of God, communion with God in spirit through His Son Jesus Christ, and stronger foundations for spiritual affections. . . .

The *matter* of the worship is spiritual. It consists in love of God, faith in God, recourse to His goodness, meditation on Him, and communion with Him. It lays aside the ceremonial, spiritualiseth the moral.

The *motives* are spiritual. It is a state of more grace, as well as of more truth, John i. 17, supported by spiritual promises, beaming out in spiritual privileges. Heaven comes down in it to earth, to spiritualise earth for heaven.

The *manner* of worship is more spiritual. Higher flights of the soul, stronger ardours of affections, sincerer aims at His glory; mists are removed from our minds, clogs from the soul; more of love than fear; faith in Christ kindles the affections, and works by them.

The *assistances* to spiritual worship are greater. The Spirit doth not drop, but is plentifully poured out. It doth not light sometimes upon, but dwells in, the heart. Christ suited the gospel to a spiritual heart, and the Spirit changeth

a carnal heart to make it fit for a spiritual gospel. He blows upon the garden, and causes the spices to flow forth: and often makes the soul in worship like the chariots of Amminadib in a quick and nimble motion. Our blessed Lord and Saviour by His death discovered to us the nature of God, and after His ascension sent His Spirit to fit us for the worship of God, and converse with Him.

One spiritual, evangelical, believing breath is more delightful to God than millions of altars made up of the richest pearls, and smoking with the costliest oblations, because it is spiritual; and a mite of spirit is more worth than the greatest weight of flesh. One holy angel is more excellent than a whole world of mere bodies.

Prop. 7. Yet *the worship of God with our bodies* is not to be rejected upon the account that God requires a spiritual worship. . . . Our bodies as well as our spirits are to be presented to God, Rom. xii. 1; our bodies in lieu of the sacrifices of beasts, as in the Judaical institutions: body for the whole man; a living sacrifice, not to be slain, as the beasts were, but living a new life, in a holy posture, with crucified affections. This is the inference the apostle makes of the privileges of justification, adoption, co-heirship with Christ, which he had before discoursed of; privileges conferred upon the person, and not upon a part of man.

1. Bodily worship is due to God. He hath a right to an adoration by our bodies as they are His by creation; His right is not diminished, but increased by the blessing of redemption: 1 Cor. vi. 20, "For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your bodies, and in your spirits, which are God's." The body as well as the spirit is redeemed, since our Saviour suffered crucifixion in His body, as well as agonies in His soul. Body is not taken here for the whole man, as it may be in Rom. xii.; but for the material part of our nature, it being distinguished from the spirit. If we are to render to God an obedience with our bodies, we are to render Him such acts of worship with our bodies as they are capable of. . . .

2. Worship in societies is due to God, but this cannot be without some bodily expressions. The law of nature doth as much direct men to combine together in public societies for the acknowledgment of God, as in civil communities for self-preservation and order; and the notice of a society for

religion is more ancient than the mention of civil associations for politic government: Gen. iv. 26, "Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord," viz., in the time of Seth. No question but Adam had worshipped God before as well as Abel, and a family religion had been preserved; but as mankind increased in distinct families, they knit together in companies to solemnise the worship of God. So Cain and Abel met together to worship, Gen. iv. 3, "at the end of the days," at a set time. God settled a public worship among the Jews, instituted synagogues for their convening together, whence called "the synagogues of God," Psa. lxxiv. 8. The sabbath was instituted to acknowledge God a common Benefactor. Public worship keeps up the memorials of God in a world prone to atheism, and a sense of God in a heart prone to forgetfulness. . . .

3. Jesus Christ, the most spiritual Worshipper, worshipped God with His body. He prayed orally, and kneeled, "Father, if it be Thy will," &c., Luke xxii. 41, 42. He blessed with His mouth, "Father, I thank Thee," Matt. xi. 26. He lifted up His eyes, as well as elevated His spirit, when He praised His Father for mercy received, or begged for the blessings His disciples wanted, John xi. 41; xvii. 1. The strength of the spirit must have vent at the outward members. The holy men of God have employed the body in significant expressions of worship; Abraham in falling on his face, Paul in kneeling, employing their tongues, lifting up their hands. Though Jacob was bed-ridden, yet he would not worship God without some devout expression of reverence; it is in one place leaning upon his staff, Heb. xi. 21; in another bowing himself upon his bed's head, Gen. xlvii. 31. . . . The heart can no more restrain itself from breaking out than Joseph could inclose his affections without expressing them in tears to his brethren, Gen. xlv. 1, 2. "We believe, and therefore speak," 2 Cor. iv. 13.

To conclude: God hath appointed some parts of worship which cannot be performed without the body, as sacraments; we have need of them because we are not wholly spiritual and incorporeal creatures.

II. The second thing I am to show is, *what spiritual worship is*. In general, the *whole spirit* is to be employed. The name of God is not sanctified but by the engagement of our souls.

Worship is an act of the understanding, applying itself to the knowledge of the excellency of God, and actual thoughts of His majesty, recognising Him as the supreme Lord and Governor of the world, which is natural knowledge; beholding the glory of His attributes in the Redeemer, which is evangelical knowledge; this is the sole act of the spirit of man. The same reason is for all our worship as for our thanksgiving. This must be done with understanding: Psa. xlvii. 7, "Sing ye praises with understanding," with a knowledge and sense of His greatness, goodness, and wisdom. It is also an act of the will, whereby the soul adores and reverenceth His Majesty, is ravished with His amiableness, embraceth His goodness, enters itself into an intimate communion with this most lovely Object, and pitcheth all his affections upon Him.

We must worship God understandingly; it is not else a reasonable service. The nature of God and the law of God abhor a blind offering; we must worship Him heartily, else we offer Him a dead sacrifice. A reasonable service is that wherein the mind doth truly act something with God. All spiritual acts must be acts of reason; otherwise they are not human acts, because they want that principle which is constitutive of man, and doth difference him from other creatures. . . .

Particularly, 1. Spiritual worship is a worship from a *spiritual nature*. Not only physically spiritual, so our souls are in their frame; but morally spiritual, by a renewing principle. The heart must be first cast into the mould of the gospel, before it can perform a worship required by the gospel. . . . As no work can be good, so no worship can be spiritual, till we are created in Christ, Eph. ii. 10. "Christ is our Life" (Col. iii. 4). As no natural action can be performed without life in the root or heart, so no spiritual act without Christ in the soul. Our being in Christ is as necessary to every spiritual act as the union of our soul with our body is necessary to natural action. . . . As the root is, so is the fruit. If the soul be habitually carnal, the worship cannot be actually spiritual. There may be an intention of spirit, but there is no spiritual principle as a root of that intention. A heart may be sensibly united with a duty, when it is not spiritually united with Christ in it. Carnal motives and carnal ends may fix the mind in an act

of worship, as the sense of some pressing affliction may enlarge a man's mind in prayer. Whatsoever is agreeable to the nature of God, must have a stamp of Christ upon it; a stamp of His grace in performance, as well as of His meditation* in the acceptance. The apostle lived not, but "Christ lived in him" (Gal. ii. 20); the soul worships not, but Christ in him. Not that Christ performs the act of worship, but enables us spiritually to worship, after He enables us spiritually to live. As God counts not any soul living but in Christ, so He counts not any a spiritual worshipper but in Christ. The goodness and fatness of the fruit comes from the fatness of the olive wherein we are engrafted. We must find healing in Christ's wings, before God can find spirituality in our services. All worship issuing from a dead nature, is but a dead service. A living action cannot be performed without being knit to a living root.

2. Spiritual worship is done by the influence and with the assistance of the Spirit of God. A heart may be spiritual when a particular act of worship may not be spiritual. The Spirit may dwell in the heart when He may suspend His influence on the act. Our worship is then spiritual when the fire that kindles our affections comes from heaven, as that fire upon the altar wherewith the sacrifices were only consumed. God tastes a sweetness in no service but as it is dressed up by the hand of the Mediator, and hath the air of His own Spirit in it: they are but natural acts without a supernatural assistance. Without an actual influence we cannot act from spiritual motives, nor for spiritual ends, nor in a spiritual manner. We cannot mortify a lust without the Spirit, Rom. viii. 13, nor quicken a service without the Spirit. . . . The acts of worship are said to be in the Spirit, "supplication in the Spirit," Eph. vi. 18; not only with the strength and affection of our own spirits, but with the mighty operation of the Holy Ghost, if Jude may be the interpreter, ver. 20,—the Holy Ghost exciting us, impelling us, and firing our souls by His divine flame, raising up the affections, and making the soul cry with a holy importunity, "Abba, Father." To render our worship spiritual, we should, before every engagement in it, implore the actual presence of the Spirit, without which we are not able to send forth one spiritual breath or groan, but be wind-bound, like a

* Qu. "mediation" ?—ED.

ship without a gale, and our worship be no better than carnal. How doth the spouse solicit the Spirit with an "Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south wind," &c., (Cant. iv. 16).

3. Spiritual worship is done with *sincerity*: when the heart stands right to God, and the soul performs what it pretends to perform; when we serve God with our spirits, as the apostle, Rom. i. 9, "God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of His Son"—this is not meant of the Holy Ghost, for the apostle would never have called the Spirit of God his own spirit; but with "my spirit," that is, a sincere frame of heart. A carnal worship, whether under the law or gospel, is when we are busied about external rites, without an inward compliance of soul. God demands the heart: Prov. xxiii. 26, "My son, give Me thine heart;" not, "Give Me thy tongue, or thy lips, or thy hands;" these may be given without the heart, but the heart can never be bestowed without these as its attendants. A heap of services can be no more welcome to God without our spirits, than all Jacob's sons could be to Joseph without the Benjamin he desired to see. God is not taken with the cabinet, but the jewel; He first respected Abel's faith and sincerity, and then his sacrifice; He disrespected Cain's infidelity and hypocrisy, and then his offering. For this cause He rejected the offerings of the Jews, the prayers of the Pharisees, and the alms of Ananias and Sapphira, because their hearts and their duties were at a distance from one another. In all spiritual sacrifices our spirits are God's portion. Under the law the reins were to be consumed by the fire on the altar, because the secret intentions of the heart were signified by them: Psa. vii. 9, "The Lord trieth the heart and the reins." It was an ill omen among the heathen if a victim wanted a heart. The widow's mites with her heart in them, were more esteemed than the richer offerings without it. Not the quantity of service, but the will in it, is of account with this infinite Spirit. All that was to be brought for the framing of the tabernacle was to be offered "willingly with the heart," Ex. xxv. 2. The more of will, the more of spirituality and acceptableness to God: Psa. cxix. 108, "Accept the free-will offering of my lips." Sincerity is the salt which seasons every sacrifice. . . .

Without the heart it is no worship; it is a stage-play, an

acting a part without being that person really which is acted by us; a hypocrite, in the notion of the word, is a stage-player. We may as well say a man may believe with his body as worship God only with his body. Faith is a great ingredient in worship, and it is "with the heart man believes unto righteousness," Rom. x. 10. We may be truly said to worship God, though we want perfection, but we cannot be said to worship Him if we want sincerity. A statue upon a tomb with eyes and hands lifted up, offers as good and true a service; it wants only a voice, the gestures and postures are the same; nay, the service is better; it is not a mockery, it represents all that it can be framed to. But to worship without our spirits is a presenting God with a picture, an echo, voice, and nothing else; a compliment, a mere lie, a "compassing Him about with lies," Hos. xi. 12. Without the heart the tongue is a liar; and the greatest zeal, dissembling with Him. To present the spirit is to present that which can never naturally die; to present Him only the body, is to present Him that which is every day crumbling to dust, and will at last lie rotting in the grave. To offer Him a few rags easily torn, a skin for a sacrifice, a thing unworthy the majesty of God, a fixed eye and elevated hands with a sleepy heart and earthly soul,—[these] are pitiful things for an ever blessed and glorious Spirit; nay, it is so far from being spiritual that it is blasphemy. To pretend to be a Jew outwardly, without being so inwardly, is in the judgment of Christ to blaspheme, Rev. ii. 9. And is not the same title to be given with as much reason to those that pretend a worship and perform none? Such a one is not a spiritual worshipper, but a blaspheming devil in Samuel's mantle.

4. Spiritual worship is performed with a *unitelness of heart*. The heart is not only now and then with God, but "united to fear" or worship, "His Name," Psa. lxxxvi. 11. A spiritual duty must have the engagement of the spirit, and the thoughts tied up to the spiritual Object. The union of all the parts of the heart together with the body is the life of the body, and the moral union of our hearts is the life of any duty. A heart quickly fitting from God makes not God his treasure; he slight the worship, and therein affronts the Object of worship. All our thoughts ought to be ravished with God, bound up in Him as in a bundle of life. But when we start from Him to gaze after every feather, and run

after every bubble, we disown a full and affecting excellency and a satisfying sweetness in Him. When our thoughts run from God, it is a testimony we have no spiritual affection to God. Affection would stake down the thoughts to the object affected. It is but a mouth-love, as the prophet phraseth it: Ezek. xxxiii. 31, "But their hearts go after their covetousness." Covetous objects pipe, and the heart danceth after them, and thoughts of God are shifted off to receive a multitude of other imaginations. The heart and the service stayed a while together, and then took leave of one another. The psalmist still found his heart with God when he awaked, Psa. cxxxix. 18; still with God in spiritual affections and fixed meditations. A carnal heart is seldom with God either in or out of worship. If God should knock at the heart in any duty, it would be found not at home, but straying abroad. Our worship is spiritual when the door of the heart is shut against all intruders, as our Saviour commands in closet duties, Mat. vi. 6. It was not His meaning to command the shutting the closet-door, and leave the heart-door open for every thought that would be apt to haunt us. Worldly affections are to be laid aside, if we would have our worship spiritual. This was meant by the Jewish custom of wiping or washing off the dust of their feet before their entrance into the temple, and of not bringing money in their girdles. To be spiritual in worship is to have our souls gathered and bound up wholly in themselves, and offered to God. Our loins must be girt as the fashion was in the eastern countries, where they wore long garments, that they might not waver with the wind and be blown between their legs, to obstruct them in their travel. Our faculties must not hang loose about us. He is a carnal worshipper that gives God but a piece of his heart, as well as he that denies Him the whole of it; that hath some thoughts pitched upon God in worship, and as many willingly upon the world. David sought God, not with a moiety of his heart, but "with his whole heart," with his entire frame, Psa. cxix. 10. He brought not half his heart, and left the other in the possession of another master. It was a good lesson Pythagoras gave his scholars, not to make the observance of God a work by the by. If those guests be invited, or entertained kindly, or if they come unexpected, the spirituality of that worship is lost; the soul kicks down what is wrought before. But if they be brow-beaten by us,

and our grief rather than our pleasure, they divert our spiritual intention from the work in hand, but hinder not God's acceptance of it as spiritual, because they are not the acts of our will ; but offences to our wills.

5. Spiritual worship is performed with a *spiritual activity and sensibleness of God*, with an active understanding to meditate on His excellency, and an active will to embrace Him when He drops upon the soul. If we understand the amiableness of God, our affections will be ravished ; if we understand the immensity of His goodness, our spirits will be enlarged. We are to act with the highest intention, suitable to the greatness of that God with whom we have to do : Psa. cl. 2, "Praise Him according to His excellent greatness." Not that we can worship Him equally, but in some proportion the frame of the heart is to be suited to the excellency of the object ; our spiritual strength is to be put out to the utmost, as creatures that act naturally do. The sun shines, and the fire burns, to the utmost of their natural power. This is so necessary that David, a spiritual worshipper, prays for it before he sets upon acts of adoration : Psa. lxxx. 18, "Quicken us, that we may call upon Thy name." As he was loath to have a drowsy faculty, he was loath to have a drowsy instrument, and would willingly have them as lively as himself : Psa. lvii. 8, "Awake up, my glory ; awake, psaltery and harp : I myself will awake early." How would this divine soul screw himself up to God, and be turned into nothing but a holy flame ! Our souls must be boiling hot when we serve the Lord, Rom. xii. 11. The heart doth no less burn when it spiritually comes to God, than when God doth spiritually approach to it, Luke xxiv. 32. A Nabal's heart, one as cold as a stone, cannot offer up a spiritual service. . .

The more the soul is "dead to sin," the more it is "alive to God," Rom. vi. 11, and the more lively too in all that concerns God and His honour. For grace being a new strength added to our natural, determines the affections to new objects, and excites them to a greater vigour. And as the hatred of sin is more sharp, the love to everything that destroys the dominion of it is more strong. And acts of worship may be reckoned as the chiefest batteries against the power of this inbred enemy. When the Spirit is in the soul, like the rivers of waters flowing out of the belly, the soul hath the activity of a river, and makes haste to be swallowed

up in God, as the streams of the river in the sea. Christ makes His people "kings and priests to God," Rev. i. 6. First kings, then priests; gives first a royal temper of heart, that they may offer spiritual sacrifices as priests: kings and priests to God, acting with a magnificent spirit in all their motions to Him. We cannot be spiritual priests till we be spiritual kings. The Spirit appeared in the likeness of fire, and where He resides, communicates, like fire, purity and activity.

Dulness is against the light of nature. . . . God is a Spirit infinitely active, and therefore frozen and benumbed frames are unsuitable to Him: "He rides upon a cherub, and flies," He comes "upon the wings of the wind," He rides upon "a swift cloud," Isa. xix. 1, and therefore demands of us not a dull reason, but an active spirit. God is a living God, therefore must have a lively service. Christ is Life, and slothful adgrations are not fit to be offered up in the name of Life. The worship of God is called wrestling in Scripture, and Paul was a striver in the service of his Master: Col. i. 29, "in an agony."

6. Spiritual worship is performed with *acting spiritual habits*. When all the living springs of grace are opened, as the fountains of the deep were in the deluge, the soul and all that is within it, all the spiritual impresses of God upon it, erect themselves to bless His holy name, Psa. ciii. 1.

This is necessary to make a worship spiritual. As natural agents are determined to act suitable to their proper nature, so rational agents are to act conformable to a rational being. When there is a conformity between the act and the nature whence it flows, it is a good act in its kind; if it be rational, it is a good rational act, because suitable to its principle. As a man endowed with reason must act suitable to that endowment, and exercise his reason in his acting, so a Christian endued with grace must act suitable to that nature, and exercise his grace in his acting. Acts done by a natural inclination are no more human acts than the natural acts of a beast may be said to be human. Though they are the acts of a man as he is the efficient cause of them, yet they are not human acts, because they arise not from that principle of reason which denominates him a man. So acts of worship performed by a bare exercise of reason, are not Christian and spiritual acts, because they come not from the principle

which constitutes him a Christian. Reason is not the principle, for then all rational creatures would be Christians. They ought therefore to be acts of a higher principle, exercises of that grace whereby Christians are what they are; not but that rational acts in worship are due to God, for worship is due from us as men, and we are settled in that rank of being by our reason. Grace doth not exclude reason, but ennobles it, and calls it up to another form: but we must not rest in a bare, rational worship, but exert that principle whereby we are Christians. To worship God with our reason, is to worship Him as men; to worship God with our grace, is to worship Him as Christians, and so spiritually; but to worship Him only with our bodies, is no better than brutes.

Our desires of the Word are to issue from the regenerate principle: 1 Pet. ii. 2, "As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word." It seems to be not a comparison, but a restriction. All worship must have the same spring, and be the exercise of that principle, otherwise we can have no communion with God. Friends that have the same habitual dispositions have a fundamental fitness for an agreeable converse with one another; but if the temper wherein their likeness consists be languishing, and the string out of tune, there is not an actual fitness, and the present indisposition breaks the converse, and renders the company troublesome. Though we may have the habitual graces which compose in us a resemblance to God, yet for want of acting those suitable dispositions, we render ourselves unfit for His converse, and make the worship, which is fundamentally spiritual, to become actually carnal. As the will cannot naturally act to any object but by the exercise of its affections, so the heart cannot spiritually act towards God but by the exercise of graces. This is God's music: Eph. v. 19, "Singing and making melody to God in your hearts." Singing and all other acts of worship are outward, but the spiritual melody is "by grace in the heart," Col. iii. 16. This renders it a spiritual worship, for it is an effect of the fulness of the Spirit in the soul; as ver. 18, "But be filled with the Spirit." The overflowing of the Spirit in the heart, setting the soul of a believer thus on work to make a spiritual melody to God, shows that something higher than bare reason is put in tune, in the heart. Then is the fruit of the

garden pleasant to Christ when the Holy Spirit, the north and south wind, blows upon the spices, Cant. iv. 16, and strikes out the fragrantcy of them. Since God is the Author of graces, and bestows them to have a glory from them, they are best employed about Him and His service. It is fit He should have the cream of His own gifts. Without the exercise of grace, we perform but a work of nature, and offer Him a few dry bones without marrow.

REMINISCENCES OF WILLIAM TIPTAFT.

TAKEN FROM HIS MEMOIR BY J. C. PHILPOT.

