

THE  
GOSPEL MAGAZINE.

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

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

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

No. 211, }  
NEW SERIES. }

JULY, 1883.

{ No. 1,411,  
OLD SERIES. }

The Family Portion;

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

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

THE "COME AND WELCOME" OF THE GOSPEL.

"And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark."—GENESIS vii. 1.

BELOVED, wherever and whenever the Lord says "*Come*," you and ourselves never need fear to "*go*," and why? Because the very language bespeaks that the Lord Himself is there, and where He is we need not fear to be. Blessed be His name, although we may fail to hear it, the Lord speaks the self-same welcome word to all His children, in regard to His leading them into strange, perplexing, and difficult positions and pathways. They may not see Him any more than hear Him, as the Leader and Guide in those pathways, nevertheless "the Lord hath gone out before them," for most distinctly is it His province to "bring the blind by a way that they knew not," and to "lead them in paths that they have not known." Equally is it His prerogative, and His alone, to "make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight."

Now, how prone are the dear children of God to overlook the fact that, if they could see of themselves, and by themselves regulate or adjust matters, and, in the same self-sufficiency, overcome all difficulties, how independent would they become, and consequently how deprive the Most High of a position and a power which strictly belong to Him, and to Him only.

How emphatic are the words, "Hear, ye *deaf*: and look, ye *blind*, that ye may see. Who is *blind*, but My servant? or *deaf*, as My messenger that I sent? who is *blind* as he that is perfect, and *blind* as the Lord's servant?" So that that very blindness and deafness instrumentally contributed to the *sight* and the *hearing*, in the true Gospel sense of the word; for a knowledge by the Holy Ghost of the want of both the one and the other has led, by the constraining power of the same Spirit, to the fleeing to Him who is sight to the blind, ears to the deaf, feet to the lame, life to the dead! Thus poor sinners and a precious Christ are, by the Holy Ghost, brought to a happy meeting

and greeting one with the other; yea, to an unspeakably-blessed knowledge and fellowship! Christ and His Church united in eternal and indissoluble bonds!

But, lest we should, in the course of writing, be diverted from the idea which was first suggested to the mind when thinking upon the ark, we will, as the Lord the Spirit may enable, at once revert to it.

With respect to the response to the invitation, "Come thou and all thy house into the ark," we read that "Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the ark, because of the waters of the flood. Of clean beasts, and of beasts that are not clean, and of fowls, and of everything that creepeth upon the earth, there went in two and two unto Noah into the ark, the male and the female, as God had commanded Noah."

Now, beloved, the thought that was presented with special sweetness was that in regard to the *creeping things*. *They*, even *they*, formed part of that marvellous procession, were identified with that astounding rescue from the all-but-universal ruin and destruction, found shelter in the same wondrous structure, were objects of the same infinite wisdom and providential care, as that which designed and regulated the whole.

We love to see little children amusing themselves with the ark and its numberless occupants. We delight to see them arranging the numerous creatures representing the former inmates of that wondrous structure. We revel in the fact that the tiny ant as much formed one of the procession, was as verily called into the ark, and had as perfect right there, as the ponderous elephant or the majestic lion. Had either the one or the other looked with disdain upon the tiny and tender creature at its side, threatening to crush, as too small and contemptible to devour, how perfect the right of that creeping thing to plead the cause of its *venture* among the many that were there. The disparity was no barrier. Its insignificance was no objection. The ant, so to speak, had heard the "Come," even as the elephant; the beetle even as the bear had responded to the prompting; and why? Both the one and the other had been *called*. The "Come" had echoed and re-echoed to far-off distances, and the listeners (so to speak) gave no heed nor argument as to obscurity, unlikelihood, inconsistency, difficulty, or danger. The "Come" was the claim! The "Come" silenced all scruples! As each little living creature ventured among the mighty group, and, after waiting its time and turn to *creep* or to *crawl* up the pathway into the ark, suppose it had been challenged with, "What could such a worthless and obscure thing as you have been thinking about to present *yourself* here? Of what consequence are *you*? What multitudes of vastly more value and importance than you will find no entrance here! What right, therefore, have you?" Had such

tiny creature the power of speech, what would be the answer to all such seemingly-reasonable arguments but the one, "I heard the 'Come'?" That would overrule all unsightliness and all unseemliness. Had the plea of size and strength and value and importance been urged as a ground for the non-admission of the ant, or the fly, or the dormouse, the answer might have been, "Comparisons are odious." Yea, more, a counteracting plea might have been advanced: "My very tininess and weakness and worthlessness are the more striking proof of the watchful eye and kindly care and universal dominion of that almighty One who made me, and hath kept me to this day."

