

THE
GOSPEL MAGAZINE.

"COMFORT YE, COMFORT YE MY PEOPLE, SAITH YOUR GOD."

"ENDEAVOURING TO KEEP THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE BOND OF PEACE."

"JESUS CHRIST, THE SAME YESTERDAY, AND TO-DAY, AND FOR EVER." "WHOM TO KNOW IS LIFE ETERNAL."

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The Family Portion;

OR, WORDS OF SPIRITUAL CAUTION, COUNSEL, AND COMFORT.

"Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."—2 Cor. i. 4.

THE POWER AND THE PRECIOUSNESS OF THE
WORD.

"He sent His word and healed them."—PSALM cvii. 20.

WE are often struck with the timeliness as well as with the singular appropriateness of the Lord's mercies. How such go to prove that His eye is perpetually upon His people, and that He "remembers them in their low estate, for His mercy endureth for ever." The Sabbath services were over; and, as we often do, we felt that "the oil had ceased." The poor mind recoiled into itself, and one of the Sunday night conferences took place between Satan and one's wretched, unbelieving heart. In addition to the usual services of the day, tidings came at midday that a very elderly one—a former loved one of the congregation—was sinking. The case admitting of no delay, he was visited between the services. The scene was very touching on sundry accounts. Of that scene Satan afterwards took advantage, in that he brought vividly before the mind the break-up of the poor frail tabernacle, and all the painful ordeal of the severance of soul and body. The fear of death, in consequence, was felt afresh most vividly; the night and the morrow especially were dreaded. It was a gloomy season indeed; yea, "it was now dark, and Jesus was not come." How manifold were the fears that, after all, *the end* would be sad. The holding on and the holding out were presented to the mind with the dark and distrustful "If" and "How?" These fears were intensified by facts upon which we need not here enter, but of which the great enemy failed not to take advantage, intimating that another's wretched end, of very recent occurrence, would assuredly at last be one's own. It was, therefore, a time of weeping before the Lord; and, on retiring to rest at night, there was, at the silent midnight hour, the going over the ground afresh, reminding the Lord of where He had met with one, what He had done, and what He had pledged Himself to do. In the absence of present comfort and enjoyment, and in spite of dark forebodings and

gloomy apprehensions, there was the venturing to plead before the Lord His own most gracious promises of sustaining, upholding, and finally-delivering and all-conquering grace. The first blessed manifestation (nearly fifty years gone by) was specially pleaded, and the Lord was reminded that He was "without variableness or shadow of turning;" that "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." Rousing sundry times from but broken slumbers, this was again and again brought before the Lord. At day-dawn there was a feeling of gratitude, as is very frequently the case with us when we see renewed proof of the Lord's mindfulness of His covenant of day and night, summer and winter, seed-time and harvest. But the best remained. At an early hour our little one was brought as usual to our room; and, seeing the Bible upon the mantel-piece, where it had been left over-night, she said, "Shall I give you your Bible?" Climbing up upon a chair, she reached it down, and handed it to us. With this little loving act the mental cry went up, "Lord, give me a word, and one, too, if Thy will, that will embrace the little one." Immediately upon taking the book from the dear child, and just as the mental cry aforementioned had ascended from our poor oppressed heart, we opened upon the 32nd and 33rd chapters of Jeremiah. Turn to them, dear reader, and consider, under the circumstances, how sweet, appropriate, and blessed the language: "And I will give them one heart, and one way, *that they may fear me for ever*, for the good of them, *and of their children after them*: and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, *that I will not turn away from them to do them good*; but *I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me*. Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul." Again, how sweet was the plea, "Ah, Lord God, behold, Thou hast made the heaven and the earth by Thy great power and stretched-out arm, and *there is nothing too hard for Thee*. Thou shewest loving-kindness unto thousands, and recompensest the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them: the Great, the Mighty God, the Lord of hosts, is His name. Great in counsel, and mighty in work: for Thine eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men: to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings: which hast set signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, even unto this day, and in Israel, and among other men; and hast made Thee a name, as at this day; and hast brought forth Thy people Israel out of the land of Egypt with signs, and with wonders, and with a strong hand, and with a stretched-out arm, and with great terror; and hast given them this land, which Thou didst swear to their fathers to give them, a land flowing with milk and honey" (Jer. xxxii. 17—22).

Oh, reader, how precious and how powerful is the word of the Lord when thus spoken home to the heart, in His own rich and free and sovereign way, the more especially when He has given the relish and the appetite for it by a previous course of searching and discipline,

“bringing down the heart with labour,” giving the soul to realize its destitute, needy, and undone condition : and causing it to hunger and to thirst after the bread and water of life. Ah, yes, it is then the refreshed and astonished one can, with the utmost truthfulness, exclaim, “I found Thy Word, and I did eat it; and Thy words were unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart.”

The Bible handed us by the dear child was our preaching-Bible. Upon referring, however, to a smaller *fac-simile* size, which we commonly carry in the pocket, we find, by the margin, that portions of the self-same chapters had on two previous occasions been specially applied in the corresponding months of the years 1867 and 1868. In the 31st chapter and 34th verse we read, “And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for *they shall ALL know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them*, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” Over against this blessed promise, we find noted, in the margin of this pocket-Bible, “Forest Hill, 15/5/68. Graciously given in the night-season, after a time of precious pleading with the Lord for my children.”

Godly parents who may be, as we personally are, separated by many, many thousands of miles from those so near and dear to them, can only appreciate what the application of such words as the foregoing, in answer to the breathings enkindled in the soul for the spiritual and eternal well-being of the children the Lord, in His all-wise providence, has given. What a stay to the mind are such “way-marks” and “love-jottings,” as now and again presented both to eye and heart, the more especially when there is no human prospect of again meeting in the flesh the objects of this intense solicitude and soul-travail.

How blessed, under such circumstances, to fall back upon the covenant word of a covenant God with a “Thou saidst, I will surely do thee good,” and with a “Do as Thou hast said.” For mark you, dear reader, wherever and whenever there is a sealing home upon the heart and conscience of this or that word of the living God, with power and unction and dew and savour, that is distinctly and emphatically of and by the Holy Ghost. This is both His province and prerogative, and His alone. No reasoning or argument or persuasion of the creature can ever give this power or preciousness. By suggestion or reading, the word may seem suitable or appropriate; but the *application*—the *sealing home*—the *dropping into the heart*, is a totally different thing.

Dear reader, have you not found it so personally and experimentally? You have been, probably, in trouble or affliction, or possibly you have been in a state of painful anxiety and suspense about your own spiritual state and condition before God. You have met with this or that friend whose conversation has been most Scriptural. You could not gainsay a single argument they brought forward, or deny the suitability and appropriateness of a

single Scripture they quoted. Still, withal, there was *a something wanting*. Your case was not met so as to bring the relief you needed. How was this? The reasonings and the arguments, and even the Scriptures themselves, lacked *power*. It was this blessed, supernatural *power* that was wanting. This no creature could give. This the Bible itself fails to afford. It is the Holy Ghost, and the Holy Ghost alone, can supply this *power*. He, and He only, it is who takes of the Word, and applies it with His own demonstration, and living, loving, light-infusing *power*.

And now, dear reader, we would ask, have you not personally found, at least upon one or more occasions, in connexion with that spiritual intercourse with fellow-pilgrims, or that conversation to which we just now alluded, what we are about to state to be a fact? As already intimated, the reasoning, and the arguments, and the Scriptures quoted, all failed to convince and assure and set at rest. They left you where they found you, in point of peace, comfort, and satisfaction. Afterwards, however, when least expected, or perhaps at the moment you were writing bitter things against yourself, or construing the failure of all your friends' efforts to convince or comfort, as a sorry sign against you, and a hapless token there was no grace nor mercy in reserve for *your* case, at least, some passage or part of a passage out of the blessed Word has come silently, gently, persuasively upon the mind, distilling like dew, infusing a calmness, a peace, a serenity, in striking contrast with all of which you had previously been the subject. You stood amazed; you wondered what all could mean. The Scriptural portion that had thus been brought home so sweetly, so gently, and had produced such a meekness and mellowness, had not been mentioned in the aforementioned intercourse, nor, perhaps, had it either been read or thought of for months previously. And yet, now it was brought, not merely to the mind, but dropped into the heart in such a timely, although in such an altogether unsought or unlooked-for, manner. At the same time, it was the very word of all words most wanted—the Scripture of all Scriptures most suitable. So that, as you have silently sat, as it were, and gazed and wondered, you have mentally exclaimed, "Well, if this is really for *me*—if I may venture to call this promise *mine*, it contains all I want. In it is summed up and embraced all that I need, and all and everything which for years and years I have been looking and longing." The very mode of the application of the Word has shed blessed and personal light upon that Scripture. You looked upon it in a light now in which you had never viewed it before. "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass" (Deut. xxxii. 1, 2). Oh, that distilling—that rich and blessed bedewing—beloved! That heart-glow! That tender, melting, moulding, mellowing, special, indescribable something! What was

it, dear reader? What? Why, the life-giving, love-enkindling, sin-subduing, world-vanquishing, Satan-crushing power of the Holy Ghost. That which is as distinct from all human suasion or fleshly effort or free-will or duty-faith attainment, as light is distinct from darkness, and as utterly out of the power of the creature's grasp as the sun or the moon is beyond the reach of an infant's tiny hand.

Reader, whatever may be said to the contrary, in these flesh-exciting days, these are Gospel verities, and go to ratify and confirm the great fact, that "the Spirit quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing;" that it is "not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." Reader, the longer we live, the Lord being our Helper, the more determined are we to contend for these truths.

But, again, by the *application* of which we have spoken, the hearer or the receiver is made manifest as the rightful heir and lawful possessor, not of the word merely, but of all the benefits and blessings contained in it. Supposing such word had only once, twice, or thrice been thus applied, and presuming a thousand doubts, fears, and cross-questionings of that word, as to its special and divine application, had subsequently presented themselves, it would be of no matter. Those doubts and fears could by no possibility *undo* what the Lord had *done*. The change is in the *creature*, not in the *Lord*. If a person had once heard his name read out in a will, or seen it in plain black and white there, would it be necessary for that hearing or that seeing to be repeated again and again in order to convince or assure him? Would all the doubts or suspicions of his fellow-men succeed in arguing him out of what he had once personally heard or seen? Would not the power or pleasure or satisfaction attendant upon that once hearing or seeing leave an influence so fresh and so abiding as to defy contradiction or denial? The personal interest and the validity of the document would outvie all other considerations. The "*I*" and the "*mine*" would be supreme.

This simile or illustration, dear reader, fails to convey the full force and supernatural blessedness attendant upon that *special interest* and *living power* which the Holy Ghost conveys with and infuses into His own home-and-heart-spoken word. It is apprehended by *faith*, that faith which He only gives, and He only nourishes and maintains. We grant that because His word is purely spiritual, and because it has to do with the spiritual, supernatural, and eternal interests of the never-dying soul, there may from time to time—yea, for most part—be a veil drawn over that once, twice, or thrice specially-spoken and specially-applied word; still, as we have already said, it by no means interferes with, nor in any wise defeats, the promises or purposes of that word. Being spiritual and divine, it is beyond and altogether independent of the comprehension or the grasp of the creature or the poor fleshly mind of man.

Rightly understood, the seeming unlikelihood and apparent impossibility of certain hopes and expectations, grounded upon certain

promises, ever being fulfilled or coming to pass, only furnishes the stronger ground for hope and expectation, in a spiritual point of view, of fulfilment and confirmation in the Lord's own good time and way. The more closely the reader analyses the 11th of the Hebrews, the more clearly will he see, in connexion with the varied cases given there, how that it was, in spite of all human probabilities and in the face of apparently insuperable difficulties, the Lord fulfilled His own gracious promises and accomplished His own covenant designs. Stamped upon the blessed details in that eventful chapter, as illustrative of the power and operations of faith, is that verse :

"Faith, precious faith, the promise sees,
And trusts to Christ alone,
Laughs at impossibilities,
And cries, 'It shall be done.'"

We have said that the once hearing read or seeing for one's-self one's own name in a last will or testament satisfies, and leaves the interested party beyond the reach of doubt or uncertainty in the matter. This fact in natural things holds good in spiritual things, while that *power* of which we have spoken is realized. There is no room in the dear child of God for fear and misgiving, as long as the Spirit is pleased to witness with his spirit that he is an heir of God, and a joint-heir with Jesus Christ. It is not until the savour subsides, the dew is dried up, and the power is withdrawn, that Satan and an unbelieving heart conspire together to endeavour to *unsay* what the Lord has *said*, and to *undo* what the Lord has *done*. All this is allowed for the *trial of faith*, and for the more full and creature-humbling discovery of what the recipient of such great and distinguishing mercies is in himself considered. He must come down into the valley, in order to know yet more fully and unquestionably who it was that called him up into the mount and communed with him there. Paul must have a thorn in the flesh, after he had been caught up into the third heaven, lest he should be exalted above measure, through the abundance of the revelations.

However, in proof of the pitifulness and compassion of our God, and in distinction from that state of things of which we have spoken about *men* and *their* wills, the Lord is pleased to vouchsafe to His dear children a sight again and again of *their* title-deeds. He knows full well with what they have to contend as the occupants of a body of sin and death. He knows the wilderness through which they are passing, and the threefold enemy with which they have perpetually to contend, the world, the flesh, and the devil. He knows that every spiritual and eternal blessing is apprehended by *faith*, and in spite of all the enmity, ignorance, and perpetual resistance of the flesh; and, therefore, in condescension and pity, He is pleased to *renew* His mercies and *repeat* His visits. He reveals Himself, and admits again and again to an inspection of the title-deeds. That eminent servant of God, Mr. HART, blessedly touches this chord when, in his piece entitled, "The Author's own Confession," he says :

“This promise oft I call to mind,
 As thro’ some painful paths I go;
 And secret consolation find,
 And strength to fight with ev’ry foe. | “And oft-times when the tempter sly
 Affirms it fancied, forg’d, or vain,
 Jesus appears, disproves the lie;
 And kindly makes it o’er again.”

Reader, what say you personally to these simple, old-fashioned verities, in these days of soul-deception, vanity, and mere surface-work? We hear a great deal about “the *higher* life,” what about “the *inner* life,” or the daily, hourly operations of that Spirit-infused and Spirit-maintained power that lives and moves and has its being in total distinctiveness from all that characterizes or appertains to the flesh? That saying, “The Spirit quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing,” is by no means confined to the infancy or early stages of grace, but it extends to the whole of the time-state of the child of God. His flesh, or his first-Adam nature, is not in the leastwise a *help*, but a *hindrance*, all the way onward and homeward. The flesh is ever in deadly antagonism to the Spirit—the old nature and the new nature are as distinct and as opposed the one to the other as light and darkness, heaven and hell! Hence we have ever reason to beware of any state, position, or feeling in which we vainly imagine the flesh is improved or become more reconciled to the dispensations of God, either in His providence or grace. Be assured, dear reader, that Scripture will hold good all the wilderness through and down to the very brink of the Jordan: “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” (Gal. v. 17). But what a mercy that that other precious portion shall equally hold good likewise—yea, to the self-same streamlet of the Jordan: “Sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace” (Romans vi. 14).

Speaking of this daily conflict—this ceaseless warfare between the two natures in every child of God, the old Adam and the new Adam, dear HART again sings:

<p>“Strong nations now possess the land; Yet yield not thou to doubt; With arm outstretch’d, and mighty hand, Thy God shall drive them out. “Not all at once: for fear thou find The rav’nous beasts of prey Rising upon thee from behind, As dangerous foes as they. “By little and by little, He Will chase them from thy sight; Believers are not called, we see, To sleep or play, but fight. “Spiritual pride, that rampant beast, Would rear its baughty head; True faith would soon be dis- possessed, And carelessness succeed.</p>	<p>“Corruptions make the mourners shun Presumption’s dangerous snare; Force us to trust to Christ alone, And fly to God by prayer. “By them we feel how low we’re lost! And learn, in some degree, How dear that great salvation cost Which comes to us so free. “If such a weight to ev’ry soul Of sin and sorrow fall, What love was that which took the whole, And freely bore it all! “O when will God our joy complete, And make an end of sin? When shall we walk the land, and meet No Canaanite therein?</p>
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<p>“ Will this precede the day of death ? Or must we wait till then ? Ye struggling souls, be strong in faith, And quit yourselves like men.</p>	<p>“ Our dear Deliv’rer’s love is such, He cannot long delay ; Meantime that foe can’t boast of much Who makes us watch and pray.”</p>
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Dear reader, peace be with thee. Remember for thy comfort, “ Soon He that shall come will come, and will not tarry.” We grant that, looking at the times in which we live, and the aspect of Christendom generally, whether it be in the Church of England so-called, or out of it, things wear a gloomy—yea, a most solemn—aspect indeed. We acknowledge that, personally, our heart sinks, and we mentally exclaim, “ What can possibly be the end of all these things, when the enemies of God and of His truth seem to be having all their own way ? ” Then we remember the record in the 73rd Psalm, where Asaph stood, as it were, aghast, as he contemplated the success and the prosperity of the wicked, “ until,” he says, “ I went into the sanctuary of God ; then understood I their end. Surely Thou didst set them in slippery places : Thou castedst them down into destruction. How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment ! they are utterly consumed with terrors. As a dream when one awaketh ; so, O Lord, when Thou awakest, Thou shalt despise their image ” (Psalm lxxiii. 17—20).

Ah, believer, here is our stronghold, the Word of the living God. Let that Scripture, we pray you, be more than ever your watchword, “ To the law and to the testimony : if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them ” (Isaiah viii. 20). Here is the test. Consider and seek increasingly to be equipped in the Gospel armour, as described in the last chapter of the Ephesians, and ever tenaciously grasp and fearlessly wield “ the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.” Ah, here, and here alone, will you successfully contend. The poor blinded Papist and the equally-blinded Ritualist (the Apists, as they have been well called, for they do seek to copy the Romanist, although they lack the honesty to avow it, or to go to their own place, which is Rome), such, we say, fall before the Word of the living God. The more they *resist*, the more you *insist*. Abide by the Word. Neither add to nor take from the Word. They despise it ; they hate it.