WILLIAM TIPTAFT was born at Braunston, a village near Oakham, Rutland, February 16th, 1803. His father, James Tiptaft, died in 1811; he was a farmer and grazier of some wealth and substance, occupying chiefly his own land. His mother also died in 1817. The profession chosen for William, the youngest son, was what is called "the Church." In Oct., 1821, he entered himself at St. John's College, Cambridge, where he continued three years; and in 1825 began to prepare himself for ordination. Now we begin to find one of the first marked links of that wondrous chain of providence which afterwards appeared more conspicuously. When at Charlton-Kings studying for ordination, he formed an acquaintance which led to important results; for through it he obtained his title to orders, and later, the living of Sutton Courtney, near Abingdon. This brought him into the neighbourhood where his labours were to be abundantly blessed. He left the following record of this period of changes, from which he dates the first buddings of the fear of God in his heart:

"It is now more than 24 years since I left the Church of England. I was a minister in that church nearly six years. I was appointed curate to Treborough, Somerset, by Archdeacon Trevelyan, in March, 1826; in Jan., 1828, I was appointed curate of Stogumber, in the same county, by his son George; and in Feb., 1829, I was instituted to the living of Sutton Courtney, and left it Nov. 24th, 1831. It is nearly 30 years since I was ordained in Wells Cathedral. My hair is grey, and I am writing with spectacles; so in various ways I am reminded how fast my life is passing away,

as a tale that is told. I trust my soul was quickened in Jan., 1827, and from that time I have had marks of the fear of God in my heart, and earnest desires to be taught aright by the Spirit of God. But how dark, blind, and ignorant I have been respecting spiritual things, and how I should have continued so, if it had not been for rich and sovereign grace. Blessed be God for the little I do trust that I do know of myself as a vile sinner, and of Jesus Christ as a precious Saviour. How gradually did the scales fall from my blind eyes, and how gradually have I been led to know the blessed doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints, and also the doctrines of predestination and election. How earnestly did I pray that if these despised doctrines were true, that I might receive them; if they were not true, that I might reject them; and the Lord confirmed the doctrine of election to my soul by applying that portion respecting the opening of Lydia's heart. I was convinced of the truth of it, which took place the latter end of the summer of 1829. Through mercy, I have been enabled to contend for the doctrine ever since; but I know it is a hard doctrine to receive, and feel risings in my own mind against it. It is a blessed doctrine, when fully received in the heart, as the 17th Article describes it.

“Dec. 4th, 1855.

“W. TIPTAFT.”

Thus it was while he was vicar at Sutton Courtney that the doctrines of grace, especially that of election, began to be opened to him; and his boldness and decision, where he knew and felt himself to be right, were some of the strongest marks of his character. He so beat down salvation by works, and so set up salvation by grace, that a mighty stir soon began to be made in the neighbourhood. On a special occasion he was called upon to preach at the “Great Church” at Abingdon on the evening of Christmas Day, 1829. He read for his text, Matt. i. 21: “And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins.” He opened this sermon with the striking words: “I stand before you this evening as the servant of Christ, or the servant of the devil;” and proceeded to bring out one by one the grand doctrines of sovereign, distinguishing grace, proving every point by the Scripture. The effect was undeniable; his own impressions and exercises concerning it he related in the following letter to his brother-in-law, Mr. Keal:

“Dear Brother,—Since I last wrote, I have preached in Abingdon Great Church, on Christmas evening, the only night in the year that it is lighted. I preached the truth, I trust, to a very crowded congregation, supposed to be (sitting and standing, who were able to get in) about 5,000 people. I pleased the believers, but very much displeased the carnally-minded, who were never so puzzled and confounded in their lives before. But even those who hate me and the truth acknowledge that the Bible has never before been so much read in Abingdon, or the Articles of our Church so much examined. I spoke the truth faithfully, and so as all could hear; but I had no idea that the gospel would have given so much offence. They have done nothing else since but talk about it. I allow there was much strong, doctrinal matter in it, but I said no more than I fully believe. On the Sunday after, a clergyman preached very much against me and the doctrines which I profess. Last week he published his sermon. He misrepresents my sermon so very much that, in my own defence, I am obliged to publish it, for which there is already a great demand. It is a very long sermon, from Matt. i. 21. The clergyman who preached against me is a wine-bibber, a great card-player, and a fox-hunter. They all acknowledge if I am not right, they are sure he is not.

“The Lord is with me, for I really believe many are brought out of darkness through my preaching, and their lives manifest their faith as that which works by love and purifies the heart. It is the truth that offends and disturbs Satan’s kingdom. The neighbouring clergymen, who are in the dark, say of me, ‘Away with such a fellow from the earth; it is not fit that he should live.’ Some hate me, but some love and bless the day they first heard me. Some of the worst characters here have become decided Christians. They bring no charge against me, except my views of religion; but they cannot gainsay them. Some say the Articles of our Church were buried till I brought them forth. My mind is not moved by the persecution, for I have every testimony that I am a minister of Christ, and I believe if He has a work for me to do, I shall do it in spite of the devil and all his children. It is not coming near to the truth, it is not the letter of the gospel, that will convert men, but the Spirit.

“Make the Word of God your study. Pin your faith to no man’s views. I scarcely read any other book.

“The people of Abingdon come over in large parties to hear what this troubler of Israel hath to say. Though they say all manner of evil against me falsely, they find what I say ‘quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword.’ Nature is not changed, the gospel is not changed, and Christ is not changed. What reason is there why they should not hate the truth now as much as in the time of the apostles? I never saw any fruits of my labours till I roused and disturbed the roaring lion. When through the grace of God I began to disturb his kingdom, I soon found that his children began to hiss; they want to know what has become of their forefathers. I came not here to judge them, but to preach the gospel. Beware of those who want to exalt man in any manner. The world and Satan hate believers. Read Paul’s Epistles; they beautifully throw light upon the other Scriptures. Listen to no one who wants to mix free will and free grace, the law and the gospel; for free will is a very stronghold of Satan’s. Listen to no one who talks about universal redemption. Remember Satan can transform himself into an angel of light and his ministers into ministers of righteousness. The Pharisees hate me the most. I cut off all their rotten props, and all their fleshly devotion.

“Yours very affectionately,

“Sutton, Jan. 30th, 1830.

“WILLIAM TIPTAFT.”

At this period God was most evidently with him, signally owning and blessing the word preached by him, as there were many witnesses. He soon began to contemplate leaving the Establishment, his objections against it growing stronger and stronger, causing him to feel that if he were not turned out, he must resign. This subject and other exercises he speaks of in the following letters:—

Sutton, Oct. 25th, 1831.—“I must now tell you that I am harassed in my mind about leaving the Church of England, for I find that I cannot hold my living and a good conscience too. Every reason which is urged on me to continue savours of the things which be of man, and not of God. I believe it to be an unholy system, from an undergraduate in preparation at Cambridge to the Archbishop of Canterbury. I cannot read the Baptismal and Burial Services; and I am inclined to think that pride and covetousness have caused me to continue in it to the present moment. What I shall do if I leave it, I know not. God will direct me. I am willing to

labour in His service, and I shall rejoice to be free from such shackles as I now labour in. I find that all who recommend me to keep my living have no grace in their hearts, or so little that I can scarcely perceive it. Out of the camp there is reproach; but, by the grace of God, I have learnt to esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than my living. We know but little of the deceit and wickedness of our own hearts; and that detestable pride is interwoven with every fibre of them. We must suffer with Christ before we reign with Him; and if grace enters the heart, the world must be turned out, and then a man will act in a manner which surprises the world. 'No man can serve two masters.' 'If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.'"

Nov. 16th, 1831.—"After frequent prayer to God and deep consideration, I sent a long letter to the Bishop of Sarum, declaring my intention of resigning my living last Thursday, and received an answer yesterday, saying he accepted it. You are aware that flesh is not favoured in this transaction, but a burdened conscience. The performance of the ministerial services constrained me to resign my living. . . . I have been induced, from various reasons, to think about settling at Abingdon. . . . I intend to go to London next week to resign, it being necessary to go before a notary; consequently, next Sunday will be my last. I do not at present see what I shall do, but I think of continuing in my vicarage a few weeks longer, and then I think of taking lodgings in Abingdon.

"My congregations do not diminish, for last Sunday I think I scarcely ever saw more in my church. Several chapels will be open to me occasionally; but, of course, my chief interest is with those whom the Lord has called by my ministry, and those who are spiritual amongst my hearers."

Nov. 29th, 1831.—"I have bought a small piece of land at Abingdon to build a chapel on, for I feel constrained to remain in this neighbourhood; as nearly all my hearers are very poor, and would not be able to pay a minister, if one could be had for money. So you may send word to Mr. W. that I cannot accept his kind offer and invitation to go to N., as I am about building a chapel at Abingdon, in this neighbourhood where but very little knowledge of Christ is manifested. I have a chapel lent to me in my village till mine is built, where I preached last Sunday. It will hold, when full,

about three or four hundred; but it will not at present contain all my hearers. On next Sunday I am to preach twice at Wallingford, to an established church which invited me to become their pastor.

“It has made rather a sensation in this neighbourhood, particularly as I am about to remain. Many were hoping that I should no longer be a troubler of Israel in these parts. . . . I feel much comfort in my mind now I am free, and I think that the Lord never gave me so much liberty and power as He did last Sunday evening. But already I perceive that I and my hearers will be more hated and persecuted.”

It will be seen from the above letters that he was led to build a chapel at Abingdon entirely at his own expense. I may here remark that his means were but small compared not only with his liberality, but the general opinion of those who saw or shared in it. I should say that the utmost of his property at this time, could it have been realised, did not exceed £5,000, consisting chiefly of some houses at Leicester and land in the same county and Rutland. The rents from these formed the whole of his income, which at four per cent. would not exceed £200 a year. Of course, to raise the money needful to build the chapel, he had to sell part of this property, thus diminishing his income as well as sacrificing his capital. But besides the expense thus incurred in building the chapel, he never would take anything, at least not until he had spent all his own a few years before his death, for preaching in it. He entertained at his house, and paid all the ministers who supplied it in his absence, and defrayed all the charges of cleaning, lighting, repairing, &c. Nor would he receive anything for preaching at the various chapels where he laboured, nor be persuaded even to take his travelling expenses. The wonder is, how he could, with all these expenses, keep up that continual stream of giving money away, which was so habitual with him. The chapel was duly opened on March 25th, 1832, by Mr. Warburton and Mr. Hitchcock.

In the spring or early summer of 1834, a circumstance occurred which, though scarcely alluded to at the time in his letters, I cannot think right to pass by, as it was an almost unparalleled instance of liberality and self-denial on his part. This was the coming of John Kay to Abingdon. Being

compelled by reasons of conscience to give up his curacy and withdraw himself from the Establishment, he directed his steps to Abingdon, led thither chiefly by what he had heard of W. Tiptaft in the neighbourhood of Kettering, where he was residing as curate to Sir George Robinson, Bart, Rector of Cranford. When he arrived at Abingdon, he found W. Tiptaft from home, but he took lodgings in the town, not knowing where else to go or what to do. As all his relations were strict Church people, his father having been a beneficed clergyman, and were of course highly offended by his secession, he knew it was useless to look for any help from them; and indeed he would have looked in vain, for from them he never received any help or even notice for 14 years, during the whole of which time he was dependent on his Abingdon friend. But the Lord, who directed his steps to Abingdon, had already provided him a friend in W. Tiptaft. When he came home after his short absence, J. Kay at once made himself known to him, and told him how he had been led, and how he had been compelled to flee out of the Church of England. The account that J. K. thus gave being commended to his conscience, and being fully persuaded that the grace of God was in him and had moved him to take this step, W. Tiptaft received him most kindly; and when J. Kay had spent what little money he had brought with him, he felt that he could not suffer him to want the actual necessaries of life, for he had now not a friend on earth to look to, and no means of procuring a livelihood for himself. Indeed, on that point I must say that what with bodily and mental infirmities and the peculiarity of his position, though he was by no means deficient in intellect or education, I scarcely ever knew a more helpless man. He therefore invited J. K. to take up his abode with him for a while, as there was a small spare bedroom which he could occupy. Poor Kay had no alternative but to accept this most kind and brotherly offer, though it was not likely that either of them contemplated it then as a permanent arrangement. I must say that I have always considered this the greatest act of noble liberality and unwearied self-denial which, even with all his sacrifices, my friend ever made. Though about two years after this arrangement he moved into a somewhat better house, yet, besides the two bedrooms, he had but one small sitting room; and to share that year after year with one who

had no claim upon him but that of Christian brotherhood was, I need not say, a sacrifice of his own comfort and privacy such as no man but he, I believe, would or could have endured. John Kay was a truly good man, and of a very amiable, Christian spirit; but, I am obliged to add, in many things very eccentric. But our friend for fourteen years lodged, fed, clothed him, paid a few debts that he owed, and was to him indeed a father, a brother, and a friend. It is true that some friends helped somewhat to bear with him the pecuniary expense, but all the load of having him continually in the same room was borne by his entertainer. For fourteen years, however, did W. Tiptaft bear this load with a sinking income, and little prospect of any change. But in 1848, John Kay's uncle, who had never noticed him since he left the Establishment, died, and in his will left him a handsome legacy. This unexpected interference of the providence of God—for, I believe, in a previous will the old man had quite cut him off—at once liberated W. T. from his long, yet patiently endured burden, enabled the two friends to live apart, and—though they were still as closely united as before in spiritual ties, and resided, until J. K.'s marriage in 1859, in the same town—restored to W. Tiptaft his cherished privacy of life. John Kay died at Abingdon, May 27th, 1860, and his death was deeply felt and mourned over by his friend. A full account of him may be found in the August No. of the "Gospel Standard" for 1860.

All through these early years of his ministry, for ten years after his chapel was opened, W. Tiptaft preached chiefly to people gathered under him, and had no church formed. His letters show how constantly his mind was exercised and tried by a deep sense of his unfitness for the ministry and inward evils.

Dec. 16th, 1833.—"O that the Lord would, of His infinite mercy, pour out His Holy Spirit upon all His dear children, so that we might indeed say that the Lord has done great things for us. I am tried in my soul in various ways. The formation of a church here is in consideration, and I feel it a very weighty matter. I do not at all feel myself fit for a pastor to go in and out before them, nor can I conscientiously continue regardless of the Lord's ordinances. I am in a strait."

Aug. 24th, 1835.—"Through mercy I continue until this

moment professing the name of the Lord Jesus; but not without difficulties, and trials, and temptations, and many fears whether I shall endure unto the end. Sometimes I think it will be well with me, and I shall endure unto the end. I meet with a share of the reproach and contempt cast upon the truth, and I believe God will ever bear testimony to and defend the doctrines which I preach.

“I am more and more convinced how little I know, and how unfit I am to preach; and the work of the ministry is a greater trial to me than ever it was. It seems to me, at times, to be almost presumption to stand up in the Lord’s name, being so ignorant, knowing so little of myself, and less of God. Hardness of heart, unbelief, and a sense of various inward abominations constrain me to contend for a free-grace gospel, the difficulty of going to heaven, and inability of man in every respect. I cannot think well of Christians who have always had a smooth path. If they have never had the pot boil within so as to be sensible of the scum, they have never valued mercy and the restraining grace of God. I get shut up in such places that I can neither go backwards nor forwards, and my hope of entering heaven sinks into nothing. You and I have abominations in our hearts that we are little aware of; and if we are not brought to feel and confess how bad we are, we shall never know how good God is to us.”

Feb. 1st, 1836.—“Some visible landmarks seem to show themselves for my encouragement, and I have signs and tokens that the Lord has been with me, and will be with me, even unto the end. But I am not satisfied with myself as a Christian, much less as a preacher. I want more powerful proofs and testimonies that God is my Father, that Christ is my Saviour, and the blessed Spirit my Teacher. These mercies seem to be too great, and the knowledge so high that I cannot attain unto it. I know and feel too much of my corrupt nature to be content with speaking of the Trinity, as many do, in word, and thus call themselves Christians. I am sure nothing will do for a sensible sinner but a knowledge inwrought in the soul by the blessed Spirit of God. All things here below seem opposed, in my view, to the spiritual kingdom in the heart. Pride, lust, selfishness, unbelief, and strong love of self, with the powerful influence of the devil, seem to tread down and destroy everything in the soul which

strives for and searches after eternal things. 'When I would do good, evil is present with me.' So going to heaven is a continual conflict, a daily cross, and a climbing of mountains, which difficulties often make the poor sinner wish himself back in Egypt, that there was no heaven, and that he had never gone forth as a pilgrim. He wonders where the scene will end, and is afraid of that text which says, 'He that endures unto the end shall be saved.' Encouragement is not given so soon as we think we want it, and we are obliged to say with one of old, 'Is Thy mercy clean gone for ever? And hast Thou forgotten to be gracious?'

April 15th, 1836.—"I find myself a very ignorant, sinful creature to be a preacher of the gospel; and I wonder that God blesses me in any way. I should like to be more holy and heavenly-minded, and to enjoy more of the Lord's presence and love; but instead, I have to feel the bitter evils of my heart, and to question what right I have to make a profession of religion in any way whatever. I learn that there is no real hope but in God's mercy. I am sure that I deserve hell. I have sinned; I am unclean; I am vile. I need the Lord's helping hand, and His delivering goodness. I feel no union with those who are not exercised with the evil workings of their hearts, and feel their helpless state. The Lord's people must and shall know that their strength is in God. I want to know more of the fulness of the gospel and of the riches of God's grace realised in my soul, so that I might speak more clearly of what the Lord has done for me. I do not like to be obliged to take so low a ground, and to find so many oppositions within to everything that is good."

Nov. 13th, 1839.—"We need chastisements, rods, and crosses, to bring us to a throne of grace; and we need a daily sense of our vileness and our sins to constrain us to fly to the only true refuge for poor, helpless sinners, who is a Friend in need and a Brother born for adversity. But I find that my unbelief would strike at the root of all my hopes, so that I scarcely know what to make of my religion, and think it will be a wonderful mercy if I ever enter into that rest which remaineth for the people of God. Very often, through the various exercises of my soul, my religion is obliged to go into a very small compass, and I am compelled to confess to my hearers what straits I get into. But the more confounded I become in my soul exercises, the better they seem to bear

with me and to hear me, and tell me they find that my sickness is made profitable to them. And yet I am often tried what right I have to be in a pulpit.

“The more, however, I am tried about my own evidences, the more I am tried about the evidences of other people, and the more convinced I am that very many are deceived who are calling themselves experimental Calvinists. Sin, in one way or other, reigns and rules in the heart, and is but little opposed, except at times by a little honesty of conscience.”

(To be continued.)

TO THE CHURCHES OF THE “GOSPEL STANDARD” DENOMINATION.

BRETHREN,—The Committee of your Societies send you affectionate greeting. It is in our hearts to write to you on our present position, hoping thereby to promote true “unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God” (Eph. iv. 13), the good of the whole body, and the glory of God. The most precious treasure to God in the world is His church, 1 Pet. ii. 9. That His elect may be this they are called with a heavenly calling, and so are “holy brethren” (Heb. iii. 1); that they may show forth the praises of Him who hath called them “out of darkness into His marvellous light” (1 Pet. ii. 9). This “marvellous light” is seen in the “face” or Person, of Jesus Christ, and shines in the heart “to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God” the Father (2 Cor. iv. 6). Thus are men separated from the world, and made to dwell alone, as the Jews their type.

As a denomination we have had peace concerning the vitally important doctrine of Christ’s eternal, proper, essential Sonship, and rest therein, for fifty years. It was Philpot’s greatest honour to be the means of stating, contending for, and establishing among us that doctrine. And now, though we are not aware that any one among us denies or opposes it, yet there is an effort, a strong, steady and organised effort, being made by a Society known as the “Strict and Particular Baptist Society,” to draw the simple away from that distinctive doctrine. That Society is composed of members of the ‘Earthen Vessel’ denomination, one which is distinguished

and absolutely different from ours by its denial of Christ's highest title and glory. And it is diligently propagating its Articles of Faith, Rules, and literature among our people; the Article on the Trinity being stated in terms that would convey to many the same belief as ours, while allowing and *really meaning something widely different*—a course dishonourable, in our opinion. Hence we are in danger of error being brought in privily, as error usually has been, Gal. ii. 4; Jude 3, 4. That that body is "not of the same faith and order with us" was particularly pointed out in our January No. of 1910, and also in the "Earthen Vessel" for March, 1908, wrapper, xi.—3; and that on the ground that we differ from them on that foundation doctrine.

In this Article on the Trinity, and throughout the Articles of Faith issued by the above Society, there is no mention of the eternal generation of Christ. This may not strike many of you as a serious matter. But reflection on the fact that in the "Earthen Vessel" denomination the belief that Christ's Sonship *originated with, and is determined by, His Incarnation and complex nature*, we trust will suffice to convince you that the omission is serious. For when it is declared by them that there are in the Trinity Three co-equal, co-eternal Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, it is not meant that *essentially* the Father is the eternal Father, and the Second Person the eternal Son, and the Spirit the Spirit of the Father and the Son, proceeding from Them as such. According to their belief, there is no essential order in the Trinity expressed by those names, but the names belong to the Three Persons only in virtue of Their eternal covenant engagements. Whence even when they speak of the eternal Father, the eternal Son, and the eternal Spirit, they only intend to express covenant names, not real relationships.

