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44 years Editor of the Gospel Magazine

THE
GOSPEL MAGAZINE.



"ENDEAVOURING TO KEEP THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE BOND OF PEACE."
"JESUS CHRIST, THE SAME YESTERDAY, TO-DAY, AND FOR EVER. WHOM TO KNOW
IS LIFE ETERNAL."

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[No. 19.

DID THE LORD EVER MAKE THEE A PROMISE ?

Then plead it before him, as Jacob did, GEN. xxxii. 12,

AND THOU SAIDST, I WILL SURELY DO THEE GOOD.

WHATEVER may be said to the contrary by Satan, by a merely professing world, or by the unbelief of the heart, it is the high privilege of the children of God, to put him in remembrance—to plead before him his own covenant word and promise. The Scriptures afford a divine warrant for the same ; for, in the forty-third chapter of Isaiah and the twenty-sixth verse, the Lord himself says, "Put me in remembrance ; let us plead together," &c. Here it would seem that the Lord had forgotten—that he required to be reminded of his promise : this, however, can never be ; he never can forget the sacred engagements into which he has entered with his dear Son, as the one glorious living Head and Representative of his church, nor with the church in him. A sacred compact was eternally entered into, taking into account the every state and condition in which every individual member of that church should be placed, and effectually providing for his complete preservation and final deliverance. And the Lord has been pleased uniformly so to withdraw himself in his sensible manifestations, as to cause his children to feel their weakness, their loneliness, and their entire inability to counsel and instruct themselves in the path in which they should go ; that, thereby, the faith of his own implantation may be brought into

exercise, and an opportunity afforded him of displaying his watchful care over, and tender sympathies towards, his church.

Jacob (ah ! poor Jacob !) was, like a multitude of his followers, prone to live by sense and feeling. He could *believe*, for the most part, just as far as he could *see*, and but little or no farther, only as the Lord the eternal Spirit was pleased to operate upon his naturally weak and timid mind. Destined, even before his birth, to be a special character, and one more immediately requiring the peculiar guidance and protection of the most high God, it was not long before he was placed in circumstances which were to set forth what he was in himself, and what God was and would be in him.

That he or his mother was to be justified for the treacherous manner in which he obtained his good old father Isaac's blessing, as recorded in the twenty-seventh chapter of this book, we do not, for a moment, maintain. He did, in this, as did Abraham with respect to Hagar (in the sixteenth chapter), betray the impatience, the unbelief, and the depravity of our poor fallen nature, which is ever ready to give God the lie, and to adopt its own falsely-conceived ideas of good. Oh, no ! in this treachery and falsehood Jacob was not to be excused ; abstractedly considered, it was an evil thing, and (as a correspondent lately remarked) it was a conviction of this that he felt so keenly many years after, in the prospect of meeting his brother Esau. Sin had unmanned him ; sin had rendered him weak ; and though God, in the rich aboundings of his mercy, does put away the sins of his people, yet he does make them smart for sin ; and they feel enough, under his chastening hand, to make them dread the indulgence of it. Nor do they, in proportion as his love and grace are kept sweetly alive in their hearts, more tremble at the thought of hell itself, than at the idea of the Lord so withdrawing himself as to leave them under the dominion of their old carnal nature, or the power of Satan ; and though they are compelled, day by day, to adopt the language of the apostle in his seventh chapter to the Romans, yet it is their ardent desire to be so perpetually living in and upon the grace and fulness of Jesus, that they never would dishonour him by an unbelieving thought or an unholy deed. This is the practical tendency of what is termed Antinomianism.

But Jacob obtains the blessing, and then, compelled to flee the anger of his brother, with a guilty conscience and a burdened heart, he sets out for the house of Laban. Who shall describe his feelings—the anguish of his heart, on leaving his parental roof, and finding himself exposed to many privations ? Here, in this forlorn condition, the Lord graciously meets with him ; not to upbraid him—not to add sorrow to his already burdened heart—but, in a way of kindness and compassion, his indulgent Father holds communion with his spirit. He tells him who he is and what he is ; and, recapitulating some of his wondrous acts, assures Jacob that he will be with him still. The revelation being only by a dream, the FAITH of Jacob was thereby more called into exercise ; there must be a going out of self—a venturing upon a something altogether beyond the reach of human reasoning or mere fleshly feeling. It was a revelation to the faith which the Holy Ghost, at the

same time, implanted in the heart of Jacob ; so that there was an instantaneous response, as it were, to the voice of the Most High, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not." The mere natural mind of man never can comprehend the peculiar manifestations of God to his people ; "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him ; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. Nor can the natural mind, or old Adam-part of our nature, after grace is implanted, comprehend these divine mysteries any more than the ungodly, who do not possess an opposing principle and a supernatural light. Hence arise, after the brightest manifestations, the multitude of doubts and scruples, the vilest unbelief, and the most God-dishonouring thoughts, which the sceptical mind, the earthly part of a believer, can produce. God promises, faith listens and approves ; there is a sweet reception of the word, a blessed closing-in with the promise, a shaking hands, a divine embrace between God and the soul ; the devil and the unbelief of the heart all the while keeping at a respectful distance : but the moment the Lord withdraws—directly he turns his back (so to speak), they begin ; by little and little they throw in their insinuations, their cross-questionings, the *possibility*, yet the great *improbability*, of the fulfilment of the promise. "Ah ! was it not a misunderstanding ? Was it a revelation ? Might it not have been a mere illusion ? Does anything around justify such an expectation ? If it were likely to come to pass, would there not appear some grounds upon which a more certain reliance might be placed ?" Oh ! that crafty devil ! this vile unbelief ! near kindred indeed—both deserving one common damnation ! Ah ! poor exercised believer, thou wilt be freed from both by and by. Thou art now a prisoner ; the world is often nothing more than a dungeon to thee ; sin and unbelief are the fetters which bind thee, and Satan is door-keeper. Ere long a stronger than he shall come, whose very countenance, animated as it is with love to thee, shall strike such terror into thine enemy, as shall quickly send him back to his own place.

"And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good." "Lord, it is thine own word, spoken irrespective of me and my foul deserts altogether. Thou art the omniscient Jehovah, taking in, at one glance of thine infinite mind, all I was and all I ever should be—a poor, guilty, hell-deserving wretch—afar off from thee by wicked works—prone to despise thee—possessing, naturally, not even the veriest particle of love to thee, but would, on the contrary, gladly hurl thee from thy throne, and deprive thee of existence ; yet, notwithstanding all, in Jesus thou hast made me a promise ; 'I will surely do thee good.' And this promise, Lord, I come now, in the time of my necessity, to remind thee of ; and I come, not in my own name, nor pleading any worth or worthiness of my own—for I have none to plead—but I come in his dear name in whom and with whom thou hast said thou art ever well pleased. I come, moreover, Lord, pleading the name, the work, the ever-prevalent merits of that very Jesus whom *thou* didst, in thy great mercy, first reveal as an almighty and an all-suitable Saviour to *my* sin-burdened soul."

Reader, is this the solemn, the sincere, the importunate language of thy soul? Is this the mode of thy approach to the mercy-seat? Whatever be thy troubles, however complicated or numerous thy exercises, are these the breathings of thy heart? We tell thee, then, for thy comfort, thou *must* prevail. It is the Holy Ghost pleading within thee, in his own blessed character, as a Spirit of grace and supplication. Left to thyself, to thy own carnal will and rebellious feeling, thou couldst no more breathe forth these desires and ardent longings, than thou couldst create a world. A wrestling Jacob must be a prevailing Israel. Hence the encouraging history left upon record, and now before us. What of his own had Jacob to plead? What inherent good had he to offer at the throne? He had acted in the character of a base deceiver, and uttered lie upon lie; in a human point of view, he had proved himself far less deserving of the blessing than Esau his brother, and yet, according to the eternal purpose and sovereign choice of Him who has a right to choose whom he will, and pass by and reject whom he pleases, Jacob was to inherit it. In a treacherous way he obtained it; upon a free-will, human-merit principle, it must counteract itself; but, viewed in a light to which mere human reason cannot attain, and in conjunction with the results which are left upon record, the treachery and precipitancy of Rebecca and Jacob could not frustrate the eternal purpose of our God. Inconvenience and anguish he must and did suffer; of this we have before testified; still the pleasure of the Most High shall be accomplished, and that in such a way as to render it a most suitable evidence of his long-suffering and compassion to his church in every age.

Jacob leaves Bethel (ever-memorable spot!) and journeys onward. His course is opened most sweetly, and it is proved, to a demonstration, that God *is* with him, according to promise. Yet mark, amidst all, the interminglings of Fatherly reproof, enough to rebuke the most presumptuous. He had served his seven years for Rachel, seemingly a brief period, on account of the love wherewith he loved her; but, as he had deceived an Isaac, so must he be deceived with a Leah. Mark this, reader, if thou art presumptuously saying, "Let us do evil, that good may come." We hesitate not to say, that this is the most dangerous ground a soul can occupy; and, if a poor child of God be left there, we earnestly pray that God the Holy Ghost, may show him the fallacy of the argument, and break the awful snare in which his poor unwary feet are entrapped. Oh! He can give all the grace, all the brokenness of spirit, and humility of mind thou inwardly pinest after, without leaving thee to fall into the sin which a lying devil and a deceitful heart are saying will, *if* thou art a child, surely "work together for thy good." It is an awful lie of the devil—an ensnaring bait by which he wishes to entrap thee. God in mercy deliver thee, for none else can. If thou art left to fall into the snare, whatever it be, Satan will surely turn round upon thee, and all but overwhelm thee in the very vortex of despair.

At length, having greatly increased in substance, led by the Lord, Jacob is resolved to return to his own country. Fresh trouble awaits

him ; soon intimation is given him that his brother is come out against him with four hundred men. And now comes Jacob's pleading-time. Having used all due precaution, he at once goes to God, and, first reminding him of his high character, as the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God that had bade him follow his present course (oh ! it is very blessed when the soul can get here), he confesses his own utter demerit ; and then, rehearsing what the Lord had done for him, "With my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands" (it is very precious when the soul can contrast former circumstances with present mercies), he presents his plea, and expresses, in the simplest language, his own apprehensions ; "Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau ; *for I fear him*, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children." Then comes the language of our text, as though Jacob, notwithstanding all his unworthiness, would assign a reason for the Lord's gracious interference in his present calamity, "And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good ;" *thou* hast promised to appear, *thou* art under a sacred engagement. Wilt thou—canst thou forfeit thy word ?

From the order of the language, it appears that the Lord remained silent—apparently gave no heed ; for we afterwards read of the additional precautions which Jacob took. But the night gets darker—the burden increases—the crisis is nearer at hand ; and Jacob rose up that night (verse 22), and, being left alone (verse 24), there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. How significant is the expression, and how clearly does it manifest the power of the blessed Spirit as being put forth in the soul of every true wrestler. Jacob—poor, unbelieving, fearful Jacob—was brought into the most necessitous circumstances. A present help he needed—an immediate deliverance he required ; hence his importunity, and the holy courage with which he was endowed ; "I will not let thee go except thou bless me." Mark the gracious condescension of the Lord ; "And when he (that is, the Lord) saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh ; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him." This would seem to be putting a finishing stroke to the matter, giving a flat denial to the whole entreaty ; but no, this was merely intended to awaken still more earnestness, and to produce a more determinate resolution to be satisfied with nothing short of the blessing sought ; and behold how fully was his every wish realized ; nay, how far beyond his utmost expectation did the Lord appear for him, turning the lion into a lamb, and possessing the mind of Esau with the utmost tenderness and affection towards his brother, as the following chapter testifies.