Reader, manifold are the proofs of the hostility of these men against the Word of God, the believer’s charter. Keep them in view, we pray you. Do not for a moment lose sight of it. Here, we repeat, is your stronghold. Oh, think of that blessed word, in which instrumentally centres all your hopes, and upon which rests all your expectations—that word which tells so sweetly and so precious of Him who is all your salvation and all your desire, and respecting which He Himself said, “ Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life ; and they are they which testify of me.” Think, we say, of that self-same precious Word being held in contempt,

and being treated with disdain, by men who have nominally and by oath given in their adherence to that Word.

This simple fact speaks volumes, and proves beyond a doubt that all their sayings and doings—their services and sacrifices—are in and of the flesh. They neither emanate from nor partake of one particle of that true spiritual, living power which is of the Holy Ghost and the Holy Ghost alone, and which springs out of and is inseparable from that divine life of which He only is the Author and Maintainer. Their services are a mockery and a cheat; and, if so be their eyes are not opened ere they are called to their great account, notwithstanding all their self-satisfied observances, the great Judge of quick and dead will then say, "I never knew ye. Depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

Doubtless many will charge us with a want of charity for this testimony; but we read, "By their fruits ye shall know them;" and we unhesitatingly pronounce any fruit that is not closely and inseparably identified with the Word and the testimony of the living God to be that of the flesh, and not of the Spirit. It is a bringing forth "fruit unto death" (Rom. vii. 5), "and not unto life eternal" (John iv. 36).

St. Luke's, Bedminster, June 27th, 1874.

THE EDITOR.

LOVE is a desire to communicate good, the chiefest good, unto the creature; but mercy is to pull the creature out of a depth of *misery*. So that mercy superaddeth this to love, that it respects the creature in *misery*. Parents, they love their children simply as they are their *children*; but, if they be fallen into misery, then love works in a way of *pity*. It is not mercy only, but the Apostle also mentioneth *love*; because that mercy only respecteth *misery*, as I said before; it goes no further, simply *as* mercy, than the relieving those that are in misery.—*Dr. Goodwin*.

LOVE is a perfection of a higher strain than *mercy*; mercy may be prevalent where love is absent. This [goodness of God], under the name of His *love*, is rendered [or given as] the sole cause of the redeeming death of the Son; it was to "commend His love," with the highest gloss, and in so singular a manner that had not its parallel in nature, nor in all His other works, and reaches, in the brightness of it, beyond the manifested extent of any other attribute. It must be only a miraculous goodness that induced Him to expose the life of His Son to those difficulties in the world, and death upon the cross, for the freedom of sordid rebels. His great end was to give such a demonstration of the liberality of His nature as might be attractive to His creatures, remove their shakings and tremblings, and encourage their approaches to Him. It is in this He would not only manifest His love, but assume the name of *love*. By this name the Holy Ghost calls Him in relation to this good will manifested in His Son. "God is love." In this is manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent His only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. He would take the name He never expressed Himself in before. He was Jehovah, in regard to the truth of His promise; so He expressed Himself of old. He is goodness in regard to the grandeur of His affection in the mission of His Son; and therefore He would be known by the name of LOVE now in the days of the Gospel.—*Charnock*.

Wayside Notes.

LINK BY LINK.

“Lo, these are parts of His ways.”—JOB xxvi. 14.

IN our two previous monthly Notes we have been led to consider “God’s way of saving sinners,” and “His dealings with them when saved,” and it seems to us that the subject of His special providence over His children fits into this line of things as “parts of His ways” whose plans are perfect and stamped with infinite wisdom and power; and the subject of His special providence is one very precious to the writer, because his life has been made up of such interpositions, and he feels that he is, at this moment, a monument of God’s goodness and mercy. May the Lord the Spirit, then, direct us to write experimentally such things as shall tend to comfort any of His children who are under a cloud and bring honour to His own name.

Now, the *universal* providence of God is generally acknowledged. It is true there are some miserable creatures on earth of whom it may be written, “The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God,” and, verily, he must be a fool who, surrounded by innumerable tokens and evidences of the existence of a Supreme Being, denies that there is a God. Such, indeed, must be without reason. But with these we have nothing to do. But, while many believe in the universal providence of God, they do not seem to realize His *special* providence. They believe that He is employed about the whole, but they do not believe that He enters into the minute circumstances of our lives, and deals with the particulars and details thereof. But such teaching will not do for the children of God, who are feeling daily and hourly that God is at work for them in providence and grace, ordering all for their eternal good, and that every link in the chain of their progress to heaven is worked and welded by His Spirit. We know there are objections to this position, and it may be as well to refer to one or two of them before going immediately into the subject

First, a common objection to the special providence of God is that, if God overrules all our actings, we are deprived of our liberty, and are not free agents. As far as we feel, knowing not a little of human nature, we consider it a mercy that we ARE, in this sense, deprived of our liberty, and are not free men; for sure we are, if left to ourselves, our liberty would but prove a cloak of licentiousness, and our free will would end in our destruction. I would much rather have infinite wisdom arranging and carrying out all for me than finite weakness attempting and spoiling the work; and in the Lord’s hands I feel safe, but in my own in constant danger.

Another objection raised is that God will not alter the laws of nature to please the whims and fancies of any one. Ah, but we respond, without hesitation, He will control the wind and waves, and rule the elements, when His people are in danger, and they know what it is, again and again, to see the Lord’s hand in their signal deliverance. Elias was a man subject to like passions, and in a time of drought, when all nature was burned up and human sustenance failed, he prayed earnestly that it might rain, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth brought forth her

fruit. And when God, in His anger, sent fire among the Israelites, which consumed "even the uttermost parts of the camp," the people cried unto Moses; and, when Moses prayed unto the Lord, the fire was quenched. And when our Lord rebuked the wind and the waves, and "there was a great calm," the disciples said, "Who is this, that the winds obey Him?" And is not the Lord the same now as then? Doth He not still measure the waters in the hollow of His hand, and gather the wind in His fists? Yes, in this point, as well as every other, He is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Have you ever heard of Samuel Hick, whose faith in God was so strong, and his believing prayers were so successful? Upon a day fixed for the meeting of a goodly number of the Lord's people Samuel had got his corn ready to be ground; but the windmills, in consequence of a long calm, stretched out their arms in vain to catch the rising breeze. In the midst of this death-like stillness, Samuel carried his corn to the mill, and requested the miller to unfurl his sails. The miller objected, stating that there was "no wind." Samuel, on the other hand, continued to urge his request, saying, "I will go and pray while you spread the cloth." No sooner had he done this than a fine breeze sprung up, the fans whirled round, the corn was converted into meal. A neighbour, who had seen the fans in vigorous motion, took also some corn to be ground; but the wind had dropped, and the miller observed, "You must send for Samuel Hick to pray for the wind to blow again."

Another objection raised to His special providence is, "Oh! these things which you call providences are but apparent accidents." We emphatically reply, No such thing. There can be no accidents with God—no chance work with Him. His plans are perfect, and every part of His way marks His divine sovereignty and power.

But not to refer to any other objections, but to go into the subject itself, we observe that the Lord has first a fixed purpose concerning each and all of His saints, and then He works in His own sovereign way to effect it. For instance, it was the Lord's purpose to make Moses (humanly speaking) the deliverer of His people from Egyptian bondage and their leader through the wilderness. What! that little babe, hidden away in an ark of bulrushes, in the midst of the flags, by the river's brink, become leader of God's people? How absurd! And yet, by a train of events, God-like and remarkable, it was accomplished.

Again, look at Joseph. It was the Lord's determination that he should be the greatest man but one over all the land of Egypt. What! that young man who, hated of his brethren, was cast into an empty pit, where there was no water, and afterwards sold to a company of Ishmeelites, become so great a man? How absurd! And yet we know how step by step in a remarkable way the Lord accomplished His purpose.

To mention one more case—that of David. It was the Lord's will that David should be the anointed king of Israel. What! that shepherd boy, who kept his father's sheep at Bethlehem, and who was afterwards disdained by the great champion of the Philistines, who declared that he would give his flesh to the fowls of the air and to the beasts of the field—this youth become king of Israel? How absurd! And yet it was accomplished, *link by link*. God wrought His purpose, and none can withstand His mind and will.

And is it not the same in connection with our little history, beloved? Take the case of one of His own SENT ministers. I dwell upon the

word *sent*, because there are a multitude of under-shepherds whom the Lord has never sent into His vineyard, and I cannot pretend to describe the way in which they came there. But with His own the Lord intends that His servant shall become a mouthpiece for Him to His people. "See," He says, "I have this day set thee over the nations, and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant." But His servant struggles against it, and says, "Ah, Lord God, behold, I cannot speak, for I am a child." Again the Lord removes all stumbling-blocks in the way, overthrows all obstacles, and, putting words into his mouth, effects the purposes of His love and favour.

Or the case may be the very contrary to this. His servant thinks that he is calculated for a foremost position in the Church of Christ, and that he is gifted to speak in the name of the Lord. The Lord does not think so. He knows that such a course is fraught with difficulties little calculated upon by His servant. So He blows upon his designs, hinders his plans, and brings him to nothing. Of course, there is a kicking and plunging against God's will in the matter, and he still thinks that it would have been well had he had his own way. Ah, we little know what the Lord has saved us from, and the unseen pits He has preserved us from falling into. He knows what is best for us. Oh, to let Him work in His own sovereign and wise way!

But not merely with regard to His ministers, but to the very least and lowest of His children, is He the same gracious and wonder-working God. As in nature, so in grace; from the grandeur of the up-heaved mountain to the tiniest leaflet which grows at its foot, we see that the one is as perfect as the other. So, not merely in the greater work of salvation, but in the little details of the humblest Christian's life, the Lord is there. He knows all about His hidden one. Yes, He who knew and pointed out the very lodging of Simon the tanner, whose house was by the sea-side, knows the very chamber of His lowly one, and the very garret of His poorest one. And a consciousness of this will bring the Christian to acknowledge, in the details of the hour, "Now, it is the Lord who has done this for me; it is the Lord who has ordered this matter for me. I could not have done this thing or the other thing of myself. No, I am sure He has been secretly at work for me. He has led me in this particular case. Apparently unworthy as it may seem of His divine notice, yet has He stooped to be gracious. Oh, what a merciful God is mine!"

The same gracious hand is seen and felt in times of difficulty and trial. We believe it is often after this wise. His poor foolish child has got unwittingly into some entanglement. He did not mean to do so; but the world is more than a match for him, and he is beaten. To extricate himself he feels to be simply impossible. Another step forward in creature strength would only make matters worse. All he can do is to cry to the Lord, just as the bleating lamb does when it has lost its dam. The Lord is looking on. He hears that cry, and recognizes the voice of His own child. And He orders things that shall extricate him from that entanglement! Everything now is made to give way. The opposition, sharp as it has been, is turned from him, and his very enemies are made at peace with him; and the Lord brings His helpless child out with such peculiar working and marvellous power that he sees at once

that it is the Lord. Acknowledging this with an overwhelming gratitude, his faith receives a vigour which it did not possess before.

Beloved, do we portray truthfully in this matter? Does what we have said fit into your experience of things in connection with God's special providence?

It is the same, also, not merely with regard to difficulties we get into from our own folly, but with dark mysterious providences into which He leads us. For example, a breach may be made in a family, and we say, Why was that dear one taken? or, Why am I called to the misery of this unutterable blank? Ah! but in such grief we are only thinking of self. If we think of loved ones, who have died in Christ, whose memory is so dear to us, we may well reflect that, while we are the losers, they are the gainers, and that

"Jesus can every breach repair,
And wipe our tears away."

As well as the Lord's takings, there are also the Lord's *checks*, which are "parts of His ways," fraught with wisdom and goodness. Shall we explain what we mean by the Lord's checks? The child of God is bent upon an object. The Lord knows that it is not for his good, but would bring evil upon him, unseen and little calculated upon. So he prevents him, by some means, from obtaining it, turns his thoughts into another channel, leads him into a contrary road, or otherwise diverts him from the object. Thus does He, in a signal and sovereign way, hinder His child from gaining the evil which he thought good, and will afterwards prove to him how much better it is as it is than as he would have had it. Yes, the Lord's *checks* are full of love, and His orderings ever work for our eternal good.

While thinking of these things, the eye has caught a precious passage of the Word, which comes with that freshness and power which we so much love to realize? It is this: "Thou preventest him with the blessings of goodness" (Ps. xxi. 3); that is, "Thou dost hinder him;" or, what is, perhaps, a better rendering, "Thou goest before him." Oh, how sweetly true is this, beloved. As He went before the children of Israel, guiding them by the pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night, so He leads now, although unseen.

And then, in connection with the Lord's going before, has not some little *link* been the turning-point of our life's history? It seemed a trifle at the time, but it was full of deep purpose, and pregnant with blessing, and we have felt it was all by the Lord's direction and arrangement. Yes, most Christians can say, "It was *so*;" that little incident, that apparently trifling circumstance, turned the whole current of my concerns, and led me in the way of providence, into a different pathway altogether than I was carving and cutting out for myself. And the same applies to grace as providence. It was being directed to such and such a spot, the hearing of a certain minister, or the sealing home of some precious portion, that brought about all those changes that have resulted in my knowledge of divine things and present standing in grace. Oh, these are things we love to watch. And the little links in providence and grace are just like Himself, full of love and mercy. Well may the Prophet Nahum say, "*Watch the way.*" And it is precious and seasonable when we do meet with some kindred spirit, and talk together of these "parts of His ways," which bring out the

purposes of His love and favour towards us. What mercies we have to recount, and how we can tell of some very significant *standpoints*, which have turned the tide of our affairs into wonderful providences on our behalf. Ah, I do believe that, in some way unknown to us in time, in the future we shall have a clear sight of the whole way the Lord has led us; and then shall we see how wisely all has been ordered—not a footprint wrong, not a link out of place, but all and every step interwoven by a Master hand.

And what are the results which should flow from the knowledge of the fact of the special providence of God to His children? Oh, should it not tend to keep them from over-wrought care concerning the things of time? How blessedly the Lord shows us this in His sermon upon the mount. Surrounded by Jews, whose inordinate grasping of money was and is well known, He says, "No man can serve two masters"—that is, masters who are contrary the one to the other—"for either he will hate the one, and love the other, or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink," &c. Ah, dear careworn one, is it as a puzzle to you? and are you thinking of the passage, "If any provide not for his own, he is worse than an infidel?" And are you feeling what an impossibility it is for you not to care and be careful for the things of this life, when your surroundings are so full of pressure and pain? But mark, for your comfort, our Lord does not say, Take no *care* for your life; He says, "Take no *THOUGHT*;" that is, let not anxious corroding thought be mixed with your care; let not distracting thought draw you down to earth; be not cumbered—that is to say, embarrassed and entangled—about many things, as was Martha. "Behold the fowls of the AIR" (not such as are brought up in houses, not those which are supported by human care, but by the Lord's care); "they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?" Ye, for whose salvation I will do all that is needful, will ye trouble about the lesser concerns of your life and body, which body is mine, and which I will preserve to the appointed time for it to be laid in the grave to await its glorification with the soul? And how consoling is this view of the Lord's care. I am in the midst of trouble, or suffering, or sorrow, but the Lord knows all about it. He hears my cry, He sees my tears, He knows my strugglings. Oh, yes—

"Jesus, my Shepherd, Lord, and Chief, | And not a worm or shaking leaf
Will shelter me from ill, | Can move but at His will."

And has not that which follows the part referred to in our dear Saviour's sermon on the mount shown us that He so enters into the details of the Christian's daily wants that He not merely *feeds* them, but *clothes* them? "Why take ye thought for *raiment*? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin. And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?"

We have been in company with some who have taken upon themselves to ridicule William Huntington, because he prayed for clothing when he needed it, and had faith to believe God would supply his need; and he

gives instances of His doing so in a marvellous and miraculous way. Let such doubters dispute our Saviour's assertions alluded to if they can; God's dear people know what it is to attribute their very clothing of the body to the Lord's goodness.

Well do we recollect a dear man of God, an old writer for the GOSPEL MAGAZINE, long since gone home to glory, telling us that when first the Lord laid upon him the work of the ministry, and led him into it, he had to sacrifice his daily calling, and with it his daily bread. But did He leave him and forsake him? Oh, no. He told us that, upon one occasion, during a very severe winter, when he needed an overcoat to keep him warm, but had not a penny towards purchasing one, he laid his want before the Lord, and on the following Sunday morning, ere he trudged forth across the snow to the distant chapel, a new overcoat was placed on a chair in his room, with an indication that it was for him, and that from that day to the one when he mentioned the fact to us, a period of many years, he never knew the instrument God employed to supply his need; but the coat fitted him admirably. "Shall He not clothe you, O ye of little faith?"

And then the providence of God brings out *His divine power*. "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" Oh, we have indeed need to look to His power more and more. While experiencing, the other day, a wretched deadness to the full, and one's total inability to say anything about divine things unless the Lord would break the spell, those words of the Apostle Paul came with unction: "And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling." What! did the bold Paul feel as I feel? Do others of the Lord's family, whose mountain seems to stand so strong, do they also experience such fear and trembling? Yes, they do. But, mark, it is the Lord's way of bringing them to realize what the Apostle adds—"that their faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." This is what we want—divine power, felt and realized. And, as well as this, how the providence of God brings out the special preservation of His saints. "For the Lord forsaketh not His saints, they are preserved for ever." Oh, such a declaration as this ought to give us great comfort and confidence. To the same effect is the covenant promise, "The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever." No perishing by the way, no failure in the possession, "for He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways."

And then there are two outgoings of the soul which the fact of the special providence of God bids flow forth, namely, *wrestling* and *trusting*. Yes, providence is immediately connected with prayer. "Ask, and ye shall receive, seek, and ye shall find, knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Three of God's *shalls* to encourage one in the exercise. But even the exercise can only be of the Spirit's power. Nor does the display of the providence of God depend upon it. Oh, no. While this is oftentimes His way to answer our wrestlings at a throne of grace, and to encourage us to pray to Him, for He never said to the seeking seed of Jacob, seek ye my face in vain; at the same time He works as a Sovereign, and there are thousands of things that the children of God have and enjoy that they never prayed for; for verily, in their ignorance, they know not what to ask. But the Lord gives over and above their askings; and although His ear is always open to their cry, and He is ready to help them, He is wonderfully helping beyond all this. Still, this fact does not lessen the value of prayer, or in the leastwise discourage it. No; far-

otherwise. The Lord does signally work in answer to prayer, and is greatly moved by His child's wrestlings at the throne of grace. Pray on, wrestle on, then, dear reader, and the Lord will give thee blessing if really needed and for your good.