Now this belief, according to Scripture, is a serious, God-dishonouring, cardinal error. According to it there would have been no relationship in the Trinity but for the covenant. For this reason we feel it our duty to address a serious warning to you and an exhortation. We beseech you, remember the testimony of the apostle John; "We beheld His glory, the glory as of the ONLY-BEGOTTEN of the Father. . . . No man hath seen God at any time; the ONLY-BEGOTTEN SON, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him" (Jno. i. 14, 18). Beware, then, of the Articles of Faith

which have emanated from the "Strict and Particular Baptist Society." Receive them not, because they bring not the doctrine of Christ, 2 Jno. 9, 10, 11. In religion, in movements which have these Articles for their basis, have nothing to do. Beware of the beginnings of error. It usually begins by making the importance of truth appear less; by lowering the vital importance of a particular truth. Believe not the statements that the "Gospel Standard" churches and those of the "Earthen Vessel" are but two sections of one denomination; it is a misleading statement; it is putting the doctrines of Baptism and Particular Redemption, whence we are known as "Strict and Particular Baptists," above the more fundamental doctrine of the adorable Person of the Lord Jesus. Philpot says on this point, "The ordinances of God's house we do not put on the same exalted level with those truths relating to the eternal Sonship of Jesus, which we have been lately defending in our pages" (p. 251, "G. S.," 1859). It is vain to plead a legal oneness (if such there be) of all who come under the designation, "Strict and Particular Baptists," while a doctrinal difference remains in the foundation, "which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. iii. 11). For where is the oneness in Strict Communion between communicants who differ in their belief concerning the very mode of subsistence of Him whose death they celebrate? Where is their oneness in the faith of Particular Redemption, if they differ as to the Redeemer's being in His divine Person, "the Only-begotten of the Father"? And how can believers baptised upon their confession of faith in Jesus as the real Son of God be of the same body as those baptised in One bearing only the title or office of a Son? Such considerations show how *fundamental* a difference is made by persons' having two objects of faith. And how can it be one building which has two foundations?

We exhort you, therefore, brethren, to cleave to the ever-blessed doctrine of Christ's eternal, divine Sonship. Remember that any union with a denial of it is a dishonour to Him. Without enmity to any person, let an affectionate cleaving to our Lord's highest title be a sufficient reason for holding aloof from Societies and Homes which bring not to you that precious doctrine. That the Sonship of Christ is a profound mystery can be no reason against the strictest faith therein as revealed in the Word and in your hearts by the Spirit. See the Epistles of John. The limitations of our capacity

must ever preclude us from comprehending Jehovah and His mode of subsistence in the Trinity. But if we have had the smallest inshining of the glory of God in the face of Him who is His Father's glory and the express Image of His Person (Heb. i. 2, 3), we surely have seen enough to cause us to turn from all sorts of religious communion with that which dishonours that glory.

In thus addressing you we recognise the facts that as "Gospel Standard" churches you possess a common Faith, and a common adhesion to the Magazine which has long represented you, and been regarded as embodying that Faith; also that your two Societies are devoted to the relief of your poor ministers in distress and the widows of deceased ministers, and to the help of your poorer brethren. On behalf of these Societies we desire your constant and liberal support to be continued as hitherto or increased; so that kindness to the poor may be constantly and increasingly shown among and by ourselves. And we appeal to you in this hour of danger to regard the honour of the Lord Jesus above all things, Matt. xxvi. 7—12; that there may be no compromise respecting it, and no subtle entrance of error into your midst. The Lord Jesus give us all one heart and one way to do His will in this matter—to cleave to what we firmly believe and confess concerning His eternal relationship to His Father.

"Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you" (2 Cor. xiii. 11).

Yours in affection and to serve for Christ's sake,

THE COMMITTEE OF THE "GOSPEL STANDARD" SOCIETIES.

We, alas, know little of Christ, we enjoy little of Him; and therefore know very little what perfect enjoyment of Him is. But Christ knew Himself perfectly, and what bliss His company would be to His people. This is one thing that may make us admire this will of Christ. As if our Lord had said, "My poor people know not fully wherein their greatest bliss consists: but I know it well, and will it to them."—*R. Traill.*

It is a very humbling consideration that the mercies of God should work otherwise upon my spirit than they use to do upon the spirits of others to whom they come as sanctified mercies from the love of God.—*H'avel.*

FAITH'S MEDITATION.

My dear Friend,—I am glad to hear my dear friend is still alive, standing upon his legs in the battlefield, waging war with his former allies, the world, the flesh, and the devil. It is a hard conflict, and according to one's feeling, the victory often hangs in doubtful scale. But not so in reality, for the victory is sure. "They overcame through the blood of the Lamb." "And this is the victory which overcometh the world, even our faith." By the same mighty shield, "ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God," &c. (see Eph. vi. 10—18). I am fully satisfied in my own mind of two things concerning you; one, that the Lord has equipped you with this armour. Second, He will never let it rust upon you; and however much at times you would like to lay it on the shelf, have a little rest, go on a bit more smoothly, wash the dust off your feet, and lose some of your scars, He will not let you. "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses."

I have often felt encouraged with this thought: it is a mercy to be made the subject of that which the devil opposes—the work of grace. The world hates the image of Christ; and our flesh disapproves of taking up our cross daily and following Him through evil and good report. May it be ours willingly to suffer with Him here, and reign with Him eternally; to bear the cross through this little span of time, and wear the crown for ever. May the remembrance of His sorrow and suffering, of what He endured for us, cause us, on the one hand, to blush with shame, and [on the other] stimulate us to follow on after them who, through faith and patience, inherit the promised rest. Never were sorrow and suffering like His; every member of that body which He assumed was tortured and mangled, from that dear and sacred head to His feet. See that cruel crown of thorns; how they must have pierced His holy temples. See that lovely face, which was "fairer than the children of men," besmeared with the spittle of that Jewish rabble who were thirsting for His blood. See His hands, feet, and side. The ploughers plough deep into His sacred flesh; "they made long their furrows."

One step back, and view Him in the Garden where, in the awful, inconceivable agonies of His soul, He in that bloody sweat weeps, as it were, blood from every pore. Every part and particle of His body suffers and welters in its blood, and why? In order that every member of His mystical body, the church, every part and particle of it, should be redeemed with that sin-atonement blood. "That He might present it to Himself a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing." Well might one sing, "What is love?" And another,

"At most we do but taste the cup,
For Thou alone hast drunk it up."

I have at times mused upon these things as I have lain upon my bed, and have felt in a little measure what it is to have fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ in His sorrows and sufferings; although I find to my grief that I soon lose the blessed feelings, and return to my own place, and like my friend, feel myself to be a mass of sin and wretchedness. We painfully prove that the malady is within us;

"But the remedy's without us;
See it in the Saviour's blood."

Yours in Him,

Carshalton, Surrey, Sept. 21st, 1897.

S. CURTIS.

VISITS OF LOVE.

BROTHER,—What shall I say or write? You have put me in a great dilemma; I neither know what to say, or how to say it, but am begging of Jesus to put some thoughts in my mind, and impulse in my heart, and inspire my soul; and even now He reminds me of the sweet fragrance I gathered this morning, as I opened the precious storehouse of heaven's blessings for those who seek for them. I opened the sacred Volume on Song v. 12: "His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, and fitly set;" and O, in a moment of time His eyes seemed to beam upon me full of LOVE; so that I was quite still, meditating on His beauty and glory; and I prayed to Him to fill your soul with this sweet fragrance, and for the smell of it to go through the sanctuary at Blackburn.

Sometimes I think God is too good to me in giving me

friends with kind hearts and loving affection towards such a poor broken pot as I am ; and yet by these means He cements us together in love, and makes up all the difference. He knows how to do it, and His sweet, precious love covers all our faults, and removes all that scum that would otherwise ferment and produce a crop of weeds manured with Satanic saline, and poison us all.

God be with you and yours.

J. TURTON.

123 Black Brook, Haydock, Feb. 28th, 1910.

My Brother,—I would like to tell you a strange experience. Perhaps you may have had the same, but I never had one so noticeable before. When I was kneeling at the mercy-seat this morning, and looking for Jesus to be at my side, I was surprised. The awful majesty of God was before me ; but I cannot describe it for want of language. The words of dear old Jacob do it better than mine, viz., “ How awful (dreadful) is this place ! ” and yet, dear brother, I felt calm and composed as I beheld the display of His eternal, essential, Godlike appearance and surroundings. I cannot go beyond this, but I feel that heaven, which I sometimes long for, will be greatly enhanced ; but this was the mercy of it to me, He said to me in such sweet words—but I saw no shape or form of anything, only there was an overwhelming impression that some awful, eternal power surrounded me—and these came into my soul, and my tears of love ran down, “ I WILL BLESS THEE. ” O brother ! if I could tell you the effect of this upon my soul ! I would like to be in some secluded spot, quite alone, but this cannot be. Do you think God is going to take me off to heaven ? I keep wondering. If so, none will be the worse down here, and I shall be a thousand times better. But now this has been a change in my mercy-seat experience. I had hasted out of bed to my favoured spot (where my dear wife gave up the ghost), and expecting the welcome of my sweet ALL, beheld the wonder I have related. And, dear brother, with all this display of divine goodness, eternity in all its stupendous vastness, glory, beauty, almighty grandeur—the magnificence of it it would be futile for me or any other mortal being to attempt a description of. But O the glory ! I will try to tell you when you come, the Lord helping me.

Yours truly,

Haydock, July 2, 1911.

THE LONE SPARROW.

PRAISE FOR THE MINISTRY OF CHRIST.

TRANSLATED FROM GERMAN. REFORMATION PERIOD.

SURELY none like Thee can teach,
Jesus, Lord ;
None like Thee the heart can reach,
And light afford ;
Rich in wisdom, rich in love,
Is Thy Spirit from above.
To mankind in weakness laid,
Jesus, Lord,
Thou the Counsellor art made
In deed and word :
Counsel deep and true Thou art
To the failing, faltering heart.
Therefore in Thy precious faith,
Unshackled, free,
Shall my spirit plume her wing
Rejoicingly,
Whilst her praises she shall sing
Well tuned to Thee.
On the Father's mission sent
To men below,
Here Thou camest,
And the paths of life didst show,
Where enfranchised,
We from sin's dark shades might go,
Where of mercy
We might taste the boundless flow.
Lord, Redeemer, Thee we laud,
Thee we honour, Thee we bless,
Thee the Son and Sent of God !
For Thy gift of righteousness,
For Thy gospel evermore,
We will praise Thee and adore.
Gracious Saviour, unto me
Thy Spirit send ;
Let Him lead me, let Him be
My constant Friend,
Till I gain the blissful goal,
Till with truth He crowns my soul.

Thus from vain conceit set free,
 Let my being bend to Thee;
 Till rejoicing at the sight,
 I behold a clearer light
 In the presence of Thy face,
 Circled round with beams of grace,
 And the glories I descry
 Of a bright eternity!

“NO MORE STRANGERS.”

A MORNING READING BY JAMES BOURNE.

JAN. 26th, 1841.—Eph. ii. 19; Phil. iii. 7—10: “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints.” Not strangers to the afflictions of the gospel; you must not count them strange things. Nor strangers to sweet access to God, nor to communion with Him, nor to that real application of the blood of Christ to the conscience. Once we were “without hope”—what word can be so terrible?—because we had no hope in the blood of Christ. But now we are reconciled to God by the cross. Christ has died for our sins, and given us peace, reconciliation, and sweet friendship with God; so that we fear no evil as long as we have this faith. “Beloved, now are we the sons of God”—we do not lay to heart enough the greatness of this inestimable salvation. “And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure.” That is, on every fresh contraction of guilt we shall come to Him and confess and cry, till our guilt is washed away with blood. We shall not purify ourselves by this nonsense and that, by any outward thing; but shall wait till this atonement is really applied.

Paul says, “What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.” “I cannot do this,” you may say; “I love money, honour, reputation, esteem of men; really I do not like to have my poverty noticed and detected.” I speak of the children of God. I feel all this in myself; there is not one of these evils I do not love; but here is the cross. I confess, I mourn, I entreat, till Christ comes, and by His love shed abroad in the heart, casts out all these things. These things will be in us as long as we live; but by fighting against them, and finally casting them out, we show that Christ is the Captain of our salvation; and one smile from Him does indeed

enable us to count all things but dross and dung besides. But we could not feel so in the conflict. How my mind has been filled with ten thousand trifles, and such confusion. I say, "O Lord, is not this to teach me to look to the intercession of Christ? Does not He stand in my place because I can do nothing right?" And here I rest and watch, for I cannot get out. "That I may win Christ and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness,"—how my righteousness frightens me! But I do know by old experience that these are such prayers as God hears. An old soldier is better than a young one in this respect: he knows the places of danger and of help; and by old experience is not so easily made to turn back. So I say, "Let me feel as I may, dead or alive, I will cry, I will look to Christ, I will eye my Captain, and I will hope in Him, let things be as they may; 'that I may be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ;' that the Holy Spirit may sweetly reveal to my soul that what Christ did and suffered, He did and suffered for me; and may apply the benefit to me." "That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection," that when guilt, darkness, and sin prevail, I may keep crying on till, through the revelation of Jesus Christ to my soul, I may rise above all these things, and be made a partaker of His resurrection.

And also we are not strangers to His sufferings; for as He suffered for sin, so must we suffer with Him in this conflict. We are brought into all these perplexities that we may "rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Sometimes I have the sweetest persuasion that He has a kind regard and affection for me, and will not let me go, but will cause all seeming evils to work together for my good. And forgetting what is past, I reach forward continually for some fresh manifestation of His power and love to my soul. "Not as if I had already attained;" no, for these evils come on again as badly as ever, and as soon as they are conquered they come on again. This battle will last all our lives; but at every fresh onset there will be a cry, till the Lord comes to cast out the evils.

As sure as possible, if the work of God is found in us, this conflict must be found also; we cannot escape, nor be strangers to these things. We must partake with Christ of His sufferings, and He is not inattentive to our cry; for not even a sparrow can fall to the ground without His knowledge.

CRUMBS FROM THE MASTER'S TABLE

FROM BOSTON'S "CROOK IN THE LOT," OR, "THE SOVEREIGNTY AND WISDOM OF GOD IN THE AFFLICTIONS OF MEN DISPLAYED."

(Continued from page 469.)

II. *Particular Directions.*

I now proceed to a more particular view of the point. And, 1. We will consider the lifting up as brought about in time, which is the *partial lifting up*.

This lifting up does not take place in every case of a child of God. One may be humbled in humbling circumstances, from which he is not to get a lifting up in time. We would not from the promise presently conclude that we, being humbled under our humbling circumstances, shall certainly be taken out of them, and freed from them ere we get to the end of our journey. For it is certain there are some, such as our imperfections, and sinfulness, and mortality, we can by no means be rid of while in this world. And there are particular humbling circumstances the Lord may bring about one, and keep about him till he goes down to the grave, while in the meantime He may lift up another from the same. Heman was pressed down all along from his youth, Psa. lxxxviii. 15; others all their lifetime, Heb. ii. 15.

Objection. "If that be the case, what comes of the promise of lifting up? Where is the lifting up, if one may go to the grave under the weight?"

Answer. Were there no life after this, there would be ground for that objection; but since there is another life, there is none in it at all. In the other life the promise will be accomplished to the humbled, as it was, Luke xvi. 22. Consider that the great term for accomplishing the promises is the other life, not this. "These all died in faith; not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them" (Heb. xi. 13). And that whatever accomplishment of the promise is here, it is not of the nature of a stock, but of a sample or a pledge.

Question. "But then, may we not give over praying for the lifting up, in that case?"

Answer. We do not know when that is our case; for a case may be past all hope in our eyes and the eyes of others, in which God designs a lifting up in time; as in Job's, chap. vi. 11: "What is my strength, that I should hope? and what is

mine end, that I should prolong my life?" But, be it as it will, we should never give over praying for the lifting up, since it will certainly come to all that pray in faith for it; if not here, yet hereafter. The promise is sure, and that is the commandment; so such praying cannot miss of a happy issue at length. Psa. l. 15: "Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me." The whole life of a Christian is a praying, waiting life; to encourage whereunto all temporal deliverances are given as pledges. Rom. viii. 23: "And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." And whoso observes that full lifting up at death to be at hand, must certainly rise, if he has given over his case as hopeless.

However, there are some cases wherein this lifting up does take place. God gives His people some notable liftings up, even in time raising them out of remarkably humbling circumstances. The storm is changed into a calm, and they remember it as waters that fail, Psa. xl. 1—4.

Some may be in humbling circumstances very long and sore and hopeless, and yet a lifting up may be abiding them, of a much longer continuance. This is sometimes the case with the children of God, who are set to bear the yoke in their youth, as it was with Joseph and David; and of them that get it laid on them in their middle age, as it was with Job, who could not be less than forty years old at his trouble's coming, but after it, lived one hundred and forty, Job xlii. 16. God by such methods prepares man for peculiar usefulness.

Others may be in humbling circumstances long and sore, and quite hopeless in the ordinary course of providence, yet they may get a lifting up, ere they come to their journey's end. The life of some of God's children is like a cloudy and rainy day, wherein, in the evening, the sun breaks out from under the clouds, shines fair and clear a little, and then sets. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark. But it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light" (Zech. xiv. 6, 7). Such was the case of Jacob in his old age, brought in honour and comfort into Egypt unto his son, and then died.

Yet, whatever liftings up they get in this life, they will

never want some weights hanging about them for their humbling. They may have their singing times, but their songs while in this world will be mixed with groanings. 2 Cor. v. 4: "For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened." The unmixed dispensation is reserved for the other world; but this will be a wilderness unto the end, where there will be howlings with the most joyful notes.

All the liftings up which the humbled meet with now are pledges, and but pledges and samples of the great lifting up abiding them on the other side; and they should look on them so. Hosea ii. 15: "And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope; and she shall sing there as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt." Our Lord is now leading His people through the wilderness, and the manna and the water of the rock are earnestnesses of the milk and honey flowing in the promised land. They are not yet come home to their Father's house, but they are travelling on the road, and Christ their elder Brother with them, who bears their expenses, takes them into inns by the way, as it were, and refreshes them with partial liftings up; after which they must get to the road again. But that entertainment by the way is a pledge of the full entertainment He will afford them when they come home.

Objection. "But people may get a lifting up in time that yet is no pledge of a lifting up on the other side: how shall I know it then to be a pledge?"

Answer. That lifting up which comes by the promises is certainly a pledge of the full lifting up in the other world; for as the other life is the proper time of the accomplishing of the promises, so we may be sure that when God once begins to clear His bond, He will certainly hold on till it is fully cleared. "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me" (Psa. cxxxviii. 8). So we may say, as Naomi to Ruth, upon her receiving the six measures of barley from Boaz, Ruth iii. 18, "He will not be in rest until he have finished the thing this day." There are liftings up that come by common providence, and these indeed are single, and not pledges of more; but the promise chains mercies together, so that one got is a pledge of another to come; yea, of the whole chain to the end, 2 Sam. v. 12.

Question. "But how shall I know the lifting up to come by the way of the promise?"

Answer. That which comes by the way of the promise, comes in the low way of humiliation, the highway of faith, or believing the promise, and the long way of waiting hope and patient continuance. Jas. v. 7: "Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain." Humility prepares for the accomplishment of the promise, faith sucks the breast of it, and patient waiting hangs by the breast till the milk come abundantly.

But no liftings up of God's children here are any more than pledges of lifting up. God gives worldly men their stock here, but His children get nothing but a sample of theirs here, Psa. xvii. 15. Even as the servant at the term gets his fee in a round sum, while the young heir gets nothing but a few pence for spending money. The truth is, this same spending money is more valuable than the world's stock. Psa. iv. 7: "Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased." But though it is better than that, and their services too, and more worth than all their waiting, yet it is below the honour of their God to put them off with it. Heb. xi. 16: "But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He hath prepared for them a city."

We shall now consider *what they will get* by this lifting up promised to the humbled.

They will get,

1. *A removal of their humbling circumstances.* God having tried them awhile, and humbled them, and brought down their hearts, will at length take off their burden, remove the weight so long hung on them, and so take them off that part of their trial joyfully, and let them get up their back long bowed down; and this one of two ways.

Either *in kind*, by a total removal of the burden. Such a lifting Job got, when the Lord turned back his captivity, increased again his family and substance, which had both been desolated. David, when Saul his persecutor fell in battle, and he was brought to the kingdom after many a weary day, expecting one day to fall by his hand. It is easy with our God to make such turns in the most humbling circumstances.

Or *in equivalent*, or as good, removing the weight of the

burden, that though it remains, it presses them no more. 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10: "And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee, for My strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities." Though they are not got to the shore, yet their head is no more under the water, but lifted up. David speaks feelingly of such a lifting up, Psa. xxvii. 5, 6: "For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; in the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me; He shall set me up upon a rock. And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me; therefore will I offer in His tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord." Such had the three Hebrews in the fiery furnace; the fire burned, but it could burn nothing of them but their bonds; they had the warmth and light of it, but nothing of the scorching heat.

2. *A comfortable sight of the acceptance of their prayers* put up in their humbling circumstances. While prayers are not answered, but trouble continued, they are apt to think they are not accepted or regarded in heaven, because there is no alteration in their case. Job ix. 16, 17: "If I had called, and He had answered me, yet would I not believe that He had hearkened unto my voice; for He breaketh me with a tempest." But that is a mistake; they are accepted immediately, though not answered. 1 John v. 14: "And this is the confidence we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us." The Lord does with them as a father with the letters coming thick from his son abroad; reads them one by one with pleasure, and carefully lays them up to be answered at his convenience. And when the answer comes, the son will know how acceptable they were to his father, Matt. xv. 28.