Reader, though the subject has oftentimes preached volumes to us, we feel that, in our present meditation, we have been unable to get at the marrow of it as we could desire—so sovereign are the Lord the Spirit's dealings with his messengers. To have sweet meditation upon a subject is one thing—to bring it forth is another ; and, lest we should rest upon our contemplations rather than upon the Lord, the most enlarged

views are frequently attended with the most barren deliveries ; the sweetest personal participation in a subject, with the coldest and most indifferent announcement of it ; the most blessed inward witnessing of being employed as a Gospel messenger, with the keenest apprehensions that we are a mere sounding brass or tinkling cymbal. These, these are some of the complicated exercises of which the Lord's messengers are the subjects ; and frequently have they to go for days and weeks pent up with these uncertain feelings, with a mere transient deliverance during the time of their occupation with the family. And here—in these dark, unaccountable spots—are some of their most useful lessons learnt, and from this apparently lost time and experience, the family instrumentally obtain their richest supplies.

To talk of an individual always being upon the mount of enjoyment, never having to combat with any doubts and fears, is visionary ; there is no such thing in the family of God ; and much that passes current for faith, even in the real child of God, we verily believe to be nothing more than a fleshly confidence. As the mind is easily depressed by natural or bodily causes ; so, from the same causes, does it frequently attain to a mistaken assurance, which gives way when tested by temptation or trial.

There are, however, a few observations which, before we close, we would have the reader gather from the subject we have been considering.

1. In Jacob we behold the sovereignty of God in the choice of, and continued forbearance with, one of the most unbelieving of those whose history is recorded. Hear his language, after the numberless and very signal deliverances he had experienced ; "All these things are against me" (Gen. xlii. 36).

2. We discover the evil of sin—the bitterness of spirit and the bondage it communicates.

3. We see the entire inability of the creature to act faith, when placed in discouraging circumstances ; and are compelled to acknowledge the absolute necessity for Him who first implanted it, to cherish it in every time of need.

4. We would have thee, reader, learn, by Jacob's history, not to judge by dark dispensations of the Lord's good-will towards thee, nor estimate his love by the measure of thy enjoyment. Some of his sweetest visits, and the most conclusive proofs of his love, are hid behind such dark visitations as seem to falsify every hope, and threaten to annihilate every particle of confidence.

5. When thou art most sensible of thy weakness, and most apprehensive of danger, be it thy concern to express it before the Lord. Looking at thy malady, merely deliberating on thy danger, will do thee no good ; but the eye and the cry to Jesus will relieve thee, and will surely prove the dawning of deliverance. The sweetest relief the soul can possibly enjoy, is by telling out its cares to him who has said, "Cast thy burden on the Lord, and he shall sustain thee ;" and to give the desire and the ability thus to act, is one of the high offices

which the Holy Ghost sustains. He must be acknowledged as the first and great moving cause in every sigh and cry which ascend to Jesus.

6. Be it thy aim, also, to acknowledge this self-same Spirit as the dear Remembrancer of his people. In dark seasons may he indulge thee with a cry to him, that he would be pleased to bring to thy recollection the words which in former seasons he has spoken to thee ; that thou, like Jacob, may rest upon his faithfulness and unchangeability, however discouraging an aspect present things may wear ; "And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good." "Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope."

7. Observe, in Jacob, the two-fold operation of the Lord, and see its frequent assimilation to thine own experience. In the words before us, under the blessed Spirit's power as the Remembrancer, he is *reminding the Lord of his promise*—this was a great privilege ; but a higher favour was it, *when the Lord* (in the thirty-first chapter and thirteenth verse) *reminded him*, saying, "I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar, and where thou vowedst a vow unto me." Learn, too, from this, the acceptance of the *desire* of faith where there is not the *confidence* of faith. We often misjudge here, and conceive that only those prayers have met a reception with the Holy One which have much *assurance* in them. Jacob's prayer at Bethel had an *if* in it, and yet that prayer entered into the ear and heart of the Lord God of Sabaoth. Frequently there is far more prayer in the sobs, the groans, and the tears, mingled as they are with unbelief and slavish fear, than with our profusion of words.

Lastly. Learn from Jacob's history, that it is the lot of many a pilgrim through this desert land to a better country, to travel by many an obscure and winding path. Jacob did not travel *smoothly* long together, and yet he journeyed *safely*. After his first Bethel manifestation—his reception by Laban—his vast increase—his overpowering the angel—his meeting with Esau—his return to his father's house in peace—and the several conspicuous visitations of God to him, he at times questions all, and in fresh seasons of difficulty is as unable to rest upon the promise, and as much stands in need of fresh communications, as ever. See the conclusion of his history ; and with his humiliating yet memorable confession to Pharaoh we close (forty-seventh chapter, eighth and ninth verses) ; "And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old art thou ? And Jacob (reflecting upon the unbelief which had marked his career) said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years ; few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers, in the days of their pilgrimage."

Reader, the Lord has many a fearful, unbelieving Jacob still ; and (thanks to his great name) has an ear as ready to hearken, and a hand as ready to aid, as ever.

THE EDITOR.

THOU HAST KNOWN MY SOUL IN ADVERSITY.

PSALM XXXI. 7.

AND that these are the words of our dear Lord Jesus Christ in their highest and most dignified reference, I doubt not; since he is "the Man that hath seen affliction," and his righteous soul knew adversity, not in the simplest, but in the most solemnly awful manner; to confirm which we hear him crying out, under a solemn and accumulated pressure that would have sunk the church to hell, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." "And, being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly, if it were possible the cup might pass from him." This was indeed adversity—this was indeed what Hart designates it, a "tragic scene;" and what the dear Sufferer himself calls it, "exceeding sorrow;" and I do, from my very soul, believe that the greatest power of adversity was felt by our dear Lord in Gethsemane, when so pressed, so overwhelmed, and borne down by sorrow of soul that he "sweat, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground." To attempt to define the power, nature, and extent of these adversities, would only manifest my folly; suffice it to say, that he did suffer, bear, and groan under the greatest accumulation of adversities that ever was borne or endured yet by one—nay, the whole adversities of the election of grace were borne by him; for, says the apostle, "We have not an High Priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was, in ALL POINTS, tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Blessed "all points"—how confirmatory of the fact that his righteous soul knew the veriest adversity!

But who knew the righteous soul of this dear Sufferer in adversity? Who witnessed (not participated) these adversities? Holy angels, the powers of darkness, Jehovah—all these, no doubt, witnessed the deep adversities of Jesus in the garden; and though he is to the unconverted sinner as "a root out of a dry ground," without form or comeliness, still every repenting sinner must know the blessed Sufferer in adversity, for "they shall look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn:" those that are ever destined to see him on the throne, shall first see him in the garden and on the cross. Happy, happy, eternally happy soul that ever has had fellowship with Jesus in adversity, for so surely shalt thou be with him also in glory; for "Christ loved the church and gave himself (HIMSELF, astounding) for it." "And having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end." Thus, then, the soul of the dear Redeemer was known in adversity; and as this Scripture, in its highest import, refers unto him, so, secondarily, it is the experience of the church, every individual member of which is, through sin, the subject of adversity, for this is the awfully prolific source of it all: but for sin, no adversity would happen; and though adversity branches out in various ways, yet it all springs from the same root—adversities within and without, personal and relative, temporal and spirit-

ual. But our text declares that there are adversities of soul, which of all are the most momentous; and I venture to assert that, let a man's adversities be what they may outwardly, they are all as nothing when compared to soul-felt adversities; this is the rod that swallows up all the others, and the all-absorbing care, compared with which all others are trivial. "What must I do to be saved?" is the language of a soul in adversity. Hence, then, these are the adversities of the quickened, living, convinced sinner, as is manifested in the declaration, "God, be merciful to me a sinner;" so of the law-cursed, law-condemned sinner, who has been led to feel, though but a little, its killing power and direful consequences. The adversities of such a soul are described in the seventh chapter of Romans, and felt, more or less, by every one of God's family, who little think then that this day of adversity is necessary to be felt before the day of Gospel prosperity. As sure as this is felt and known, so sure is it followed by others, that, like Job's messengers, tread upon the heels of each other, and consist of the fear of hell and being lost for ever. The poor soul moping about in lonely places, unfit for the world, unfit for heaven; in a word, lost, in a greater or less degree, in fears and feelings; and as there is a dreadful enemy to contend with, so he will suit his attacks to the situation, and fill the soul with adversities. Then the poor soul has little else but adversities from morning till night and from night till morning; adversities from sin, Satan, the world, the law, fear, and soul-sorrow. But, as the day of prosperity is to stand against the day of adversity, so, in the Lord's own time, a little hope in the Lord's mercy springs up behind the hills of darkness, and soon the day dawns to such, which is a sure pledge of the rising of the Sun, who, at the appointed time, arises in their souls with healing beneath his wings; and then all adversity seems to be past and gone, and sunk like lead in the mighty waters of redeeming love and sovereign mercy. But do their adversities end here? Why most of God's dear children, brought into liberty, I suppose, think so; but, poor things! they are soon undeceived, for fresh adversities spring up in the shape of fierce temptations, fiery darts, and awful visitations of the enemy, who is ready to carry them away as with a flood; the workings, lustings, and carnal enmity of that depraved, vile, filthy nature, which they possess, and which makes them groan, being burdened; together with the absence of their best Beloved, and the withholdings of those gracious visitations that make their souls like a well-watered garden, producing such fruit as their Beloved can eat; and all these blended with the fear of death and the consequences thereof. These are adversities indeed—soul adversities; and there are multitudes more that I might adduce, for this is a scene of adversities, a time of "Jacob's trouble," under which the poor creature is ready to cry, "No one knows me! no one careth for my soul!" Well, poor soul, I do assure thee that the world does not know thee, as says John, "The world knoweth us not;" neither do mere professors know thee, they are not in the secret; "for the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them (the rod of) his cove-