And we have said, also, that the special providence of God engenders TRUST. Oh, what a full and experimental word is that word TRUST! It seems to have a threefold rendering of a very precious character, namely: Confidence without doubting, credit without examination, committing all into the hands of another. Is our trust of this character, beloved? Alas! does there not often come in with us the creature "why?" and "wherefore?" and those ugly old words of carnal reasoning, "*Oh, but?*" Away with the "buts" and "peradventures" of the flesh, and let us take our stand upon covenant verities. "My God hath said it, and will He not do it?" His power is equal to His promise, and His promise equal to His love. And I am sure, if we look back upon the way He has led us, and mark for a moment what He has brought us through, we have reason to be ashamed that a thought of mistrust should ever cross our minds. Oh, what upliftings and upholdings, what deliverances and preservation, what mercies and blessings, we have to recount! We ought, indeed, to fear not. But "He knoweth our frame, He remembereth we are dust." Oh, may we be enabled to trust, and that, too, even where we cannot trace. It is for Him to perform, and for us to be patient. It is for Him to triumph, and for us to trust in Him.

Thus, beloved, have we dwelt briefly upon the special providence of God, disposing of the objections raised to it; that God is employed about the whole, but does not enter into the details of our life's history; that, if He overruled all our actings, we are deprived of our liberty as free agents; that He will not alter His fixed law to gratify our desires; and that these things which we call providences are but mere accidents; showing, on the other hand, that He works with a fixed purpose concerning all His saints, and acts in a sovereign way to effect that purpose; that in so doing He saves us from unseen dangers, extricates us from self-made entanglements, leads us into mysterious dispensations for an allwise end; and that His "takings" and checks by the way are full of love and mercy—the result of all this tending to deliver His children from corroding care, and showing them how divine power and divine preservation is carried out by Him on their behalf; and, lastly, how all these facts should bring us practically and experimentally to wrestle with Him for blessings, and put our trust in Him, who is God over all, blessed for ever.

And now, in conclusion, have I not written, dear reader, the truth upon this matter? Do you not feel with us that your life has been made up of special providences, interwoven with mercy and grace? And do we not enter into Jacob's feelings in a review of the same, when he said, "O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which saidst, Return unto thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee. I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which Thou hast shewed unto Thy servant?" And when, at a later period of His life—indeed, just before he was gathered to his fathers—he looked back to spots where the Lord had blessed him, acknowledging that the Lord had fed him all his life long, and redeemed him from all evil?

Ah, one of the features of the lively Christian is, that he will acknowledge, with a sense of his own unworthiness, God's goodness and mercy

to him; and, with regard to the future footsteps, will subscribe to the language expressed as follows—

“Father, I wait Thy daily will,
Thou shalt divide my portion still;
Grant me on earth what seems Thee best,
Till death and heaven reveal the rest.”

G. C.

Wanstead, Essex.

Words in Season for those who are Weary.

DAVID VIEWED UNDER THE HIDINGS OF GOD'S FACE.

THE living family of God are subject to spiritual changes; they are not *always* on the mountain-top of communion with God; they do not *always* enjoy the felt presence of the Lord Jesus in their souls; they very often walk in darkness, and are deprived of the felt light of God in their souls. God often leads His people through paths which are intricate and dark. Speaking of the narrow way, dear old Hart says—

“False lights delude the eye,
And lead the steps astray;

That traveller treads the surest here
Who seldom sees his way.”

The Lord sees a “needs-be” that His people should sometimes walk in darkness. If the path of the Christian were one of clear sunshine, with no darkness, no doubt, no misgiving; if there were no tempting devil to annoy, no evil heart of unbelief to trouble, no sinful world to prove a stumbling-block; the Christian would have no anxiety with regard to his spiritual condition, he would have no errand to the throne of grace, and he would not feel his entire dependence upon the sovereign power and grace of the Lord Jesus; and therefore there is a “needs-be” for the living family of God to be tried and exercised in a variety of ways. The Psalmist David was often very much tried, he often had to do business in the great waters of adversity; and it may be regarded as a proof of the Lord's wisdom and condescension to place David in circumstances in which his faith was tried, and his mind exercised, since his experience is recorded by the finger of inspiration for the benefit of the Church of God in every age. Whenever David was in trouble, God used the trouble to lead him to look away from the creature to the Lord. “In the time of trouble,” he says, “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” (Psalm xxvii. 5). How anxious David was to walk in the light of God's countenance, and to enjoy His felt presence in his soul; and therefore we find Him saying, “Hide not Thy face from me; put not Thy servant away in anger: Thou hast been my Help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation” (Psalm xxvii. 9). Now David, in these expressions, may be regarded as the mouthpiece of the Church, and therefore his language is just adapted to the believer all through his pilgrimage.

Two things are to be noticed in these words which may be profitable to the tried ones of God's living family who may be troubled because of the hidings of God's face; namely,

I. *David's trouble*: “Hide not Thy face from me; put not Thy servant away in anger.”

II. *David's comfort*: “Thou hast been my Help.”

May the blessed Spirit direct the pen while an attempt is made to trace out "the footsteps of the flock," that some poor anxious soul may be comforted.

The first particular to be noticed is,

I. *David's trouble*.—What was it? Lest the Lord should hide His face from him: "Hide not Thy face from me." David was often in trouble—things often went contrary to his wishes; he experienced not only domestic but national trouble. The trouble he specially refers to in the text is lest he should be deprived of the shining of the Lord's face: "Hide not Thy face from me." The words "face of the Lord" are used sometimes to denote His anger: "The face of the Lord is against them that do evil." The language of the ungodly at last, when Christ shall come as the great Judge, will be, "Hide us from the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb." Sometimes the words denote the Lord's love and the Lord's favour: "Make Thy face to shine upon Thy servant;" "Cause Thy face to shine upon us, and we shall be saved." The Lord promised Moses, "My presence (face) shall go with thee," &c. Moses was not willing to go without the presence (face) of the Lord. As soon as the convinced burdened sinner looks to Christ by faith, and tastes that the Lord is gracious, he is brought into living union with Christ, and the words of the Apostle are fulfilled in his experience, "Wherefore, my brethren, ye are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to Another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that ye should bring forth fruit unto God."

The sinner married to Christ lives in the felt enjoyment of spiritual life only as he, through grace, enjoys the Lord's face; he cannot be at peace in his own heart if the Lord hide His face from him; and yet many things *do* cause the Lord to hide His face from His people. *Unbelief* is one of the things. When the sinner is made a partaker of a *living faith in a living Saviour*, he is not free from unbelief. All gracious men have been troubled with this sin; it is the offspring of the carnal mind, and will always trouble the Christian whilst in the flesh; and therefore the exhortation to the living family of God is, "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God." When unbelief is in exercise in the believer, it *leads* to his departing from the living God; and, when he thus departs, can he be content? No, he cannot; he is sure to be in trouble. Such was the case with David: "Hide not Thy face from me." David knew that his unbelief *deserved* that God *should* hide His face from him; and what Christian does not feel guilty of this sin? And then *carnality of mind* will cause God to hide His face from His people; this the Christian finds by experience. When God quickens life in a sinner, He does not *alter* the carnal mind, nor is the *flesh* created anew. Paul's experience was, "I find that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing." The carnal mind, working through the flesh, exerts a powerful influence on the Christian, and, when the mind is absorbed with carnal things, and the thoughts are occupied with them, the Christian is sure to be troubled with the hidings of God's face. *Over anxious care* will cause God to hide His face from His children. From the time that the sinner tastes that the Lord is gracious, the Lord teaches him the special care that He takes of His people—he is not left to himself. All the events of this life are *ordered*; they are all in "the covenant ordered in all things and sure;" and

therefore the exhortation which is given, "Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you." But, alas! the Christian is too often like Martha, "careful and troubled about many things." And what is the consequence? He is troubled with the hidings of God's face.

Again, *worldly-mindedness* causes God to hide His face. When God calls a sinner, He inwardly separates him from the world. He says, "Come out of her, my people," "they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." But, alas! the Christian not only performs the business of the world, but he often finds *himself*, his *thoughts and affections*, wholly engrossed with the world. At such times the Christian feels the truth of Christ's words, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon," and he is troubled with the hidings of God's face. Thus, if the Christian were left to the workings of the carnal mind, and his carnal self, he would always be under the hidings of God's face, *and not be troubled*. But he is not left to himself, grace cannot be silent long, grace cannot be friendly with the carnal mind; and, if the carnal mind prevail for a time, what is the consequence? the Christian is troubled, and, like David, he will cry, "Hide not Thy face from me."

Thus the sinner born from above and brought into living union with Christ—the sinner sensible of an interest in atoning blood and the blessings of redemption—may be troubled with unbelief and carnality, over anxiousness and worldly-mindedness; yet the *voice of grace cannot be silenced, nor can the principle of grace be suppressed or destroyed*. A sinner who is once a partaker of divine grace will never lapse into a state of nature, "dead in trespasses and sins;" and therefore he is sure to experience times when he is compelled, by the *silent, yet powerful, working of grace*, to cry in trouble, "Hide not Thy face from me."

And then David prayed, "Put not Thy servant away in anger." It seems that David penned these words at a time when he was greatly opposed by Saul; and therefore in trouble he said, "Put not Thy servant away in anger." Now, the Lord had chosen David to be king in the stead of Saul; and, though Saul hunted him like a partridge upon the mountains, yet David *must* be king because the Lord had chosen him. David knew this; yet in unbelief he said, "I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul." Now, David was conscious of his sinfulness; and, if the Lord had dealt with him as he *deserved*, He *would* have put him away in anger, both in a temporal and spiritual sense. And, if the Lord were to deal with the Christian as he deserves, He would often put him away, cast him out of the covenant, and cut him off from an interest in covenant blessings. But, then, the Lord God of Israel saith that "He *hateth putting away*." A sinner brought into living union with Christ is married to Christ according to the covenant settlement of the Three-One God before time was, and therefore the Lord cannot put him away. If the Lord were to put away a sinner thus married to Christ, He would forfeit His word of promise, His love would *change* into hatred, and the vessel of mercy would be turned into a vessel of wrath; and thus the covenant of grace, confirmed by oaths, and promises, and blood, would be rendered void. *But this God cannot do*. God must cease to be God before that could be. And that is absolutely impossible. And so it is impossible for God to set aside His everlasting covenant settlements. True, the Christian often merits the anger of God; but how cheering to know that Christ drew upon Himself all the merited anger of God which His people deserved! And therefore the language of the Church is, "Though Thou wast angry

with me, yet Thine anger is turned away, and Thou now comfortest me ;” “ Put not Thy servant away in anger.” Oh, what a mercy that the Lord does not deal with His people on the principle of desert, but on that of free sovereign grace, and God’s grace was given to them in Christ before the foundation of the world, and admits of no change. “ Because I the Lord change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.” How comforting to think that God sees His people in Christ, and therefore He sees in them no sin. “ He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel.” In Christ they are justified, in Christ they are accepted, in Christ they are complete, in Christ they are comely and beautiful, in Christ they are seen of God “ with no spot or wrinkle or any such thing.” As Kent sweetly sings—

“ And since my Saviour stands between, | ’Tis He, instead of me, is seen
With garments dyed in blood, | When I approach to God.”

No credit is due to God’s people, therefore, that God does not put them away in anger. Indeed, the Christian abounds with ingratitude, rebellion, and unfaithfulness, and therefore he has occasion to be filled with trouble and say, “ Put not Thy servant away in anger.”

II. *David’s Comfort.*—“ Thou hast been my Help.” The language expresses the experience of every true Christian. The promise which God gives to His Church is, “ I will help thee.” Indeed, in pursuing his pilgrimage, the Christian experiences the help of the Lord against the mighty; and, no matter how strong or how powerful the enemies of the Church, if the Lord help, “ if God be *for* us, who can be against us?” When Asa was in trouble, because of the Ethiopians who came against Israel, he cried unto the Lord: “ And Asa cried unto the Lord his God, and said, Lord, it is nothing with Thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on Thee, and in Thy name we go against this multitude. O Lord, Thou art our God; let not man prevail against Thee. So the Lord smote the Ethiopians before Asa, and before Judah; and the Ethiopians fled ” (2 Chron. xiv. 11, 12). Here was a signal help which the Lord granted to Israel. But in what respect does the Lord help spiritual Israel in respect to following Christ? When the eyes of a sinner are, through grace and mercy, turned to Christ in the Gospel, and his feet put into the way of peace, the Lord says to him, “ Follow me.” Is the path easy? *No*; a sinful world, an evil heart of unbelief, and a tempting devil are mighty influences acting upon him. But is he left to follow Christ alone? *No*. What is the experience of the Christian in the past? It is expressed by David’s words, “ Thou hast been my help.” Paul could say, “ By the help of God I continue unto this day.”

“ He who has helped me hitherto
Will help me all my journey through,
And give me daily cause to raise
Fresh Ebenezers to His praise.”

And then the Lord helps spiritually in respect to being faithful to Christ. The Christian has every motive to be faithful to Him “ who loved us, and gave Himself for us;” but, oh, what an unfaithful heart he has! He *feels* it; and a sense of it often sends him to the throne of grace as a weeping penitent. True, he is married to Christ, but how often do other objects draw away his affections from Christ? and he would remain unfaithful to Christ if left to himself. So David felt. He says, “ When Thou

saidst, Seek ye my face : my heart said unto Thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek" (8th verse). The Lord must speak *first*, and say unto His child, "Seek ye my face;" and, "where the word of a King is, there is power." When the Lord speaks to His child, there is a ready response, "My heart said unto Thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek." Thus, because of the help of the Lord, the Christian is enabled to remain faithful to Him. And then, in respect to doing and suffering the Lord's will, the Lord helps spiritual Israel. The Christian is not only called to do, but also to suffer the Lord's will. The Christian is not called to perform great deeds, or to go out of the path of duty to do the Lord's will; but to do what God has in His providence given him to perform with an eye to serve Christ and from a motive to glorify Him. But, in thus doing the Lord's will, the Christian needs the help of the Lord. Then the Christian has often to *suffer* the Lord's will when, for example, he is called to suffer affliction of the body, or loss of friends, or children, or to pass through trials of any kind. All this is not easy; there is often at such times much murmuring, and complaining, and rebellion; and, therefore, the Christian feels the need of the Lord's help. And, looking back on the past, what is the experience of the child of God? Is it not expressed by the words of David, "*Thou hast been my Help?*"

"O God, our Help in ages past,
Our Hope for years to come;
Our Shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home."

And, oh! if the Lord *has* helped us, how ought our gratitude to Him to be manifested? By magnifying His grace, by our *words*, and by our *actions*; by seeking grace from above to enable us to walk consistently and holily *before men*, that we show them what the grace of God has done for us. Yes, it is by our upright and holy walk before men that we bring glory to God and adorn the doctrines of a free-grace Gospel, which has ever been "the power of God unto salvation unto every one that believeth."

Tyldesley.

J. J. E.

EMINENT BISHOPS (MARTYRS, REFORMERS, &c.) ON BAPTISM.

George Carleton, Bishop of Chichester. 1619.—"All that receive baptism are called children of God, regenerate, justified; for to us they must be taken for such in charity, until they show themselves other . . . But, when we have said all, we must come to this, that all this is the charity of the church, and what more can you make of it?"

Archbishop Cranmer. 1553.—"All that be washed with water be not washed with the Holy Spirit."

Archbishop Whitgift. 1583.—"Good and evil, clean and unclean, holy and profane, must needs pass by the sacrament of baptism, except you will indeed, in more ample and large measure, tie the grace of God unto it than ever did the Papists, and say all that be baptized be also saved."

Archbishop Usher. 1624.—"Are all they that are partakers of the outward washing of baptism partakers also of the inward washing of the Spirit? Doth this sacrament seal up their spiritual engrafting into Christ to all who externally receive it? Surely no! Though God hath ordained these outward means for the conveyance of grace to our souls, yet there is no necessity that we should tie the working of God's Spirit to the sacraments more than to the word."

Bishop Jewell. 1559.—“In baptism, as the one part of that holy mystery is Christ’s blood, so is the other part the material water. Neither are these parts joined together in place, but in mystery; and therefore they be oftentimes severed, and the one is received without the other.”

Bishop Latimer. 1540.—“Christ said, ‘Except a man be born again from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God.’ Ye must have a regeneration: and what is this regeneration? It is not to be christened in water, as these firebrands (the Roman Catholics) expound it, and nothing else.”

Archbishop Usher. 1624.—“Some have the outward sign, and not the inward grace. Some have the inward grace, and not the outward sign. We must not commit idolatry by deifying the outward element.”

Bishop Davenant. 1627.—“We must not glory because we are made partakers of the external sacrament, unless we obtain besides the internal and quickening work of Christ. For if this be wanting, as was said heretofore to Jews, ‘O ye uncircumcised in heart,’ so may it be justly said to us, ‘O ye unbaptized in heart.’”

Bishop Davenant. 1627.—“Let us learn not to confide with Papists in the *opus operatum*, but inquire whether we possess all the other things, without which the inward effects of baptism are not secured.”

Archbishop Usher. 1624.—“Many ignorant people among us, for want of better teaching, harbour in their minds such Popish conceits, especially that baptism doth confer grace upon all by the work done, for they commonly look no higher: and they conceive a kind of inherent virtue and Christendom, as they call it, necessarily infused into children, by having the water cast upon their faces.”

Bishop Babington, of Exeter. 1594.—“Wicked is that Popish doctrine, that original sin is forgiven by baptism; and for all actual offences after baptism, partly by Christ’s blood, and partly by our own satisfaction, we attain and get pardon of them.”

Bishop Robert Abbot. 1615.—“If there be that cure that they speak of in the baptized, how is it that there is so little effect or token thereof?”

TIMELY WORDS.

[WITH a view to cheer my helpers, in their self-denying labours of “sowing beside all waters,” in spite of all obstacles and discouragements, I said, “I thought few, if any, could see less fruit of their labours than myself; that it was the rarest thing for me to have any testimony of good being done; that, as far as *seeing* was concerned, all I had to encourage me was a goodly number of most attentive hearers. Yet withal,” I continued, “I was not disheartened, because the Lord kept my mind stayed upon a promise which He gave me many years ago, and which had been a stay and support to my mind ever since. It was that precious Scripture, Isaiah lv. 10, 11: ‘For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.’” Shortly after, when going to one of my MSS. drawers in quest of a certain article, my eye dropped upon the annexed, which had been lying

there since they came to hand. Their contents may touch a chord in other hearts beside one's own. With that hope they are now published. They will prove to the tried and tempted that they are not alone in the wilderness, and that "no strange thing hath happened unto them."]