3. *A heart-satisfying answer of their prayers*, so that they shall not only get the thing, but see they have it as an answer of prayer; and they will put a double value on the mercy, 1 Sam. ii. 1. Accepted prayers may be very long of answering, many years, as in Abraham and David's case, but they cannot miscarry of an answer at length, Psa. ix. 18. The time will come when God will tell out to them according to the promise, that they shall change their note and say, Psa. cxvi. 1: "I love the Lord, because He hath heard my voice

and my supplication ; " looking on their lifting up as bearing the signature of the hand of a prayer-hearing God.

4. *Full satisfaction as to the conduct of providence* in all the steps of the humbling circumstances, and the delay of the lifting up, however perplexing these were before, Rev. xv. 9. Standing on the shore, and looking back to what they have passed through, they will be made to say, " He hath done all things well." Those things which are bitter to Christians in the passing through, are very sweet in the reflection on them ; so is Samson's riddle verified in their experience.

5. They get *the lifting up, together with the interest* for the time they lay out of it. When God pays His bonds of promises, He pays both principal and interest together ; the mercy is increased according to the time they waited and the expenses and hardships sustained, during the dependence of the process. The fruits of common providence are soon ripe, soon rotten ; but the fruit of the promise is often long a ripening, but then it is durable : and the longer it is a ripening, it is the more valuable when it comes. Abraham and Sarah waited for the promise about ten years ; at length they thought on a way to hasten it, Gen. xvi. That soon took, in the birth of Ishmael, but he was not the promised son. They were coming into extreme old age ere the promise brought forth, Gen. xviii. 11. But when it came, they got it with an addition of the renewing of their ages, Gen. xxi. 7 and xxv. 1. The most valuable of all the promises was the longest in fulfilling, namely, the promise of Christ ; that was four thousand years.

6. *The spiritual enemies*, that flew thick about them in the time of the darkness of the humbling circumstances, *will be scattered* at this lifting up in the promise. 1 Sam. ii. 1, 5 : " And Hannah prayed and said, My heart rejoiceth in the Lord, my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies. They that were full have hired out themselves for bread, and they that were hungry ceased." Formidable was Pharaoh's host behind the Israelites while they had the Red Sea before them ; but when they were through the sea, they saw the Egyptians dead on the shore, Ex. xiv. 30. Such a sight will they that humble themselves under humbling circumstances get of their spiritual enemies, when the time comes for their lifting up.

We come now to the *due time* of this lifting up. That is a

natural question of those who are in humbling circumstances, "Watchman, what of the night?" (Isa. xxi. 11, 12). And we cannot answer it to the humbled soul, but in the general.

The lifting up of the humbled will not be longsome, considering the weight of the matter; that is to say, considering the worth and value of the lifting up of the humble; when it comes it can by no means be reckoned long to the time of it. When you sow your corn in the fields, though it does not ripen so soon as some garden-seeds, but you wait three months or so, you do not think the harvest long a coming, considering the value of the crop. This view the apostle takes of the lifting up in humbling circumstances. 2 Cor. iv. 17: "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." So that a believer, looking on the promise with an eye of faith, and perceiving its accomplishment and the worth of it when accomplished, may wonder it is come so shortly. Therefore it is determined to be a time that comes soon, Luke xviii. 7, 8; soon in respect of its weight and worth.

When the time comes, it and only it will appear the due time. To everything there is a season, and a great part of wisdom lies in discerning it, and doing things in this season thereof. And we may be sure Infinite Wisdom cannot miss the season, by mistaking it. Deut. xxxii. 4: "He is a Rock, His work is perfect; for all His ways are judgment." But whatever God doth will abide the strictest examination in that, as all other points. Eccles. iii. 14: "I know that whatsoever God doth, it shall be for ever; nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it; and God doth it that men may fear before Him." It is true, many times appear to us as the due time for lifting up, which yet really are not so, because there are some circumstances hid from us which render that season unfit for the thing. Hence John vii. 6: "My time is not yet come, but your time is always ready." But when all the circumstances, always foreknown of God, shall come to be opened out, and laid together before us, we shall then see the lifting up is come in the time most for the honour of God and our good, and that it would not have done so well sooner.

When the time comes that is really the due time, the proper time for the lifting up a child of God from his humbling circumstances, it will not be put off one moment longer.

Hab. ii. 3: "At the end it shall speak, and not lie, . . . it will surely come, it will not tarry." Though it tarry, it will not linger, nor be put off to another time. O what rest of heart would the firm faith of this afford us! There is not a child of God but would, with the utmost earnestness, protest against a lifting up before the due time, as against an unripe fruit cast to him by an angry father, which would set his teeth on edge. Since it is so, then, could we firmly believe this point, that it will undoubtedly come in the due time, without losing of a minute, it would afford a sound rest. It must be so, because God has said it; were the case ever so hopeless, were mountains of difficulties lying in the way of it, at the appointed time it will *blow* (Hebrew, Hab. ii. 3). A metaphor from the wind rising in a moment after a dead calm.

The humbling circumstances are ordinarily carried to the utmost point of hopelessness before the lifting up. The knife was at Isaac's throat before the voice was heard. 2 Cor. i. 8, 9: "For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life; but we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead." Things soon seem to us arrived at that point, such is the hastiness of our spirits. But things may have far to go down after we think they are at the foot of the hill. And we are almost as little competent judges of the point of hopelessness, as of the due time of lifting up. But generally God carries His people's humbling circumstances downward, still downward, till they come to that point.

Herein God is holding the same course which He held in the case of the Man Christ, the beloved Pattern copied after in all the dispensations of providence towards the church, and every particular believer, Rom. viii. 29. He was all along a Man of sorrows; as His time went on, the waters swelled more, till He was brought to the dust of death; then He was buried, and the grave-stone sealed; which done, the world thought they were quit of Him, and He would trouble them no more. But they quite mistook it; then, and not till then, was the due time for lifting Him up. And the most remarkable liftings up that His people get are fashioned after this grand Pattern.

(To be continued.)

Obituary.

On June 11th, 1911, ALFRED COUGHTREY, aged 85 years, for many years pastor of the Strict Baptist Church meeting at Chaucer Street, Nottingham, and for some time the Editor of the "Gospel Standard."

It is to be regretted that Mr. Coughtrey left no written record of his call by grace. He related a few years ago some particulars of the Lord's gracious dealings with him, to the present pastor of the same church. He then said that in his early days he attended the Church of England, and being a moral young man, was what the world would call a Christian. He knew nothing, however, of what a sinner he was before a just and holy God, until the Lord cut him down with a stroke of His rod. This took place during a violent thunderstorm. The solemn awe he felt produced such an effect on his mind that all his supposed goodness and profession of religion were brought to nothing. The holiness, justice, and righteousness of the law of God were opened up to him in such an awful manner that he could see no way of escape from the wrath to come, nor how it was possible for him to be saved; and he came to the conclusion that hell would be his portion. Soon after this Mrs. Coughtrey was laid upon a bed of affliction, and her life quite despaired of; which was the means of bringing her into concern about her soul, and added to Mr. Coughtrey's distress. Satan tempted him sorely, so that he did not dare to bend his knees to pray; for he feared it would be an act of presumption, and only add to his condemnation. With much fear and trembling he at last resolved to make an attempt to pray for his poor wife, that it would please the Lord to restore her to health and have mercy upon her never-dying soul; and finding access in prayer, he was encouraged to plead with the Lord for himself. The Holy Ghost helped his infirmities, and enabled him to pour out his heart with strong cries and tears for mercy. Hope arose in his breast that his groans would be regarded; and in answer to their united cries, Mrs. Coughtrey was restored to health and strength. Mr. Coughtrey was then led by the Holy Spirit's teaching to see God's plan of salvation, that He could be just and yet justify the ungodly. Many great and precious promises were applied with power to his wounded spirit, and he was

eventually brought to know and feel that his sins were pardoned, and to enter into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. He was baptised at Chesham, and soon after began to proclaim to others the things which he had tasted, handled, and felt.

In the early days of his ministry Mr. Coughtrey laboured at Eaton Bray, many being added to the church there; afterwards he ministered at Waddesdon Hill, and later at Over. He commenced his stated labours at Nottingham in the year 1878, over the cause founded by the late Lady Lucy Smith; and soon after, he formed it into a Strict Baptist church. In the year 1881 the present chapel at Chaucer Street was built, and within two years was free from debt.

Mr. Coughtrey was, by the help of the Holy Spirit, enabled to proclaim a full and free salvation by Christ Jesus to needy sinners; and I believe many can testify of the power and unction attending the word before his mental powers began to decline. The following extracts from his letters were written previously to his coming to live at Nottingham.

“At times we feel as though Christ and heaven and all that is pure would fetch our very souls out of us; and oh, what utter hatred to sin! how extremely loathsome the sight and stench of sin is in every form! And soon after this we seem to be over-run again with troops of evils.” “He is so immensely good He has filled me with gratitude. When the Son of God will come and walk through fire and flood with us, we feel both honoured and humbled.” “It must be an endless wonder to us that God should so regard such base things and things that are not. I belong to that tribe—‘things that are not.’”

“Poor base things like me may and do forget His goodness; and if we are so base as that, how much more likely are we to be guilty of ingratitude—and neglect towards one another? Ah, here is our mercy—He hath not dealt with us as our sins deserve. If we are blessed of God, He will have us know that it comes sovereignly. The cause is in Himself, not because we are either black or white, rich or poor, sweeps or kings. He finds us all on the dung-hill, filthy beggars, clad in rags. Can we boast of our high pedigree? Our mouths are for ever shut here, and bless the Lord for closing them. If we sing, it must be of grace.

“‘Grace all the work shall crown.’”

“I was very glad of spiritual sympathy just then [referring to a time of affliction]. My pains of body had given me a rare shaking, which left me in my feelings poor, helpless and needy, and grateful for a crumb. The Lord seems to be so kind in everything; everything seems to endear Christ. He was indeed worth something last week. How unwilling we are to lose the savour of His presence! You cannot know the delight it affords, without saying, “Master, it is good to be here!” O may He grant us many earnest of His eternal favour! Nothing kills sin like a sense of His love and blood; and poor, guilty creatures (who are) so prone to wander from the God they love, need a little to keep their heads above water.”

With advancing age Mr. Coughtrey's health began to decline; and after having two strokes he was heavily afflicted, which greatly enfeebled him in both mind and body. His infirmities increasing, he was in the year 1900 obliged to discontinue his ministerial labours. This was a very sore trial to him; and some considerable time elapsed before he seemed to be reconciled to the mind and will of the Lord in this matter. As time advanced, however, he appeared to be much more submissive; and on several occasions, when I visited him during the last few years, he said that while he had much to say against himself, yet he had not a single word to say against the dear Lord Jesus Christ.

Notwithstanding his enfeebled condition, in divine things he remained sound and clear to the last. The day previous to his death he repeated with fervour the following lines:

“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.”

Hymn 747 was a great favourite with him, portions of which he often repeated:

“How hard and rugged is the way,” &c.

I saw him shortly before he passed away, but he was then unconscious. When he breathed his last, those about him scarcely knew his spirit had fled. I believe it can be truly said,

“He's gone in endless bliss to dwell,”

H. T. S., *Pastor.*

JAMES SHEPPARD, of Hillside, Corsham, passed away, June 2nd, 1911.

He was born July 4th, 1843, and was the son of our late deacon. From a youth he lived a very moral life, and attended the means of grace regularly; and when his father, who led the singing, became unable to continue, our friend took his place. I have never heard him say how he first became concerned about his state, but for several years he gave evidence of having eternal life by being made a new creature. He now felt himself a sinner, and felt his need of mercy, which set him begging for mercy—all new things to him. Now he attended the prayer-meetings, and took part by engaging in prayer. It was evident from his prayers he was much concerned about dying rightly, for he often used the language of the hymn,

“Prepare me, gracious God, to stand before Thy face,” &c.

And this was accompanied with a desire to live rightly, to be separate from the world, and most upright in all his business transactions. He was a very liberal supporter of our cause, and with an open heart and house he would entertain the ministers. His illness was a very painful one from an internal growth. He was favoured much in prayer, and resigned to the Lord's will. He said, “Dear Lord, if Thou hast nothing more for me to do in Zion, take me home.

“ ‘ My soul shall pray for Zion still,
While life and breath remain.’ ”

After a very blessed time he repeated the verse, which he said expressed his feelings :

“ Hail, blessed time ! Lord, bid me come.” (482.)

“ When shall I wake, and find me there ? ”

was often repeated by him with deep feeling. He much enjoyed his sister's reading to him the sermon on the mount. When in great pain, which was endured without a murmur, he said, “ Such a poor insignificant creature as I am ! do look in mercy upon me. O Lord, have compassion upon me ! O Lord, Thou art good ; do not put on me more than Thou wilt enable me to bear. There is nothing, Lord, like a word of compassion that cometh from Thee.” He said, “ *Father, Father*—O the sweetness of a Father's name ! O Lord, do help me to forget all, and look to Thee.” He had a brain seizure on Easter Sunday, which rendered him unconscious for some time, so that he could never connect his

words after as before. After this, when he had breathed out his soul's desire to the Lord, he said, "Come, let us sing,

"Give me the wings of faith,' &c.

"God moves in a mysterious way.'"

After this he said, "O Lord, do appear for Thy people here; wash all our souls in Thy precious blood. Let Jesus come! He can touch the right spot; you cannot." Putting his hand on his heart he said, "Touch me, Lord, just there; do, dear Lord, bring comfort to me." On May 30th, after a long time in prayer, he said, "Sing, sing." Being asked what, he said, "Mercy." So we sang the 11th hymn through, and he very distinctly joined in the singing, especially the fifth verse. He said but little after this, such as, "Lord, help me; do not let me murmur; do not put on me more than I can bear; do let me come." And he very sweetly breathed his last at 2.40 on June 2nd.

W. HALE.

On July 24th, 1911, Mrs. HUCKS, of Hertford, an old hearer of Bernard Gilpin's, after 18 days' illness.

It has been a merciful dispensation, little pain or suffering. My dear sister had a sudden seizure on the 6th, losing all power of movement. She slept much, and soon regained the use of her limbs, but became very ill. The doctor said there was no immediate danger. She ebbed and flowed after this, her mind being perfectly clear and serene. Again and again she testified to the faithfulness of the Lord to His promise, and to His faithful dealings with her through her long life. One night was a very sad one, such restlessness and wandering. "What shall I do? what will become of me?" which made my heart sink. However, it passed off, and this morning I would that others could have heard the expressions of hope, love, and confidence that flowed out, having flowed in. Her words were so sweet, so tender, full of joy, peace, and confidence. "I never was so happy, except once long ago when very ill. I hardly knew whether I was in the body. I felt each finger of my hand, and wondered. Now it is like that again. O I could go, I would rather go! I have nothing to cling to here. O I love Him, I love Him! (repeating it many times). He hath done all things well. I shall see Him." Asking her if there was any portion she would like me to read, she said, "'He is a Stronghold in the day of trouble, and He knoweth them that trust in Him'—

and we do." To one standing by, "Did you ever see one so peaceful at the end? I am longing to go, I have everything I want, and the kindness—He sends it all." Many and great were the interpositions of providence towards us during this illness; over and over did she exclaim when told of them, "Wonderful, wonderful!" She would say to me, "You have a heavy burden laid upon you—yes, you have; but help comes in a wonderful way from all quarters. We have nothing to do with it; it comes, and will come." She repeated the words: "'He breathed upon them, and said, Peace be unto you'—yes, 'peace be unto you.'" Again and again the sweetest smile passed over her countenance. The day before she died she whispered, "I have fought a good fight." I said, "He has made you a conqueror." "*More, more,*" she replied. She passed away peacefully and sweetly at 4 a.m. F. D.

On Saturday, June 3rd, 1911, at Godalming, WILLIAM PEARSON, in his 93rd year, for many years a member of the church at Bethel Chapel, Guildford. Of his call by grace we know very little. His mother was a godly woman, and his father, a sea-faring man, died when he was very young, so that his mother had the cares of the family left entirely to her. We have heard him say he used to go with her to chapel. When leaving it one Lord's day, he said the text having been on the election of grace, he felt such rebellion in his heart against the doctrine that he said to himself, "I will never believe that;" but, to quote his own words, the appointed time at length came when he was able to believe it to the joy of his heart.

Soon after leaving home he went to live with a gentleman at the Naval College at Greenwich, and later, in the providence of God, he removed to Croydon, where he sat under the ministry of the late Francis Covell for several years. Here he joined the church, and remained a member till the year 1865, when he removed with his employer to Godalming. There being no Strict Baptist cause there, a few friends used to meet in a room kindly lent them by the Society of Friends (who seldom required the place for their own use). Our dear father and the late Mr. Mayers, who was also a member at Bethel, used to meet with them. A sermon was read, and our father generally gave out the hymns, and with others

engaged in prayer. It was about the year 1880 that he came to Guildford, and joined the friends at Bethel.

For the past three or four years, owing to infirmity, he was not often able to attend the means of grace. A few days before his death I asked him if he would like any special portion read. He said, "Yes, read, 'Bless the Lord, O my soul.'" While I was reading it the tears flowed down his cheeks in gratitude to the Lord, and at the finish he remarked, "I can say amen to every word of that." He then asked me to read the 23rd Psalm, saying, "That's my Psalm." He was much melted down during this, and when able to speak, said he felt quite ready to go whenever the Lord should be pleased to take him, and all fear of death had been taken away. When leaving him he said, "You may not see me again; I hope we shall meet above." On the following Friday we were all with him, and we saw a great change. He knew us at intervals, and my brother read to him some hymns, which he much enjoyed, among them being, "Rock of Ages." When he finished, our father said, "I want no other Rock." He remained much the same, and could talk but little. The enemy was not permitted to try him. When he was a little revived, I said to him, "You are nearing the end of the journey." He said, "Yes." I asked him if he felt a solid peace, to which he nodded. A little later, when he motioned for someone to go near, he clasped my hand tightly. I asked him if he felt the Lord to be near, to which he replied audibly, "*He couldn't be nearer.*" These were the last words I could understand. After this he beckoned for each of his children to go to him, but was unable to do more than hold their hands firmly in his. He frequently clasped his hands as if in prayer. He lived through the night, and passed away peacefully at 1 o'clock p.m. on Saturday, June 3rd.

E. PEARSON.

On May 8th, 1911, JEMIMA SELFE, aged 77, for 34 years a consistent member of the church at Bolton. She was born in the village of Brundish, twenty miles from Ipswich, Suffolk, of godly parents, but so poor their whole life was a continual struggle for existence. Her father tried to keep a small farm, but finding year by year his children multiplied beyond the increase of his flock and field, and the little farm could not sustain them, the good man gathered up his goods into a waggon, with his wife and twelve children, and so carried

them to London *en route* for Manchester—a long journey in 1897. They lodged the second night in the great city, and the next day were transferred to a boat on the canal to be drawn by horses to Manchester, duly arriving there after eight days; thence to Bolton.

The Lord often employs the circumstances of life to teach His people; so He did with our sister Jemima, for which she blessed God in after days. As in time her aged mother hung upon her for support, so the daughter seemed to lean for shelter on the mother's religion, as human nature ever clings to a refuge of lies. From this refuge she was driven on the death of her mother at the age of 85. That was a terrible stroke, and a great awakening to her. All was now gone—mother, home, religion, God; she was solitary in the world, having no sure hope. For several years she was much exercised. Her strict morality, prayers, and duties, weighed in the balances of the sanctuary, were found wanting. She read eagerly the Law and the Testimony, the Lord gently leading her from darkness to light. Her eyes were up unto Him, her feet turned towards His testimonies; and blessed be God, neither sin nor Satan could turn them back, though they oft attempted. The preached word was sought after, and found at times to be "the word of life." The late J. Foster, Mr. Chandler, Mr. Sinkinson, with Mr. Oldfield, were often blessed to her in their ministrations at Bolton. She was never able to give a clear outline of the Lord's work in her, but her heart went to the Lord's people, the name of Jesus was precious to her, and she was warmly received into the church at Bolton, being baptised by Mr. Chandler, Oct. 7th, 1877. She became a useful member and handmaid to the church. When her tabernacle began to decay, she experienced the blessings of Psalm xli. 1—4. Through the kindness of friends at Preston she received help annually from the "G. S." Societies, which was so opportune her gratitude overflowed for the benefit. For several years she was unable to attend the means, and prayer-meetings were held at her house. For the last year she was almost unable to converse, but would brighten up on hearing a few verses of Scripture. Often filled with fears she cried, "O shall I be right at the end?" But as the end drew near, the great adversary, her accuser, was put down, her lips moved in prayer, and with a smile she passed from us to be for ever with the Lord. G. HEALEY.

NOTICES OF DEATHS.

On May 7th, 1911, aged 86 years, GEORGE GOLDSMITH, of Croydon, member of the Dicker, Hellingly. He was taken suddenly with a stroke and lost his speech; he had an earnest desire to be found right at last. It may be truly said of him he was poor in spirit; his

"Hope was built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness."

He is now for ever with the Lord. And I am left a widow to mourn my loss, but my loss is his eternal gain. "There remaineth a rest for the people of God." RHODA GOLDSMITH.