nant," as whom he loveth he chasteneth ; and God's own children might not, in certain situations, and as to the extent and peculiar nature of some of thy adversities, know thee ; and, indeed, thou art such a mysterious being that thou canst not read or know thyself. Yet there are some that do know thy soul in adversity—the great enemy of souls does ; for he tells thee that thou never canst be delivered, and that thou wilt one day utterly "fall by the hand of the enemy ;" and that the beginning of thy religion was not right, and therefore it must end wrong. Well, and according to that Scripture in Heb. i. 13, we may infer that angels know thee, for they are sent to minister to those who are heirs of salvation. But, poor soul, I have to tell thee the thing I had first in view, and that is, the LORD knows thy soul in adversities—Jehovah knows thee in his Trinity of Persons—God the Father, as the object of his love and the subject of his claim—God the Son, as the purchase of his blood—and God the Holy Ghost, as the work of his regenerating grace. Thus, then, Jehovah knows thy soul in adversities : but more particularly I wish to lead thy mind, instrumentally, to consider that Jehovah not only knows thy soul, but *thy adversity* ; not only in his sovereignty and omniscience, but personally, feelingly, and experimentally in the Person of thy Saviour, who took thy nature on purpose, and became *very man*, flesh of thy flesh, as well as being "God over all," in order to know thy adversities and thy soul in them ; as Paul says, "Can be touched with a feeling." Now this could not have been as God alone, neither could it be of any service to thee as Man alone ; but as God and Man in one glorious Person, he suits thee well, he has felt thy adversities and knows them and thee in them. Herein, I say, is the blessedness of the subject ; this is the pith and marrow of the text. Cheer up, then, poor soul, though thy enemies may be mighty and thy adversities many—though thou mayst seem to be poor and singular, standing like a sparrow alone upon the housetop, and like a poor, moping, solitary owl of the desert, Jesus knows thee and thy adversities. He knew thee in eternity—he knows thee in time—ay, he not only knows thee in prosperity, but in adversity, and he will surely know thee when time shall be no more ; for thou art engraven upon the breastplate of his heart. What can I say to thee ? Why that Jesus not only knows thy soul in adversity, but loves to hear from thee ; for he says to thee, "Call upon ME in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." Depend upon it, my dear, tried friend, whoever thou art that needs this, thou shalt have it ; for "heaven and earth shall pass away, but not one jot or tittle" of all that he has promised shall fall to the ground ; "but the word of our God shall stand for ever." Farewell, then, ye poor souls in adversity, may the Lord the Spirit enable thee to gather a crumb of consolation from these few remarks ; then thou wilt join with thy unknown friend in desiring to give Jehovah all the glory and honour, now and for ever. Amen and amen.

Gloucestershire.

MARK.

ON RASH JUDGMENTS ; AND BELIEVERS TAKING THE JUDGMENT CHAIR AND CONDEMNING THEIR BRETHREN.

Judge not, and ye shall not be judged : condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned : forgive, and ye shall be forgiven.—Luke, vi. 37.

(Concluded from page 182.)

IN the Church there are Judges of all degrees and ages, for this is an epidemic evil ; and can it be a wonder that so many are so very destitute of all true and right judgment in divine things ? Is it any marvel that we hear such strange decisions, and see such “fearful sights” (Luke, xxi. 11) in our heavens ? Verily the sayings and doings of these men seldom exhibit much of that “judgment and righteousness” with which the Lord hath promised to “fill his Zion ;” or of that “wisdom and knowledge” which form the “stability of her times” of prosperity ; but little of that “fear of the Lord” which is his treasure lodged in the hearts of all his chosen ones (Isa. xxx. 5, 6) ; and still less of that LOVE, kindled by the Spirit in their souls, which “suffereth long, is kind, envieth not, vaunteth not itself (margin, ‘is not rash,’ “can this be said of our Judges ? are not some of them full of rashness ?), “is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, “is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but “rejoiceth in the truth ; beareth all things, believeth all things (for “which there is scriptural warrant), hopeth all things, endureth all “things ; which LOVE never faileth” (1 Cor. xiii. 4—8).

The importance of this subject has often appeared in my view so great, the evils of this rampant disease so manifold—like a door, which, when once opened, is sure to let in a numerous retinue of pernicious consequences and transgressions—that I have often purposed writing a small tract upon it, with the intention of setting forth some things which the Scriptures hold forth and inculcate on this matter. Illness, years, and infirmities, have now admonished me that I must have little to do with either writing or reading during the short remnant of my days. One consideration, however, gives me no little comfort, which is, that Christ Jesus Jehovah, our Righteousness and our Judge, is on his way, and will, ere long, appear, to put these Judges, these high and mighty Ones, these (in their own estimation) wise and all-discerning men, out of that seat which they have so improperly usurped, and take it Himself. He will not judge, as men do, after the sight of their eyes, and reprove after the hearing of their ears, but “with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth” (Isa. xi. 1—5). “The meek will he guide in judgment, the meek will he teach his way” (Psalm xxv. 9). “He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces every oppressor.” (See Psalm lxxii. 1—9, 12—14).

When Jesus assumes this seat, and taketh to himself his great power to reign over the house of Jacob, righteousness will be the girdle of his

loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. He will come for and with salvation to his tried and afflicted ones, too often harshly condemned by men, and, not unfrequently, outcasts from his Israel; like Joseph, sold into Egypt and separated from their brethren. But to the usurpers of his throne and dominion, his offices and rights, to his enemies, his appearance will be terrible, "burning with his anger," to avenge his elect; his very "lips full of indignation, and his tongue as a devouring fire" (Isa. xxx. 27—30). When those who have thrust themselves into the Judgment-seat "are overthrown"—some in soft and some in "stony places"—then the words of Jesus "will be heard" and found "sweet," indeed (Psalm cxli. 6); then will it be fully proved that this spirit of rashly judging the brethren is utterly a fault, yea, a devouring pestilence, that has made dreadful havoc, innumerable breaches, and brought endless reproaches upon the churches of Christ. May these evils soon be done away, the divisions in the Israel of God be healed, and every reproach be effectually wiped away from the Zion of the Holy One, the children of the mighty God of Jacob. (See Isa. xxv. 6—8; xxx. 23—26).

David puts a question that no man yet has been able to answer—"Who can understand his errors?" (Psalm xix. 12). Doubtless he had a view of his own errors; for it is added, "cleanse thou ME from secret faults." Though he could not number those he was conscious of, he was sure of there being found in him many others of which he was ignorant. Surely this is sufficient employment, an endless task for every gracious soul, during all their sojourn upon earth. He saw and felt his own sins to be so great and grievous, so daring and outrageous, that he was obliged to pray to be "kept back from presumptuous sins; yea, that none but the Lord could keep him from falling by "the great transgression" (the unpardonable sin) (ver. 13). Very different indeed from this state, is that of our self-imposed, self-made Judges. They understand that they are free from all errors themselves, and have a thorough knowledge of the errors of other persons, on whom they not only sit in judgment, but are often found ready to bring in verdicts against them, and even pronounce sentences of condemnation upon them. Sometimes this is done only because others do not see eye to eye with them upon matters of no vital importance, and upon which the Bible does not lay any stress. How often are men made offenders for a word, and the just turned aside for a thing of nought! (Isa. xxix. 22). Nay, in one instance I heard of, the omission of one letter was considered unscriptural, and visited with censure. This arose from a godly minister having in prayer used the words "O Lord *Jesu* Christ," instead of *Jesus*. When once the evil practice begins, it soon gains ground, and will descend from important matters to the veriest trifles.

Is there not more of presumption in this dangerous practice of judging than of faith? more of arrogance than meekness? more of pride than of humility? of bitterness than kindness? of self-love and complacency than self-loathing and abhorrence? yea, more of self altogether, than of Christ alone? "None but Jesus" is not their pre-

vailing motto. Their conduct seems to say, "We are the men, and wisdom will die with us." "I believe in myself" more than "I believe in Christ," and the Oneness of his mystical body in him. Do they not make rents in his seamless robe, and try to maim his body, the church, of some of its members? Surely this must be utterly a fault. Some, in the church at Corinth, sat in judgment on Paul, and they thus severed even him, the great Apostle of the Gentiles, from the church!! But with Paul it was a very small thing that he should be thus judged of man's judgment; yea, he would not, he could not, judge himself rightly and truly, but says, "He that judgeth me is the Lord." Therefore he referred the matter to Him, though he doubtless knew himself better than any others possibly could. (See 1 Cor. iv. 3—7).

When the Lord calls any person to an office, he gives him the qualifications requisite for its duties. To decide upon, not merely the words and actions, but on the state of their souls before God, perfect knowledge, truth, and justice, are indispensable. But hath God given omniscience to any human being? Where is the man to be found that has a thorough and perfect knowledge of his own heart? How, then, can any man know the heart of another! Jesus says that all his saints and churches shall know that "He searches their hearts and reins" (Rev. ii. 23). Can any other do this? Not one!

There are, doubtless, many things that the Lord's people should have, and exercise, a right judgment upon, and have clear and correct knowledge of. A worse state can hardly be, than that complained of by the Prophet, concerning any church and people—"There is no judgment in their goings!" (Isa. lix. 8; see also ver. 9—15). The prevalence of this evil practice is one great proof, among many, of the lamentable facts there detailed. In point of fact, no one ever thought, spoke, or acted rightly in this or any other matter, so as to bring forth fruit to God's honour and the good of his people, but as the Lord was graciously pleased to fulfil this blessed promise to them and in them—"In that day shall the Lord of Hosts be for a crown of glory, and for "a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people; and for a spirit of "judgment to him that sitteth in judgment (upon himself primarily and principally, and upon all other things that it is needful he should form a right judgment about); and for strength to them that turn the battle "to the gate" (that is, in all their conflicts with evils and enemies are enabled to look unto Jesus, and overcome through him) (Isa. xxviii. 5, 6).

Having already, I fear, Mr. Editor, trespassed too much upon your time, and made too great a demand upon your pages, I will not farther enlarge upon this subject of judging and judgment, which latter word bears twenty different meanings in the Holy Scriptures; from which consideration alone there arises no small difficulty in discerning what may be right and necessary in it, from that which is pernicious and to be condemned. At some future time, if you give insertion to this paper, I may, possibly, trouble you with some farther observations. I cannot tell you how important the subject appears to me, both as it respects the glory of Christ and the welfare of his Church. The spirit

of rashly judging the brethren forms no small part of the rubbish which it is necessary to remove, before the walls of the heavenly Jerusalem can be built up, so that she may rise up and appear in that beauty, majesty, and glory, which her Head and Husband hath put upon her, and predestinated every one of her members, enrolled in heaven, to the full enjoyment and possession of, in and by himself. (See Neh. iv. 10; Ps. l. 2; li. 18; cxii.; Isa. lii.; lxii.; Zech. xii.; Heb. xii. 22—24); to which may be added, Rev. xxi. and xxii., as they contain the fullest and most glorious description of the blessings, benefits, and privileges of the church; or, in other words, the Covenant of Jehovah's free grace and salvation with all those interested therein, the heirs of its promises—yea, those who are graciously made the heirs of that covenant God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and joint heirs with Jesus, the Mediator of the covenant of eternal wedlock between Christ the Bridegroom, and the Church his bride, the Lamb's wife; which matters are more largely and powerfully set forth, in various figures and similes, in the last two chapters of the Bible than in any other portion of it.

This paper begins with a portion having respect to a great evil, and I would close it with two others, which, if duly considered, would point out and lead to its remedy—"Blessed are (all) they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb" (Rev. xix. 9). "BEHOLD, THE BRIDEGROOM COMETH; GO YE OUT TO MEET HIM" (Matt. xxv. 6).