THE PROMISE AND THE DEATH UPON IT.

DEAR SIR,—I desire to say a word to you for your encouragement in your now long day of labour in the work of the Lord, in preaching His holy truth, desiring, if it is the good Lord's holy will, that you may have another and fresh cause to thank the Lord and take courage, for the great blessing I found attend the preached Word at St. David's, on Lord's-day morning to my poor soul, though I cannot find words to express with what sacred and holy power it did distil from your lips upon my poor heart, from the portion out of Baalam parables. Though parables to him that gave utterance to them, yet are they to the believer the "sacred mysteries of the kingdom." "God is not a man that He should lie, or the son of man that He should repent. Hath He said, and shall He not do it? or spoken, and shall not He make it good?" It was especially that part of your discourse about the promises to the believer becoming dead and buried ere they are realized; yet shall they arise, come, and be fulfilled in God's allwise and good time. My poor soul has not had such a blessed season in the means for a very long time; and what shall I say about it to you? I feel I cannot write any more than speak of it, as I attempted to do to you in the vestry, after the morning service. How it brought up so vividly the *first promise*, as I believe, that came with power to my heart, now some thirty years ago, while reading and searching the Scriptures, with such a sacred and holy relish, in the little pantry of the rectory at Elmley, when living with my late beloved master, Rev. R. Pym, as I tried to tell you, whose ministry was made a blessing to my soul in awakening it up into life divine, beginning at this point: When He the Spirit of Truth, is come, He shall CONVINCE of SIN. And what a long and painful ordeal, for some twenty or more years, ere that same blessed Spirit, who had so *convinced* me of my state in nature's sin, as in the fall, as said Jesus, did "TESTIFY of me." I was led to take and read the Bible with a new interest, and thought to myself, I have heard much said about it. What is in it, and its sacred contents? I will read it carefully, and see *what is in it*. So I did, book by book, chapter by chapter, verse by verse, sentence by sentence, and word by word; and how I found the interest increase to a relish, and that on to love and delight, though there were parts of it, oh, how they did point at me and condemn me; so that at times, under such a sight and sense of the evils of my poor heart, that so boiled up that I dare not touch it. Then again I ventured to take it and go on with the perusal of it. But I could not yet see Jesus, whom I so heard preached by Mr. Pym, as the Saviour at all of such poor vile things as I felt myself to be, as if my sins were too great, or His salvation too little, for me; or, in a word, I was too vile and bad for Him to have anything to do with at all. Well, when I came to that portion in the Epistle to the Hebrews—"For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry"—oh, the strangely to me powerful and sweet, and sacred, and holy power, it did drop upon and into my poor burdened and bleeding heart, of the same, as since I have found; how the hard heart was softened and broken all to pieces,

as it was a rare thing for me to have, and especially at that time a youth in my "teens." How I did feel such a love for the Word, and could and did hug it to my breast; how I turned to it after, and again and again, but it would not speak to my heart as it did then. Well, with it all, I was so brutishly ignorant of the real nature of divine truth in the hand of the Spirit upon the heart that I was indeed as one said, "I thought as a child;" not with the understanding of one older. No. Well, after this, I travelled on and on for some fourteen years before I came to have a right idea that it was the Word of the Lord the Spirit to my heart, but heard it and felt it; but, like young Samuel, I did not recognise the Lord to be the Speaker until after I heard and read over and over again and again, and read, in the experience of good and gracious men, of how the Lord appeared at such a time, and *spoke* to them at such a time, and sweetly helped them with a PROMISE at such a time and place, in such a trial or temptation. I pondered, and wondered what it could be and mean, until, at length, I was carried back to time and spot when the sweet portion I have stated so came to me. So I made it a point to open the matter to a dear old pilgrim, a chair-bottomer, as I was pushing him through the street from the place of hearing; and, oh! with what interest I did wait to hear what he said of it, if I really might call that word a *promise*, spoken by the Lord to my heart. Oh, how His "most assuredly I do" did enter my ear, heart, and soul, with such a sacred persuasive power, that has not left me to this moment. At times how have the carnal powers of the unbelieving heart sneered at the words as a *promise* with, "Why you cannot make that into a promise, can you? Look at it; it has such a *generality* about it which prevents you to give that *particularity* to it that you seemed to wish; and still less can you give it to any *personality* to yourself in the higher and greater sense of a blessed promise, as is spoken by God, the ever-blessed Spirit, to the heart of a believing soul."

So, as it were, the enemy got hold of it at one end, and my poor heart the other, to retain its hold, and so to read it and re-read it; and so, as it were, to find a new reading of it, without wresting the portion or doing violence to the Scriptures. Thus, "He will come," "He shall come," that this reading was fairly in it, as it stands, and so back again to read it as it stands. "He that shall come will come, and will not tarry;" but, yet, a little while. Oh! how all these conflicts of the heart and mind were brought up again, as you were so speaking about the promise and the death it passes through ere it is realized; and that the more strong, vivid, and marked the promise, the deeper, as it were, has it to be *buried*, or we should be boasting of our faith or something. I do desire to be thankful for the blessed hearing I was favoured with at St. David's. I have had a few such seasons during these thirty-nine years; but I don't know what to say, nor how to speak about it, to you as I would; language fails me. Yet I desire to say a little to you, dear sir, for your encouragement, if the Lord will.

What a mercy to be brought and taught our entire need of Jesus, our own emptiness and His glorious fulness of grace and truth.

May the good Lord still go on to bless abundantly your labours, from pulpit and press, is the desire and prayer of yours, dear sir,

April 24, 1871.

W H.

HELP IN HELPLESSNESS.

DEAR SIR,—Although personally unknown to you, the love of Christ constraineth me to write and tell you how most blessedly I have been delivered from a fearful state of darkness, trial, and temptation of eleven months, and how the dear Lord has blessed the reading the first article in your September magazine to me; and I should here mention how a relative of mine, brought up from long and deep distress through reading your Magazine when it first started, many years ago, has long gone to his rest. I have mentioned my own case to two or three gracious persons, and it has helped them; and I now write that you may see that your labour is not in vain in the Lord. Last October I fell from a state of much enjoyment and sweet communion with my dear Lord and Saviour. At the commencement of the trial I could get no access, then a great darkness fell upon my spirit. Then these words, "Thy God hath forsaken thee." Oh, the dismay for months, until I heard a friend repeat these lines—

"And Satan suggests, with a roar,
Thy God hath forgotten thee quite."

I saw in a moment whose work it was, and lost the horror at once. Then a slight gleam of comfort, from the Psalmist's last words, "Although my house be not so with God, yet He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although He make it not to end." It lasted a day or two; then down I went again, worse than ever. I thought the Lord had suffered all this to come upon me because I had loved and adored the dear Saviour more than the Holy Father and the Holy Spirit, and so grieved Him, and He had withdrawn from me entirely. Oh, the anguish and the sinking in the deep waters! Kneeling down to pray, and could not, dare not, only moaning, sighing. I said, Let me be an outcast, or go forth barefoot into the world, or any worldly evil; but, O Lord, restore unto me the joys of Thy salvation, reveal Thyself once more to me as of old. I feared I should die a disgrace to my profession. How many times I have wished I had never made an open profession; but I could not smother it up, it was like a fire that burned in my bosom.

Now, all the Scriptures that had ever been blessed to me were nothing, only the dreadful ones were those that I could take to myself. Then, after a few months, "Whoso honoureth the Son honoureth the Father also," that spell was at once broken; still no real deliverance, only the anguish was removed. Then Jacob's wrestling was brought to my mind to ponder over, "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God," came very powerfully. Oh, the poor helpless creature I was. I said, O Lord, how can I humble myself? I can do nothing. I feared worse trouble was coming upon me. I fell sick. The doctor said I had heart disease, and might die at any moment, and that moment, to all human appearance, had come. I had spasms of the heart, and no God, no heaven, for me. I tried to get out of bed to pray for the last time. The death sweat was upon me. I sank in agony and death. When I came to myself I was thankful to be alive, and these words, "Who redeemeth thy life from destruction." I kept pondering these words for some time; still I got no deliverance. When I took up your September Magazine, in the very first article my eyes fell on these very words, "Who redeemeth thy life from destruction," and all the first four verses of that

blessed 103rd Psalm were mine, made so to me at once. *Oh, the dear Lord had come at last.* I could see eye to eye with you, and found it was all right. Why, I shall never forget it. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name." That was all my trouble, that I could not bless His name all these eleven months. And now, bless His dear and holy name, I could not have enough of it. As I read, I was completely blest. What love was poured into my heart. I said, Ah! dear Lord, I can die now; bless and praise His dear name. It was like a conversion. How I did love the lovely, loving Saviour for His so loving me, and for *constraining* you to write these very things for me to see. I could go all the way with you. I could hardly keep from writing to tell you of my joyful deliverance. Help me to bless and praise His holy name. I feel as though I could never be tired of blessing Him for what He has done for me. See how "He lifteth up the beggar from the dung-hill, and setteth him among the princes." "Beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning."

I believe, dear sir, we shall spend a joyful eternity together, when we shall never tire of the glorious work of blessing and praising. But now I am come down a little lower, and, perhaps, shall go into the fire again; but here I raise my Ebenezer. I believe the greatest torment is when one has known what it is to have the love of God shed abroad in the heart, and then to lose it. I was as one astonished! Oh, the grief, the misery, the remorse to lose the sweet communing. May I be kept by the mighty power of God, or I shall not stand an hour. I must rejoice with fear and trembling. "These are they which came out of great tribulation." May you have the support and presence of our gracious God the remainder of your journey.—Yours, in the best of bonds, S. B. A.

Chelsea, Oct. 21st, 1871.

"PASSING BY THE NATURE OF ANGELS."

LIFE is the hallowed sphere
Of sacred duties to our fellow-men,
The precious and appointed season when
Sweet deeds of love the mourner's heart may cheer,
The hour of patient and unwearied toil,
When seed from heav'n is sown in earth's dark soil.

The seraph throng above
Before God's throne in adoration bend;
Yet, though their songs earth's feeblest notes transcend,
They cannot tell our world a Saviour's love,
Win back its wanderers, and gather them
As radiant jewels for His diadem.

Ours is the work below,
Our lips may breathe the message of the cross,
Which soothes the sinner's anguish and remorse,
Irradiates with joy the grief-worn brow,
Flings hope's bright sunshine o'er the pilgrim's road,
And plants in man's cold heart sweet trust in God.

Sermons and Notes of Sermons.**"THIS MAN RECEIVETH SINNERS."**

(LUKE XV. 2.)

SIXTH LECTURE UPON THE HIGH PRIEST, BY THE REV. THE HON. SAMUEL WALDEGRAVE, BARFORD ST. MARTIN, APRIL 12, 1848.

THE offices of the high priest had a twofold aspect—national and individual. For Israel as a nation he offered sacrifice; for Israel as a nation he burned incense; for Israel as a nation he pronounced the solemn prayer of benediction. And just so is it with the Great High Priest, Jesus, the Son of God. For His Church, the Israel of God, He offered one sacrifice, once for all (Heb. x. 12); for His Church, the Israel of God, He doth continually, fervently intercede with His Father; upon His Church the Israel of God, He doth, day by day, pour down all the overflowing abundance of spiritual blessing. May it please the Lord God the Holy Spirit to lead the people of God into all the truth on this matter. May it please the Lord the Spirit so to cause them to "receive with meekness the engrafted word" (Jam. i. 21), so, "as new-born babes," to desire and to feed upon "the sincere milk of the Word" (1 Peter ii. 2), "that their hearts may be comforted, being knit together in love" (Col. ii. 2, 3); for, indeed, beloved brethren, the doctrines which concern Christ's ancient, abounding, special, peculiar, supreme love to His bride, the Church, do afford cordials the most refreshing, nourishment most strengthening, to the weak and fainting souls of God's dear children. Truly, they cannot be kept back without dishonouring God and injuring His people. May the Lord of the harvest send forth many labourers into His harvest (Matt. ix. 38) who will not "shun to declare" all the "counsel of God" (Acts xx. 27), who will not keep back anything that is profitable (Acts xx. 20).

But there is another point of view from which we must look upon the Jewish high priest. We have observed him as he officiated for the nation; we must now look upon him as he ministered to individuals. And herein we shall find matter of inexpressible comfort to the broken-hearted and contrite ones. When you read of Jesus sanctifying "the people with His own blood" (Heb. xiii. 12); when you hear Jesus Himself say that He prays for His people, and "not for the world" (John xvii. 9); when you find it written that Jehovah hath "mercy upon whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth" (Rom. ix. 18), you may well, poor sinner, tremble lest you should be found amongst the vessels "to dishonour" (2 Tim. ii. 20). But when it is told you that the leper was commanded to come with his leprosy to Aaron the priest, then you are reminded of those good words in Luke xix. 10, and 1 Tim. i. 15. Truly, "this Man receiveth sinners." Oh, then, come, poor leprous, sin-sick sinner, to Jesus, the Son of God, the Great High Priest, for, John vi. 37.

But let us look into this matter more narrowly, and herein let us reflect upon—

I. The Leper.

II. That which the High Priest had to do for the Leper.

I. The Leper. Look at his disease. If you study the laws concerning the leper laid down in Lev. xiii., and the several instances of leprosy

recorded in Holy Scripture, you will learn that leprosy was a constitutional disease, which exhibited itself in deep-seated, spreading, loathsome sores. The leper, you will observe, was diseased in his very blood; nay, we read in the case of Gehazi of the malady passing from father to son (2 Kings v. 27). Again, the leprosy showed itself outwardly. Not only is it written of Gehazi that he became "a leper as white as snow," but of king Uzziah, that "his leprosy even rose up in his forehead" (2 Chron. xxvi. 19). Again, it was deep-seated and spreading. These, we learn from Lev. xiii. 2—8, were the two marks by which real leprosy could be discerned. Once more, it was a loathsome disease. Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, "was a great man with his master, and honourable, also a mighty man of valour," but all his political influence, and all his military honours, were nothing to him so long as it could be said, Naaman "was a leper" (2 Kings v. 1).

Need I, beloved, remind you that not one nor two of us, but *all*, inherited from our parents a constitutional disease of manifest, deep-seated, spreading, loathsome sores? I speak not of the body, but of the soul. Is not the soul, by birth, sick with sin? (Ps. li. 5.) And how speedily doth this disease show itself without. How very soon doth the little child begin, in its tempers, its disobediences, its deceits, its conceits, and its vanity, to show the outward marks of its hereditary sickness (Ps. lviii. 3; Job xi. 12). And the evil does not decrease. The heart is speedily filled full with every kind of abominable imagination, the lips proclaim the foulness of the complaint, and the whole life bears witness to its malignity (Gen viii. 21; Mat. xv. 18, 19); so that truly the Holy Ghost well spake by the mouth of Isaiah, ch. i. 5, 6. Alas! this disease, noisome though it is, is not felt to be a trouble to many—they rather delight in than abhor it; and this is, perhaps, as fearful a feature of the complaint as can be found (Ps. xxxvi. 4). But, dear people, believe me, on the authority of God's Word, that this disease of sin is, indeed, loathsome" (Job xv. 16; Ps. xiv. 3). Happy, thrice happy, that man who has been convinced of sin; happy, thrice happy, that man who has been taught that he is spiritually full of leprosy; for, for him there is healing (Ps. xxxii. 3—5). Oh, pray for his feeling of sin who said, Psa. xxxviii. 5. But miserable, most miserable, that man who doth not know that he is a sinner; for how sad the sentence which awaits him! (Mat. xxv. 41.)

Let us now consider the Consequences of Leprosy (Lev. xiii. 45, 46).

Observe, brethren, that the leper, whosoever he might be, rich or poor, learned or unlearned, noble or simple, was shut out from the camp all the time of his leprosy. Even Uzziah the king was constrained to give up the government to his son, and dwell "in a several house until the day of his death" (2 Chron. xxvi. 21), because he had been smitten with leprosy. Just so, my beloved brethren, is exclusion from heaven the inevitable, the necessary, consequence of sin, in the case of every one that shall be found with sin upon him when the Lord shall come (Ps. v. 4; Hab. i. 13; Rev. xxi. 27).

Why, my dear people, will ye not believe God's own Word? Why will you believe the devil's lying flattery? The devil tells you that "ye shall not surely die" (Gen. iii. 4); the Lord tells you "sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James i. 15). And, remember, Titus i. 2; 1 Sam. xv. 29. But, perhaps, you will shelter yourself in your works of piety. You will say, "I confess that I am a sinner, but, surely, the Almighty will not overlook my prayers, my church-goings, my alms, my

fastings, my visitings from house to house, my works of mercy, my zeal in His service?" Now, if there should be any person disposed so to speak, I would have them look at the latter part of Lev. xviii. You will there find that, as there was leprosy in men, so there was leprosy in garments. What are we to learn from this? That, as sin infects man, so it infects his works. His works are a covering too small, just as, Isa. xxviii. 20. But, more than this, they form a covering in itself filthy (Isa. lxiv. 6).

You will notice in Lev. xiii. that some garments must be cleansed, others destroyed, when affected with leprosy. Just so do the works of the saints need washing in the "fountain opened" (Zech. xiii. 1) before they can be accepted of the Father. The works in themselves are even an abomination (Isa. i. 13—16). If such be the case, how can man fondly hope to hide his sin-leprosy by any works of righteousness which he can do? Oh, my brethren, pray for the mind that was given to Paul (Phil. iii. 8, 9; Titus iii. 5).

But perhaps some one is taking refuge in the fact that he belongs to what he considers a sound and Scriptural body of Christians. He is a sinner. He knows that his best deeds are nothing worth, but (unconsciously, perhaps) he takes refuge in his corporate capacity; he hopes to enter heaven in a crowd. Thus do the Papists comfort themselves with the allegation that they belong to the only true Church. And there are others besides Papists whose confidence is no better. Their baptism in infancy, or in maturer years, their recognition as Church members, constitute their ground of hope. They imagine themselves to be safe because they are apparently and professedly stones in Christ's house. Let such turn with me to Lev. xiv. 33—53. There we see that a house might be leprous. When such was the case, that house must be cleansed or pulled down. When cleansed, how was it done? By taking away the leprous stones. Just so, our being built (as we may fancy) upon a foundation doth not secure us from being leprous stones, which shall be taken away at the last great day (Rom. ii. 28, 29).