DR. A. W. JOHNSON, of Detroit, Mich., U.S.A., entered into rest, July 8th, 1911. He was for nearly forty years a faithful minister of the everlasting gospel of free grace. He was very deeply taught of God; and as he freely received, so he freely gave, never losing an opportunity to edify any of God's children. He was away preaching, and on his return home was taken sick, and for three weeks suffered intensely, but uncomplainingly. He had during his sickness many sweet communions with God, and he was not forsaken in the valley of death. The last words which he uttered that could be understood were, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power." Only part of this could be understood. He passed peacefully away on July 8th. He leaves a widow, five sons and three daughters; but our loss is his eternal gain.

BELLE JOHNSON.

On July 10th, 1911, SAMUEL CHIPPEN, member, and for some few years a deacon of the Strict Baptist Church at Ripley, Surrey, aged 82. He was called by grace fifty years. He was a man of prayer. The little church will miss him. During his long and painful affliction his mind was at times very dark, but at eventime it was light. He died in prayer, trusting in the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ. We believe the church's loss is his eternal gain.

W. C.

EPHRAIM, youngest son of Thomas Daw, of Heathfield, died July 27th, 1911, aged 22, after a long illness, which he was enabled to bear with resignation. The Word of God was, he said, his only support; particularly that, "For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth; and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth" (Heb. xii. 6). The day before he died, he said, "Underneath are the everlasting arms." The last day he said to his father, "I am going home; I am the same as last night; 'Underneath are the everlasting arms;'" beckoned each one to him, and said "good-bye." and saying that he should like the hymn 329 sung at his funeral. His father asked him how he was feeling; he said, all right with the exception of his body. "Come, Lord Jesus;" and peacefully breathed out his soul to God.

W. W. WEST.

ELIZABETH HOBSON, of Lowestoft, aged 57, who passed to her eternal rest, August 18th, 1911. She was for many years a member of Providence chapel, Lowestoft, a true lover of Zion, and a friend to God's poor. Our loss we believe to be her eternal gain.

J. D. HUNT.

THE GOSPEL STANDARD.

DECEMBER, 1911.

MATT. v. 6; 2 TIM. i. 9; ROM. xi. 7; ACTS viii. 37, 38; MATT. xxviii. 19.

FROM "THE PASSION OF CHRIST."

BY ROBERT ROLLOCK.

"After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst. Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to His mouth. When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished: and He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost."—
JOHN xix. 28—30.

DURING the time that the Lord Jesus hung quick upon the cross, which was three hours, and large more,* ye may read, well-beloved in Christ, sundry voices that He uttered. When I look through the four Evangelists, I find in number six sundry voices, and every one of them is well to be marked: for at that time He uttered nothing in vain. The first voice we read of was a voice of divine power together with mercy, when one of the thieves who hung at His right hand said to Him, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest to Thy kingdom." The Lord answered him like a King, and like a powerful and merciful God, "Verily, I say unto thee, This day thou shalt be with Me in paradise." The next voice was a voice of human pity and natural affection toward His mother; she being by the cross with John and other women, He recommends her to the custody of His well-beloved disciple. The third voice we read of was a voice of sadness, proceeding from a heart that was sad on every side to the death, and from that agony on the cross, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" The fourth voice, in like manner, was a voice of sadness, proceeding from a wonderful heat in the soul and body, "I thirst." The fifth voice, by all appearance, was a voice of

* *i.e.* A considerable portion of another hour.

joy ; seeing the work of redemption to be wrought, and the wrath of His Father to be assuaged, He says, after He had drunk the vinegar, "It is finished." The sixth and last voice, in like manner, was a voice of joy ; for, finding He was to give up the ghost immediately, and finding His Father sweetly to loose His soul from His body, He says, "Father, into Thine hands I commend My spirit."*

As in all the points of the suffering of Christ I look more to the disposition of His Father than to the Jews, to the devil, or his instruments ; so I do in this. No question as His Father exercises Him inwardly with a bitter wrath—even so, when as the Lord, by making a heavy moan, seeks an outgate, and cries, "My God, My God," &c., He will have Him met outwardly with bitterness. Aim where He will, He meets Him with nothing but bitterness and wrath, inwardly and outwardly ; hell inward and outward ; no refuge, no escaping, till the ransom be paid to the last farthing. Well, brethren, if ye would see an image of hell, see it here. . . .

Now I come to the voices ; and first to that fourth voice the Lord uttered, when He said, "I thirst." When uttered He it? When He knew that all things were ended, to the end that the prophecy might be fulfilled that was spoken of Him before, He said, "I thirst"—a voice of sadness coming from an extreme drought of body. The Lord Jesus, as He took our nature upon Him, so He took on all our infirmities, sin excepted. Many times was He hungry and thirsty, but chiefly when He hangs on the cross ; in that extreme heat of His soul and His body, the soul was burned up with wrath, and all the moisture of the body likewise dried up with wrath. At this time the Lord had such a thirst that the tongue of man cannot express it : thou sufferedst never such a thirst in any fever or disease as the Lord Jesus suffered for thee on the cross. And, no doubt, beside other pains, this exceeding thirst was a part of His pain, and a part of that ransom that He paid to the Father for our redemption. Ye see when a man is in a fever, the thirst will be a special part of the pain that he hath ; therefore, albeit the thirst that the Lord suffered on the cross was an exceeding great pain, yet He will not utter His voice, "I

* It will be seen that our author omits here, as he does also in the parallel passage of the Latin Commentary, a seventh voice, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke xxiii. 34).

thirst," till the ransom was paid; He would not seek to quench that thirst till the wrath of the Father was satisfied. The drought was insatiable; for the infinite wrath of God thirsted after the blood of the Mediator, bearing our sins, and was not quenched till the blood of the Mediator was drunken up. No quenching of sin but by the blood of the Mediator; if thou be not in Him, the wrath of God will thirst for thy blood. After this follows that bodily thirst. The soul is dried up, the moisture of the body is clung up, the wrath sucks all up; on this rises the thirst of the body; for, except the Lord had had a spiritual thirst, and a pleasure to obey His Father to the death, and to save thy soul from hell, it had been impossible for Him to have suffered that bodily thirst so long.

Learn this lesson at the Lord Jesus, and follow His example; we should suffer patiently all pain that it pleases the Lord to lay on body and soul, knowing that it is according to His will, and that by thy suffering, thy obedience to Him is tried; and, as we should suffer patiently all pains, so we learn at Christ to abide patiently this bodily thirst in sickness or fevers, knowing well that the Lord lays it on us to try our obedience and patience. But wilt thou know how thou shouldst abide it patiently? The Lord Jesus had a spiritual thirst to obey His heavenly Father, and for thy salvation, that swallowed up that bodily thirst. Get thee an earnest thirst to obey thy God; it will be a wondrous thing how patiently thou wilt suffer whatsoever God will lay on thee. Therefore, brethren, in all things we should set our hearts to obey God; and wink and close thy eyes at all dangers: yea, if they be in extreme thirst, and going to die, say, "Lord, I will obey Thee;" and if thou get thy heart thus resolved and humbled under the hand of thy God, howbeit thou be in pain for a time, thou shalt see a fair end. The Lord Jesus, after this thirst, and after death, saw a glorious end. So, no question, wilt thou lean on thy God as He did, and abide His will patiently, thou shalt see the joyfullest and most glorious end that ever was. The Lord give us grace to obey God, and to say, "Cast me here or there, and lay on me what Thou wilt, I shall obey Thee: though Thou shouldst slay me, I will trust in Thee."* This is a happy resolution.

* Job xiii. 15.

We shall speak of the end wherefore the Lord uttered this voice: "To the end" (says John) "that the Scripture might be fulfilled." In Matt. v. 17, 18, the Lord says, "I come not to dissolve the Law and the Prophets, but to fulfil the Law, and to fulfil every jot of that Law; heaven and earth shall perish ere one jot of that Law shall pass away." Now, among all the prophecies that Christ fulfilled, there is one here made mention of, in Psa. lxi. 21: "In my meat they gave me bitterness, and in my drink they gave me gall to drink." Now this prophecy is accomplished; David spake this in his own person typically; but the verity thereof was fulfilled in Christ. David got no vinegar to drink; but Jesus Christ drank vinegar. When the Lord came into the world, and wrought the work of our redemption, there was not so much as a tittle that was foretold of Him but He fulfilled it; there was not a circumstance of His death but it was foretold: that nailing was foretold, where it is said, "They pierced Mine hands and My feet;" † the hanging of Him betwixt two thieves was foretold, "They reckon Me" (says the prophet) "among the unjust;" ‡ the dividing of His garments was forespoken, "They divided My garments among them, and cast lots for My coat." § Look at the xxiind and lxiith Psalms, and the liiird chapter of Isaiah. So this drinking of vinegar was foretold. Now, what learns this unto us? Was there ever any man whose death was pointed out this way? No, never any one. All the kings, nor all the emperors, had never such a particular pointing out of their death. This lets us see that the Father had a more special care of the death of Jesus than of the death of any man that ever was; and consequently it lets us see, that there was never such a worthy Personage in the world as Jesus, and that there was never such excellency in the death of any as in the death of Jesus; in it stood the life of the world. Let men make pomps of the death of emperors, the Lord had never such an eye to the death of any as to the death of His only well-beloved Son; and all the predictions of His death are to this end, that we, comparing the issue of His death with the predictions, might believe that Jesus was sent to be the only Saviour of the world. When I think on this, I wonder at the blindness of the Jews, that cannot know Him to be the Mediator; but after that once a man be

† Psa. xxii. 16. ‡ Psa. lv. 3. § Psa. xxii. 18.

given to a reprobate sense, he will say the sun in the noon-tide is but darkness. "The gospel is hid (says Paul, 2 Cor. iv. 3) to them who perish;" if thou see not and believe not the gospel, thou hast an earnest penny in thy bosom that thy damnation is sealed up.

Thus far for His thirst. They gave Him a drink; there is a vessel full of vinegar. This was a custom that they used; they had a drink beside them who were crucified; some think it was for this end that the pain might be stanch'd. There is a drink of vinegar standing beside the Lord, but I know not if they gave such a sour drink to the thieves. So this vessel standing beside, one of them steps to it in scorn, and takes a water sponge, and puts it on a reed, and put it to His head. He got little thanks for his work; I take this giving of this drink to the Lord at this time to have proceeded from bitter malice. The wrath of His Father was begun to be assuaged, yet the wrath of the Jews could not be assuaged. . . . Refuses the Lord the drink? Indeed, before He was raised up on the cross He tasted of this, but would not drink; but He, being on the cross, it is said He drank it. It may be that after such a troublesome labour, His drought was so great that He was glad to drink any liquor. *Always this I know, except the Lord had had thirst of thy salvation, He had not drank it.* The thirst of thy salvation made Him, as He drank out the cup of the wrath of His Father, so to drink out this bitter cup that was propined to Him out of the bitterness of their hearts; He drank out the wrath of God and the wrath of man, that thou shouldst drink the water of life. . . .

Now I go to the next voice. When He hath drank, He says, "It is finished;" that is, "That wearisome work is now put to an end; now the ransom is paid, now the work of redemption is ended." . . . This is the sum of the gospel: "The work of our redemption is ended." This is all our preaching; heaven, life, and glory are conquered again to the lost world. Thou needest not give one penny out of thy purse for heaven. Cursed are they, from the high heaven to the low hell, that open their mouth to say thou must pay some of that ransom out of thy purse. Woe to the Papists who will stand up and say thou must pay some part of that ransom! woe to that foul mouth that dare be so bold to open it and say, "Pay thou a part of that ransom with

thy money"! seeing that Jesus Christ hath proclaimed that all is finished and bought by His blood. . . . Look down to His heart and to the sense from whence this voice arose; when He says this, ye shall find that Jesus felt the wrath of His Father assuaged. Before, He was in agony; now He feels the agony to cease; where before He found no joy, now joy returns; on the sense of all these things falls out this voice, "All is ended." When I look to this, I think I see the image of a godly saint dying; for the godly are like to Him in death and life. Before the last moment they are in a battle; and suddenly they will say, "I have gotten the victory in Jesus;" and then last they will yield up the spirit.

Come to the last voice: it is a voice of joy. I am of that opinion that before the Lord yielded up the ghost, the agony left Him, and that joy that had left Him returned again, and made Him to utter joyful words." The Evangelists say, "He cried with a loud voice." What voice this is Luke expresses: "Father, into Thine hands I recommend My spirit." All that were standing about might have heard Him uttering this powerful voice. Now ye would wonder that a man immediately yielding up his spirit, should have such a strong voice. Ye see men and women, in death their voice will fail them; some will not have any voice, and some not any sign; some, if they get that grace to speak, yet it will be a weak voice, because the strength of nature fails. Yet Jesus all the day before uttered not so shrill a voice; so it must follow that natural strength was not failed in Jesus Christ, and that by the strength of nature He might have lived long; for the other two lived long, and were not dead till they came and brake their legs. Jesus died against nature; neither was He broken as they were. What follows of this? Jesus Christ, in that same moment that He yielded the spirit, He had a power above nature, and a divine power against nature, which puts out the life; and if He had power against nature to put out His life, He uttered before the Jews that they had no power to put out His life, and that He had a power to keep His life, if it had pleased Him. And that is it which He says, "None takes My life from Me, but I lay it down, and I take it up again" (Jno. x. 17). Ye will hear that when word came to Pilate that Jesus was dead, he wondered, and all the world wondered at this yielding up of the spirit.

And by this the Lord would show that He was not a common man; He would show that He was God, either to keep His life, or to put it out at His pleasure; He says, "Father, into Thine hands I commend My spirit." These words are far from this, "My God, My God, why hast," &c.? for those words proceeded of great sadness mixed with confidence, but of no joy; but these words, "Father, into Thine hands," &c., as they proceeded of confidence, so they proceeded of a wonderful joy. No doubt, at this time, He feels that sweet hand of the Father dealing with Him most sweetly, not as the reprobate. Alas! the hand of the Lord in justice striking the soul of the reprobate, looses it from the body with the sense of extreme wrath; but the Lord feels the hand of the Father loosing His soul from the body with sweetness; and all they who die in Christ will feel the Father loosing the soul with sweetness; as these last words utter. Look to the martyrs, they never utter the first voice, "My God, My God," &c.; no, but the second, "Father, into Thine hands I commend my spirit," because they find joy in torment. Stephen, the first martyr, uttered the second voice, Acts vii. 59; and the rest of the martyrs followed him: which testifies plainly that this was a voice of joy that Jesus uttered. But mark the words of Christ. Ye see that every man and woman, beside the body, they have a spirit, and more beautiful, and far more precious of substance than the body, and yet it lodges in a house of clay, and in an earthly tabernacle. Next, there will be a separation of the soul and the body. Thou thinkest ever to live, but whether thou wilt or thou wilt not, thy soul shall be separated from the body, and then the body shall die. Shall thy soul die? No; [and] if thou be in Christ, the Father shall take thy soul.

Now, again, brethren, see how careful the Lord is of His soul, at the point of death. If Jesus, who had no sin, is so careful of His soul, I pray thee, who art a sinful body, how careful shouldst thou be thereof? . . . Then look how careful thou shouldst be in following the example of Jesus, to recommend the soul into the hands of the Father; and look, how careful thou art to render the soul into the hands of the Father, the Father shall be as careful to loose the soul, if thou be in Jesus Christ, to convoy it with Him to rest for evermore in His blessed bosom. The Lord give us grace to commend our souls into the hands of that faithful Keeper in

the hour of death, and that we may find Him ready to receive and convoy them with Him to that everlasting rest purchased to us through Christ. To whom, with the Father, and the blessed Spirit, be praise for evermore. Amen.

REMINISCENCES OF WILLIAM TIPTAFT.

TAKEN FROM HIS MEMOIR BY J. C. PHILPOT.

(Concluded from page 500.)

HE had long been much exercised about attending to the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper at Abingdon, as there were many there and in the neighbourhood who had been called or blessed under his ministry who desired to make a public profession of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. His own trying exercises of mind, however, holding him down in hard bondage, had much hindered the accomplishment of this desire; but he was enabled at last to break through all obstacles, and on Jan. 29th, 1843, he was mercifully strengthened in body and soul to baptise 23 persons, of whom 13 were women and 10 men. It was on the night immediately following this baptism that the Lord gave him the greatest blessing which he ever experienced. It is related by himself as follows:—

“My dear Sister,—I have now something to relate in which, I trust, you and the other friends at Oakham will feel interested, and will be glad to hear; and may the Lord make it a blessing, and may He have all the praise. It is a new strain for me to begin with: ‘My heart is inditing a good matter; I speak of the things which I have made touching the King; my tongue is the pen of a ready writer.’

“After talking over the proceedings of the day with four friends, I retired (on Lord's day evening) to bed in a comfortable state of mind, feeling thankful that the Lord had brought me through a trying day, concerning which I had been much exercised, and trusting the Lord had blessed the word to some that day through such a worm as I felt myself to be, as well as owned His own ordinance, to which we had been attending. When I knelt down to offer up a few words by the bedside, I felt my soul drawn out to God, and humbled low before Him with a sense of my sins; but as soon as I was in bed I began to feel a melting of heart and a sweet

sense of God's love to my soul, which immediately made my tears flow; and the Lord sweetly began to apply precious promises to my soul with unction and power, and to such an extent as I have never been blest with before. In fact, I have never experienced any such blessed manifestation and sweet deliverance, though I have been blessed at different times that I can mention; but they were far short of this sweet blessing to my soul; and the savour of it sweetly abides with me still, but I am afraid of losing it or being robbed of it.

“When the promises began to flow into my soul, these words came with as great power and as often as any: ‘Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs;’ and again and again: ‘I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins; return unto Me, for I have redeemed thee;’ ‘I will honour them that honour Me;’ ‘He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me; and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him.’ I did sweetly experience this manifestation of love to my soul; and I said to the blessed Lord, ‘Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth,’ ‘for His mouth is most sweet.’ The promises flowed into my soul, and my tears flowed so fast that I soon began to water my couch with tears of joy, not of sorrow. I lay till between twelve and one o'clock in this blessed state, and then fell asleep for about two hours, and awoke in a delightful frame, the Lord blessing my soul again, till I had to restrain myself from crying aloud. I did not go to sleep again, but lay awake blessing and praising God for His goodness and mercy to my soul, with debasing views of myself and with exalted views of the blessed Jesus, having communion and fellowship with Him in His agony and sufferings. But during my soul enjoyment I kept saying at times, ‘Is it real, Lord? Is it real, Lord?’ I wanted to know whether it was real. I asked myself whether I was willing to die, and I felt I was; and if it were the Lord's will, I was willing to die without telling anyone of His great goodness to my soul; for the Lord's will was my will. I asked myself whether I would rather have a large bag of gold or this blessing, and I felt a large bag of gold was no more to me than a large bag of pebbles compared to the Lord's rich blessing. These words came to my mind sweetly again and again:

“ ‘ Now will I tell to sinners round
 What a dear Saviour I have found.’

And Hart's hymn,

“ ‘ Blest Spirit of truth, eternal God,’ &c.,

was sweet to my soul. I went up and told J. K. early in the morning, and could not refrain from crying, and could scarcely shave myself through shedding tears so fast. I shed more tears last night than I have shed for years, for my tears do not flow so easily as many people's do. These words came with power: ‘ Sing, O ye heavens, for the Lord hath done it,’ &c.; and also: ‘ Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.’ This has been to my soul ‘ a feast of fat things, of fat things full of marrow, and of wine on the lees well refined;’ for ‘ the vision is yet for an appointed time, but *at the end it shall speak*, and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry.’ You, as well as others, know I have had to wait, and have been much tried because the Lord has not blessed me more with His presence and manifestations of His love, though He has given me a few sips by the way.

“ I have been led to know my vileness, and to feel much of the depravity of my heart, so as to be sensibly a poor, lost, ruined sinner. Sometimes I have envied the brute creation, and at times I have thought God would strike me dead, being sensible of so much sin in my heart. I felt sure I had but little grace, if I had any at all; and my mind has been much tried respecting the formation of a church here, seeing it a grievous thing that the ordinances of God's house should be slighted and neglected year after year by those who, I believe, were the proper persons to attend to them. I could, therefore, see the need of church order and government much better than I could see in any way my fitness to be a pastor. So I was in great straits, and looked forward to the ordinance next Lord's day with much exercise and trial of mind, having to administer it in my darkness of soul, and knowing also that there is such a thing as eating and drinking unworthily, and that such ‘ eat and drink damnation (or condemnation) to themselves, not discerning the Lord's body.’ On Friday evening I was with two friends who were speaking of the Lord's manifestations to their souls; but I was dumb, and could say nothing, and felt as if I could not possibly stand in the position I was placed in,

being so dark, shut up, and tried. On Saturday, too, I felt much darkness and trial of mind, but I little thought that God's great goodness and mercy were so soon to be manifested to my soul. I have had sips, but now my cup is full, and even runneth over. In the days of adversity I have considered how the scene would end, but now in the day of prosperity my soul is joyful. 'I will be glad and rejoice in Thy mercy, for Thou hast considered my trouble; Thou hast known my soul in adversities, and hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy; Thou hast set my feet in a large room.' 'The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it.' The Lord continues to bless my soul with His love, and Christ is precious; and I am sure the Lord's spiritual blessings to my soul do not lead to worldliness and licentiousness, but to deadness to the world and to separation in spirit from it. Real faith works by love, and Christ is truly precious, and there is no true victory over the world but through this blessed experience known and felt in the soul; and love to Jesus is accompanied with love to the brethren, and with earnest and sincere prayers for the children of God. 'They shall prosper that love Zion.' Before this blessing I looked forward to the ordinance of the Lord's Supper as a man would who had a great payment to make, and had not wherewith to pay; he wishes that there was no such engagement, or that the time was farther distant; and now I can look upon it as the man would upon the payment, if any one had given him all or more than all the money. Yours affectionately,

"Abingdon, Jan. 31st, 1848.