M. H.

To the Editor of the Gospel Magazine.

PEACE BE WITH YOU IN CHRIST JESUS.

If you think these few lines will be of service to any poor awakened sinner under Mount Sinai, who wants to shelter himself there, he may see the writer could not, with all his strength and legal striving.

THE CONSEQUENCE OF SIN AS IT APPEARED TO ONE UNDER THE LAW, AND THE SLAVISH FEAR ENDURED FOR NEARLY SEVEN YEARS AFTER THE ARROWS OF CONVICTION HAD ENTERED THE HEART, AS DIRECTED BY THE HOLY GHOST.

THE subject.—A person died of a brain fever, and all the features were distorted. On entering the room where the corpse lay, the curtains being drawn aside, in order that the person who had thus breathed his last and was now in the presence of God, might be seen, in a moment these words entered my heart, like a powerful voice into the ear, "Behold the features of the damned under the torments they endure for sin!" Fearfulness and trembling instantly seized me, and with eagerness I departed from the room. This was a moment never to be forgotten. None to go to that I might tell out the feelings of my heart. Overwhelmed with horror and distress, and being poor by birth, and amongst the lowest grades of society, living in the height of wickedness with them—these were my only companions; and all day long working

with them to earn the bread that perisheth, nothing was heard but horrid imprecations and blasphemy against the God of heaven and against the rulers of the people; myself no common transgressor. In vain I strove to remove out of my sight the object I had seen, or to forget the awful sentence. My tongue was quickly stopped in swearing, and in a few days my countenance began to grow pale and wan, and many heavy sighs proceeded from my heart. I was laden with a heavy load of guilt and sin; it arose like the smoke of a furnace; the sins of my childhood were brought to my remembrance. I was now become like a speckled bird amongst my companions; my parents, brothers, and sisters—all, with one voice, said that I was fast hastening to the grave in a deep decline, which increased my fears; and others, because I wandered so much alone, pronounced me guilty of some awful crime: and in this wretched, forlorn state I wandered for three years, until I was forsaken of all friends and acquaintance—in poverty and distress—with a conscience laden with slavish fear. At length, with great difficulty, I bought a small Bible and Prayer-book; and though I could read but very imperfectly, yet I discovered the purity of God's law, and that I was too weak to fulfil all that the law required. However I strove to do so with all my might, and purchased a few decent things to appear at church in. Here I thought to know all that I was required to do; many of the prayers my heart could respond to—such as this, "Although we be tied and bound with the chains of our sins, yet let the piteousness of thy mercy loose us," with several more; for I was in real earnest, and I went to church with a sincere desire to hear of something that would remove the burden of sin. But the sermon was of no use to me, but was intended for those who were perfect in the flesh; well might the apostle say, "The letter killeth." I now began to conclude I was past recovery; for the minister whom I went to hear did not preach to such as I, but to a different kind of people altogether—to those who had been pious all their days—who were full of charity, good works, &c. Now as I had no money to give away, I concluded I had no charity; I knew I was not pious, having been exceedingly wicked all my days: and I felt myself bound to believe what the minister said, as he professed to speak the word of God. Under these considerations all hope fled away, and I believed God had cut me off, and would not show mercy or favour. I now gave myself up to despair; hard thoughts of God were continually before my mind, from which I had no power to extricate myself; I left off going to church, seeing I could get no good there, and I even meditated self-destruction. Nevertheless I continued to read my Bible, although every word condemned me. But God had something more to show me yet—oh the unsearchable riches of his grace! who teacheth like him? I had at this time a wife and one child, of whom I was very fond; the latter was the idol of my heart. It pleased the Lord in his wisdom to lay the child on a bed of sickness; and oh how earnestly did I entreat the Lord, night and day, with tears, that he would spare my child; but it was all in vain; the vital spark fled, in a few days, to the kingdom of light and glory. My wife was also taken ill, and, to add to my sorrow, I was thrown out of employment. Rebellion now rose in my heart to a fearful height, the fountains of the great deep of my sinful nature were broken up; I looked upon God as a cruel judge, and his law without mercy; and I tried to put away from me all thoughts of God, and harden myself in sin—so desperate was my enmity. And now conscience testified against me that my wickedness was greater than at the first, and these words would follow me all the day long, "Rebel not, lest thy bands be made strong;" also, "Pay me what thou owest—perfect obedience and sinless perfection." At this I sank still deeper into despair. I was condemned of high rebellion against God—despised by the world—body, soul, and circumstances, seemed engulfed in

one eternal ruin; no minister of the Gospel to speak to me—no one to prescribe for my case—too fearful to tell it out to any one; and in reading the word of God that I might know the worst of my state, the following portion of it was distressing to my soul, “And if a soul sin, and hear the voice of swearing, and is a witness whether he hath seen or known of it, if he do not utter it, then he shall bear his iniquity;” “The wages of sin is death.” I had light enough to see that the death of the soul, as well as the death of the body, was included in this latter text; and faith was given me to believe in the judgments of God. I beheld the miserable punishment of sin, which was death, as a deprivation of life, joined to extreme misery; and I found the beginning of spiritual death, in matter of sense, was spiritual bondage; and spiritual bondage had brought me into subjection to the powers of darkness and to spiritual, deadly enemies. I had light to see that, by whom a man is overcome, of the same he is brought into bondage; and this bondage was the bondage of the devil, and the bondage of the devil is a subjection to that power of the devil whereby he effectually worketh in men, and in respect of them he hath command over death; which I found by Acts, xxvi. 18, “To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.” I found myself in subjection to the enticement of the world, and had been, and still was, in bondage to the world and to sin, from which I had no power to come out. From this spiritual death there seems to follow a multiplying of sin continually by acts of rebellion; and light was given me to discover from Rom. i. 25, 26, that those sins that followed had a respect to punishment because of the first sin; for it is written, “For this cause God gave them up to vile affections,” which secures the death and increases the misery. I found they were punishments, because of the inward suffering which I was subject to in sinning, which pressed me down; and I am confident that no legalist or workmonger, nor Arminian, nor any other sect or denomination, however refined their morals according to the light of nature, can lift up their heads and declare that God accepts them because of their innate righteousness; for I think my morality was not inferior to that of many who were round about me, and with no small strictness I adhered to it. But I forbear to make farther mention of this, knowing it to be of no avail before the holiness of God. I was led to draw the most awful conclusions from Mark, ix. 45—48, where the punishment of the wicked is said to be eternal, or never to be ended, where their worm dieth not and their fire never goeth out; eternal, because of the eternal abiding of the offence, and because of the unchangeable condition which that degree of punishment doth follow for want of satisfaction; and I found, by woful experience, that the incorruptibility of the damned would be their immortality in death and to death: and from Matt. vii. 23, “Depart from me”—go ye cursed—I found there must and did follow an eternal hardening in sin. Now my despair reached its height; I saw I could do no good thing, because of the internal workings of my evil heart, and I thought I was cast off from the face, presence, and favour of God. I could not subdue the awful rebellion of my heart, and I concluded I was given over to the power of Satan. I strove with all my might to be delivered from the terrors of a guilty conscience, but I saw no way in which this could be done; nothing that I heard or read did me any good, but, on the contrary, it produced a gloom on my mind, and filled me with horrible fears. At last the dreadful night came, my room appeared to be filled with smoke, and I walked out of it and went down into a dark wood-house to know the worst; but God saw my footsteps, and watched over me all the time my strength was failing; and, when it was quite gone, and there was only a step between me and destruction, then the blessed promise entered my heart with great power, bringing with it indescribable liberty, and light, and joy, and

sorrow, and humility. The word which set me free was this, "Thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ" (2 Cor. ii. 14). I quickly beheld the dear Redeemer stooping under the load of misery which was due to me; my eyes began to open; I retired from the dark room to behold the sun again with my natural eye, and the Sun of Righteousness was risen in my heart. So precious now was God's word become to me that I laid it under my pillow all night long; it was my meat and drink by night and day. My health and strength began to return; the Lord began to bless me in my temporal concerns, and whatsoever I did, the Lord made it to prosper. He brought me up out of the depths of the earth and from the lowest hell; joy and gladness were in my heart, and the praises of God were continually on my tongue; the garment of heaviness was taken away, and a garment of praise was given me by my dear Redeemer, and he led me forth to the dances of them that make merry.

I must now conclude, and if you think it will be of any service to one poor, tried, and tempted believer, I will continue with the leadings of my covenant God for twenty years.

Yours, in the Lord,

MARK.

[We shall be glad to receive the account to which our Correspondent refers.—
ED.]

THE PORTRAIT.—WALTER ROW.

(Formerly Editor of the Gospel Magazine.)

As "iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend."

WE are glad to be enabled, as an accompaniment to the present Number, to furnish our readers with a portrait of their late esteemed Editor, which we are informed, by Mrs. Row and her son, is a correct likeness. For forty-four years was he engaged in the service of his Lord and Master in connexion with this work—a fact, we should presume, unparalleled in the annals of literature. How far he acquitted himself as "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed," is not for us to determine; the recollection of him and his services is too fresh in the remembrance of numbers to need the expression of our opinion: though we believe his fellow was scarcely to be found in Britain.

It is but little—very little, we have seen of the writings of Walter Row; some few dozen pages comprise the bulk of what we have read as emanating from his pen; yet, from that little, we gather the expressions of a richly-stored mind, a highly-cultivated intellect, and a spirit endowed with more than ordinary courage. Privileged with a scrupulous discernment, he would readily discover the least departure from doctrinal truth; and possessing, moreover, a holy jealousy for that truth, it appears that, like a mighty warrior, already accoutred and merely waiting orders, he was ready at an instant, in his Master's service: fearlessly would he draw his sword, and wield it skilfully, in the important office in which he was placed. Mere natural feelings were overlooked—no disposition had he to parley, when the precious truths of God were at stake: whether with cunning artifice they had been invaded—with presumptuous power they had been boldly assailed—or, under a mere partially-enlightened judgment they had been encroached upon—Walter Row was prepared on the defensive. *Here he shone*; and vain and futile was every attempt to rebuff him. Discovering, at a glance, the insecurity of his antagonist's position, and the stability of his own, founded, as

it was, upon the precious doctrines of God's most holy word, like an ancient David, courageously would he go forth in defence of the truth, well satisfied that the result of the conflict must be in his favour, and in favour of Him who hath declared, "My word shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please."

Wrought upon, by the Holy Ghost, at a very early age—blessed, as a youth, with an inquiry after truth—he was privileged, during the latter part of the eighteenth century, to sit under the ministry of several eminent divines. Beneath the sound of the voice of a Romaine, a Hervey, a Toplady, and others of their day, was his youthful mind fed, his heart encouraged, and his whole soul strengthened for the important work in which he was about to be engaged. Three different men—champions for truth—would he hear on the Sabbath, and, at the close of the services, would transmit into little volumes set apart for the purpose, the sermons to which he had listened. Thus was his mind gradually brought into an acquaintance with the order of truth, which, subsequently, enabled him, under the gracious influences of the Holy Ghost, to take so calm, deliberate, and scriptural a survey of it. Added to the strength of his mind, the vigour of his argumentative powers, and the intrepidity of his character, it appears that he possessed a strong constitution, and enjoyed almost uninterrupted health. These combined circumstances render it obvious, that they were eminently ordered and overruled of the Lord, to qualify him, in a high degree, for the peculiar position in which he was placed, and the protracted period it was ordained he should occupy that position.