Oh, how ministers should beware of the kind of stones they build! (1 Cor. iii. 10—13.) And how Churches, too, should beware lest the leprosy should so fret and spread that the whole house must be pulled down. Look at Rev. iii. 15, 16; and at 1 Cor. v. 11—13.

I have now, beloved, brought before you the leprous man, the leprous garment, and the leprous house.

The leprous man teaches us the nature and the effects of sin. In itself, sin is an inbred, deep-seated, spreading, loathsome malady. In its effects, sin shuts out for ever from the heavenly city, the New Jerusalem. *The leprous garment* teaches us that no works of righteousness which we can do can save us. *The leprous house* teaches us that no corporate privileges that we possess can avail to deliver us from the wrath to come. How fearlessly doth the Baptist expose both these refuges of lies in Matt. iii. 7, 8, 9. Remember Lev. xiii. 14, 15, with 1 John i. 8.

Does any poor soul confess to the truth of all these statements? Doth he enquire, "What shall I do to be saved?" Look at Lev. xiii. 12, 13; 1 John i. 9. And let me beg him to attend while I open that which the high priest had to do with the leper. First, he was to receive the leper when he was brought to him (Lev. xiii. 2, 3). Just so, dear people, is the Lord Jesus appointed to receive the vilest sinner that, by divine grace, is brought unto Him. Do remember our text, Luke xv. 2, also Heb.

vii. 25. ; for, indeed, Satan keeps many poor souls away from Jesus by hiding from their view this part of His priestly function. He leads them into great and repeated sins, he brings all these sins home to their conscience, and then points to the divine purity of Jesus, as though He could not receive such vile offenders. If he hath been dealing thus with any poor soul here present, let that soul take comfort in the priesthood of Jesus, and go at once to Him with all its leprosy (Isa. lxi. 1—3; Matt. ix. 11—13).

But, again, the duty of the priest was, in the second place, to pronounce the leper unclean. From many passages in Lev. xiii. we learn how carefully the high priest was to examine into all the symptoms of the case, and how, after full enquiry, he was to declare the poor sufferer unclean, and therefore excommunicate. Here, I think, we have an exhibition of Christ's work in dealing with souls. When a poor soul comes to Christ, He sometimes deals with it as Joseph dealt with his brethren, and as He Himself dealt with the Syrophenician woman (see Matt. xv. 22—24). He does not at once give comfort, but He so deals with the soul as to open its eyes more and more to the enormity and peril of sin. Nay, more, even while He gives comfort, He will at the same time increase contrition. Listen to His own word in Zech. xii. 10.

Here, again, would I give a word of admonition to the heart-broken sinner. When you do come with your poor leprous soul to Jesus, still wait upon Him, even though He seem only to pronounce thee more and more unclean (see Luke xviii. 7; xi. 8). Remember His own word, John vi. 37. Remember, too, that He cannot, He may not, "heal the hurt of the daughter of" His "people slightly" (Jer. viii. 11). Therefore, Isa. l. 10; Hab. ii. 3; Mic. vii. 9.

But we must proceed to notice, thirdly, the high priest ceremonially cleansed the leper. Ceremonially, I say, for the high priest could do no more (Heb. ix. 14). You will observe in Lev. xiv. that, when the leper was cleansed, the high priest went forth to the leper without the camp (v. 3). Just so did the Lord Jesus empty Himself of His glory, and come down into this world of lepers, on purpose to "save His people from their sins" (Matt. i. 21; Rom. viii. 3).

Again, having taken two birds, the priest slew one bird over running water, while the other was let go into the air (Lev. xiv. 4—7). Have we not here a memento of the great day of atonement? Then was one goat slain as a type of Christ's dying for sin; then was the other goat sent away into the wilderness as a type of Christ putting away sin, to be remembered no more. These were called to mind by the two birds on the day of the leper's cleansing. And so, when a poor sinner's conscience is, by the grace of God, cleansed, how is it done? It is by the Spirit causing him to believe on the Lamb of God "that taketh away the sin," not of the Jew only, but of the Gentile also (1 Peter i. 2). And is this Spirit figured forth in the ceremony of the cleansing of the leper? Yes! The running water over which the bird was slain, and which, with the blood of the bird, was sprinkled upon the cleansed leper, was typical of the Lord the Spirit (John vii. 37—39).

Beloved brethren, may the Lord the Spirit be graciously pleased so to apply Christ's finished work to any poor mourning soul that is here present, that they may indeed rejoice in their cleansing (Rom. v. 1). For, observe, *immediately* that the blood of the slain bird had been sprinkled

upon the cleansed leper, *immediately* was his ceremonial defilement gone (Lev. xiv. 7). And just so, immediately that the Spirit hath wrought in a broken and wounded heart to believe in Jesus, immediately is he free from condemnation (John v. 24). Truly, as the leper was not permitted at once to enter into his tent, and was constrained to perform various other rites before he could worship in the tabernacle (Lev. xiv. 8—20); so, full often, the forgiven sinner enters not all at once into the enjoyment of the peace made for him, even though it be, notwithstanding, most certainly made (Eph. i. 13, 14).

But we must dwell longer upon this point. Let me entreat any who believe that they have been cleansed to remember another, and the concluding, part of the ceremonial (Lev. xiv. 14—18). Observe, the oil is put upon the blood; so must the fruits of holiness follow upon, not go before, sins forgiven. But, when sins are forgiven, then the fruits of holiness will follow (Rom. vi. 5). Again, look at Lev. xiv. 18. Remember, dear Christians, the word, "He giveth more grace" (James iv. 6); and, again, "the meek will He guide in judgment" (Ps. xxv. 9). Oh, pray that "an unction from the Holy One" (1 John iii. 20) may so rest upon you that it may be seen that, as He was anointed "with the oil of gladness" (Ps. xlv. 7), so are you, too, "filled with all joy and peace in believing" (Rom. xv. 13); yea, that, as upon Him rested "the spirit of wisdom and understanding" (Isa. xi. 2), so to you, too, is such grace given "that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God" (Eph. iii. 17—19).

Beloved brethren, I have now exhibited, in very scanty outline, the laws of the leper's cleansing by the priest. May the Lord make many willing to come to Him to be cleansed; may He convince you more and more of sin; may He cause you more and more simply to believe on Him for the remission of sin, that thus you may learn to say, "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion, for ever and ever. Amen" (Rev. i. 5, 6).

ZION'S CAPTIVES SET FREE.

THE SUBSTANCE OF A SERMON BY THE REV. J. A. WALLINGER.

"As for thee also, by the blood of Thy covenant I have sent forth Thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water. Turn you to the Stronghold, ye prisoners of hope, even to-day do I declare that I will render double unto thee."—ZECH. ix. 11, 12.

Four things this morning I purposed to speak of: 1, the prisoners; 2, the Stronghold; 3, the deliverance; 4, the "double." This is an interesting passage of Scripture, and contains great things, and evidently pertains to the Church of God and eternal life for His family.

First, as to the prisoners. Now, this may comprehend God's tried family, who are described as "prisoners," and cannot get forth, till God's time, out of the various prisons He may see fit to bring them into. It may comprehend a soul under bondage and fears on account of sin, and in "the pit wherein is no water," nothing to assuage the thirst or cool the

tongue. When only hell and damnation stare a sinner in the face, then there is indeed no water. But observe, such are called "prisoners of hope" (verse 12), for there is hope concerning them. Though not yet out of the pit, yet there is deliverance in store for them; and they have a little hope that the time will come when they shall get out of the pit, when the Lord shall say, "Arise, shine, for thy light is come."

Next we were to speak of the Stronghold. God Himself in Christ is the believer's Stronghold, and the devil cannot break through there. He can break through the Church, and make terrible havoc there, but he can never get at Christ, the Stronghold of God. You know it is said, "The name of the Lord"—a covenant God in Christ—"is a strong tower. The righteous run into it, and are safe." And here the prisoners are directed as their only Help and Refuge when the enemy comes in against them. When you are left at ease, then you do not want a refuge—you have no felt need of this Stronghold. But trouble comes—conviction of sin comes—ah, then there is a looking out for the Stronghold, there is then a groping for the wall as the blind, if so be you could get near it, lean against it, and throw your weight on it. Now, here is a convinced sinner, a "prisoner of hope," directed to the only Refuge, the Stronghold. You may remember there were six cities of refuge, and one of them was named Bezer, into which the manslayer might run from the avenger of blood. Bezer means stronghold, and this represented Christ, the sinner's Friend, the true antitypical City of Refuge, who says to His people, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest." And you can find it nowhere else. Has the Lord ever said so to you? "Oh, yes," say you; "I have read it in the Word, and heard it times out of mind." And will this do for you? It will do for a mere empty professor, who is content to take things second-hand—upon the letter of the Word only—but it will not do for a Spirit-taught child of God. Such want a word from the Lord Himself, and they know it by its effects. "Man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." The children of God need divine supplies to keep up the life of grace in the soul. This is the true bread, for which they are far more concerned than bread for the body. I know well you may have heard this word often, "Come unto me," and it went in at one ear and out at the other, and that because spoken only by man; but, when the Lord speaks, then the word is with power. Further, this describes the pathway of the Church, "to whom coming"—always coming—cannot do without Jesus. And why? Because you feel the plague of heart, because the world, the flesh, and the devil are too mighty for you, because you have been made to prize Jesus and His great salvation as the only Stronghold. Then you can say, "to whom coming"—you must come. Were you ever there? Did you ever find the Lord a Refuge from the storm? "Be my strong Habitation," said David, "whereunto I may continually resort?" or, as you have it in the 57th Psalm, "Under the shadow of Thy wings will I hide myself until these calamities be overpast." Not only present calamities, but future; for, if present calamities pass away, we know there are more to come. But what if they do? Christ is a Stronghold, a City of Refuge, wherein we may run and be safe. So David could say, again speaking of the believer, when faith is in exercise, "He shall not be afraid of evil tidings"—of calamities in prospect—"his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord;" as if he would say, "Let them come." But what then? Why, it will only prove what God is to me, "a very present Help in every time

of trouble." As that great man, Luther, used to say when fresh trial threatened, "It only makes more for God to do;" and that omnipotent arm in which He trusted did not disappoint him, but brought him through and out of every trouble.

Thirdly, we come to speak of the deliverance, and the way it is effected. "By the blood of Thy covenant the prisoners are sent forth out of the pit wherein is no water." Now, this is, no doubt, an allusion to the Old Testament dispensation, which was sealed and confirmed by blood at every step. Nothing was done without blood. So you read in Exodus twenty-fourth, sixth and following verses, thus: "And Moses took half of the blood, and sprinkled it, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant." Now see the use the Apostle makes of this ceremony, as you find in Heb. ix., from verse 18, thus: "Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood." So you see the Old Testament, or covenant, was confirmed to the Jewish people by blood. But the Gospel use the Apostle makes of it is to tell believers that this blood, which confirmed the national covenant, was but a type of the blood of Christ, and pre-figured that sealing and confirming of the covenant of grace that His blood was shed, and not only shed, but sprinkled. It tells you and me that there is no covenant confirmed without blood, and by the blood shed all the glory and blessedness contained in the Gospel is confirmed to the believer, no matter what his condition may be as to feeling. All those who were covenanted for must receive the blessedness, power, and preciousness of the blood, and all that it ratifies and confirms to the elect of God. When the Lord administered to His disciples the last supper, He gave them the cup, and said, "This cup is the New Testament in my blood." Just as if He had said, "This is the cup which signifies my shed blood, whereby the covenant of grace is confirmed, the covenant which gives you a beneficial interest in all I am about to do." Mark has it rather differently, in these words: "This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many." What language! How figurative! Not literal, as the Papists have it; but the representation, the symbol, of the work which He was about to perform, the covenant confirmed by the shed blood, and in the sprinkling of it experimentally upon the conscience. Not merely read of, heard of, preached about; no, but revealed, opened up, applied by divine power to the heart, and so enjoy what is called demonstrative proof, and an internal evidence that requires no argument or creature persuasion to make one receive and believe. This covenant the Apostle calls also a *will*, or testament, as in Heb. ix. 15, and two following verses. Did you ever read your name there? If it is not in the will, you can get nothing. The covenant and testament, or will, are identical; for all those on whose behalf the eternal Three covenanted have their names in the will, and, to come in for the provisions of that will, the testator must first die, as you have it here: "For where a testament is, there must be also the death of the testator." Then the legatees are eligible to receive the property left them. But, if the testator be not dead, then the will is of no force, for the man may change his mind and alter his will. But is the Testator dead? Yes; and the Testator was God Himself in human flesh. As you have in the words of Scripture: "Feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood." But had the Church of old no benefit in this death? Yes; for Christ was "the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world," and the saints lived upon that death that was to take place, received the blessed-

ness of it, and lived as much upon the death of Christ then as saints do now—His death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and session at the right hand of God. Now, as long as a man lives, you do not know what his will may be; but, when once he is dead, then the will stands. Therefore, the great point is this: *Is your name in the will?* "Oh," say some of you, "my name was in God's will from everlasting. He has shown me that all I have become possessed of is legitimately; I have got what He left me in 'the covenant ordered in all things and sure;' the death has taken place that secures it all; nothing can be added to or taken from the provisions of that will; no name can be taken out or put in; nothing can be added to it or taken from it." Oh, my friends, are you legatees? Is your name in the will? Have you come in for any property through it? There are certain blessings belonging to those whose names are in the will, and all the legacies left shall be surely paid. Take this one for instance: "Peace I leave with you, not as the world giveth give I unto you." And how does the world give? If you deserve it. Why, you know, if you have any benefit to give, you like to bestow it upon the deserving, upon the worthy. And, if God dealt so by you, where should you be? Not but, as regards the poor, you are quite right to give to those you think deserving, suited objects for what you bestow. It is written, "Blessed is he that *considereth* the poor"—gives what he gives suitably, and, as far as he can judge, deservedly; but God's gifts do not go by deserts, and that is your and my mercy. One of old said, and I hope there are those here who can join the same, "He hath not dealt with us after our sins, neither rewarded us according to our deserts," for "by the blood of the covenant God delivers His prisoners from the pit." And, when brought up, where does He lead them? To the blood, to the Word, to the obedience of Christ. So you see without blood there is no pardon, no peace, no union, no salvation. But the pardoned soul—the delivered captive—is brought into contact with the blood. "He hath made peace by the blood of His cross." And this secures the deliverance, the pardon, the joy, and the experimental peace in the believer and glory at the end; and such are brought to know the power of the Gospel, and the life of God in the soul.

Now we turn for a few moments to consider the last point—the "double." This is an allusion to the law of the first-born's portion, as you have it contained in Deut. xxi. 15—18. Now, who was to have the "double," or the first-born's portion? The eldest, though it might be the son of the hated wife, and not the loved. Now, this just reminds us of one great truth, that God's first-born—His elect—are to have the blessing—the "double"—the first-born's portion; but it also reminds us of something else—they are the hated likewise. God's First-born—His only-begotten Son—was hated of men, who killed the Holy One and the Just. His family upon earth are hated of man now, as was His Christ. God will make His people hated of the world, not deservedly, but solely on account of their religion. Their name shall be cast out as evil, not as evil-doers, but simply because they are followers of Jesus; and perhaps no plainer proof can be given that they have got the first-born's portion than this—the hatred of the world. The Lord said, in the first promise of Christ, "I will put enmity between thy seed"—that is the serpent's—"and her seed," the Church of God, and *that* enmity is the same it ever was. If the world and you can go on smoothly together, I can tell you there is very much room to doubt you know anything of the first-born's portion.

The Lord will make His people hated of the world, and they shall feel it too. But what is the "double?" Grace and glory. Now the world is satisfied with the providences of this life, and for the most part they have the largest share; but grace gives a blessing to the providences of a child of God, and, in this sense, they possess the "double," for grace sweetens all temporal mercies. Now look to your state by nature—at enmity with God, saying in heart, and by your life, to Christ, "Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways." Oh, what grace then was it that met you!—what providences have since followed you!—undeserving as you have been of the least of His mercies. But the "double" means the abundance of His grace, the riches of grace, which comprehends glory, that exceeding weight of bliss which nature cannot bear. This tabernacle must be taken down in order to enter "the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," and to be "clothed upon with our house" above, that building of God, the glorified state, the weight of which would crush the clay tenement. This is the blessed prospect of all the "prisoners of hope," of God's elect, of God's Church, to possess the "double" grace here and glory hereafter. "Turn you to the Stronghold, ye prisoners of hope, even to-day do I declare that I will render double unto thee." But I add no more.

UNBELIEVING THOMAS.

"Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."—JOHN XX. 29.

A most important truth is brought before us in the collect for St. Thomas's day. It is that the Apostle's doubts concerning the resurrection of Jesus had their origin in God's appointment. In His infinite wisdom He suffered him to fall into doubt for the confirmation of his faith. We learn from that, that God overrules the infirmities, and even the sins, of men to promote His own glory. A sincere believer is taught by his failings, and even by His falls, greater self-abasement, higher gratitude to the God of all grace for His forbearance and tender mercy, and to cherish more zealous desires as well as firmer convictions of the truth. This was strikingly shown in the language and acts of the Apostle Thomas when Jesus brought him to a better understanding. And we cannot but admire the gracious condescension of the Lord in the mildness of His reproof. He made allowance for infirmity, and also for the impediment arising from the vastness of the subject—so far above our comprehension, and so difficult to be received, till enabled so to do by the enlightening grace of the Spirit of God.

I. But we are to look far beyond the personal instruction of the Apostle. His unbelief is handed down to the end of time, in order that all weak and timid unbelievers among the children of men may see how the Lord bears with them, with what tender compassion He reproves their infirmity, and how patiently He seeks to bring them into a clear knowledge of Himself as their Lord and God. The whole of a believer's life is a state of discipline, during which Christ is unfolding instruction—sometimes reproving—sometimes chastening—opening "the chambers of imagery" to reveal the sinfulness and the idolatry of the heart, and, above all, leading to clearer revelations of His own character and work in accomplishing the salvation of His people, bringing them through the depths of the sea, and leading them in the wilderness "to humble and to prove them." All

this while faith is exercised. We walk in darkness and see no light; but "blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." We look at the Apostle Paul; and, when we contemplate his towering faith, we feel how far below we fall, and despair of ourselves. We come back to the Apostle Thomas, and discover how Jesus accepts the smallest degree of faith, though it may be mixed up with many doubts and fears, numberless sins, and utter unworthiness; cast down, but not destroyed; for Christ does not quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed; He lifts up the hands that hang down, and confirms the feeble knees.