"W. TIPTAFT."

On the next Lord's day he gave the people an account of the signal blessing with which he had been thus favoured; and I have been told that such a scene as then took place was scarcely ever witnessed in a chapel. He wept and the people wept for very joy, and there was such a general melting of every gracious heart, attended with such a blessing and praising of the Lord for His love and mercy thus manifested to His dear and honoured servant, and for such a testimony also given to the administering of the ordinances and the formation of a church, that it was as if the Lord Himself were specially present among them. Their faith in the truths which they had so long heard and professed was so confirmed, their hope so strengthened, and their love to the Lord, His ordinances, and His people so enlarged, that the blessing

might be pronounced not his only, to whom it was specially given, but extended to all his people with him, and I may well add, to very many readers of the account given of it by himself, as inserted soon after in the "Gospel Standard," March No., 1843.

His ministry from this period, though not essentially altered, yet became more clear, full, and enlarged; for he was able now to speak, from his own experience, of the rich blessings of the gospel, of the sweetness of the promises as applied to the soul, of the manifested forgiveness of sin, and the shedding abroad of the love of God in the heart. This enlargement of his ministry, and the greater confidence with which he could speak of the Person, work, blood, and love of the Lord Jesus, and of his own personal interest in them, made his ministry also more sweet and acceptable to those of his hearers who had been similarly favoured.

The following letter, which is the last I can give, shows some of the workings of his mind some years after this signal blessing:

"My dear Deborah,—. . . You have lived long enough to see that a Christian is not to be long without trials and troubles, much less a minister. If a minister have a conscience worth having, he is sure to have trouble; and if he have not a conscience worth having, he had better be a shoe-black. There are no blessings like spiritual blessings; but how little do we crave them, and how little do we value them, particularly at times. So deeply rooted is unbelief in us, and the world in various ways so opposed to vital godliness, the heart is deceitful and so wicked, that we need rods and fires as well as smiles and sweet testimonies of His love, to make us in any way alive and fruitful unto God. I trust I may say that the Lord blesses my soul at times; but I do not enjoy that peace and love I wish, and have enjoyed in times past.

Your affectionate Brother,

"Abingdon, April 20th, 1847.

"W. TIPTAFT."

From the time of this signal blessing, about 20 years, he was most abundant in the labours of the ministry, there being scarcely a town or village in any part of England where there was a people who knew and loved the truth, which he did not, as opportunity offered, willingly visit. The people of God at Manchester, Liverpool, Preston, Birmingham, Bradford, Helmsley, Lincoln, and many other places in

the North; at Cirencester, Bath, Trowbridge, and almost innumerable chapels in Wilts, in the West; Rochester, Maidstone, Faversham, in the East; Brighton, Chichester, and the Dicker, in the South, with many other places which I cannot now name, all knew his voice, and loved and esteemed him for his bold and faithful testimony.

Towards the autumn and winter of 1862 his altered appearance gave much anxiety to his Abingdon friends. A troublesome hoarseness, by him attributed to a cold, became very perceptible. The disease of which he died was an abscess, which gathered internally in the right side of the throat, accompanied by a malignant ulcer seated on one of the vocal cords. The complaint being out of sight, and coming on slowly and insidiously, there was for some time no suspicion of its real nature. Still he persevered in his labours, preaching sometimes five times in a week, besides twice on the Lord's day. He preached at Abingdon to his own beloved people on Wednesday, April 29th, 1863, from 2 Thess. ii. 16, 17; he and they little thinking it would be the last time. In May, 1863, he supplied as usual for a month at Gower Street, London, when he was induced to consult a skilful physician, who earnestly advised him to cease from preaching, at least for the present. It was to him a deep and heavy trial to cease from his beloved work. During the whole of the autumn and winter he remained at Oakham, under the hospitable roof of his brother-in-law, Mr. Keal, where everything that kindness, affection, and medical skill could suggest was done for his comfort and, if it were the will of God, his restoration. As his voice was gone, his work seemed done and his ministry ended; and as he had given us an example of *doing*, so now he appeared as if he were appointed to set us an example of *suffering* the will of God. At various times the Lord abundantly blessed his soul, reconciling him to his heavy affliction, though from the loss of voice he could not converse much.*

On June 11, 1864, he returned to Clifton, near Abingdon; and the next day being the Lord's day, after hearing Mr. Knill with great sweetness, he assisted him in administering the ordinance to the church of which he had been so many years the beloved pastor, taking the bread round on the one side of the chapel and the cup on the other. He had previously chosen

* See letter on p. 554, written about 3 months before his death.

hymn 1121 to be sung, and was much blessed when Mr. Knill gave it out, especially at the 4th verse :

“ ‘ Do this,’ He cried, ‘ till time shall end,
In memory of your dying Friend ;
Meet at My table, and record
The love of your departed Lord.’ ”

Most affecting was the scene, and many tears were shed on both sides, he feeling so deeply the coming back amongst his own people with the blessing of God resting on his soul ; and they rejoiced to welcome him amongst them, yet sorrowing over his altered appearance. His wish to come to Abingdon, and there live and die, being made known to his friends, they exerted themselves to procure a suitable house for him, and put everything in readiness for his reception. On Friday, July 1st, he entered into and upon his last earthly abode. It may not be here, perhaps, out of place to say that having given away or spent for the glory of God and the good of His people every sixpence of his own property, he was now in good measure dependent on the friends. This he need not have been but for his own excessive liberality. Being again much favoured and blessed in his new abode, he said he was grateful to the Lord that ever he returned to Abingdon, for he felt now that he was in his right place.

I will now give an extract from the letter of a friend who was much with him in his last days, and stood by his dying bed :

“ The first Lord’s day he was able to come to chapel, but the second he was not ; and in the morning of that day he was very low and tried in his mind, but about 4 o’clock in the afternoon, the Lord broke in upon his soul, and greatly blessed him. He told the friends afterwards who came to see him that ‘ the Lord *had crowned it all now* ;’ and he never sank so low after that time ; but in answer to my daily questions, said that he was quite comfortable in his mind. He came after that every Lord’s day to chapel. But the last Lord’s day, August 14th, I could see a great change in him. I saw him again on Monday ; he was still weaker, but did not appear as if dying so soon. On that day, however, the abscess broke internally. He began gradually to sink, having lost apparently all power to swallow his food.

“ On Tuesday morning, 16th, I found him very weak and sitting upon the sofa. I said, ‘ How are you this morning ?’

and his answer was, 'I am greatly blessed this morning.' The 472nd hymn was much blessed to him:

" ' When languor and disease invade
This trembling house of clay,
'Tis sweet to look beyond our cage,
And long to fly away,' etc.

He asked me if I thought he had better go to bed. After he had been in bed a little while, he said to me, 'What two great mercies these are—to be made fit and willing to die!' He was then suffering very much, apparently struggling with death; but he said, '*Death has lost its sting and the grave its victory.*' He told Friend Hicks so when he came to see him, soon after he had repeated it to me. He then asked me to read, and Friend Hicks to pray. I read Psalm cxvi. to him, and Friend Hicks prayed, and after that he said he could look death in the face, and added, 'What a mercy!' After this a friend came wishing to see him. He smiled, and said to her, '*As my afflictions abound, so also do my consolations.*' He said I might write and tell the friends 'how happy he was; that his last days had been his best, and that Christ was precious to him.' I could not help praying that the Lord would cut short his sufferings and take him to Himself. The doctor said he had no power to swallow; and that was the case, for he did not swallow any more. I said, 'The battle will soon be over.' He said, 'Do you think so?' I said, 'Yes, you will soon be in glory.' He replied, 'Yes, and what a mercy!' His cough now left him, and he was better able to speak, and in a loud whisper. About 9 o'clock he was still in great restlessness of body. I again asked if he was happy, and said, 'Is Jesus precious?' He said, 'Yes, yes!' To two friends who came in he said he was still happy, and hoped to meet them in glory. About half-past eleven he got more quiet, and his restlessness was nearly over. He then began as though he would preach to us, and said, 'What a mercy my last moments are my best!' I said, 'You can say, "I shall soon be landed"?' He said, 'Yes, and join the happy throng; and it is *free grace, free grace!* Free-will sentiments will not do to die with. It is free grace that will stand for ever; but free will will be dashed.' —'What troubles and sorrows attend the true followers of the Lamb! But what a mercy to endure to the end.' And again, 'My last moments have been my best.' I heard him now say, '*Thy love is better than wine. Praise God, praise God.*' He

said that he 'longed to be gone and praise the Lord in glory.' He then got very quiet, and gently breathed his last at twenty-five minutes past one in the morning of the 17th of August, 1864. How forcibly those words struck my mind as his last breath was gone; 'Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace.'—*Edwin Porter.*"

He was laid in his last resting place by Mr. Tanner, of Cirencester, assisted by Mr. Gorton and Mr. A. Hammond; and it might be truly said that "devout men carried him to his burial, and made great lamentation over him" (Acts viii. 2); for many tears—tears not only of sorrow, but of affection, tempered with holy joy at his blessed end—were shed by the members of his bereaved church, and by the friends who came far and near to pay the last tribute of respect to his memory.

J. C. PHILPOT.

CONFIDENCE IN GOD.

"If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."—DAN. iii. 17, 18.

THIS interesting account is more than history; it is history, but it is more. What was it made these three men refuse to worship the image Nebuchadnezzar had set up? It was this, and this only—they knew the true and living God. Nothing else kept them from idolatry; nothing else will keep us from idolatry in some form. It is therefore a mercy to have some measure, be it ever so little, of that inshining which we read of in 2 Cor. iv. 6: "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." This is the first thing, as we reflect on the case before us, that occurs to our mind; and it shows us that the true worship of God, as distinguished from all idol worship, arises from a knowledge of God in the soul. And that knowledge comes from a gracious inshining of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. It therefore becomes us to see whether underneath the carnality, form, deadness, and wanderings which, alas! so much make up and mar our so-called worship from time to time, there is any perception of God in our souls.

And this also is to be observed in this case,—that the faith of those noble confessors went in a *direct act to Him*, and that in two regards. 1. That though they were not sure of the issue of their being to be cast into the furnace, yet they were sure of the *ability* of God to deliver them out of the hand of Nebuchadnezzar. What a mercy to be assured of God's power, that He can control the awful corruptions and fiery sins of our nature, overrule and render unhurtful the fiery darts of the evil one ! If we have true faith, that will be the way it will be exercised in us. "Here we are," said the three men, "in the hands of this wicked, idolatrous king. What God will do we know not ; but we know He is able to deliver us out of his hands." That faith is enough to stay our minds ; yes, and it will cause us to seek Him, and seeking Him, to worship Him. That will exalt His power above the devil's and that of our consuming lusts. It will make Him greater to us than all the world. If He will control them, well ; if not, shall we trust Him, if He will let us be consumed to ashes ? They said, "Yes. If He will not deliver us out of the burning furnace, if we be consumed to ashes, be it known unto thee, O king, we will not serve thy gods." Ah, one God only is to be worshipped, and shall be worshipped by the very hearts' choice of all who have that inshining, by which they know Him. What a mercy to feel at any cost, whatever He permit to be done with our bodies and circumstances, we will worship nothing and none else than the blessed God, whom it is our privilege to know, and who has "shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

Now this is a point. And what is the *effect* of that great direct act of faith that makes us refuse to worship any other god and worship God alone ? *A casting of ourselves on Him*, sink or swim, whatever He permits to be done, for time and eternity. We shall trust in Him ; as well as we can, cast ourselves on Him, body and soul, and commit everything into His gracious hands. Here is a point better and clearer than some when just at it are able to think. For there may be some doubt on the mind about one's interest, even when there is this powerful resolve of faith, "If I perish, I will perish at His feet ; but I will go in unto the King." No formality will live here. Living souls alone, made so by the Holy Ghost, will stand this fire. And it is not uncommon that

when people are the weakest on entering some fiery trial, then the strength of grace becomes the greatest in them, and they venture everything for this blessed God. "Be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods." We then understand what it is to feel a loathing of every god but the true God, and a fear lest we should be left to receive some heresy, or walk in a false confidence, or bow down to a wrong thing in the spirit, or listen to a "Lo, here," or "Lo, there"—sounds the world is filled with. Faith born of God wants Him—we know that want, though we may not be able to say we have faith. And it makes the soul look for Him—"for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Tit. ii. 13).

It is a great point, and a mercy to come to it by the Holy Ghost, that there is one God, the true and living God; and it is that God we would worship. It is a solemn exercise many have about coming to this God, how to reach Him and how to worship Him. Having a sense of ignorance, and believing that God is a Spirit, and "they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth;" and also believing "no man hath seen God at any time," many questions come up as to how to believe and worship Him. We are afraid lest some elation of an active mind should beguile us into a false confidence. Sense of ignorance seems to make room for the devil to suggest, "There is no God." "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." And because the poor, afflicted soul cannot bear the thought, he is afraid he is an infidel for having it. God will never judge a sinner so exercised, nor condemn him as an infidel. He sees what He has put in the soul—an enquiring faith that would not be deceived or turned aside by a false thing. A child of God would rather live in his present exercise, in doubt all his days, than be deceived. But I tell you this, O afflicted soul, one thing will bring you to a point to know God; that is, *the inshining of His glory in the face of Jesus Christ*. Reason will not do it; no, for the great truth lies here: the Almighty is only known as He discovers Himself; you will never find Him by searching. What a great point to come to—to believe there is one only true God! And how does He make Himself known? In the Person of Jesus Christ.

"Worship God, then, in His Son."

What a gospel! We read, "God was in Christ, reconcil-

ing the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." It is a greater point to me now than it was at my beginning. I would fain be more and more after this—to know "the only true God, and Jesus Christ" whom He has sent. All vital religion comes from, and goes back to Him. And as He is apprehended by faith in Christ, the way of salvation, of justification, of sanctification, and redemption is seen; and that beautiful scripture in the Hebrews sets this forth: "Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, His flesh; and having an High Priest over the house of God"—having this, "let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water" (Heb. x. 19—22). O beloved friends, be more at this point—"We will not bow down to, serve or worship the god you have set up, O king. The One we would bow down to is God in Christ."

Christ was not unknown in that day. It was He who came into that furnace, and took the fury of the flames away. And His shining glory was such as to convince that idolatrous king, so that he said, "I see four men walking loose in the midst of the fire; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." That fourth—O what a heaven He made of the fire! I should think, and there is no record against it, that for the rest of their lives those three men would look back to that time of trial, and say it was the best season of worship and the best walk they ever had. It was the sweetest time probably of their lives, the clearest manifestation they ever had in their pilgrimage. Sometimes some particular trials God uses like this fiery furnace. He comes to His people therein, and walks with them, so that they can say, "*There was the best walk we ever had.*" What a wonder for God to make Himself known! I may say thankfully, some of the sharpest things I have had God has used as places for Himself to come, and make Himself known to me, and hold a most condescending communion and walk with me. Bless God for His visits. He does visit still; and what threatens to destroy turns to salvation. Fear no fiery trial, no furnace, no death; fear nothing but God's absence and being forsaken of Him in trouble. If He visits us, things must appear to us

well. All is well, if Christ be ours; and comfortable, if to our sense He be with us. Troubles we must have; they are common to man. Some are bitter, and grow more bitter; but the Lord has sweetness enough to make the sweetness more than the bitter, so that we can take them up, and unreservedly submit. But we have the power to stand only in His power, and to run only in His strength.

May the Lord grant us all we need to follow and trust in Him until He call us home.

J. K. P.

CRUMBS FROM THE MASTER'S TABLE

FROM BOSTON'S "CROOK IN THE LOT," OR, "THE SOVEREIGNTY AND WISDOM OF GOD IN THE AFFLICTIONS OF MEN DISPLAYED."

(Concluded from page 517.)

ANOTHER end which Providence aims at, is to carry the believer clean off his own and all created foundations, to fix his trust and hope in the Lord alone. 2 Cor. i. 9: "That we should trust not in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead." The life of a Christian here is designed to be a life of faith; and though faith may act more easily when it has some help from sense, yet it certainly acts most nobly when it acts in opposition to sense. Then is it pure faith, when it stands only on its own native legs, the *power* and *word* of God. Rom. iv. 19, 20: "And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead—neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb. He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God." And thus it must do, when matters are carried to the utmost point of hopelessness.

Again, due preparation of the heart for the lifting up out of the humbling circumstances, goes before the due time of that lifting up, according to the promise. It is not so in every lifting up; the liftings up of common providences are not so critically managed; men will have them, will wait for them no longer, and God flings them in anger, ere they are prepared for them. Hos. xiii. 11: "I gave thee a king in Mine anger." They can by no means abide the trial, and God takes them off as reprobate silver that is not able to abide it, Jer. vi. 29, 30.

This due preparation consists in a due humiliation, Psa. x. 17. And it often takes much work to bring about this,

which is another point that we are very incompetent judges of. We should have thought Job was brought very low in his spirit by the providence of God bruising him on the one hand, and his friends on the other, for a long time: yet, after all that he had endured both ways, God saw it necessary to speak to him Himself, for his humiliation, chap. xxxviii. 1. By that speech of God Himself, he was brought to his knees, chap. xl. 4, 5. And we should have thought he was then sufficiently humbled, and perhaps he thought so too. But God saw a further degree of humiliation necessary, and therefore begins again to speak for his humiliation, which at length laid him in the dust, chap. xlii. 5, 6. And when he was thus prepared for lifting up, he got it.

There are six things, I conceive, belong to this humiliation, preparatory to lifting up.

1. *A deep sense of sinfulness and unworthiness of being lifted up at all.* Job xl. 4: "Behold, I am vile, what shall I answer Thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth." People may be long in humbling circumstances ere they be brought this length; even good men are much prejudiced in their own behalf, and may so far forget themselves as to think God deals His favours unequally, and is mighty severe on them more than others. Elihu marketh this fault in Job, under his humbling circumstances, Job xxxiii. 8—12. And I believe it will be found, there is readily a greater keenness to vindicate our own honour from the imputation the humbling circumstances seem to lay upon it, than to vindicate the honour of God in the justice and equity of the dispensation. The blindness of an ill-natured world, still ready to suspect the worst causes for humbling circumstances, as if the greatest sufferers were surely the greatest sinners, Luke xiii. 4, gives a handle for this bias of the corrupt nature.—But God is a jealous God, and when He appears sufficiently to humble, He will cause the matter of our honour to give way to the vindication of His.

2. *A resignation to the divine pleasure as to the time of lifting up.* God gives the promise, leaving the time blank as to us. Our time is always ready, and we rashly fill it up at our own hand. God does not keep our time, because it is not the due time. Hence we are ready to think His word fails; whereas it is but our own rash conclusion from it that fails. Psa. cxvi. 11: "I said in my haste, All men are liars." Several of the saints have suffered much by this means, and thereby

learned to let alone filling up that blank. The first promise was thus used by believing Eve, Gen. iv. 1. Another promise was so by believing Abraham, after about ten years' waiting, Gen. xvi.

If this be the case of any child of God, let them not be discouraged upon it, thinking they were over-rash in applying the promise to themselves: they were only so in applying the time to the promise; a mistake that saints in all ages have made, which they repented and saw the folly of, and they let alone that point for the time to come; and then the promise was fulfilled in its own due time. Let them in such circumstances go and do likewise, leaving the time entirely to the Lord.

3. *An entire resignation as to the way and manner of bringing it about.* We are ready to do, as to the way of accomplishing the promise, just as with the time of it, to set a particular way for the Lord's working of it; and if that be not kept, the proud heart is stumbled. 2 Kings v. 11: "But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place." But the Lord will have His people broken off from that too, that they shall prescribe no way to Him, but leave it to Him entirely, as in that case, ver. 14. He went down and "dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God, . . . and he was clean." The compass of our knowledge of ways and means is very narrow, as, if one is blocked up, oft-times we cannot see another; but our God knows many ways of relief, where we know but one or none at all; and it is very usual for the Lord to bring the lifting up of His people in a way they had no view to, after repeated disappointments from those quarters whence they had great expectation.

4. *Resignation as to the degree of the lifting up, yea, and as to the very being of it in time.* The Lord will have His people weaned so that, however hasty they have sometimes been, that they behoved to be so soon lifted up, and could no longer bear, they shall be brought at length to set no time at all, but submit to go to the grave under their weight, if it seem good in the Lord's eyes; and in that case they will be brought to be content with any measure of it in time, without prescribing how much. 2 Sam. xv. 25, 26; "If I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, He will bring me again . . ."

But if He thus say, I have no delight in thee; behold, here am I, let Him do to me as seemeth good unto Him."