From the particular tenor of his writings—the very different view he took of the general aspects of things in the religious world (so called), to the great mass of religionists of his day, it was not at all likely that Walter Row would be rendered an acceptable writer beyond the circle of those who had been led to view the times in a similar manner. The great bulk of professors would, doubtless, regard him and his work as Antinomian, bigoted, self-sufficient; those who were not made savingly acquainted with the depths of depravity of the human heart—who knew not the stubbornness of the will, and the innate opposition to a free-grace-salvation scheme, must, as a matter of course, oppose a man whose productions were intended to sap the very foundation of every flesh-accommodating system. Happily, however, Walter Row was enabled to withstand these oppositions, and to remain unmoved—swerving neither to the right hand nor to the left—amid the conflicting opinions by which he was assailed.

He was, too, a man of letters; this enabled him to meet his antagonists upon their own ground, and to detect, the more readily, the insinuation of error, however plausible its garb; and, not being summoned to the field till he had reached, and even passed, the meridian of life, his accoutrements were the more complete, his judgment the better matured, his nerve stronger, and his general principles less likely to be invaded with success. His protracted years gave him, moreover, a clearer personal insight—a more definite observation of men and things. Hence, in an epistle with which a correspondent has favoured us, he says, respecting missions, "I have watched this mania working for now *fifty years*, but never could see, in *one* solitary instance, the outstretched arm of God. This I know (he continues), that many of the partizans thereof have done all in *their power* to put an extinguisher upon the pure Gospel of Christ, and have cruelly used many of the faithful dispensers of the truth, and have done all in *their power* to bring them into disrepute; and I am apprehensive they have run without being sent. I wish an inscription could have been put over the entrance of every missionary meeting, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.' I am not over-

anxious about the work of conversion ; being fully persuaded that, in the day when our dear Lord maketh up his jewels, not one will be wanting to deck his mediatorial diadem. Besides, God works in a different manner to our modern projectors, in bringing sinners to himself ; it is neither by the whirlwind, the earthquake, nor the fire, but the *still small voice*—things that are despised—Naaman's little maid—rams' horns—not Abana nor Pharpar, but Jordan—the sling and the stone—not the eloquent man, but him of slow speech and of a slow tongue—to such is said, 'Go, and I will be with thee.' "

Really, there is, to us, such a weight and fulness in this language, written, as it was, upon a calm review of life, just seven months previous to the day on which he entered his eternal rest, that any additional remarks of our own seem to dwindle into the utmost insignificance ; we would fain have them printed in gold—not in a spirit of rancour and animosity to those who differ from us, but to set forth the dominion, the resistless majesty of our God, whose people *shall* be willing in the day of *his* power ; yes, and, having published them in conspicuous characters, we would have them occupy the most prominent situations in meetings got up professedly to extend the Redeemer's kingdom (to use the hackneyed phraseology of the day) ; and, as banners, would we wave them again and again, in a spirit of cautionary reproof, before the gaze of every speaker who dared confront an assembled multitude of never-dying souls, and insult the Majesty of Heaven by seeking to arouse the energies of a free-will, and altogether mistaken, power. Oh, sirs ! the contemplation of such a practice makes us tremble ! Persevered in, it will leave ye in an awful predicament in a judgment, if not in a dying, hour ! God the Holy Ghost enabling us, we will not cease to repudiate the much-talked-of human agency to our latest breath ; and, quitting time and entering eternity, our watchword shall be—resistless power ! free-grace ! unmerited love !

Turning again, however, to a brief consideration of the character of Walter Row, we cannot forbear mentioning a circumstance narrated to us by his aged widow and attached son, a few evenings since, so kindly manifesting, as it does, the overruling and graciously-interfering hand of our God, and proving, also, the short-sightedness of even the most favoured of his creatures. How often do they fall short on the very points wherein they are most distinguished ! proving, that what they are they are by God, and that their most prominent characteristics are subordinate to his gift and authority. Walter Row, as, doubtless, most of our readers are aware, was engaged in trade ; he kept a bookseller's shop in Great Marlborough Street ; and, on one occasion—at a time, we believe, when many publications were abroad opposing the Government—an individual (doubtless employed for the purpose) entered the shop, asking the price of a work which he selected from among others. "Mr. Row," said a second person, who had previously been holding conversation with him, "I would not, were I in your place, part with that book"—at the same time catching it out of the other's hand. Finding he could not obtain it, the intended purchaser left the shop ; and then the person previously alluded to (an enemy to the truth, though a high professor, by whom Mr. Row was a sufferer) informed him of the seditious nature of the publication, which had, notwithstanding Mr. Row's great shrewdness of character and promptitude of discernment, found its way into his collection. That very day (if we remember rightly) a most respectable bookseller in his neighbourhood, was taken into custody for selling the same work, and imprisoned for two years ! So ever-watchful of his poor unsuspecting family is He who "neither slumbereth nor sleepeth," and who, lest any hurt it, keepeth it night and day.

So calm was Mr. Row's mind in the prospect of his dissolution, that some three months before he was removed (we are not fond of the expression—

death or dying! it is not *death* to a believer; it is only falling into a peaceful repose in the arms of Jesus), he had lost a grandchild, and, having purchased some ground in the cemetery at Kensal Green (where his mortal remains were so shortly afterwards deposited), he went over to see it, and deliberately knelt down by the side of the grave, the better to estimate its depth, and give directions respecting it, evidently contemplating his speedy occupation of its peaceful dwelling.

When asked, "Well, Mr. Row, how are you?" "How am I?" was his reply, with the utmost cheerfulness, "why, booted and spurred, and all ready to go." Does it not warm thy heart, dear aged reader, thus to hear a beloved brother speak of his removal from this time-state? Oh, it is most blessed! Ah! some of you younger ones—full of fear—vainly toiling under a broken law—wondering how any can thus speak of death—will realize the same blessed assurance by and by. Keep a precious Jesus in view; he has the keys of death and hell, remember; and just as soon could they hurl him from his throne of glory, as dislodge those keys from his girdle, or wrench you out of his omnipotent grasp! All glory to his name!

Speaking to his son of this Magazine, he would oftentimes say, "Ah! it has saved me thousands of cares." And, if one that would have gladly sat at his feet, and been a mute observer of the grace that was in him, may be permitted to respond, he would say, "If there are any moments of substantial enjoyment—if any holy freedom—calm repose—blissful anticipation is enjoyed—it is, notwithstanding its weighty responsibilities, in connexion with the GOSPEL MAGAZINE. His wages are fully paid, though in brief periods and at remote intervals."

Some two or three weeks previous to his departure, accompanying his son to Woolwich, for a little change, he said, "This will be the last time, my boy;" and being recognised by a gentleman in that neighbourhood, he expressed himself in similar terms; so confident was he of the near approach of the consummation of his joy.

"You are going to leave me in the midst of trouble," said his life's companion. "But God will never leave you," said he, in instantaneous response. A blessed assurance had he that the aged widow should not be forgotten of him who has so tenderly said, "Leave thy fatherless children, and let thy widows trust in me."

Shortly before his last, his eyes were closed, and Mrs. Row, approaching him to administer to his wants, remarked, "Ah! you said you would always look at me." Instantly, with the most perfect consciousness and pleasing affection, he opened his full eye, and gazed upon her with the utmost composure and satisfaction.

To the last, he retained the same peculiar interest in his labours. The Magazine lay on his bed, which, on his son taking up to read, embracing him as he assisted in turning him round to afford him a little relief, a few minutes before his breath left him, he said, "Ah! my boy, that's your father's Magazine;" seemingly at a loss for the moment to conceive of its future course; and yet leaving it, as he expressed himself upon another occasion, "I know not in whose hands to leave it; but I can leave it with my God."

His last writing, penned on a small scrap of paper, two days before he quitted earth, was as follows:—"Finding that we are on the point of quitting this earthly tabernacle, and knowing in whom we have believed, and now looking and longing with joyful expectation of seeing him whom our soul loveth."

Thus lived—thus peacefully died—Walter Row, on the 13th of July, 1839, in the 84th year of his age. Fain would we linger, in pensive musings, as did one of old, in the contemplation of the removal of one so eminently blessed; anxious for a double portion of his spirit, where that spirit was

brought into sweet subordination to the mind and will of God. With no small degree of reluctance do we retire from a scene so full of interest to one who had so greatly endeared himself by his long and faithful labours among a people scattered far and wide. At all times, from the contemplation of a death-bed scene, we turn with measured steps, but from this—in which successorship gives additional interest—we do peculiarly so; we move with a halting gait; deafened to its misnamed charms, we require a second call to bring us back to earth; having accompanied our venerable friend, as it were, to the water's edge, we are ready to ask the question, "Why, oh why, cannot we pass over too? Why leave us in this cold-hearted, this troublous world?" And the language of the poet comes sweetly to our relief:—

"Oh, could we die with those that die,
And place us in their stead;
How would our spirits long to fly,
And converse with the dead!
Then should we see the saints above
In their own glorious forms,
And wonder how our souls could love
To dwell with mortal worms.
How should we scorn these clothes of flesh,
These fetters and this load;
And long for evening to undress,
That we may rest with God.
We should almost forsake our clay,
Before the summons come;
And long, and wish our souls away
To their eternal home."

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of the Gospel Magazine.