II. The immediate subject to which these words apply is the resurrection of Christ from the dead; concerning this fact all the disciples as well as Thomas had their doubts. And therefore we find (Mark xvi. 14) that Jesus "appeared unto the eleven, as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart." He then adds the unreasonableness of their unbelief: "because they believed not them which had seen Him after He was risen." Therefore they were all found faulty. But, in the instance of Thomas, there was something so marked in his unbelief, that our Lord brought it out before them all to explain more fully the true nature of faith.

III. As regards ourselves, belief in the resurrection of Christ is the great truth on which all religion rests. The Apostle says, "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain" (1 Cor. xv. 14). So anxious was he to make this fully understood and felt by them that he repeats the same words in verse 17, "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins." Moreover, the resurrection of Christ is a declaration of the resurrection of the dead, one truth being so tied to the other that they can never be separated. For He says, "If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen" (v. 13). And he dwells upon this because there were infidels in his day, as there are infidels in our day. The same "profane and vain babblings" are still uttered; for time makes no difference in unbelief, which still repeats its venom. St. Paul makes mention of two of this sort, and gives us their names. Now, however, there are not only two, but multitudes—their name is legion; age after age finds them still pursuing the same infidel path. Unhappily their infidelity spreads. So it did in the Apostle's day: "Concerning the truth they have erred, and overthrow the faith of some." Men of slender faith listen to the plausible "babblings" of designing infidels, and lose their souls. The overthrow of their faith becomes the fatal rock on which they make shipwreck.

IV. The same principle of faith is applied to the forgiveness of sin. Here also it is true that blessedness is only to be obtained by him who believes. We cannot ascend to heaven to see the record of forgiveness, nor can we descend to the deep: "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith which we preach; that, if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. viii. 9).

It is God's appointed way of bringing us to Himself. It carries with it this question, Why did Christ die and rise again? His resurrection was the publication of the fact of His having finished the work He came to fulfil. Any doubt upon that great fact involves unbelief relative to the perfection of Christ's work. When He exclaimed, in His agony, "It is finished!" it was to proclaim that the work of propitiation for sin was

completed: there remains no more offering for sin—all impediment to the sinner's free access to God was removed. To deny this is a damnable heresy. It robs the whole human race of hope, of pardon, of peace, leaves all mankind under the guilt of sin, shuts us out of heaven, and binds us down in the chains of everlasting despair. "He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek Him."

It is this belief in God, in the Father's mercy, in the Son of God's perfect work, in the teaching of the Holy Ghost, that brings peace to the conscience, inspires us with hope in trouble, gives us confidence in the various changes of this mortal state, and, above all, in the hour of death. This was the principle that sustained the patriarch Abraham, Moses—of whom it is said, he "endured as seeing Him who is invisible"—and all those other glorious martyrs "who, had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings," and obtained a good report through faith.

V. The same principle is to be applied to our justification, always going along with forgiveness of sins: "To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, His faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom. iv. 5). "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin" (v. 8), if he believes "on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead." Justification carries your hopes far beyond the forgiveness of your sins. While you lie in the dust before God on account of them, you may rejoice in your acceptance by Him, through faith in that one perfect Offering for sin, and the fulfilment of the law, accomplished by the Son of God. You are raised to sit in heavenly places with Christ. Let us never cease to pray that we may in heart and mind thither ascend where Christ continually dwells; let us call to mind that we are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.

STRAY THOUGHTS ABOUT A SERMON.

"And now abideth faith, hope, and charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."—1 Cor. xiii. 13.

THE difference between faith and hope was nicely defined. Faith takes in past, present, and future, eternity past, and eternity to come; but hope only looks forward to the future, and has nothing to do with the past. Hope passes by the threatenings of God's Word, and only looks to the promises; while faith, knowing that all must be accomplished, dreads the one, but clings to the other. We are said to be "saved by hope," for it looks to the full realization of salvation completed in another world; and, when faith is weak, hope buoys up the soul, for it is fixed on Christ as an Anchor sure and steadfast, and enters within the vail whither the Forerunner is gone before.

But both faith and hope are selfish graces. They benefit no one but ourselves, for we cannot communicate them to others; while love is the brightest of them all, for it deals with God, and our brethren in Christ for His sake. Love is the most unselfish of the three graces, flowing out to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, whether they are naturally amiable or otherwise, since we only love what we discover of

Christ's image in them, and not what we see of their natural defects and deformities.

It was a very good sermon, but memory fails to retain all I could wish.

“FORTY YEARS IN THE WILDERNESS.”

Amos ii. 10.)

NOTES OF A SERMON PREACHED AT TRINITY CHAPEL, NEW BEXLEY, KENT, BY THE REV. W. FRITH,* ON HIS FORTIETH BIRTHDAY, APRIL 13TH, 1873.

My experience, my pathway, was not foreseen by myself.—Could I have done so, in thousands of cases, my course would have been very different. But this is one of the conditions of our wilderness life on earth. No pilgrim can foresee the path of his life; yet it is all seen, known, and marked out by our heavenly Father. I have often wished to see before me; and, like many others, I suppose, I have adopted many schemes and plans to ascertain, if possible, what might be my future path; but, after all, in no one case have I succeeded. My suppositions were seldom realized; my preferences were not gratified. And often, whenever I made any effort to lift the veil, I was never once permitted to look into the ark of God's secret purpose. At times I should have given anything for the mantle, spirit, and vision of the prophet; but it was not permitted. I have had to walk step by step. Yet in this I have not been alone; this is our common lot. Nor, upon calm reflection, can we dare to say it would have been better otherwise. Quite enough if He, in whose grace we trust, knows the path. And He does. Who so well? Psalm xvi. 11, has been a special blessing to me. Let it guide thee, dear friend.

My journey has been very circuitous.—As I have reflected, I have often thought of those words Moses used to Israel: “But God led the people about by the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea” (Exod. xiii. 18). This path must have seemed very circuitous to them. Not less so has mine been to me. Some of the paths I have walked have appeared to be bright with the leadings of Divine Providence; others have seemed to be the result of my unwisdom and want of forethought. Sometimes I have had to take steps backward. Once and again I have gone into “Bye-path Meadow;” but, through mercy, a kind and gentle hand has led me back again. I have sometimes turned to the left, and then to the right, when I should have gone straight forward. Sometimes, without either will or wish of my own, God seems to have “led me about by the way of the wilderness;” but, at every step, I have been reminded that this is a wilderness. Nevertheless, I do not say this because my path has been so singular. No; it has been so, more or less, with you all, dear brethren: it ever will be so so long as we are here. But I have often found those precious words a great comfort to me (1 Sam. ii. 9): “He will keep the feet of His saints.” *Will He? He will!*

My path has been rough and rugged.—Yet in this I have not been alone. Israel of old found it so “in the waste, howling wilderness.” Through the rocky gulphs, along the narrow defiles, up steep and precipitous gorges, over immense boulders, the chosen people found their way. But it is no less so with “the whole Israel of God” to-day. Most of us can

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well join our Christian poet—"True, 'tis a strait and thorny road," &c. Too often, perhaps, I have looked at the roughness of the road rather than to Him who can "make crooked things straight, and rough places plain." In this, like many of my fellow-pilgrims, I have been unwise. Instead of looking up and forward, like good Old Humphery, and trusting in God, I have too often looked down upon the rugged pathway, and then, like David, I have had to say, "My soul is cast down within me." And, if I were permitted to give one word of advice to my fellow-pilgrims, it would be this: When the road is rough and rugged, always *look up*, trust in God, and remember His gracious promise to Asher, "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass, and as thy days, so shall thy strength be." So have I found it. But I feel none the worse to-day for all the roughness of the road.

"His way was much rougher and darker than mine;
Did Christ my Lord suffer, and shall I repine?"

My way has been attended with dangers. Often—far too often—*self* has assumed the pre-eminence; and there is no greater danger to the Christian than self-preference. Humility and self-abnegation are some of the first lessons we should learn; yet they are very difficult of attainment—at least, so I have found it. There is great danger, in many cases, lest we should put self instead of Christ, or *before Christ*.

Then, too, I have met with dangers *in the world*. To be too careful about "the things which perish with the using," is wrong, and dishonours our heavenly Father; yet I cannot truthfully say that I have uniformly been free from this. "The cares of this life" have come in upon me, as I fear also upon most of my brethren, with too much ascendancy, and we have been troubled about "the things which are seen."

Then, too, *Satan has often tried me*. In common with my "fellow-heirs in the grace of life," I have had to endure his "fiery darts," and have been no stranger to his evil suggestions.

Then, too, *I have had dangers through some of my dearest friends*. They have proposed counsels and courses of action which I could not accept, nor in any way comply with; but which I was bound, in all good conscience, to decline. This has been painful, and sometimes a great temptation; nevertheless, this is my testimony: "Having obtained help of the Lord, I have continued unto this day." See Acts xx. 24.

Let me give my testimony to the glory of my Saviour-God. What shall it be? Well, I feel this is a suitable time to give it. I have come, like good Samuel, to the spot between Mispheh and Shen, and I desire to erect an Ebenezer, and to sing with our departed poet—

"Here I raise my Ebenezer, Hither by Thy help I'm come;		And I hope by Thy good pleasure, Safety to arrive at home."
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Well, my first testimony is this—

I. *I have been saved by grace*—by free, sovereign, and unmerited grace. I was a poor lost and ruined sinner. I fell in Adam, and inherited his nature. I bore "the image of the earthy," was "born in sin, and shapen in iniquity;" and so I continued "till the day dawned and the Day-star arose in my heart." Thus, dear brethren, I can sing in all truthfulness—

"Jesus sought me when a stranger,
Wandering from the fold of God," &c.

And the more I reflect upon this, the more convinced I am that it was *all of grace* "from first to last"—grace in the Father, grace in the Saviour, and grace in the Holy Ghost. And no words better express the feelings of my heart on this my fortieth birthday than these—

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

II. Another testimony is, *I have been kept by grace*, both in temporals and spirituals. You know I have often alluded to this in my ministry among you. The special providence of God is not a *mere doctrine* with me, it is a thing of my life. Without fear of fanaticism or enthusiasm, I can say I have seen the *hand of God* in a thousand instances. He has been my Vanguard and Re-reward. He has held me up in weakness, kept me steadfast when I have wavered, prevented me from being the victim of my own follies, and He has anchored my frail vessel to the "Rock of Ages," or I should have long ago made "shipwreck of faith, and of a good conscience." He has kept me from the spirit of retaliation when unkind and untruthful things have been said of me, and enabled me to cherish a forgiving spirit.

But, dear friends, is not this your testimony likewise? I am sure it is. You, too, have had the same privilege, have you not? And, while the poor restless worldling has been eagerly crying out, "Who will show me any good?" you have been resting in God.

"You see a hand they do not see,
You hear a voice they do not hear."

III. Another testimony is, *I am on the Rock*, and on it *I shall live and die!* Doth this offend you? Is it too positive? Do you ask me for my warrant for so bold an assertion? I give it in God's own words: "On this Rock will I build my Church, and the gates of hell shall never prevail (*χωρις χύσουσιν*) against it." Now, who is that Rock? Is it not Christ Himself? Or, if you say it is not personal, it is impersonal. Well, I will accept that interpretation, for it will amount to the same thing, for "*the word of the Lord endureth for ever.*" Let me illustrate this:

Some few years since, a minister was preaching at Plymouth, when a request was sent to the pulpit to this effect: "The thanksgiving of this congregation is desired to Almighty God, by the captain, passengers, and crew of the — West Indiaman, for their merciful deliverance from shipwreck during the late awful tempest."

The following day the minister went on board, and entered into conversation with the passengers, when a lady thus addressed him: "Oh, sir, what an invaluable blessing must *personal religion* be! Never did I see it more exemplified than in my poor negress, Ellen, during the storm. When we expected every wave to entomb us all, my mind was in a horrible state—I was afraid to die—*Ellen would come to me and say, with all possible composure, 'Never mind, Misse, look to Jesus Christ. He made—He rule de sea.'* And when, sir, we neared the shore, and were at a loss to know where we were, fearing every minute to strike on the rocks, poor Ellen said, with the same composure as before—'*Don't be fear, Misse, look to Jesus Christ—He de Rock; no ship wreck on dat Rock;* He save to de utmost. Don't be fear, Misse; look to Jesus Christ.'"

Thus, we are not alone. And I feel I am not saying too much when I affirm, "I know whom I have believed," I know I am on the Rock. Now, it is more than possible that this positive statement, though nothing

more than the simple truth, will be put down as the most unwarrantable presumption! Well, be it so; yet "none of these things move me." "Let God be true, but every man a liar." Dear friends, how is it with you?

"On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand."

IV. Once more. I have an *unwavering assurance* that I shall endure to the end. I do not say my faith is not sometimes weak and feeble—it is; I feel and know it. Doubts and fears, like dark and murky November clouds, do sometimes overcast my soul, and obscure the clear vision of my faith; yet the *sun is behind the cloud*, and I know it. Yet amidst it all, and through it all, the lamp of my hope never expires, but burns on through the long tunnel of my darkness, till I come out again into the bright sunlight of the "full assurance of faith." No, dear brethren, this is not presumption, this is truth—God's own truth. "This God is our God for ever and ever. He will be our *Guide, even unto death!*" "THUS SAITH THE LORD!"

But, my brethren, my *hope, confidence, and assurance* of endurance do not rest on the *word, doctrine, or opinion of man!* And I wish you to mark this well. The difference is infinite. Not what man says, but what God says, is to be our guide. Now, it is the irrevocable promise of Him who cannot lie who has said it, and what He has written, He has written, and will never reverse: "*They SHALL NEVER PERISH!*" Can I doubt it? Ought I to doubt it? Or if, in the hour of faith's weakness, I should do so, does my doubt alter His promise, or make His promise at all insecure? "Who, then, can be saved?" None! Salvation would be an utter impossibility.

And now, what shall I say in conclusion? I desire to live and work more thoroughly for Christ, and urge you to do the same.

"Now unto Him who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. Amen."

WHAT an oppressive burden is taken off a Christian's shoulders by his privilege of leaving all consequences to God. He has done with "How shall I bear this trouble? How shall I get through this deep water?" but leaves himself in the hands of God.—*R. Cecil.*

DIVINE FACTS.—The eternal God is the eternal Refuge of His people; underneath them are the everlasting arms as their eternal security. With them He has made an everlasting covenant wherein all things are ordered and sure. Every member of this everlasting covenant is ordained to eternal life (John xiii. 48), and are designated as the sheep to whom Christ gives eternal life (John x. 28). All the purposes of Jehovah toward them are eternal (Eph. iii. 11). Their redemption is eternal (Heb. xix. 12); *ergo*, their salvation eternal (Heb. v. 9). In this life they are called to eternal glory (1 Peter v. 10), while the afflictions they have to go through work for them an eternal weight of glory (2 Cor. iv. 17); and, when they have finished with all that is temporal here, they enter their eternal habitation in the heavens (2 Cor. v. 1), to enjoy their eternal inheritance (Heb. xix. 15), bought with an eternal price, even the BLOOD of the everlasting covenant.—*J. Miley.*

Pilgrim Papers.

MISSIONARY EFFORTS.

THE following announcement in a daily paper of last month we give our readers:—

Exeter Hall was crowded with the members and friends of the Church Missionary Society, assembled under the presidency of the Earl of Chichester. The meeting was addressed by the Primate, the Bishop of Ripon, and others. It was shown by the report that the ordinary income of the year had been £196,525, and the expenditure £186,118. The society's establishment now embraces 158 mission stations, directed by 207 European clergymen.

It is a trite but true saying, "Those who live longest will see most," and this notice may fall under the eyes of some who have passed their four-score years and ten, and whose memory will serve them to look back upon the early days of evangelical zeal and devotedness to God, when a few despised laymen and trembling curates ran the solemn risk of the frowns and rebukes of rectors, and bishops, and patrons, for venturing to take a resolution at a church missionary meeting, the object of which was to spread the good news of salvation, and find out, according to the ordination vows of the clergy, "the sheep of Christ scattered abroad in this naughty world." But since those days amazing changes have been brought about, and, amongst others, religion—such as it is—has crept into fashion, and missionary labours now carry the palm of first-class piety. And this recalls to mind the godly, patient, humble, self-denying labours of Schwartz, Martyn, Carey, Marshman, Weitbrecht, Fox, and a few others of the same stamp—men taught by the Spirit of God to see the deep depravity of their own heart, led into sweet discoveries of the love and blood of a dear Redeemer, and, in the divine persuasion of a personal interest in the work of salvation, could say, "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen."

All God's called people, are missionaries; they may not travel by land or water, but those who are instructed by the Spirit of God to see and feel the leprosy of sin, the fearful destiny of unpardoned sinners, and the worth of the work of Christ in the salvation of souls, must needs be missionaries. However poor the testimony, narrow the limits, and weak the effort to witness for the Lord, the feelings of every child of God are the same; they all, in their measure, as soon as divine life is given, have the desire implanted in the heart to spread the truths God has revealed to them. In a sin-desolated world like this, where the lot of the Lord's people is appointed, there is no lack of ground whereon to cast the seed. For the accomplishment of His own purposes, the Lord gives different qualifications to fit men for the position He designs them to occupy. But it is the same mission, whatever be their lot in life, as is expressed in these few words, "*Ye are my witnesses.*" This makes a missionary all the world over, at home or abroad, by sea or land, rich or poor, ignorant or learned. All the Lord's loving family are His messengers, employed by Him to spread the glories of His kingdom. This may account for some of the mysterious dealings of God with His people. Joseph was sold by his brethren, and made a missionary in Egypt; the captive maid was blessed in her Syrian home to those about her; Daniel was sent to Babylon to bear witness for God; and the rebellious Jonah went as an

unwilling missionary to Nineveh; Paul's observance of the Jewish law about vows ended in going as prisoner to Rome, where for two whole years he was a preacher of the faith that once he destroyed.