5. *The continuing of praying and waiting on the Lord* in the case. Eph. vi. 18: "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance." It is pride of heart and unsubduedness of spirit that makes people give over praying and waiting, because their humbling circumstances are lengthened out time after time, 2 Kings vi. 33. But due humility, going before the lifting up, brings men into that temper to pray, wait, and hang on resolutely, setting no time for the giving it over till the lifting up come, whether it be time or eternity, Lam. iii. 49, 50.

6. *Mourning under mismanagements in the trial.* Job xlii. 3: "Therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not." The proud heart dwells and expatiates on the man's suffering in the trial, and casts out all the folds of the trial on that side, and views them again and again. But when the Spirit of God comes duly to humble, in order to lifting up, He will cause the man to pass, in a sort, the suffering side of the trial, and turn his eyes on his own conduct in it, ransack it, judge himself impartially, and condemn himself, so that his mouth will be stopped. This is that humility that goeth before the lifting up in time, in the way of the promise.

We proceed to consider the lifting up as brought about at the end of time, in the other world. And,

1st. A word as to the nature of this lifting up. Concerning it we shall say these five things:

1. There is a *certainty* of this lifting up in all cases of the humbled under humbling circumstances. Though one cannot, in every case, make them sure of a lifting up in time, yet they may be assured, be the case what it may, they will, without all peradventure, get a lifting up on the other side. 2 Cor. v. 1: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Though God's humble children may both breakfast and dine on bread of adversity, and water of affliction, they will be sure to sup sweetly and plentifully. And the believing expectation of the latter might serve to qualify the former, and make them easy under it.

2. It will be a *perfect* lifting up, Heb. xii. 23. They will

be perfectly delivered out of their particular trials, and special furnace, be what it will, that made them weary many a day. Lazarus was then delivered from his poverty and sores, and lying at the rich man's gate, Luke xvi. 22, and fully delivered. Yea, they will get a lifting up from all their humbling circumstances together. All imperfections will then be at an end, inferiority in relations, contradictions, afflictions, uncertainty, and sin. If it was long in coming, there will be a blessed moment when they shall get all together.

3. They will not only be raised out of their low condition, but they will be *set up on high*, as Joseph; not only brought out of prison, but made ruler over the land of Egypt. And they will be lifted up into a high place. Luke xvi. 22: "The beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom." Now they are at best but in a low place upon this earth; there they will be seated in the highest heavens, Phil. i. 23, with Eph. iv. 10. Often in their humbling circumstances they are obliged now to embrace dunghills; then they will be set with Christ on His throne. Rev. iii. 21: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me on My throne." Though they now cleave to the earth, and men say, "Bow down, that we may pass over you," they will then be settled in the heavenly mansions, above the sun, moon, and stars. They will also be lifted up into a high state and condition, a state of perfection. Out of all their troubles and uneasiness they will be set in a state of rest; from their mean and inglorious condition they will be advanced into a state of glory; their burdened and sorrowful life will be succeeded with a fulness of joy; and for their humbling circumstances, they will be clothed with eternal glory and honour.

4. It will be a *final lifting up*, after which there will be no more casting down for ever, Rev. vii. 16. When we get a lifting up in time, we are apt to imagine fondly we are at the end of our trials; but we soon find we are too hasty in our conclusions and the cloud returns. Psa. xxx. 6, 7: "In my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved. . . . Thou didst hide Thy face, and I was troubled." But then indeed the trial is quite over, the fight is at an end, and then is the time of the retribution and triumph.

5. There will not be the least remaining uneasiness from the humbling circumstances, but, on the contrary, they will have a *glorious and desirable effect*. I make no question but the saints will have the remembrance of the humbling

circumstances they were under here below. Did the rich man in hell remember his having five brethren on the earth, how sumptuously he fared, how Lazarus sat at his gate, and can we doubt but the saints will remember perfectly their heavy trials? Rev. vi. 10. But then they will remember them as waters that fail; as the man recovered to health remembers his tossings on the sick bed; and that is a way of remembering that sweetens the present state of health beyond what otherwise it would be. Certainly the shore of the Red Sea was the place that, of all places, was the fittest to help the Israelites to sing in the highest key. And the humbling circumstances of saints on the earth will be of the same use to them in heaven, Rev. xv. 3.

2ndly. A word to the *due time* of this lifting up. There is a particular, definite time for it in every saint's case, which is the due time, but it is hid from us. We can only say in general,

1. Then is the due time for it when our work we have to do in this world is over. God has appointed to every one his task, fight, trial, and work; and till that is done, we are in a sort immortal, John ix. 4, and xi. 9. That work is,

Doing work; work set to us by the great Master, to be done for the honour of God and the good of our fellow-creatures, Eccl. ix. 10. We must be content to be doing on, even in our humbling circumstances, till that be done out. It is not the due time for that lifting up, till we are at the end of that work, and so have served our generation. And it is,

Suffering work. There is a certain portion of suffering that is allotted for the mystical body; the head has divided to the several members their proportions thereof; and it is not the due time for that lifting up, till we have exhausted the share thereof allotted to us. Paul looked on his life as a going on in that, Col. i. 24.

2. When that lifting up comes, we shall see it is come exactly in the due time; that it was well it was neither sooner nor later; for though heaven is always better than earth, and that it would be better for us, absolutely speaking, to be in heaven than on earth, yet certainly there is a time wherein it is better for the honour of God and His service that we be on the earth than in heaven. Phil. i. 24: "Nevertheless, to abide in the flesh is more needful for you." And it will be no grief of heart to them when there, that they were so long in their humbling circumstances, and were not brought sooner.

Use 1. Let not then the humble cast away their confidence, whatever their humbling circumstances be; let them assure themselves there will come a lifting up to them at length; if not here, yet to be sure hereafter. Let them keep this in their view, and comfort themselves with it, for God has said it. Psa. ix. 18: "The needy shall not always be forgotten." If the night were ever so long, the morning will come at length.

2. "Let patience have her perfect work." The husbandman waits for the return of his seed, the merchant for the return of his ships, the store-master for what he calls year-time, when he draws in the produce of his flocks. All these have long patience, and why should not the Christian too have patience, and patiently wait for the time appointed for his lifting up?

Ye have heard much of the Crook in the Lot; the excellency of humbleness of spirit in a low lot, beyond pride of spirit, though joined with a high one: ye have been called to humble yourselves in your humbling circumstances, and have been assured in that case of a lifting up. To conclude: we may assure ourselves, God will at length break in pieces the proud, be they ever so high; and He will triumphantly lift up the humble, be they ever so low.

"BEFORE ABRAHAM WAS I AM."

JESUS, Thou well beloved Son,
 With the Eternal Father one,
 No age or time was ever known
 When Thou wast absent from His throne.

Ancient wast Thou when days began,
 Before Thou mad'st creation's plan;
 When boundless space with chaos hung,
 Thou wast the Father's loving Son.

From everlasting Thou hast been,
 To everlasting will be seen,
 The Father's pleasure and delight,
 The Spirit's glory fill'd with might.

Oh great, almighty, holy Three,
 Quicken my soul to live in Thee:

Ever adore a Triune God,
 Through Jesus and His precious blood. F. C.

TO WALK IN THE LIGHT.

A MORNING READING BY JAMES BOURNE.

JOHN xii. 35, 36: "Yet a little while is the Light with you. Walk while ye have the Light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have Light, believe in the Light"—walk with godly simplicity as little children. If the Lord shows you any danger, be sure you watch against that, stand off from it as far as you can, dread it, "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness." If you have ever had the Light, God has shown you in it His unchangeable love toward you, "without shadow of turning," and eternal. Now this you must hold fast when you get in darkness. If He hides His face, it is for sin, and to bring sin to light. Do therefore keep on confessing your sins; if you know not the particular sin, confess that you are in all your ways a sinner; and He will come again, and again, and again. Do not say He has never shown you any favour, or not so much as others, or any such thing.

It is said, some "believed not on Him, though He had done so many miracles before them." And thus the scripture was fulfilled: "He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart"—not that He does those things, but He withheld the light and the softening influence of His Holy Spirit. Others believed, but did not confess Him; for "they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." True faith worketh by love to God. But Jesus said, "I came not to judge the world, but to save the world." Now if we can get this into our hearts, that Jesus Christ is not a Judge, but a Saviour, we shall get great good by it; as when we have contracted guilt, to go to Him, and to remember that He is a Saviour, and to say, "Who knows but He will save me?"

Paul says (Rom. xiii.), "It is high time to awake out of sleep"—you have been in darkness a long while. It is time to awake, and "cast off the works of darkness." There are works that must be cast off: 1. Works from a legal spirit. 2. Carnal reasoning. 3. A self-justifying spirit. If you can find in your heart to leave your honour with the Lord, it will be better for you. Another work to cast off is an impatient, murmuring spirit when He is gone, that you may put on patience. Do not make a mistake here; this patience is a

most active principle, a sweet grace of the Spirit. Do not say, "None can quicken his own soul; I must wait till He comes." That is true in itself, but not as you may say it. For all fleshly works must be put off. The Word says, "Let us put on the armour of light. . . . Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof" (Rom. xiii. 11—14). This armour you must be defended with; and "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. v. 11). Do not say, "I cannot do this;" or, "I want comfort, and not reproof." All this is not the wisdom that cometh from above; it is not being as a little child. All these things must be cast off, and every idol that claims the heart before the Lord Jesus Christ.

SOME OF W. TIPTAFT'S LAST SAYINGS.

MY dear Philpot,—Since I saw you I had my soul blessed on the 11th, and also on the 13th; but I was particularly favoured last night in this study from six to near nine. I enjoyed reading, praying, and meditating, and could read such hymns with feeling as,

"Descend from heaven, celestial Dove."

When I went downstairs, I could ask to have the third Psalm read. I went to bed in a good frame of soul, and continued to meditate upon God's goodness and mercy towards me. How we need revivals! When the soul is blessed, how all things are right!

"My Jesus has done all things well."

When we enjoy any fresh proofs of God's mercy towards us, so that we can say it is a right way, whether in trials or afflictions—when faith works by love, Christ is precious, and we esteem Him above gold or silver, or any earthly good. How certain it is we must die! And what can be so highly valued as fresh tokens of our interest in the love of God? Hart says:

"More frequent let Thy visits be,
Or let them longer last;
I can do nothing without Thee,
Make haste, my God, make haste."

How we need the renewings of the Spirit of God to make us feel and know that we have never-dying souls! Death is sure

to come, and if fit for the great change, it will be a mercy to be well laid in the grave. What three powerful enemies we have in the world, the flesh, and the devil! and we cannot expect a smooth and easy path.

“ His love in time 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.”

How God will lead His people in such paths that they shall value restraining grace, as well as saving grace ! It is a mercy to be out of hell ; it is a mercy to have the face towards Zion, knowing how many great professors live to wear out their religion. “ As thy day, so shall thy strength be.” It is a very great mercy to have the heart made right by grace, and kept so. What a precious gift is the fear of God !

“ But still, as oft as troubles come,
Our Jesus sends some cheering ray ;
And that strong arm shall guide us home,
Which thus protects us by the way.

“ A few more days, or months, or years,
In this dark desert to complain ;
A few more sighs, a few more tears,
And we shall bid adieu to pain.”

You have had many severe attacks. I am glad that you were able to expound twice yesterday. You will find an afflicted body a heavy cross. It is through afflictions that consolations come ; you cannot separate them, 2 Cor. i. 4—6. “ I know, O Lord, that Thy judgments are right, and that Thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.” If we had no rod or crosses, we should not be the real children of God. This world cannot afford much happiness, for sin in ourselves and in those connected with us is sure to bring trouble.

I have thought it might be desired by some that I might have advice in London respecting my throat. May the Lord direct me right ; it is a mercy to wish to please God in what we say and do. I hope that the Lord may condescend to bless my pen to some of His dear people, if I am not to use my tongue. It is a great honour to be blessed in any way to the good of the Lord's people. What men publish when they are young they may want to burn when they are old. It is a great mercy to preach or write in that way that God will honour.

What a large increase at Allington ! I am glad to hear of

the Lord's blessing His word. Some, I hear, spoke of being blessed under you, and some encourage me that I have not spoken in vain at Allington. Ministers need encouragement as well as castings down. The loss of the voice is a serious loss to a minister. I had a strong voice for more than sixty years.

It is a solemn consideration that there are three parts to religion—the beginning, middle and end. We are certainly come to our last. May the Lord bless our souls abundantly with much of His presence. When sickness and old age come, the world has not its charms. I would rather have spiritual blessings than riches and honours. "I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree. Yet he passed away, and lo, he was not; yea, I sought him, but he could not be found. Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace." What a distinction David draws in the xxxviith Psalm between the godly and ungodly! Grace makes the difference. You have plenty to pray about, and so have I. May the Lord indite such prayers in our hearts that He will answer for our profit and His glory. It will be a year on the 26th of this month since I preached the last time at Gower Street chapel.

When trials and difficulties come, how we need patience and resignation! "Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." How death is using the scythe at Stamford, as well as in your church here. May the Lord bless the souls of His afflicted.

Yours very affectionately,

Oakham, Rutland, May 23rd, 1864. WM. TIPTAFT.

Obituary.

SARAH LAWTON, of Manchester, died on January 18th, 1911, aged 83 years.

At the age of seven years she was taken to Rochdale Road Chapel, Manchester, and to the Sunday School, where she had a vivid recollection of the late William Gadsby, and hearing his addresses in the Sunday School. I cannot say when a work of grace actually commenced, but she often mentioned that a hymn containing these words,

“ His secrets they shall learn,”

left a striking impression upon her mind, and she felt a desire that the Lord would graciously reveal to her His secrets. When comparatively young she went into domestic service, and at every opportunity would go to the house of God. She left Manchester for a time, but afterwards returned to a situation where she had both to attend to domestic duties and to serve in the shop.

It was whilst at this place that she was set at gospel liberty, the ministry of the late A. B. Taylor being much blessed to her. On telling him what the Lord had done for her soul, he gladly proposed her for membership, and she was warmly received by the church. She was baptised on the first Lord's day in January, 1852, and has been heard to relate many times what a good day it was; so much so that when she was raised out of the water she longed to cry out, “ Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name.”

In the year 1855 her master was taken ill, and she attended to him night and day until his death, in addition to following her household duties and attending to the business. For about twelve months she did not get a complete night's rest. When he died, in 1856, it was found that he had left her a prosperous business as a reward for her valued services. This she carried on for many years, at first by herself, and after marriage, with the assistance of her husband, our late dear father, who ultimately joined the church at Rochdale Road. They passed through many trials, amongst them the loss of two young children in 1863 and 1864; but she was favoured to see two sons and two daughters grow up, and give evidence of a work of grace upon their hearts, three of them witnessing before the church at Rochdale Road, and being joined with their dear mother in church fellowship. Needless to say, she had many sad and heavy trials, but I have heard her relate that many years ago, after the birth of one of her children, she was so very ill that the doctor told the nurse she was dying, and her husband had better be informed of it, when she spoke and assured the nurse that she was not dying, and she must not disturb her husband. She related afterwards that the Lord had applied to her with great power the following words: “ *The eternal God is thy Refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms;* ” and said so great was the

blessing that *it felt to her that the everlasting arms were underneath her.*

About the year 1876, the shop they lived at, and from which they derived their living, was sold over their heads, and they were obliged to leave it early in 1878. Towards the latter end of 1879 her husband was taken seriously ill, and died on March 12th, 1880, leaving her with four children. When left a widow, she was led to see how good the Lord had been in making provision for her time of need, as she had sufficient, with the aid of her children as they grew up and what had been saved by great frugality, to keep her from want to a good old age. She was frequently favoured with much nearness to the Lord, and would converse audibly with Him when she thought she was alone and in the night season, and was often heard pleading with, or blessing and praising, her heavenly Friend. Her favourite Psalm was the 71st, and she laid much stress on the third verse, "Be Thou my strong Habitation, whereunto I may continually resort," &c. She has been frequently heard to say that she felt she could tell the Lord everything, and was not afraid of His betraying her.

In December, 1909, and January, 1910, she had a very serious illness, and it was thought she could not possibly get better. She seemed at times to be at the gate of heaven, and full of the blessing of the Lord. However, she got downstairs again, to pass through the heaviest trial of her old age; as a short time after this her younger daughter, Alice Chaplin, was found to have a tumour in the breast, and in Sept., 1910, passed away, leaving a husband and seven children, one twelve days old.* She never recovered from this blow, but gradually drooped, until early in January this year she took to bed, never to come down again. She had begged of the Lord for many years that she might not linger long when unable to get about the house, and her request was graciously granted. On Jan. 14th she told me how good the first and last verses of hymn 740 had been to her that morning; and on my referring to the line,

"My treasure is Thy precious blood,"

and saying that was a good place to have one's treasure in, she replied with emphasis, "Yes." A day or two before she died she said to my brother, with her right hand raised:

* An obituary of this daughter appeared in Jan., 1911, "G. S."

“Midst all His vast concerns,
He does not me forget.” (659.)

She was enabled to “rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him,” and said many good things. When the end was not far off, her daughter asked her a question, when she replied, “I am very comfortable, both in body and mind;” and she passed away very peacefully on the 18th, resting wholly upon the blood and righteousness of a precious Redeemer.

It can truly be said of her that she was good to the Lord's poor, a woman of practical piety and generosity, not letting her left hand know what her right hand did. She deplored lightness and trifling and inconsistent conduct in professing Christians, would fearlessly reprove such as were guilty, and yet loved to encourage the feeblest lamb in Jesus' fold. She clung to the good old paths, and was highly esteemed by her brethren and sisters for the truth's sake.

ABRAHAM LAWTON.

LYDIA MARCHANT, a member of the church at Wirtemberg Street, Clapham, suddenly called from all below through a cycle accident, on March 8th, 1911, aged 24 years.

She was born at Walland Farm, Wadhurst, Sussex. She appears to have had serious impressions about her soul, death, and eternity, from early childhood, and was much more sober in youth than is generally found even in children of God-fearing parents. Her parents removed from Wadhurst to near the Dicker, and Lydia became a diligent attendant at Zoar Chapel Sunday School.

It is evident from a diary in which she partially entered her hopes and fears, commencing in January, 1904, that when in her 18th year the Lord had implanted His fear in her heart, and was leading her by His Spirit into a deep sense of her state as a sinner, and also revealing the Way, the Truth, and the Life to her soul. This diary refers to a letter (not now found), in writing which she evidently found much enlargement and sacred pleasure in telling what the Lord had done for her soul. It appears that when quite young she went to live in service at Eastbourne, where she attended the ministry of the late Mr. Baxter, and joined his church on February 4th, 1904. Several entries are made of special hearing times under his ministry. In one, she says, “Never did I have such a sight of my utter depravity by nature.

It brought proud nature down, yea, into the very dust, and made me feel my vileness. Truly I felt to be the chief of sinners. That grace must needs be rich and free, which from the pit could deliver me." After hearing a sermon from Ruth i. 16, she was much encouraged, and wrote, "The word was not only with power, but with much power and sweet assurance that I was a spiritual Ruth, and I could truly say, 'Intreat me not to leave Thee;' and as the evidences of grace were traced out, I felt I had them. Having been deeply exercised about joining the church, I felt under that sermon I could not stay back any longer, and the closing hymn, especially the last verse, was sweet and confirming:

"Just as I am, Thy love unknown
Has broken every barrier down;
Now to be Thine, yea, Thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come."

After joining the church she says, "I had another feast of fat things, yea, of wines on the lees well refined this evening. I had a humble hope that I was among that people whom the Lord had formed for Himself—what matchless condescension! Does not everything He does show something worthy of a God? The doctrine dropped like rain, the speech distilled like dew upon my spirit. Had I told my feelings to the minister, he could not have expressed them more clearly and fully. Then ought we not to show forth His praise in our daily walk and conversation, and seek His will in all we do? But alas, how often the light is put under the bushel through the fear of man. How much I fail! how short I come! O Lord, do not suffer me to be deceived; do make me right and keep me right, not fearing the frowns of mere professors and worldlings, or courting their smiles, but

" 'Content all honour to forego
But that which comes from God.' "

This diary contains many confessions of felt vileness, self loathing, inability and aversion to private prayer, hardness, wandering of mind, and want of power under the word; with lamentations of backslidings, and felt shame for wretched carnality, murmurings, rebellion, hard thoughts of God, self-pity, careless indifference, and want of fruitfulness in the things of the Spirit. "Oh that it was with me as in months past, when the candle of the Lord shone upon my head!" etc. On the other hand, grateful acknowledgments of the long-

suffering and forbearance of a merciful and faithful God, with many petitions to be upheld in His fear with a tender conscience, a watchful spirit, and preserved from bringing a reproach on the gospel. The diary also records seasons of refreshing and enlargement from the Lord, both in secret and the public means, with fervent desires to live in closer communion with Christ; and a few seasons of sacred, hallowed peace with God, when all fear of death was removed and she longed to be with Christ which is far better. Her own words on one of these occasions were, "Oh Lord! let the cry soon be made to me, 'The Master is come, and calleth for thee;' for with Thee I long to be, to behold Thy glory." There is reference to her father's illness and death; of whom she speaks with confidence as a godly man entered into the joy of his Lord, and earnestly desires the Lord may sanctify the stroke to them all; making those who are yet dead in their sins to hear that word, "Be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh;" and that those who are alive to their state, might be stirred up to more diligence and watchfulness, and found with their loins girded and lights burning, ready to meet the Bridegroom. It is evident much more had been written; as fully half the book is torn away. These entries end on April 26th, 1907, with reflections upon a sermon preached at West Street, Croydon, by Mr. Booth, from *Job xxviii. 11*: "He bindeth the floods from overflowing, and the thing that is hid bringeth He forth to the light;" which sermon was evidently a great help to her.