DEAR SIR,

The following letter having much refreshed myself and others to whom I have shown it, perhaps you can find room for it in your Magazine; which, having been delivered from the endless genealogies and idle fables of apostolical succession, &c., now stands forth in a bold manner to advocate the truth as it is in Jesus. What need is there of that exhortation, to "take heed what you hear," and not to try how much poison our constitution can stand. May you and your readers who have been quickened by the word, be kept and established in the truth, and not be caught by the cunning craftiness of any of those who lie in wait to deceive; but we must remember that they do *lie in wait*, and do not come fairly forward, and therefore we have need to be on the watch that we be not caught in the snare unawares, and so be bewitched for a season. Let us not, then, be frightened by the cry of legalism from exhorting one another daily, considering one another, to provoke unto love and to good works. Believe me, your friend and brother in the one church of the Lord Jesus,

J. H. GOWRING.

MY DEAR BROTHER AND FELLOW-LABOURER AND FELLOW-TRAVELLER IN
THE TRIBULATED PATH OF THE LORD'S PILGRIMS,

What a mercy it is to be enlisted of Jesus under his banners; great as is your affliction, it does not unfit you for a place in the army of Jesus, the

Captain of salvation ; it does not unfit you for following him, no, nor for beholding and being captivated with his beauties. Yea, I think you are privileged above us, for I find the eyes of my body almost put out those of my mind ; so that, instead of beholding and being captivated, day by day and hour by hour, with Jesus, I am taken up and engaged with this thing and the other, with which the bodily eyes occupy the mind, to the exclusion of Jesus and those things from whence alone the mind obtains that sensible uplifting from the things of the world, time, and sense, and gets in any way fixed upon those of eternity and truth. Alas ! alas ! my dear friend, what poor creatures are we in ourselves ! It is more and more discovered every day how that self is no helper, only a hinderer, to the carrying on and carrying out of that which is in reality our all, our everything—our provision, and possession, and inheritance, and life, and blessings in Jesus ; these are our all, and these we neglect, and at times even seem to despise, for some trifling, unsatisfying, momentary gratification of carnal self. How again and again is it thus with me ! What painful lessons am I thus taught concerning myself ! How low am I laid in the mire of my corruption and depravity, and how loathsome and detestable am I made to appear in the sight of my spiritual self, my new man in Christ Jesus ! Thus is it I have to go down and be laid low before I get any lifting up in the power of the truth in Jesus, so precious to a really soul-humbled, debased sinner. My living to Jesus is only by such fits and starts ; only when he shines ; only when he influences, draws, and inclines by his blessed Spirit. How cold, sensibly cold, dead, carnal, formal, earthly, and worldly at all other times and seasons ! and then how tried with the body of sin and death—the old man—the corrupt carnal nature in all its desires and affections, all its plottings, schemings, plannings, and doings. To all this there is nothing which we can oppose, for our comfort, and consolation, and encouragement, but Jesus and the truth of our God in him. To bring this to bear against the overflowing current of corruption and depravity, which our fallen nature is unceasingly supplying, is not what we can do ; no, this is of the sovereignty, and the power, and the exercised grace of our covenant God in Him in whom are the unsearchable riches of grace for the supply of the need of the poor, sinful, helpless chosen ones in him. Whatever could we do in our present state and condition, as we are made known to ourselves, were it not for that despised truth of the Gospel of our God, which so suitably meets our need and necessity as helpless sinners ? What a discovery of God is made to us in and by Jesus ! What a wonderful thing it is, that, when weary and worn out with our own sinful selves, when tired of the opposition of our carnal hearts to God, then we find him to be the God who, in the exercise of his sovereignty, will have mercy, will love us, will manifest it to us, will bow us down at his feet, to receive his blessing out of the fulness of Jesus, and that in a simple exercise of faith, which is not of us, but of the operation of his Spirit within us. If all this were not borne witness and testimony to by the gift of Jesus, the life of Jesus, the sufferings and death of Jesus, we could not believe it, we should doubt it even when the very blessings themselves were being discovered to us. But faith in Jesus triumphs over doubts and fears on these subjects, while our hopes are confirmed, and we strengthened with might sensibly in the inner man, to go on our way ; looking away from self to the Lord himself, and glorying in him and him only. It is a cause for great thankfulness if, in any instance, we are permitted to have here on earth, whatever the channel, that fellowship one with another, which is of our individual fellowship with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ. This is what is wanting, the one thing needful to make any intercourse we have on earth of any real worth or value ; all other ends in nought, whatever of present gratification to natural feelings may arise out of it. I know nothing of

fellowship with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ, but as I know myself a hell-deserving, hell-fitted sinner, that has found in Jesus the all-sufficient provision of grace, that meets to the utmost of my necessity all I know of want before my God, as one who, in himself, is carnal, sold under sin, and that tells me I owe this provision to the sovereign love of Him against whom I have always and do continue grievously to sin. Fellowship with the great God of heaven and earth, through his meeting my sinful, hell-deserving need and necessity with his provisions of grace in Jesus, who is the great, the eternal Jehovah in the Person of the Son, who, as incarnate, lived, suffered, obeyed, and died for me. When I get here, to this blessed spot, then if I can communicate with one who, through the same grace, the same mercy, the same love, has arrived at the same spot, then we have that fellowship with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ. If the Lord refresh your soul or the soul of any weary fellow-pilgrim by means of aught which comes of my pen, he communicates it—then give him all the praise, it is his and his only: I am sure it is not mine—he lets me know *that*; for when he withdraws his influences, what can I write? what can I say? what can I preach?—nothing, or what is worse than nothing. Oh, my dear friend and brother, how dependent are we upon our God! Is there anything that concerns us wherein we are not dependent, and that to the utmost? Is there any dependence for anything, under any circumstances, to be placed in ourselves? Surely there is not, there cannot be. This being thus, how awful a case would ours be, while we know we justly merit the eternal wrath and vengeance of our God, had we no revelation of a sovereign, free-grace salvation in Jesus, made to our own souls, from which we are enabled to derive confidence before God, and cast our care upon him, believing that he careth for us. But again, this comes of faith in Jesus; without faith in Jesus there is no real exercised confidence in God as sensible sinners; at least I find it so; I could not confide in God, as I am in myself, had I not faith in Jesus, opening up to me a way of access to God as the friend of the poor helpless sinner; helpless I am in the extreme as a sinner, while in God is my help found. Jesus has discovered this to me, I discovered it nowhere else; in the knowledge of Jesus I have found the goodness of God to me as a poor, helpless sinner; I am far, very far from being what I would be in myself—yea, I think more and more so, the longer I am permitted to live. I need the provisions of grace in Jesus—and the union to Jesus—the oneness with him, revealed in the word, more and more; and I am sure more and more sensible am I of the need of the sovereign goodness and favour of the Lord God. Here my hopes are fixed; and when I can realize this truth with any application to myself, then I find something of love to God rise up within me, and somewhat of the fear of his holy name, and somewhat of desire to please him and do his will. Then I am vexed with myself for what I am in myself, and what I am so continually testifying that I am in myself by my conduct towards my God; who is thus the source of all my hopes and confidence in the contemplation of my particular situation, as the creature that has broken his law, dishonoured his name, and exposed myself to his just and righteous wrath and vengeance. How much is implied in the expression, a saved sinner! How fit is a saved sinner, when in possession of his salvation, which is Jesus, for heaven! None others of the children of men can ever be fit for heaven. They may talk of a fleshly meetness, a fitness of the creature—yea, they may now, in their ignorance, glory in this imagined possession, but they will never realize it; it cannot be realized; there is no such thing. Faith does not want such a thing; it is unbelief that seeks this; it is unbelief that fancies it is found and then glories in it. But how much glorious truth is hidden from the eye of such unbelieving heirs of heaven! All that really

humbles the creature and lays him down in his proper place, is hid from the eyes of such ; while they see nothing of that which glorifies Jesus and exalts God—in the salvation of the sinner—of sovereign grace and sovereign grace only.—We are watching, my dear friend, with anxious interest before the Lord, to know what he designs respecting you. We wish you well ; you have our prayers when the Lord leads us to the throne of grace with a praying spirit ; while we have great pleasure in doing anything which the Lord enables us in your service. Mrs. Gowring, with yourself, I have in my Christian affection and regard ; while I remain

Your Friend and Brother in Christ Jesus our Lord,
ROBERT PYM.

To the Editor of the Gospel Magazine.

BELOVED EDITOR,

Grace, mercy and peace, be multiplied to thee. May showers of rich grace descend on you, and cause the savour of Jesus' name to be sweetly felt and shown in your labours of love, in sending forth monthly supplies of the bread of life to the Lord's family. I have to bless the Lord that I have found, through his shining on the contents, and opening up to me the sweetness contained, much soul-profit while perusing the pages of the GOSPEL MAGAZINE, and hail with joy its arrival, which perhaps a partial scarceness in the ministry of the word tends more to enhance its value ; for where the soul does not get a full meal, the appetite is sharpened to eat plentifully when the Gospel comes in the fulness of the blessing. A full soul loathes the honeycomb, but an empty soul can, under the Spirit's teaching, enjoy a full, free, and finished salvation, and sweetly feed on the dying love of Emmanuel, and find meat to eat of which the world knows nothing.

That subject in the beginning of the April Number was particularly blessed to me ; it was exactly suited to my case, and I was led to see the certainty of the Lord's appearing, and where he would appear—viz. above the mercy-seat. The Lord has given a promise that those that wait on him shall renew their strength, and he inclined my soul to seek him more earnestly ; and in the cloud I was then encompassed with he manifested himself as the hearer and answerer of prayer ; the help of the helpless ; the hope of the hopeless ; a present help in time of trouble. I had trials within and without, and seemed encompassed on every side, but was enabled to wait for the Lord and to stand still, and saw his salvation revealed, when to me there seemed death stamped on the promise ; but I may say, and that truly, "It is good that a man both quietly hope and patiently wait for the salvation of the Lord," for his mercy endureth for ever.

We are often, when under the cloud, saying, when staggering at the promise, "How can these things be ?" but it is a mercy that the Lord seeth not as man seeth, or we should come off short of the blessing. The Lord seeth the end and the beginning, and knows the way we take ; for known unto him are all things ; and it is a vast blessing he does, and another blessing is he has promised to be with us in all the road, and, when we stray, to bring us back ; for he is the Shepherd of his dear flock, who says in his precious word, that "he carries the lambs in his bosom, and gently leads those that are with young." Blessed be his name for his care of his chosen, redeemed, and regenerated ones, whom he keeps in the hollow of his hand, preserves from the rage of the arch-adversary, so that he cannot destroy, though annoy us he does, so far as permitted ; but blessed be God, even our gracious covenant God, who has said for our consolation, "I will not lay upon thee more than

thou art able to bear, and what he does lay on to prove what is in our hearts, he does in love and fatherly correction, as beloved Kent says—

“ ————— not in anger,
But from his dear cov'nant love.”

When I reflect on the love and grace of Jehovah before all worlds, in choosing one so vile, so wretched, and so base, and in due time, even the set time, to favour me, to show me his love and great salvation, I can but admire, adore, and praise the Three-in-One, and am lost in wonder at the greatness and undeservedness of such rich favour, which causes me to cry out with the apostle, “O the depths”—who can fathom them? they are past finding out. O that I could live nearer to, and enjoy more uninterrupted communion with, Jesus my Friend, who loves at all times, when oftentimes my affections are cold to him, and drawn towards the things of time; but the joyful time is coming when flesh and sense will not intervene, and sin will not be known. The Lord direct you in all things, beloved Editor, and keep you as the apple of his eye.

Yours, in Jesus,

Bethersden, May 18, 1842.

ELIHU.

To the Editor of the Gospel Magazine.

DEAR SIR,

Having made yourself a party concerned in giving the castigation to our venerable and beloved friend *Rebecca of the Oak, Farningham*, for her temerity, as she called it, in presuming to write the poetical letter inserted last month, and not willing they should say, “A woman slew him” (Judges, ix. 54), I have ventured to reply thereunto; and not doubting that many have been refreshed while reading the warm-hearted effusion of this *Mother in Israel*, who evidently bringeth forth fruit in the season of old age, and whose leaf appears not to wither, while standing upon the brink of Jordan, waiting for the wafting breeze to carry her over the narrow stream. Whether the same vein of spirituality will be found to run through my production, must be left with you; should the alloy be found too much to allow its passing the Editor's refining pot, submission shall be yielded; but if any intrinsic value be there, and the footsteps of the flock have been accurately marked out, may the good Lord smile on it, and grant it may be instrumental in refreshing some of his now exercised ones. With much affection towards you, dear Sir,

Yours, in Jesus,

A STRIPLING.