Numerous are the missionaries sent forth by God in foreign lands, in all grades of society and all sorts of employment, unrecognized officially by churches, yet doing the work of the Lord "with all good fidelity," and scattering the seeds of truth that shall spring up to life eternal. A goodly number of true-hearted servants of Christ have their lot appointed by God in distant lands, where He owns and blesses their labour of love. They are God's missionaries, sent forth by Him to cast the "bread upon the waters that shall be found after many days."

Official missionary labourers in our day may be regarded with grave suspicion, from the overwhelming evidence, at home and abroad, that the idolatry of externals has spread its influence generally; and to exalt the sect has taken the place of exalting Christ. Men who love travel have a facility in learning languages, are indifferent to the attractions of hearth and home, and have a spice of adventure in their disposition, with an amiable temperament, which, under educational influence, is mistaken for religion, are soon stirred up, in easy times like the present, to start for missionaries. In the bulky "Memoir of John Coleridge Patteson,"* the missionary bishop of Melanesia, we see abundant proof of great natural amiability and painstaking efforts to civilize the heathen islanders, and set up the Church of England forms in the room of idolatry. The nearest specimen to anything like Gospel work on the soul we have picked out, and present to the reader; gladly would we have given a few more such instances, faint as it is, but the sorrowful fact is, that, out of the two ponderous volumes, there are no more to be found. But this solitary and touching incident proclaims to the Lord's people that He will both search His sheep and seek them out, and, however little the messengers may know of divine truth, or be able to communicate to others, God's remnant, according to the election of grace, shall be brought by the power of God to see their need of salvation, and find all they want in a precious Christ, despite all hindrances.

Wadrokala, one of the Negoné lads who had recently made his first communion, became the prominent scholar at this time. He had thought a good deal. One night he said, "I have heard all kinds of words used—faith, repentance, praise, prayer—and I don't clearly understand what is the real great thing, the chief thing of all; I feel puzzled. Then I read the Pharisees knew a great deal of the law, and so did the Scribes, and yet they were not good. I am not doing anything good. Now, I know something of the Bible, and I can write, and I fear very much. I often feel very much afraid that I am not good, I am not doing anything good.

His teacher adds—

He was talked to and was comforted with hopes of future work; but a day or two later his feelings were unconsciously hurt by being told in joke that he was wearing a shabby pair of trowsers, to save the good ones to take home to Negoné. His remonstrance was poured out thus on his slate: Mr. Patteson, this is my word, I am unhappy because of the word you said to me, that I wished for clothes. I have left my country; I do not seek clothes for the body. What is the use of clothes? Can my spirit be clothed with clothes for the body? Therefore my heart is greatly afraid, but you said, I

* By Miss Charlotte Yonge, author of "The Heir of Redclyffe," and several other novels.

greatly wished for clothes, which I do not care for. One thing only I care for, that I may receive the life of my spirit. Therefore I fear, I confess and say to you it is not the thing for the body I want, but the one thing I want is the clothing for the soul for Jesus Christ's sake, our Lord.

The memoir of John Mackenzie, Missionary Bishop of Central Africa, seems rather a humane tour for the suppression of slavery than any foreground of Christian effort. The tenets of both these men were similar, and can best be given in the closing words of Bishop Mackenzie's memoir:—

The view of religion which commended itself to his mind was the practical application of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ to the wants of men, and the best method of doing this was, in his opinion, a simple and faithful adherence to the principles and rules of the Prayer Book. I never met with a man whose religious system seemed to lie more completely within the four corners of the Book of Common Prayer. For religious speculations he had little taste, for religious eccentricities he had an utter abhorrence; but, if there were any Christian deed to be done, any work of mercy to be performed, either for the bodies or the souls of men, then Mackenzie's whole heart was engaged.

Now, this is a fair representation of many—probably the most—who offer themselves as missionaries in the present day. Ritualism now is a well-organized system, and it goes forth, Prayer Book in hand, to confront with idolatry. It has got symbols and services that are addressed to the eye and ear of the heathen, and, when they can be made to accept of what is termed sacramental grace, this is considered conversion. In the memoir of Bishop Mackenzie, religion occupies a very small space. His raid upon slavery, however humane, was questionable in his office, besides wholly unauthorized by the civil powers. But it is the character and quality of their religion we look at, because, though they profess to belong to no party, they are really representative men, and they are claimed by the party that are now in the ascendant as men of might, men of mark. But we can gather nothing from the record of their lives, save that they went abroad to give a new turn to idolatry, and to substitute for the degradation of heathenism the refined but subtle elements of Ritualism. Missionaries of the Prayer Book they were, missionaries of the Bible, and of the truths the Bible contains, enlightened judges must confess they *were not*. Editors, we admit, often do serious damage to the lives of men, and give a false view of their character, through spiritual ignorance; but letters, diaries, and, above all, companionship, will tell the truth, and discover the real state of the mind and the true position of the men. Many of our colonies are supplied now by missionaries, and strengthened by bishops who maintain the Popish doctrine of sacramental grace.* This exalts the priesthood, this gives spiritual authority, this makes an easy road to heaven, opens the door of grace in baptism and the door of heaven by the Eucharist. Rome knows well this is the pivot upon which her power turns; "by this craft they have their wealth." Strip her of sacramental grace, and her official authority is gone, her priests are "shorn of their locks, and are weak as other men."

* "We understand the passion and death of Jesus better by the broken body and the poured out blood as represented on the altar, than by the reading the Evangelists. We realize the offering of our Lord as a sacrifice of propitiation by the priest's elevation of the sacrament better than by reading the Epistle to the Hebrews."—"Strictures," &c., by Rev. W. J. E. Bennett, Rector of Frome, p. 114.

The following notice we give our readers:—

The Archbishop of Canterbury has put forth an appeal, saying that the S.P.G. is prepared to support eighteen additional missionaries in India, China, Japan, and Zululand, if suitable men are forthcoming.

The late excitement of the so-called mission week throughout the land will, no doubt, bring forth the "suitable men;" but, if their opinions are in unison with those of Bishops Patteson and Mackenzie, we can but pity the colonies whereto they are sent, and the heathen they are advertized to convert. The self-styled Anglican Church is, in plain English, Popery before the reformation, as it was established in these realms. To bring England back to days of mediæval darkness is the design of Satan, through Ritualism, and her missionary efforts at the present time only help to spread the calamity in foreign lands. Let the incredulous read the memoirs of the two men whose lives and labours have been so eulogized, and their deaths so deplored, and thus judge for themselves of the nature and character of the religion that is taking root at home and abroad.

But probably some of our readers may raise the objection, What is the use of bringing under notice books and opinions that form no part of the divinity supported by this periodical? Now, the use is twofold—for *caution*, and to stir up *prayer*. The enemy has many traps to catch the Lord's people, and, under the alluring apology, "Oh, he is such a good man!" errors of all sorts have been adopted and spread by undiscerning believers. Hence the need of caution in assisting missionary efforts, lest, in ignorant zeal to do good, only fatal error is extended.

Another use is to stir up prayer. "Darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people," but the Lord knows where His sheep are hid, and, whosoever they are, "them also He must bring." He has all means, all instruments in His own hands, to do His own work; but this word of instruction stands on record for the encouragement of God's people, "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest that He would send forth labourers into His harvest."

A QUESTION ASKED.

WHEN the men of Israel, by Jehovah's order, raised a heap of stones beside the river Jordan, He told them that if their little ones asked, "What mean ye by these stones?" (Josh. iv. 6) they were to give a ready answer. There was a wondrous tale to tell about these stones. They were not small ones, such as could be picked up anywhere. They were pieces of rock, which men had to carry on their shoulders. They were taken out of the middle of Jordan. They were carried to the bank as a proof that the people had really gone over on dry ground. God had made a passage for them through the river, as He had once before done through the Red Sea.

Once a year the Jews kept a very sacred feast. They had to kill a lamb for every family, to sprinkle the door-posts with its blood, and to eat the flesh, when roasted, with bitter herbs and unleavened bread. When the children saw this done, they would be likely enough to ask "What mean ye by this service?" (Exod. xii. 26.) God told the Israelites to be sure and answer the question. The children were to be told that this was called the Passover, and how the angel, when he went

through the land one night, slew all the first-born in the houses of the Egyptians, passing over the houses of the Israelites, where he saw the blood of the lamb sprinkled on the door-posts, and left their first-born alive. This feast was kept in memory of God's goodness.

There is now another feast, a Christian feast; it is called the Lord's Supper. Children, have you ever come away from God's house, when your parents stopped behind, to eat the bread and drink the wine which Jesus Christ has bid His people take in remembrance of Him? Did you ever ask, "What mean ye by this service?" Our answer is, "Christ our Passover has been slain for us." We have no sprinkled blood on our door-posts, but we are saved by the blood of Jesus; and it is in memory of God's goodness, in the gift of His Son, that we "keep the feast" which reminds us of our Saviour's death. The broken bread is an emblem of His body, which was bruised for us, and the wine that is poured out is an emblem of His blood which was shed. There is no more virtue in the bread and wine than there was in the stones that Israel took out of Jordan, or the lamb that the knife was run into. They were both memorial objects. And such is the Lord's Supper. It is an act of memorial, to bring to remembrance the things signified; and those who make more of it are like the ancient Israelites, who, in their declension from God, worshipped the brazen serpent. But godly king Hezekiah soon settled that matter, for we read in 2 Kings viii., "He brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made, for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it." The simple history of the Lord's Supper we have in the words of the Apostle Paul, "For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come."

AGED PILGRIMS' FRIEND SOCIETY.

WE learn from the *Rock* that the sixty-seventh annual meeting of this society was recently held at Exeter Hall. James Abbiss, Esq., J.P., presided. The meeting having been opened by singing and prayer, the annual report was read by Mr. Murphy, the secretary. It was of an encouraging character, and stated that the society, and also its two Asylums, situated at Camberwell and Hornsey Rise respectively, had received increased support during the year; but owing to the increase of the pensions, and the greater number of recipients, the sum expended in pensions alone during the year was unusually large, being £5,559, an increase of £934 on the previous year; 937 pensioners are on the books of the society, of whom 107 are recipients of the ten guinea pension, 267 of the seven guinea, 455 of the five guinea, and 108 are approved candidates, receiving 5s. per month, and who will be advanced to the five guinea pension in rotation as the funds permit; 298 pensioners have been raised to the seven guinea pension during the year, and 153 to the five guinea. Twenty-five pensioners will be elected to the ten guinea pension in June, and fifty-eight more will be raised to the seven guinea list in July. Increased support was asked from the Christian public generally, to enable the committee to continue this good work; 120 of the pensioners are inmates of the asylums. The Chairman delivered a very suitable address, in which he spoke of the blessing and happiness of being able to support so evangelical and unsectarian a society, which relieves none but those who give evidence that they are real Christians.

The Chairman was supported by the Revs. W. Alderson, J. Franks, W. K. Rowe, and T. A. Younge, Messrs. W. Jackson, T. M. Whittaker, G. Creasey, and other gentlemen. The meeting was addressed by the Revs. Ll. D. Bevan, LL.B., W. P. Tidley, E. Medley, B.A., G. Radford, J. C. Harrison, G. Davis, A. Morton Brown, LL.D., Mr. A. Marshall, and Mr. W. Heathfield. The various resolutions having been passed, the meeting closed by singing and pronouncing the benediction.

The third anniversary of the Aged Pilgrims' Asylum has also just taken place, when, after a sermon by the Rev. E. Vinal, a public meeting was held, presided over by Mr. Henry Wright, at which addresses were delivered by the Rev. J. Ormiston, the Rev. W. Frith, the Rev. C. Stirling, and others.

TO OUR READERS.

THE following appears in the current number of the *Old Jonathan*. As it equally applies to the readers of the GOSPEL MAGAZINE, we transfer our remarks to these pages.

Upon further inquiry, we find that the article, which has led to the receipt of sundry letters of remonstrance, never came under our eye at all. When we first saw it in print, and, as we have stated, without having passed under our supervision in proof, we concluded that it was just possible it had been given out in MS., among other copy, and that the objectionable passage had been overlooked as we were preparing material for the number. This, however, upon inquiry, we find was not the case. It had been inserted by other hands, and altogether without our sanction or approval. We repudiate the sentiments therein expressed as much as possible. They are as wide as the poles from our own views and opinions, and we are vexed and annoyed that such a statement should have been disseminated through a work for the contents of which we are responsible. Such, however, is not likely to happen again, as we have strongly remonstrated in the proper quarter.

It is but due to Messrs. Collingridge that we should state, that the article in question was inserted without their knowledge and sanction. They personally would have objected to the views enunciated as much as ourselves. Copy, it appears, was wanted, in order to prevent the publication from being late; hence it was supplied without our knowledge.

"An article was inserted in our last number which, if it came under the editor's eye at all, did not undergo his usual revision. It occupied part of the last page, the proof-sheet of which did not reach him in due course. It was, therefore, printed off without being altered or struck out altogether.

"Whilst giving this explanation, the editor must at the same time strongly repudiate that spirit of fault-finding in which some who really ought to know better are wont to indulge. Many there are too ready to "make a man an offender for a word." Whilst it is admitted that an editor is in a sense responsible for ALL that appears in the journal he conducts, still, certain allowances ought to be made for human weaknesses and creature frailties. Our imperfect language is open to misconstruction. Some writers express themselves ambiguously, and yet their contributions have certain claims which entitle them to consideration. If an editor contradicts himself in what he personally writes, he is undoubtedly open to censure; but, if he happens to have overlooked a flaw, or he construes an observation in one way, and his readers, or some of them, in another, surely there is ground for forbearance on either side. Let the general testimony be taken, and not mere

isolated expressions, and which very expressions may bear a totally different interpretation to that awarded them.

"In the earlier part of our editorial career, some thirty years ago, we were taught a lesson upon these matters which we have never forgotten. Over one and the same article were edified and comforted two equally godly men—ministers of Christ—but who had had some little difference, and were therefore for a time at issue. Over another article two equally good men contended: the one as strongly objected as the other approved. So much for human judgment and poor fallible man!"

THE LATE MR. HENRY EVE, AND THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS' EXCURSION.

Our readers, we doubt not, in common with ourselves, have been much refreshed by the diary of the late Mr. Eve, which has from time to time appeared in these pages. As our readers will remember, he was most suddenly called away to his eternal rest at Christmas last. As may be gathered from his diary, he was a young man of no ordinary stamp. His character bore the impress of simplicity, sincerity, and ardour in the things of God. There was at the same time a geniality of disposition, such pure unselfishness, and so great a desire to serve others, that could but commend itself.

As we had anticipated, Mr. Eve was painfully missed at our late teachers' annual excursion. Clevedon was this year chosen as the spot where we should spend a few hours together. The early morning was wet, but the rain subsiding and the clouds dispersing, one of the clearest and loveliest of days followed. Seldom, if ever, did the Bristol Channel appear to greater advantage. The Welsh coast and distant mountains, as well as a goodly portion of Devonshire, stood out in clear line and distinctiveness. We looked across those waters, and thought of those who had joined us on previous similar occasions, but who had since passed the Jordan, and had entered upon the goodly land, their eternal inheritance. Dear Clarke was among them; he had finished his short but indefatigable course; and his remains lie peacefully mouldering in the graveyard of the opposite town of Swansea, where he closed his ministerial career. In what loud and emphatic terms did these facts speak to ourselves to "work," not in a legal, but in a Gospel sense, "while it is day, seeing the night cometh in which no man can work." The calling away of these dear fellow-labourers admonished us, too, not to be *over-burdened*—not to be *care-full*—not to be *taking upon ourselves* that which the *Lord Himself* had promised to take charge of, and wisely and graciously and lovingly to manage on our behalf. Ah, would to God that the experience of others, as well as ourselves, might, by the Holy Ghost, effectually teach us these lessons. Oh, could these dear brethren speak to us now, what would their counsel be but to seek to carry all things, both little and large, minute and mighty, and *to leave them, too*, in His almighty hands? Ah, how would these now glorified, but once burdened, brethren reiterate the sentiment so oft expressed on earth—

"'Tis enough that HE should care;
Why should *we* the burden bear?"

With what emphasis and with what energy would they exclaim, "*Ye*

have no need to fight in this battle; the battle is not *yours*, but the *Lord's*. *He* shall fight for you, and *ye* shall hold your peace!"

We are sure that this would be the counsel and this the testimony of these glorified brethren, could they now speak to and with us. By faith, then, may we have grace to hear and heed their words, seeing that they are so strictly in accordance with what is left upon record in God's holy Book.

Our meditations were sweet and refreshing as we gazed upon those smooth and glassy waters, and upon the far-stretched shore on the other side, as, prompted by the immortal Watts, we mentally exclaimed—

"Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood | So to the Jews old Canaan stood,
Stand dressed in living green; | While Jordan rolled between."

We had, however, something in reserve which was, if possible, more refreshing. It was the singing as with one heart and with one voice of our little party, as we returned home in the quiet and silent repose of evening. The sun was just going down, and the peaceful day was succeeded by the calm and stillness of the advancing night, when we resumed our seats in the four-horse and well-found break in which we had been conveyed in the forenoon. Soon after starting, the usual hymns were sung; and never do we remember a greater sweetness or solemnity to have marked our songs of praise. As far as we personally felt it, it was singing on pilgrimage indeed. Many among our number we knew did in reality know and love the Lord. Hence it was in reality communion with the better land. Whilst we thought of those who were gone before—and we could but think of them—we felt of their song and its object—

"Sinners here may sing the same—"

yea, we felt—

"The hill of Zion yields | Before we reach the heav'nly fields,
A thousand sacred sweets, | Or walk the golden streets."

Very numerous and most telling were the hymns which were sung; and, as we contemplated those who had, year after year, taken part in those songs of praise, how heart-uplifting and soul-inspiring did such, for example, as these become, as sung so sweetly and heartily in the stillness and softness of that summer evening,—

"For ever with the Lord."

"There is a happy land."

"We sing of the realms of the blessed."

"There is a land of pure delight."

"Rock of ages, cleft for me."

"There is a fountain fill'd with blood."

"Guide me, O, Thou great Jehovah."

To ourselves, and we doubt not to others, it was a scene and a season long to be remembered. We are free to acknowledge that personally we do most thoroughly enjoy these annual excursions, and that, too, upon the ground of their instrumentally bringing us, as it were, into closer contact with pilgrims at rest—fellow-labourers gone before—those we once knew and loved on the stormy ocean having reached in peace and safety the fair havens. And our enjoyment is heightened by the thought that similar rest and the like attainment and victory await many among our number who are at present on pilgrimage, or buffeting the stormy

waves or rough billows, which, nevertheless, are conducting them to the self-same heavenly harbour, there at last to cast anchor for ever and ever.