She was then living at Croydon, and in the autumn came to a situation at Clapham, with members of our church. Before accepting the position, she enquired particulars respecting the chapel, and was by no means favourably impressed, as she had some remembrance of the poor minister preaching at the Dicker when she was young. It was with some diffidence she agreed to come. Upon first coming to worship with us, she could hardly believe it was the same poor minister she had heard before; the word was with power upon her heart, and she was much subdued and overcome. Soon after coming among us she witnessed a baptising service. This was a special occasion: she was instructed, convinced, and subdued, all her prejudice was removed, and from this time she became exercised in mind about following the Lord in this ordinance, believing now that it was the only scriptural

way to the Lord's table and church fellowship. The Lord continued to bless the word to her soul, and she became increasingly attached to the ministry and friends; and this warm attachment in no way abated till the sudden and sad ending of her days. She now advised the church at Eastbourne that she could no longer continue a member with them. She was baptised with four others on April 26th, 1908; and the Lord blessed her much in coming to His table. She felt no more a stranger or a guest, but like a child at home. I was much pleased to see the spirit of humility, tenderness, constancy, and godly fear in which she walked. Young people do necessarily cause a minister some concern and often some sorrow; but Lydia was so staid and sober-minded that I rejoiced to see her walking in the truth.

But soon her health gave way, for though she was a fine, well built young woman, her throat and chest were weak, and some feared there were seeds of consumption in her constitution. She was away in the country for a time, and came back to another situation at Croydon. Here she had an illness in May, 1909, suffering with her throat and chest, when she wrote the letters appended:

"My dear Mr. and Mrs. H.,—You will be pleased to hear I am better, and dressed to-day for the first time. My dear mother has left me to-day. The doctor says my throat is still in a precarious state, and I must not think of work yet; so I do not know what I shall do, as I shall not be able to stay here if I cannot work. But though I cannot see an inch of my future steps, yet I feel (I hope it is not presumption) I must and can leave it all in the Lord's hands, who holds the helm and guides the ship. It has been a fiery trial, and is not ended yet; but I hope it has been profitable spiritually.

"I much enjoyed reading the first twenty chapters of Exodus yesterday morning. As I read, I felt to read my own experience. How marvellously God supplied Israel of old when in the desert and is He not the same God still?

" 'When His people have need,
His goodness will find out a way.'

His promise is, 'Bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.' Also, 'Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be.' Is He not a God of providence as well as a God of grace?—if we could only have more faith in Him, and trust Him more fully; but we are so unbelieving. I hope I have sensibly felt the supporting arm of God while I have been laid aside. It has been a severe affliction, with intense pain at times; yet how light compared with what Christ endured! I tremble at the thought of once more joining the world. My prayer is, 'When I join the world, be near me.' I have no

desire to go back into the world; I would fain have bid it all goodbye, and have done with all below. O to be for ever with Christ! Say you, 'Is He precious?' Yes, my dear friends, He is precious—precious in His birth; precious in His life, when He wrought out a perfect obedience to God for His people; precious in His death, when He laid down His life a ransom for many (and I trust unworthy me among them); precious in His resurrection, when He rose a Conqueror over hell and the grave; precious in His ascension, when He ascended into heaven, there to make intercession for us; precious there a Mediator between God and His people. He is precious in His blood, which atones all sin and purges the conscience from guilt; precious in His righteousness, which covers a vile sinner so well that not even by the piercing eye of God one blemish can be found. May it be our happy lot to stand thus arrayed at the last great day! Christ shall 'see of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied;' not one shall be lost for whom He died. Men kick against election, but they will not overthrow it. 'There is a remnant according to the election of grace;' and they shall be saved with an everlasting salvation, while the rest will be blinded and go to swift destruction.

“ Ah, but for free and sovereign grace,
I still had lived estranged from God,
Till hell had proved the destined place
Of my deserved, but dread abode.
But oh, amazed, I see the hand
That stopped me in my mad career;
A miracle of grace I stand;
The Lord has taught my heart to fear.’

“ Had I the talent and strength, I could write much upon the past three weeks, but I must forbear. My people here have been very strange to me; they wanted me removed, but the doctor said I was far too ill to be moved; he said it might kill me to take me any distance. I cannot tell what the issue may yet be, but do earnestly beg it may be for my good and God's honour and glory, and if His gracious will, my return altogether to Clapham. That is my home; I love our little Ebenezer, I love our pastor, I love the people; and my friends to whom I am writing share no small part of that love.

“ Your ever affectionate, LYDIA.

“ Croydon, May 7th, 1909.”

“ My dear Mr. and Mrs. H.,— . . . I am still improving, and get about again now, but have not started on my full work. I feel I must call it a 'blessed affliction,' for I have been much favoured.

“ ‘ Not a wave of trouble roll'd
Across my peaceful breast.’

It seemed as if the dear Lord left everybody else to visit me. Two days especially I dreaded the approach of footsteps to my bedroom; I wanted to be alone with the Lord. When I first took to my bed, that verse came with much sweetness and power:

“ Himself shall be thy helping Friend,
Thy good Physician, nay, thy Nurse;

To make thy bed shall condescend,
And from the affliction take the curse ;'

and it has been fulfilled to the very letter. How I did long to go up to the house of God yesterday, but was not permitted. How true it is, 'Man proposes; God disposes.' . . . I long for deeper realities; I long for that which the world can neither give nor take away. Ah, what a little heaven below my bedroom has been! how different now I am downstairs—nothing but business, hustle, and strife. My prayer still is, 'When I join the world, be near me;' for if left to myself, I shall soon become a prey to my evil lusts and sinful passions. O that I could live separate from the world, and live hourly to God's honour and glory and His people's good! I often have a desire to be made useful to the Lord's people. I could willingly spend and be spent for them; they are to me the excellent of the earth.

"Your ever affectionate, LYDIA.

"Croydon, May 10th, 1909."

After this, she came to live at Brixton for a time, and again worshipped with us. This situation also she had to give up after a few months, and having no home, went to live with a married sister at Cuckfield. Here begin the last links of that chain in Providence which brought the end. In the autumn of this year, 1910, she went as housekeeper to a lady at Staplefield. While here she attended a small Calvinistic place of truth, and found some food for her soul under Mr. Turner's ministry. From here she wrote the following letter:—

"Dear Mr. Midmer,—. . . Oh what a paradox I often feel to be! Sometimes feeling a sweet, melting frame of mind, and my heart goes out to the Lord, and I can say, 'Lord, Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest I love Thee.' Also, 'Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth I desire beside Thee.' No earthly object now attracts my heart or divides my choice; my idols are cast down, and Christ reigns supreme. He is more precious to me than gold, yea, than fine gold. I sit down under His shadow with great delight, and find His fruit sweet to my taste; and under these feelings I long to drop my hold of all earthly things, and depart 'to be with Christ, which is far better.' But alas, these golden hours do not last long, and down I sink as low as ever, feeling strangely cold and indifferent. . . . I do long to know more of a precious Christ; I cannot feed on husks. I long to feed on the paschal Lamb; there is nourishment and food. Before the lamb could be eaten or the blood sprinkled upon the door post and lintels, it had to be slain. Has not Christ, the spotless Lamb of God, been slain, that sinners might feed upon Him by a living faith, and have His precious atoning blood sprinkled upon their hearts and consciences?

"It is quite possible I shall not be here much longer, owing to death in the family. The Lord has seen fit to put me in the

pathway of trial since I have been away from Clapham, but with the trial has made a way of escape. . . .

“Yours very sincerely, LYDIA.
“Staplefield, Feb. 6th, 1911.”

We perceived the Lord appeared to be rapidly preparing and meetening her for her end. Her affections were set on things above, Christ was precious to her soul, with Him she held sweet communion, and lived upon Him by faith and in His fear. Her life seemed to us most to be desired; but in the midst of life we are in death. Death intervened in the family where she lived; and on March 1st she had been out in connection with another situation, and was returning home when, on Handcross Hill, she was violently thrown from her cycle (it being dark) by an elderly man straggling in the road. She received such serious injury to her head that she did not regain consciousness, but lay in Cuckfield Infirmary just a week, and passed away on March 8th, 1911. The first intimation we received of this sad event, was from a newspaper cutting, brought to us by one who knew her. This was much like the tidings of Jacob's sons, when they brought the coat and said, “Know now whether it be thy son's coat or no.” Our fears were soon confirmed. The inquiry proved the man saw her light approaching, but wandered in the middle of the road, and it appeared she tried to avoid him, but he again altered his course, and she collided with him. Thus she did not need another situation. The Lord took her; He knew what He would do. His thoughts are not as ours, or His ways as our ways; but He disposes all things after the counsel of His own will, and we, like Aaron, must hold our peace.

Her mortal remains were laid to rest near her father's, in the burial ground of Zoar Chapel, the Dicker, in the presence of a large, sorrowing family, of whom she was the youngest, and several Dicker and Clapham friends; and we firmly believe that her redeemed and happy soul is with the Lord. The will of the Lord be done. C. MIDMER.

REBECCA GOSDEN, on June 16th, 1910, who died at Brighton, aged 52 years, daughter of the late George Gosden, of Wilmington, Sussex.

Our dear sister was called to pass through great afflictions of body, having twice to undergo serious operations, which

she bore with great resignation. The first time we saw her on her death-bed, she said she felt all her religion gone, and death, as it were, staring her in the face. She said, "This is a solemn place to be in." She could see no evidences, and was much tried in her mind more or less all the time she was on her bed. She was in great sufferings of body as well for nearly eight months, and had to be in one position. It was most painful to witness. How we did grieve! but we could not help her. Her Bible and hymn-book were her companions. The hymns,

" 'Tis a point I long to know ; "

" Prepare me, gracious God ; "

she said had been her heart's desire for many years ; and she did hope that hers might be a triumphant death-bed, and that she might leave a good testimony behind, such as those of our sisters and brothers who have gone before. She sometimes had a little hope, but it was soon gone. She felt that passage sweet at one time : " Those that think upon His name ; " and said she had hoped she had had many good times under the word preached ; but now all seemed gone. She valued dear Mr. Popham's ministry and his visits, but was so grieved she could not tell him something more cheering ; she was so afraid of saying anything she did not feel. She had many kind friends to visit her in her long affliction, and some of them felt it would be well with her at last. In her younger days she was much attached to her late dear pastor, Mr. Vine ; and he used to say he felt a great union to her, and felt she was a vessel of mercy. Although she could say so little on the best things, her actions spoke what she really was. She was very kindly disposed, ever ready to help those in affliction, and witnessed many happy deaths ; and I think that made her hope hers would be the same. She spoke to me of the death of our late dear friend, Mr. Dunk, which she was privileged to witness, and said it was really beautiful ; that if her last end could be like his, how nice it would be ! She was taken away quite suddenly at last, and we can but hope that our loss is her eternal gain.

C. G.

True love cannot bear long parting, much less everlasting parting.—*R. Traill.*

"SOW THY SEED."—ECCLES. xi. 6.

"THE SOWER soweth the word" (Mark iv. 14). This seed is called by Matthew "the word of the kingdom" (xiii. 19); and by Peter, "incorruptible seed," whereby, when it is sown in the heart, a man is born again, and "liveth and abideth for ever," though all nature withers and decays. "For 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: but the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (1 Pet. i. 23—25). Therefore what a storehouse of life-giving seed is the Bible, the revelation of the Being and glory of Jehovah, our greatest treasure on earth! In those inerrant pages He is made known to men as the King of kings and Lord of lords, doing His will in the armies of heaven and among the children of men. Therein He manifests His abhorrence of false worship, and directs men to the only worship which is acceptable to Him, John iv. 24; Rom. xiv. 17, 18; He opens in beauteous brightness His love, wisdom, and power in the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ, Isa. ix. 6; 1 Tim. iii. 16; and He unfolds the doctrines of sovereign grace. Paul speaks of this sacred Book to Timothy as able to make him "wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus," and testifies to its divine inspiration and its use to the man of God. And the man of God must go to that divine repertory for his "doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," that he "may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. iii. 15—17).

In humble confidence that the teaching in our pages is drawn from that divinely inspired source, once more we ask our indulgent readers' support of the "Free Distribution Fund." On this ground may not our appeal be urged with boldness? There are many to whom our Magazine is sent, through your liberality, who probably have little or no means of hearing and reading any other faithful opening of the way of salvation; there are also some in our churches who are too poor to purchase it; and if in infinite condescension the Lord has need of it for the spiritual instruction and good of such, and the calling of some out of nature's darkness, may we not urge the claims of the Fund for freely distributing it? We would do so the more urgently in this dark day, lest our distinctive doctrine of the eternal, essential Sonship of Christ,

which may be called our denominational crown, be taken from us through the working of a hidden leaven in our midst. The Lord cautions all who have ears to hear, against letting go any truth, saying, "Remember how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast. . . . Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (Rev. iii. 3, 11). We therefore venture to be "much bold in Christ" to press on our kind contributors, and others who have not hitherto contributed, *our need of their liberal support*, in order to scatter the seeds of light and truth freely and abundantly. We would with them sow "the truth as it is in Jesus," and seek the rain of His Spirit upon it, to enable those who are on His side to separate themselves from all communion with error, that we "may be a new lump," as we are unleavened (1 Cor. v. 7).

We are thankful to say that our income this year has exceeded that of last year. In 1910 we received £61 3s. 9d., and this year £64 0s. 1d. is the sum sent us. For this we first render thanks to God, who has inclined the hearts of so many friends to extend their liberal support to the Fund, and next we thank them.

An early response to this appeal is desired in order that we may instruct our publishers to go forward. Contributions should be sent to Mr. Popham, Normandien, Surrenden Road, Brighton, by whom they will thankfully be acknowledged in the "Gospel Standard."

In my judgment God is expressly called *the Dweller in heaven*, not only that the faithful should attribute as much to His power as they ought to do, but also that they should bear in mind that God's power remains in perfect fulness in heaven, even when there is no hope left upon earth, or rather when their state is past all recovery; as if they were buried, or lost as it were in a maze. Therefore, there seems to be a covert antithesis between the troubled and confused state of the world and God's heavenly kingdom, from whence He so moderateth all things that He calmeth all the storms of the world as often as He thinketh good, cometh to the rescue when all is lost and forlorn, restoreth light by dispelling darkness, and raiseth them that are fallen and cast down. And this the prophet confirms by the words "lift up;" that is, when all things in the world fail us, we must lift up our eyes aloft, where God abideth evermore like Himself; howsoever the madness of men turns all things upside down here.

—*Calvin* on Psalm cxxiii. 1.

NOTICES OF DEATHS.

Died on March 5th, 1911, HANNAH LAVER, aged 71 years, widow of Mr. Laver, of Marks Tey, Essex. But little is known of the early days of our departed sister, but she was called by grace over 20 years ago; and after passing through much tribulation for some time, the Lord set her at liberty. She felt a love to the Lord's house and people, and a desire to be with them, and was baptised, and joined the church at Marks Tey. She was a woman with a weakly body, but was seldom absent from the services when the doors were open. She loved to dwell upon spiritual things; they were meat and drink to her soul. But to come to the last. She remarked to a neighbour on the Saturday evening (she lived alone) that she was feeling sadly, and was advised to stay in bed a little longer in the morning and rest. As nothing was heard of her, about 10 o'clock the house was entered, and she was found dead in bed, having apparently passed away without a struggle. "The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever." We believe our loss is her eternal gain. May the Lord gather another to take her place in the church militant.

M. W.

RICHARD GEORGE RANGER, died, July 6th, 1911, aged 63 years, for some years a deacon at Ebenezer Chapel, New End, Hampstead. My father was born of godly parents, but like all others, he longed after the things of time, of which he took his fill till about 40 years of age. Then the Lord laid him on a bed of affliction, and began the work of grace, and searched his heart. He was much cast down by the thought of eternal damnation, thinking it better to die than add more sins to his account; yet the Lord showed a little light, so that he could say, "He found me in a desert land;" and could enter into Christian's feelings when fleeing from the City of Destruction, crying, "Life, life." This was his desire, for all around and all within besides was eternal death. The Lord in His own good time gave him his desire. He had many promises spoken to his soul, and one verse of a hymn was sweet to him at that time:

"When first you bow'd before My feet,
Angels began to shout;
My work of grace I must complete,
I will not cast you out."

He was a firm believer in the doctrine of election; to him it was all security—like a ring he used to say, so he could not fall out. Though at times cast down, yet he had sweet lifts by the way. His one desire was that he might grow in spiritual knowledge; and many friends who used to visit him can testify that this was granted. His path for some years had been a trying one, having a diseased bone in the hand which prevented him from earning the bread that perisheth. Yet the Lord put it into the hearts of the friends, so that he was provided for until the end. He was ready and waiting to depart, resting on the all-prevailing name and finished work of the Redeemer.

EDITH CORNELIUS.

On August 13th, 1911, JULIA, aged 50, beloved wife of Charles KEDDLE, of Southsea, a member of Salem Chapel, Portsmouth, and daughter of the late Mr. Thomas Saving, Baptist minister, Winslow. She was sweetly sustained in her affliction, and had a happy exit from this "vale of tears" to the mansion prepared for His ransomed people. Her husband and children have lost a good wife and mother, but their loss is our dear one's eternal gain. "How blessed the righteous when he dies." A few particulars may (G.w.) follow.

CHARLES KEDDLE.

On September 6th, 1911, ELIZABETH BRANDON, the beloved wife of Alfred Brandon, departed this life after much suffering for seven months, aged 82. Her oft repeated words were, "Prepare me, gracious God," &c. The Lord kindly gave her a peaceful end.

A. B.

MARY ANN HAYNES, died, October 11th, 1911, at Tonbridge. For thirty-two years a member of the Strict Baptist chapel, Tonbridge. She was born at Sudbury, Suffolk. Her parents were God-fearing persons, and she was the subject of many prayers. Being one of a numerous family, she was placed out in early life. She was the subject of many convictions when quite young; but it was while living at Brighton the blessed Spirit deepened the work of grace in her heart, and made it manifest that she was a vessel of mercy. She was favoured to hear the late Mr. John Grace, and Mr. Wilkins, and it was through the ministry of the latter she was brought into gospel liberty, in which she was favoured to walk a considerable time. Soon after this she was baptised and received into the church. Her joy when she received the pardon of her sin was great; the company of God's people and the preached gospel were her chief delight. These were days of prosperity, but days of adversity for her were at hand. She married, and in the course of years was left a widow with three young children to maintain; her trials in providential things were many, and called forth many cries; yet the Lord was pleased to appear, and in remarkable ways supplied her needs. Coming to the last days, her health had been failing for some time. She was, however, much favoured at times, having a sweet sense of the love of Christ; at other times she experienced a season of darkness and consequent distress of soul, and could find no rest until the dear Lord shined again into her heart, or applied some precious promise to meet her case. When taken worse, she was heard to utter the words, "Precious Christ, precious Christ." Two days before her death she was in great distress of mind, and conflict with the enemy. She seemed to be in an agony of soul, and earnestly asked, "Am I a hypocrite?" Shortly after she repeated the lines:

"Were not Thy love as firm as free,

Thou soon wouldst take it, Lord, from me."

The day following, she exclaimed to one of her sons, "*Jesus is come, He is with me.*" Her face was radiant with joy, and bespoke the gladness she felt within. She has gone to be with Christ, "which is far better." "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace."

F. RUSSELL, Pastor.

THE GOSPEL STANDARD.

JANUARY, 1912.

MATT. v. 6; 2 TIM. i. 9; ROM. xi. 7; ACTS viii. 37, 38; MATT. xxviii. 19.

AN OPENING WORD.

DEAR READERS AND FELLOW-TRAVELLERS,—May peace be to you, "and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. vi. 23). As we enter the year just opened, it is, perhaps, seasonable to look back on that which has now closed. And as we do so, what reflections may force themselves on us, what memories may agitate us, what wounding sense of sins innumerable may humble us, what views of God's unbounded goodness to us may touch the springs of thankfulness in our hearts! On the one hand, we may feel, under the searching light of the Spirit, almost unable to bear the sight of our dreadful departures in heart from our best, our unchangeable Friend; on the other hand, as the same divine Teacher enables us to remember all the way He has led us, we shall stand amazed, and feel stirred to praise redeeming, preserving love, power, and faithfulness. Sin has not had the dominion it has struggled to obtain, though by its craft and power we have received much damage. The devil has not destroyed us, though he has pursued us, roared against us, and many times deceived us. And though to many the dealings of God in providence have been most solemn and heavy, wounding them in their deepest and tenderest affections, yet He has turned those very dealings into signs of His heavenly love (Heb. xii. 6, 7).

What, then, must be our first word, as we commence another year with the past in near view? Even the same as that with which the church opened Psalm cxv.: "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory, for Thy mercy and for Thy truth's sake." Worthy Object of praise! worthy song! unworthy singers! Yet, blessed be the God of all grace, He accepts the tribute of