Your letter, REBECCA, JOHN duly received,
And with its contents felt very well pleased;
You speak well of the King, the Lord of the house,
And what he has done on behalf of his spouse.
As you sat, quite at ease, just under the oak,
The honey-dew dropped on the words as you spoke;
It came as a cordial, to give me relief,
When o'erwhelmed was my heart, and sinking with grief.

“But why this o'erwhelming,” methinks you will say,
“The promise insures you the strength for the day;
Yea, more, for in weakness you shall be made strong;
Then cheer up, my brother, and give us a song.”
The promise I read, yea, I firmly believe,
As yet it has never been known to deceive;
’Tis not from a flaw or a change in the mind
Of Him who in motive cannot be unkind;

He rests in his love, and is found to embrace
 That heaven-born train, "the election of grace."
 But I live in a house wherein there's a door
 Admits all the inmates who dwelt there before;
 They question the right of the Prince of the place,
 And often, led captive, I'm brought to disgrace;
 The shattered condition in which the house is
 Gives them easy access whenever they please;
 And though I succeed in securing the door,
 It really would seem they rose out of the floor;
 Like locusts in bands they essay to go forth,
 With the king at their head "comes out of the north;"
 The coldness from thence which we know doth abound,
 Produce the icicles that hang all around.
 Then can you long wonder that *Exile's* my name,
 Or feel a surprise when the same I proclaim?
 A Jonah once said, "I'm cast out of thy sight;"
 And may not a "Stripling" be in the same plight?
 How often the brook seems in depth to increase,
 While its hollow sound tends to disturb our peace.
 The stream must be lucid and clear from the spring,
 Ere the "Stripling" finds stones to put in his sling;
 Nor must they be rough ones, but polished and smooth,
 Or they'll not do to meet Goliath, forth-sooth;
 In the bag of the heart a time they must lay,
 Yet always be ready to bring into play.
 And who is sufficient to go to this length?
 Not, surely, a "Stripling," when failing in strength;
 If shorn of his locks, as a Sampson of old,
 The shaking himself the sad tale will unfold.
 From what I have written, REBECCA will trace,

The *Salopian Exile* mourns over his case.
 Since those shinings so bright succeeded by dew
 Have left him in darkness his way to pursue;
 Those beasts that come forth from their dens in the night,
 Have taught him his safety is only in flight;
 And yet, so averse is his nature to yield,
 That he seems most inclined to die in the field.
 But shall he thus die? now the question we put,
 The answer is given, yet not with a but.
 The *Exile* deliverance shall surely obtain,
 Through the blood of the Lamb his victory gain;
 Yet here he must sojourn, surrounded with cares,
 The promise enjoy in the midst of his fears.
 Then what doth it matter in pitching the tent,
 If in all things therewith we learn but content;
Sabrina's great flood can make no addition,
 Nor *London* itself effect diminution.
 The weight and the measure that's given to each,
 Must pass the Lord's balance before it can reach
 The homer, the hin, and the ephah so just—
 However we fear, we with safety may trust.
 But how easy to say, yea credit to give,
 And yet on the promise be found not to live.
 My case this, too often, I'm led for to fear,
 When no light on my path may seem to appear;
 Arraign at the bar of my reason the Lord,
 And feel sore displeased when he withers my gourd.
 Then say, is it so with REBECCA, my friend?
 Or can she rejoice in beholding the end?
 With plummet and line can she fathom the deep,
 And thus gain advantage while JOHN is asleep?
 'Tis for courage like this you credit deserve,
 And are placed in the niche, we beg to observe,

By the side of those worthies left on record,
 Though weak in themselves were made strong in the Lord.
 Then why should the subject engender a strife,
 When we give you the name of *Lapidoth's* wife?
 Her name it was Deborah, meaning "a bee,"
 The place of her dwelling, the noted palm-tree;
 You have gone to this tree, the boughs have laid hold,
 The fruit you have eaten, the new and the old:
 In the hive of the church, by Jesus made free,
 We cannot mistake his Deborah, the bee.
 Your heart will respond to the truths we have spoke,
 And to others you'll prove how easy that yoke,
 To bear which in youth you were called to engage,
 Nor are you grown weary, though shaken with age;
 In the villages still his acts you rehearse,
 And tell how he saved you from sin and the curse.
 A mother in Israel, how few there are found—
 What honour's conferred upon worms of the ground!
 The statement you make beyond doubt is correct,
 For by grace are ye saved, says the elect.
 And why use such firmness in stating the case,
 Whilst thousands are living despising this grace.

The praise to ourselves we wish not to ascribe,
 The glory is His who lays claim to the bride.
 A subject so sweet imparts warmth to my heart,
 I feel quite inclined for a song ere we part;
 What say you, my friend? in what tune is your harp?
 Shall we strike the note *flat*? nay, rather a *sharp*;
 The theme of salvation demands we should raise
 The highest of notes when our Saviour we praise.
 Yet though I feel willing to aid in the song,
 I see very clearly my chords are not strong;
 Perfection below we're taught not to expect,
 Then surely these trifles must not be a check;
 I'll use my endeavours no discord to throw,
 While *Baca's* dark valley I'm called to go through.
 My hope will I cherish, my fears they may crowd!
 I know the sun shines, though I'm under a cloud.
 With warmest affection to Him I commend
 REBECCA, my sister in Jesus our Friend;
 Since my name I subjoin, then why do you smile?
 I feel all I say,
 THE "SALOPIAN EXILE."

Extract from a Letter.

I have entered my sixtieth year, and what shall I say? Why it is by the grace of God I am what I am. I have learned that it is not *age* that kills sin; for if sin break not out, it is raging within; contaminating the mind, the understanding: neither can anything, but the mortification of it by the Spirit, effect a change, and that does not abate the unpleasant feelings of the soul under the conflict. Like two armies on neutral ground, whichever gains the victory, the harvest-field suffers, and the husbandman feels disquieted in the meantime. I have no resource but in the boundless grace and perfection of our Lord Jesus, and it is not often that I am favoured by a clear and definite view of Him who is essentially the *ALL* of his people's comfort. But this brings me to the foundation of all hope—the immutable love of God in Christ; by which I mean that it is *his interest* in me, and not my frames and feelings, that insure my final safety. For I have seen him, when racked with pain and

distressed by poverty, carrying all the designs of his Heavenly Father into effect, so as to insure the glory of all to God, while love and mercy were exhibited in all his dispensations towards me. I then saw that all was mercy, all was right. But in health my soul seems tossed, confused with the perplexing nature of his dispensations. "In the multitude of thoughts within me," says the Psalmist; there seems such confusion within me, that I cannot find my way out; sometimes the "union" seems to await me; sometimes I am led to think, "What have I to do with futurity?" sometimes I am a little affected with the special providence of God, and believe he careth for me; but in general my grief arises from the want of that grace which neither despises, nor faints under, the rod. I murmur that I murmur, and complain that I complain. Amidst it all, I think I feel a greater growing up into Christ in all things, and a greater love to heaven as a place of freedom from sin; and, as a sight of Jesus transforms, so I seem to long more to see him, that I may be like him "who died unto sin once, but now liveth unto God." "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness," *within* as well as without.

H. P.

ANSWER TO CORRESPONDENT.

We have received a kind and judicious letter from a correspondent signing himself "*Amicus*," in allusion to the letter of Publius Lentulus which appeared in May. If that letter tended in any degree to enliven the minds of any of the feeble-minded of the Lord's family, by causing them to indulge the idea of a material substance when approaching the throne—which is a species of idolatry—we heartily regret its appearance in our pages, and pray the Holy Ghost to overlook our shortsightedness, and remove any stumbling-block which we might thereby have thrown in the way of our readers. It is no uncommon trap of Satan to endeavour to delude the minds, especially of young believers, by bringing before them, as they come near to God, ideas of the person of Christ, and so on, and, ere the poor soul is aware, to lead it out into a species of creature-worship and adoration, ultimately involving the soul in a maze of perplexity, from which the power of the Holy Ghost alone can extricate it. The only satisfactory and safe way by which to approach the throne, is, under the gracious influences of the eternal Spirit, to acknowledge a holy, blessed, and *incomprehensible* Trinity—a Triune Jehovah, whose nature and existence no finite creature can define; nor does that faith which is of the operation of the Holy Ghost in the heart, ever wish to pry into it. As we have said before, even so we say now, it is the privilege of faith to embrace the simple testimony of Scripture, in reference to the Holy Trinity—"There are Three which bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these Three are one." As the church journeys through the wilderness, she worships and adores this her Triune God; sometimes led out in sweet contemplation upon the Father's everlasting love in choosing the church, and giving it into the hands of Christ to redeem; at other times lost in admiration of the boundless love of her adorable Emmanuel in his great redemption-work; and anon sweetly drawn out in acknowledgment of the office and work of the Holy Ghost in carrying home conviction to the hearts of his elect—guiding, instructing, and leading them on in the chequered pathway of the wilderness. This is how the church acknowledges a Trinity in Unity and a Unity in Trinity, without wishing or attempting to define or satisfy the scepticism of a carnal mind. Here she sees the Lord Jehovah Jesus through a glass darkly, and is privileged, as the Holy Ghost is pleased to give her utterance, to make known her wants unto him; there, in eternal light and glory, the veil shall be taken away, every mystery explained, and faith itself shall be lost in the beatific vision of God and the Lamb.

ORIGINAL POETRY.

A FEW THOUGHTS ON HEARING THE THUNDER,

Sunday, January 3rd, 1840.

[After the awful intelligence which, during the last month, has reached England, of the destruction of the Island of St. Domingo by earthquake and fire, we have thought the following lines—embodying, as they do, so much that is full of consolation to the real believer—not altogether inappropriate.—ED.]

HARK! hark! what awful noise is that I hear,
Rolling, and then rebounding through our sphere?

It breaks my slumber, starts me from my bed,
And with amazement at a sound so dread;
What is't, methinks, that shakes this earthly ball?

Are earth's huge pillars now about to fall?
All nature seems convulsed, as if it rends,
And in one ruin all the nations sends.

With wonder and astonishment I hear,
The thunder clap, this period of the year;
Clap follows clap, still rumbling o'er my head,

And flash succeeding flash, the vivid lightnings spread.

Thoughts such as these did at the moment fill

My mind, by sweet repose beclouded still;
But these ideas gave place to recollection,
And calmly brought my mind to this reflection:—

Why should I fear? rather let me rejoice;
That sound majestic is my Maker's voice.
Hark! for the voice of God in nature breaks;
Why then alarmed, my soul? thy Father speaks.

The Sovereign of the world, the skies, and seas,

The "God of glory, thundereth" when he please.

One with thy Saviour, safe in Jesus' hand,
No harm can e'er befall the chosen band.

Come death to him, how, when, or by what means,

The end's the same, 'twill snatch from earthly scenes

His soul, from this vain world of sin and woe,

To that bright land where sorrow none can know.