“ Oh! blissful dawn of endless day;
When sin shall cease, and death
shall die;
And Christ His glory shall display,
And beam upon my longing eye.
Then, then, my God, this soul of
mine,
Bought, dearly bought, and made
Thine own,

Southsea, July 20, 1874.

In Thy bright righteousness shall
shine,
And have its portion on Thy
throne.

“ Then wrapt in everlasting bliss,
'Midst heaven's innumerable
throng,
Thy love shall all my powers employ,
And be the theme of endless song.”

D.

Correspondence.

CROSS-WEARERS.

To the Editor of the Gospel Magazine.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—I am not sorry that my tract on “Cross-wearers” has drawn forth a letter in your last number from our venerable brother, whom I have known and loved now for, I think, twenty years, although we have recently very seldom met; for, if it has no other result, it will attract still further attention among professing Christians to what I consider a very reprehensible custom—that of wearing representations of our Lord's cross around their necks, or dangling at their sides, in the interests of fashion, or, still worse, of superstition.

Our dear brother objects to my way of treating the subject. I cannot well make out from his letter—which refers to other matters beside cross-wearing—whether he objects to the wearing of crosses or not, but I presume he does; and, therefore, I conclude he has written rather against my way of assailing the practice than against the assault itself. Of course, this, like every other subject, will be regarded from different points of view, and I have in my tract presented it from the one which appeared to me likely to strike a thoughtful believer in our precious Redeemer, as He is represented in the divine portraiture given of Him for our use in God's inspired Word.

We admire, love, and rejoice in our Lord because we are now privileged by faith to see Him as He is, in the entirety and fulness of His redemption character. Any defective or fragmentary representation of Him would not satisfy our longings, or sustain our hopes. For example, a history of His life, even with its wonderful deeds and words, without any reference to His death, would prove very inadequate to our necessities; so an account of His death, without the thrilling narrative of His previous earthly career, would leave us in much darkness and difficulty. In the same way any account of His death, not followed by that of His resurrection and ascension, would prove so incomplete as to provide no resting-place for the soul conscious of sin and exposure to divine wrath, and, therefore, trembling under sentence of eternal death.

Now, let me ask, Suppose I could produce the very cross on which the Son of God hung, and undertook to give its history, strictly confining

myself to His relation to that cross, or perhaps I should rather say to give that portion of His history which was strictly connected with that cross, how much of the sacred narrative would come within the range of my observations? Let us see:

1. The cry of the Jews, "Crucify Him, crucify Him."
2. Pilate's delivery of Him to be crucified.
3. His crucifixion between two malefactors.
4. The Jews' challenge to Him to come down from the cross.
5. His cry to God, who, He said, had forsaken Him.
6. His death after the words, "It is finished."
7. The wound inflicted on His dead body by the Roman soldier.
8. The removal of His body from the cross as of one accursed of God (Deut. xxi. 23).

What, then, have we here? 1, the triumph of human malice, envy, and hatred; 2, the supremacy of earthly power; 3, the infliction of the most shameful and degrading of all punishments; 4, a successful infidel sneer; 5, God's repudiation of the crucified One; 6, His death; 7, an act of heathen violence; 8, the curse exemplified.

Now, I must insist that in the history of the cross, *taken by itself* (and upon that the whole argument in my tract turns), you have nothing but what is here set down. In other words, this is all that the cross, upon which our Lord hung, represents. To include more you must take the word "cross" in a representative rather than in a real sense; but that use belongs to words, not to things. The thing which I present to your notice when I produce for your inspection the wooden frame on which our Lord hung is the instrument of punishment and death, and cannot mean anything else. In connection with our Lord's work on earth, it represents, therefore, only sin and its consequences, and any imitation of it cannot represent anything more; but that is only the humiliating and repulsive part of the glorious story of man's redemption. It contains not a jot, it suggests not a tittle, of the exulting, transporting intelligence of sin pardoned and death conquered. We must pass from the cross to the sepulchre for that—from the lifeless body taken down from the accursed tree to the living Jesus rising triumphantly from the miraculously-opened tomb, who, though delivered to the cross for our offences, is now raised from the tomb for our justification.

No, the cross, except by a rhetorical verbal figure of part for the whole, does not represent my religion. I believe not in a crucified, but in a crucified *and* risen, Jesus. I do not, as my venerable friend implies, take the cross out of my religion; but I will not accept it as constituting my religion. I still maintain that, "of itself," it is the emblem of defeat, of wrath, of judgment. I admit that it was set up "in the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God," that it might be struck down by the arm of Omnipotence; but it is that striking down which I embrace as my soul's hope and joy. I accept the fact that my Surety was nailed to it till He died; but, had the curtain fallen upon that dread transaction, nothing but darkness and dreariness could have rested on my eternal prospects, and the shadow of the cross, instead of providing a sense of peace and security, would have spread a pall of darkest night over my soul, and conjured up appalling visions of wrath and retribution for the coming day of account.

I accept the word "cross," as used frequently in Scripture, in the full sense in which it is used, that is, to represent the religion of Jesus

in the humiliating aspect which it presents before the world. When Paul says, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ," he meant that he did not boast of those earthly things which ministered to human pride, but of that which was productive of shame and humiliation, because it identified him with the crucified One in a God-denying world. But Paul was not satisfied with the cross as the emblem of shame, suffering, and death. He desired by any means to attain to the resurrection of the dead, and leaving the things that were behind—the cross and its accompaniments, perhaps, included—he pressed towards that crown of righteousness, life, and glory which he knew was laid up for him.

Our friend reminds me that Paul "determined to know nothing among the Corinthians but Jesus Christ and Him crucified," or, as some would have it, "*even Him crucified*;" that is, he proclaimed Jesus to be the Son of God, and Saviour of men, not shrinking from so representing One who was executed as the lowest and vilest of criminals. But did Paul really think that the Gospel message was nothing more than a proclamation of the crucifixion and death of Jesus Christ? And did he confine his preaching among the Corinthians to that? We have the strongest evidence to the contrary, even his own account of what he preached to these people. He says, writing to them, "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received; how that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, *and* that He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures." And so much importance does he attach to this last subject of communication that he not only employs the remainder of the doctrinal portion of his epistle—occupying a very long chapter—with it, but boldly declares that, in the removal of this item from the Gospel scheme, the entire of that scheme would be rendered utterly worthless. But of that item—namely, the resurrection—there is not the faintest suggestion in the cross of Calvary, and, therefore, not in any model or representation of it. Therefore, if my religion is represented by the cross only—and upon that word "only" I lay special emphasis—then it lacks the great element without which, according to apostolic testimony, it is of no value whatever.

It is written of our blessed Lord, "That for the joy that was set before Him He endured the cross, despising the shame;" that is, the shame of a servile and degrading death. That death the cross represented, but it did not represent the joy. The joy, it is true, arose out of the cross, but nowhere in Scripture is the word cross used to symbolize joy; on the contrary, it always indicates something painful, trying, heavy to bear. Therefore, our Lord's cross exercised His endurance; but He looked confidently for it to pass away, and then would come the joy. There was no joy to the Saviour in the cross as such, as there is no joy to His followers in their crosses as such. It is in anticipated deliverance in both cases, and the blessings thereby secured, that the joy is felt. Now, the believer's portion in Christ is peace and joy; but, while these decidedly emanate from the cross Calvary, there is nothing in the shame, sorrow, and suffering of that cross to represent them.

Our dear friend seems shocked at my saying, "the cross signifies the triumph of Satan, and nothing else." Now, may I ask him, Does it *of itself*, without any reference to its effects, represent anything but Satan's work in the heart of Judas, the Jewish priests' murderous hatred of Jesus, the success of the cry, "Crucify Him, crucify Him," the execu-

tion of Jesus thereon and His death? And was not Satanic policy thus far triumphant? Quite true, that policy was, even in its temporary triumph, accomplishing Satan's overthrow, but, up to the resurrection of Jesus, he seemed to have it all his own way. What I mean is, that, however blessed and glorious were God's purposes of love in the cross, and the effects proceeding from it, these do not appear in the dark incidents gathering around the cross and suggested by it, any more than the peirage and the pension appear in the surgeon's knife that amputates the leg of the military hero who has won both by the prowess of which the amputated leg is the evidence. The knife represents suffering and loss; who would think of wearing it, or any imitation of it, as an emblem of victory?

When my friend says he hangs all his hopes upon the cross, I think I may say, using his own language, he does not mean that. He does not hang his hopes on the wooden thing on which our Lord hung, of which all worn crosses profess to be imitations. He does not hang his hopes on any one or more of these imitations in various substances which women hang from their necks. He does not hang his hopes upon these things, because they are earthly, human, powerless. He does not hang his hopes upon that which the cross of Calvary alone represents—a suffering, dying, dead humanity, assumed by Deity that it might be reduced to that state, and that divine power and love might be magnified in its rescue from that state. It is upon that divine power and love that our venerable brother hangs his hopes. It is in a resurrection and living Jesus that he trusts—a Jesus crucified and put to death indeed, by Satanic suggestion, and the "wicked hands" of man, because divine wisdom had so appointed; but raised from the dead "by the glory of the Father," that He might be "the First-fruits of them that slept," and the Author of life to those who shall rise in Him, and who shall live because He lives.

Do I, as my brother alleges, disparage the cross because I reject it as the emblem of my religion? I am a dying man and want life, restored, sustained life; but I do not find it in the transactions of the cross. I do find it in the transactions of the sepulchre. Then why should I linger at the cross, and not hasten on to the sepulchre? There I find an angel of light, who informs me that my Redeemer has triumphed over the cross and over the sepulchre too. He is risen and gone to Galilee; there I shall see Him. Would my brother say, "No, I will cling to the cross?" He would not, he will leave the cross far behind. It has done its work of shame, pain, death, but all that is now past. Farewell cross, my sympathies are no more with you: a living and risen Christ is now my confidence and my joy. I will think of Him on the throne, ever living to make intercession, and not on the cross, suffering for sin now pardoned, dying to purchase reconciliation now accomplished.

My respected friend and brother asks how I can sing certain hymns in which the cross is referred to as a ground of gratitude and joy. May I ask him, Did he ever extol a medicine that was nauseous or bitter merely for these qualities? Was it not for the cure which it effected? My objection to cross-wearing is that the emblem represents only the repulsive features of the Christian religion—features necessary to it because of my sin; but it does not—of itself, remember—represent what my soul rejoices in—the smile of redeeming love on the face of Jesus. To see that I must ascend from the cross to the throne, and there I hear One saying, "I am He that liveth and was dead, and, behold, I am alive for evermore." The

death is a thing of the past; the life of Jesus is my portion now and for ever. My Christianity is sin and death conquered, not suffering and death canonized.

Christianity is like a heavenly body with a dark and a bright side, because partly in shadow and partly in sunshine. A true representation of it would include both those features; but, were I restricted to a partial delineation, I certainly would not choose a view taken from the dark side, especially if it affected to represent the whole. Give me either a portraiture of the entire with its double aspect, or give me that which is pleasant to the eyes and sweet to the heart, especially if I know that the use of the orb is not to cast a shadow, but to reflect the sunshine. No wonder that we have men and women professing to be devout followers of Jesus who think that the essence of Christianity consists in making themselves, and looking, as miserable as possible; who are always in the poor publican state of never daring to lift up so much as their eyes unto heaven, and whose proper attitude is supposed to be prostrate in the dust: thus utterly distorting and falsifying the joy-inspiring features of the Christianity which they profess. Like Legion, their associations are with the dead, not with the living. They have their dwelling in the tombs, and there alone they find their Christ. In a cross or a crucifix they study Him and His redemption work, and consequently in their religion they never get beyond suffering and death.

I am sure my dear brother will agree with me in my view that a cross, *of itself*, represents only the dark side of Christianity, and that the bright side is the resurrection of our glorious Head, which the cross does not represent. If he will proceed with me thus far, I do not think he will find, on reflection, that I am very wrong in asserting that a cross *per se* does not symbolize his Christianity or mine.

Ever, dear brother, affectionately yours,

S. A. WALKER.

Bristol.

I am thankful to say that my tract, which is approaching a sale of 40,000, has been blessed of God in several instances to cause the practice of cross-wearing to be discontinued.

INFANT BAPTISM.

To the Editor of the Leicester Journal.

DEAR SIR,—Having oftentimes been questioned by Church of England Sacramentarians and Nonconformist Sacramentarians on the subject of baptism, I have given the following reply in several cases with much satisfaction resulting. I think it may be useful at this time to some at least, when men's minds are exercised so greatly with matters tending to divide the children of God, who at this period of our dispensation need above all things to be united. "Divide and conquer" is an old device of the devil. Well, then, when I baptize I consider that I do, in a form or symbol, for a testimony *in* the Church, and *to* the world, what God must do in reality for the poor creature "born in sin and shape in iniquity." Abraham is said to have received Isaac from the dead in a figure, symbol, or form (Heb. xi. 19). There was in reality no death in the case, and, consequently, no real resurrection. The Almighty has, in all ages and dispensations, set out His truth by forms or symbols, beginning with the cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden. The form must of necessity be a perfectly true setting out of the *reality*

signified. Therefore, if any one be symbolically baptized, that one is symbolically regenerate, and must be pronounced to be so, inasmuch as every one really baptized by God the Holy Ghost *is a regenerate person*, a new creature, having a new, a divine, an eternal life bestowed according to "the eternal purpose purposed in Christ Jesus," even His life, who is the second Adam, and emphatically **THE LIFE**. All who are brought under the form, being submitted to this ordinance by their parents, or of their own mind, are no more necessarily, or of consequence, Christians than all those submitted to the ordinance of circumcision were Jews in the judgment of God, as pronounced in Romans ii. 28, 29: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God," who, whatever be His purpose in having men submitted universally to His ordinances in each dispensation, certainly never designed either circumcision or baptism to be a life-giving ordinance of consequence or necessity. Evidently, the matter of submitting their offspring to the ordinance of God concerns the parents more than the children; the parents, as professed servants of God, thereby testifying their obedience to the faith, as in the case of the Lord Jesus Himself, as we read, "The parents brought into the temple the Child Jesus, to do for Him after the custom of the land." And, as regards a man submitting himself to be baptized, the ordinance does not of necessity make him a Christian any more than in the case of Simon Magus, who was afterwards pronounced to be in "the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity." Surely, we see this fact illustrated in every day and generation, and we protest also most emphatically against the modern custom of certain men who substitute a performance of their own, called "a dedication of children to God," instead of God's own appointed ordinance of baptism—a mere affair to stifle conscience, but, nevertheless, *an act of positive disobedience*—the old line, in fact, of fallen human nature substituting a performance of its own for God's ordinance, as in the case of Cain bringing the fruit of the ground instead of the slaughtered lamb, and the fat thereof, the firstling of the flock. Depend upon it, the children of disobedience are found now, as then, in the line of *religion* as well as in irreligion and immorality.

I am, yours faithfully,

G. W. STRATON.

Reviews and Notices of Books.

Kalendar Notes. Short Devotional Comments for every Sunday and Holiday in the Christian Year. By the Rev. JOHN R. VERNON. London: William Wells Gardner.

THE tendency of this book may be easily perceived from the following extracts:—"Let us, therefore, consider the duties that follow upon our bodies being the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in us *Every baptized person* among us, rich or poor, young or old, man or woman, has committed to his charge a temple of God, a building consecrated and dedicated to God's service, and that has to be kept clean and pure, and fit for God's indwelling." "The *great* bishop, Samuel Wilberforce." Respecting the Virgin Mary: "We may well feel, with our poet, that her

name 'all but adoring love may claim,' we may reverently imagine, although we are not told, that she must have been the holiest and purest of all men and women," &c. &c.

The Companions of the Lord: Chapters on the Lives of the Apostles. By CHARLES E. B. REED M.A., late Scholar of Trinity College, Cambridge. London: The Religious Tract Society.

A CONNECTED history is here given of each of the disciples of our Lord, including the twelve apostles and our Lord's brethren, many scattered threads of information are gathered together from various sources, and a useful volume is the result.

The Divine Glory of Christ. By the Rev. CHARLES J. BROWN, D.D. London: The Religious Tract Society.

THE author of this work states that his object in writing it was twofold; first, to contribute something which might not be altogether without value, theologically, in the Unitarian and some other controversies; and secondly, to do this in such a way as to promote the edification of the devout reader. With this object in view, he considers the incidental testimonies to the divine glory of Christ, from the claims of His authority, from the invitations of His grace, from references to His rank and place in relation to the Father, &c., and he notices the bearing of the whole subject upon Infidelity, Arianism, and Romanism, and upon Christian faith and life.

Protestantism: Its Ultimate Principle. By R. W. DALE, M.A., Birmingham. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

MR. DALE thinks that there is some reason to fear that in this country the great cause of Protestantism will suffer, in consequence of its argument being entangled with innumerable collateral disputes; and he endeavours to prove that one great idea controls and inspires the whole, viz., that Protestantism asserts the right of private judgment, maintains the authority of Holy Scripture, and teaches that men are justified by faith. This may be perfectly true, but it is equally true that it is often impossible to confine controversy to one or two particular points; and, whereas an argument seems to be based upon a comparatively trivial circumstance, its real foundation lies far deeper. The Reformers apparently contended and died for a trifle when they insisted that bread and wine were never changed into Christ's body and blood, and died in consequence; but the truth was not that that point was of vital importance in itself, but that it was the pivot upon which turned other matters of most vital importance. Concede that point, and you at once pave the way for an idolatrous worship, and for all the arrogant assumptions of the priesthood of Rome; the one Divine Mediator is exchanged for many human mediators, and the one great Sacrifice for the oft-repeated sacrifice of the mass. Mr. Dale speaks of the change which has passed over the country in reference to its opinion of Romanism; we deeply regret that change, but we think that Mr. Dale exaggerates the case; he says, *e.g.*, that "the doctrine of the real presence is openly taught from *thousands* of Anglican pulpits." We must see some proof of this statement before we can believe it. Romish doctrine is no doubt openly taught from *many* Anglican pulpits, but surely not from "*thousands*;" on the contrary, when the Ritualists got up their celebrated petition on confession, it was only signed by 480 "Priests," and ever so many of these afterwards withdrew their names, stating that they had signed it in utter ignorance of its contents.