All that to Him are given, with him shall dwell,

Our God is faithful and immutable;

The angel of the Lord encampeth round
The souls that fear him, and in him are found.

His voice, the worldling's heart may fill
with fear,

Alarmed he hears, and thinks destruction near;

With dread doth he regard the world to come,
Sin all his aim, regardless of its doom.

The thought of death disturbs his brightest joys,

Conscience will speak, and this his mirth annoys;

If in this state when he resigns his breath,
Sudden damnation comes with sudden death.
No hope beyond the grave whereon to rest,
Dread of eternity will fill his breast.

But shall a child belov'd shrink back with fear

Whenever he his Father's voice shall hear?
Speak how he will, by thunder, whisper, storm,

It is his Father still, who will not harm;
The voice of thunder leads the soul his power,

His majesty, and glory to adore;
The whispers to his heart in accents sweet,

Fill him with peace and joy at Jesus' feet;
Inspire with love, and gratitude, and praise,

To Him who guides him, keeps him all his days.

One, in himself so helpless, poor, and vile,
Is happy, when beneath his Father's smile;

One of his jewels, lov'd as Jesus' bride,
Protected, let whatever here betide,

Safe in his hand, though death should sudden come,

So suddenly he'll reach his bliss, his mansion, and his home.

His Father's habitation's there—with him he'll ever be,

And join the throng around the throne thro' all eternity.

EBENEZER.

REFLECTIONS ON THE INCARNATION OF CHRIST.

HARK! hark! what sound is that that charms my ears,
Bursting from thousand tongues in yonder spheres?

'Tis heaven's bright heralds, the glorious news proclaim,
And sound aloud the lovely Saviour's name.

} (Luke, xxvi. 13, 14.)

"Yon eastern star shall lead you to the place (Matt. ii. 9.)
 Where lies the 'Mighty God,' the 'Prince of Peace;' (Isa. ix. 6.)
 An inn in Bethlehem, a mean abode, (Matt. ii. 5, 6; Micah, v. 2.)
 Shelters the Lamb, th' eternal Son of God." (John, i. 29; Prov. viii. 23—30.)

So may the voice of mercy, love, and peace,
 The cry of Wisdom from the God of grace, (Prov. viii. 4, 5.)
 Dissolve my icy heart, inspire my tongue, (Psalm cxlvii. 18; lxvi. 17.)
 My spirit draw, and lead my soul along. (Songs, i. 4; Psalm cxliii. 10.)

And may the Lord, "The Bright and Morning Star," (Rev. xxii. 16.)
 The altogether lovely, pure, and fair, (Songs, v. 10—16.)
 Conduct me safe to heaven by wisdom's ways, (Psalm cvii. 7.)
 To dwell with Christ midst light, and joy, and praise. (John, xiv. 3.)

Oh may the tenant of this "mean abode,"
 My heart possess and fill with every good; (Eph. iii. 19.)
 Made glorious by thy presence, fit for thee, (Psalm xlv. 13.)
 The chosen residence of Deity. (2 Cor. vi. 16.)

Onward we'd move to Calvary's rugged mount, (Luke, xxiii. 33.)
 And there the dying Saviour's groans recount; (Matt. xxvii. 46.)
 The thorn-torn brow behold, while rack'd with pain (Matt. xxvii. 29.)
 The dolorous shrieks to hear of Jesus slain. (Luke, xxiii. 46.)

The sun, as though asham'd, withheld its light; (Luke, xxiii. 45.)
 Earth opened wide, and day was turned to night; (Matt. xxvii. 52; Luke, xxiii. 44.)
 Saints arose, from 'neath the graves upturn, (Matt. xxvii. 53.)
 As if to join in nature's solemn mourn.

Ere long the rock which held the King of kings (Luke, xxiii. 53.)
 At his command upheaves and backward flings; (John, x. 18.)
 In glorious majesty ascends on high (Psalm xlvii. 5.)
 The Saviour, King, th' Incarnate Mystery. (1 Tim. iii. 16.)

With shouts of triumph of the celestial bands, (Psalm xlvii. 5.)
 Leaves earth for heaven, and, lo! at his command
 The everlasting doors wide open fly—
 Enters th' all-conquering King, th' Infinity. } (Psalm xxiv. 7, 8.)

Oh may my heart be filled with joy and peace, (Rom. xv. 13.)
 For love unequal'd and such matchless grace, (1 John, iv. 10.)
 That brought the Lamb from off his glorious throne,
 To save my soul from hell—a guilty worm. } (Acts, vii. 34.)

Break, break, my heart, at yonder wondrous sight;
 Behold your ascending Lord, the Prince of Life; (Acts, iii. 15.)
 Hear the rocks rend, and view the darkened sun;
 The Victor shouts, the battle's fought and won. (Col. ii. 15.)

While darkness, gross darkness spreads this lower earth, (Isa. lx. 2.)
 Oh may I know my Jesus' peerless worth; (Prov. viii. 18, 19.)
 Th' ascending power of my exalted Lord; (Phil. iii. 10.)
 The quickening Spirit, the enlight'ning Word. (Psalm cxix. 130; John, vi. 63.)

Then shall I walk the path that leads to bliss, (Psalm cxix. 105.)
 And drink perennial streams of joy and peace; (Rev. vii. 17.)
 Shall dwell in glory ineffable and bright, (Rev. xxi. 23, 24.)
 With Christ the Lamb, the Everlasting Light. (Isa. lx. 19.)

THE TIME OF LOVE.

EZEKIEL, xvi. 8.

THE love of Jehovah to me O how great!
 In raising my soul from the lowest estate
 'Twas possible for a poor worm to be in—
 The depths of pollution and thralldom of sin.
 The day he came by was the time of his love,
 Beheld me cast out, and no pity did move
 The priest or the Levite; oh, no! they pass by:
 The hands of my Jesus my needs did supply.
 He said to me, "Live," when I laid in my
 blood,
 "Thy works cannot save thee, 'tis nought but
 the flood
 Shed on Calv'ry's summit can cleanse thee
 from sin;
 Look to me and be saved, wash now and be
 clean."
 The word of the King was accompanied with
 power;
 The day of salvation, th' acceptable hour,
 Was that when the Lord the bless'd Com-
 forter took
 The things of my Jesus, and peace to me
 spoke.
 Invincible grace! how rich, sov'reign, and
 free
 Was that which Emmanuel extended to me!
 When fearing the wrath and just vengeance
 of God,
 To have pardon revealed through Christ's
 precious blood.

Made wise to salvation and justified quite,
 In Jesus' obedience, the garments of white,
 The robe of fine linen, the saint's holy dress,
 How perfect are those who this garment
 possess.

Though darkness surround, and the Lord
 hide his face,
 Yet, bless his dear name, to th' election of
 grace

His care will not cease, nor his presence
 remove—
 Again he'll appear, and will manifest love.

My soul, gloomy seasons thou oft has been
 in,
 When Satan has roared and accus'd thee of
 sin,
 And a host from without thy peace have
 assailed,
 God's love never varied, nor faithfulness
 fail'd.

While travelling here with my face Zion-
 ward,

Thy visits renew, oftentimes, dearest Lord;
 The love of the great Three-in-One let me
 sing,

Till above in that ocean of love I shall swim.

Bethersden.

ELIHU.

TO A FRIEND, ON HIS BIRTHDAY.

BROTHER, beloved, I would entreat for thee
 A birthday blessing, but I know not what
 To ask; for thou art bless'd already. Yes,
 Thou art highly favour'd, and the richest
 Gifts of God are thy redundant portion.
 He lov'd thee as thy Father, long before
 The worlds were made; and did, to prove his love,
Present thee to his Son, that he might bear
 For thee the curse of sin, which he foresaw
 Would justly come on thine offending head.
 Yea, more! he did ordain that thou in
 Jesus' righteousness should stand complete;
 And should at last, when time shall end, be raised
 To dwell with him in glory everlasting.
 Besides all this, thy God hath kindly lent
 To thee much earthly comfort; he has spread
 Thy table with his bounty; and, to fill
 Thy cup of temporal bliss, hath bless'd thee
 With a partner who can share in all thy
 Joys and sorrows, and on whom thy heart may
 Rest in fullest confidence of kindred
 Love; one who, like thyself, is lov'd, and bless'd,
 And sav'd in Jesus unto endless life.
 Thus, brother, thou art bless'd indeed; and thus
 I leave thee—well assured that thou art safe
 Beneath his care, who hitherto has led
 Thee on in safety, and who will, in death,
 Be nigh, to bear thee through, a conqueror.

E. M. L. P.

THE GIFT OF GOD.

"The gift of God" is said by Paul,
In the divinely written word,
To be "eternal life" to all
The saints, "through Jesus Christ
their Lord."

This is a voluntary grant
To all the Father gave the Son
In that eternal covenant
In council made ere time began.

"The gift of God" THEY must receive;
For THEM the Saviour lived and bled;
THEY are his members, and must live,
And be made like their living Head.
And all these will this "gift" receive
In the appointed time; and then
When God the Spirit in them breathes
This life, they're truly "born again."

"The gift of God" at first appears
Little or nought to human eyes;
But who shall (see the sinner's tears!)
The day of such small things despise?
Tears by a corpse were never shed;
If but a groan, it shows there's life;
The upheaving chest, the aching head
From sin within, tell there's a strife.

"The gift of God" produces this!
And where the "water"* once shall
go,

It there shall be a well of bliss,
That into endless life shall flow.
The "smoking flax" God will not
quench;

The "bruised reed" he will not
break;

Whom he once loves he will not leave;
The feeblest child he'll not forsake.

"The gift of God" let none contemn;
It by no power can be o'ercome;
Who have it, none shall e'er condemn,
But all shall be brought safely home.

Kent.

* John, iv. 14.

No tribulation shall o'erwhelm,
Nor hellish foe, nor treach'rous friend;
The bark, with Jesus at the helm,
Must reach heaven's haven at the end.

"The gift of God"—a little leaven
It may at first appear, but nought
Shall mar "the proof;" for it for heaven
Was destined, where it must be
brought.

Rough chilling winds, fiends, pleasures,
lusts,
And ill propensities, combine
To spoil, destroy—but rise it must;
"They're mine," saith God, "and
shall be mine."

"The gift of God"—how rich! it flows
Spontaneous from the source of love;
Its limits no archangel knows;
No depths beneath, no heights above.
It's vast as God! it's infinite!

"He gave himself; the Father, Son,
And Spirit in the work unite
To finish what they have begun.

"The gift of God's" a precious gift,
Embracing, for our sojourn here,
All we can need, or when in death,
Or when we at the throne appear.
A precious Saviour—precious life,
The fruits of which are "precious
faith,"

And precious love, hope, every grace,
Spring from this root, as Jesus saith.†

"The gift of God" also includes,
Complete acquittal from all sin;
A precious robe of righteousness,
Which God, his Father, clothes him
in;

And precious blood to cleanse his soul,
Though e'er so lep'rous and diseased;
And (time would fail to tell the whole)
With the recipient God's well pleased.

A NATIONAL SCHOOLMASTER.

† John, xv. 5.