Reader, what blessed Gospel pleas and arguments may be based upon these very grounds! What a standing lesson does the ark and its occupants present, in answer to so-called relative merits and merely human calculations and conclusions! How powerfully and how blessedly is brought out, in that early day, and by striking type and figure, the glorious verities proclaimed, in far later day, by the Apostle Paul: "Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in His presence" (1 Cor. i. 26—29).

Reader, we have endeavoured to show that the smallest and most obscure of the vast creation could prove their right to venture into the ark, because of the "Come," and in consequence of the inward prompting and irresistible constraining which followed upon the "call." Now, in like manner, the weakest, the feeblest, the guiltiest, and the most feelingly unworthy and despicable have the same authority for proving the lawfulness of their coming—their creeping or crawling—into the antitypical Ark, Christ Jesus.

How many a sin-burdened, conscience-aroused, and intensely-anxious soul argues, at least mentally, "If an angel from heaven were to speak to me specially and pointedly, or were my name plainly and positively embodied in or attached to the invitation, I then should have no scruples, but fearlessly accept the terms and respond to the call."

Now, we insist upon it that the Gospel call and the divine welcome far, far exceed any such proclamation as that we have been supposing. Were a name distinctly announced, what would then be the argument? "May there not be other such names? Would it not be most unreasonable to think otherwise? Then what right have I to suppose that *I* am the person there intended?" This most natural scruple and objection would be the more forcible because

of the ages upon ages which have passed away, and the generations which have come and gone, since these glorious Bible-invitations were given.

But, when we substitute *character* and *condition* for mere *names*, what a very different state of things is presented! The one holds good in perpetuity, and admits of no parley or objection.

What is the glorious invitation—what the “Come” of the Gospel? It is, “Ho, every one that *thirsteth*, come ye to the waters, and he that hath *no money* [a poor, penniless pauper—just man’s condition by nature, but only the Spirit-quickened and the Spirit-taught are brought to know and feel it]; “come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price,” or “without money’s worth,” as COVERDALE renders it. Now, however strange and unaccountable to the proud and self-sufficient heart of the natural man, these are God’s terms with regard to salvation matters.

We have still further proof and confirmation of the fact in the same blessed fifty-fifth chapter of Isaiah: “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts” (ver. 7—9).

In blessed harmony with this precious Gospel “Come,” as proclaimed by the prophet, upwards of seven hundred years before the incarnation of Christ, we have, in the fulness of time, the Lord’s own Personal welcome: “Come unto Me,” says He, “all ye that *labour* and are *heavy laden*, and I will *give* you *rest*.” Again, in His very first sermon, He testifies, “Blessed are they which do *hunger* and *thirst* after *righteousness*, for they shall be filled.”

Now, here we have *character* delineated, but no names given. Here are the *labouring*, the *heavy laden*, the *hungry*, and the *thirsty*. Then, reader, it is for us to ask ourselves, Are we personally in this state and condition? Do we *labour*? Are we *heavy-laden*—borne down and oppressed, under a sense of sin and guilt—striving and toiling to free ourselves from condemnation by a round of duties and observances, the which, nevertheless, brings no relief—no peace—no satisfaction? Again, do we *thirst*? Are we *hungry*? Is there a void, a destitution? Do we feel, day by day, as it were, a worm gnawing at the root of all our pleasure or satisfaction? Do we labour to no purpose? Strive at this, or toil at the other, but still there is the same falling short of that special something for which we seem to seek and strive and suffer in vain? Oh, this it is—these vain efforts—these

fruitless strivings—that bring us, little by little, into the most suitable of all positions for Christ to prove the freeness, the fulness, the exact suitability and adaptation for Him to bestow *His salvation*, upon the only terms upon which it is based, and the only grounds upon which He can administer it, namely, “without money and without price.” It is, as He Himself declared, with respect to the fifty and the five hundred pence debtors, “And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both.”

Ah! reader, it is a wonderful thing for the naturally proud and haughty heart to be so “brought down with labour” as to be “made willing in the day of God’s power” to receive salvation as a poor bankrupt wretch, just in the same way as a Mary Magdalene or a dying thief received forgiveness at the hand of Him who “delighteth in mercy.” Now, the question is, Are we personally brought to this state? Most certainly we are not if still where nature left us. Even the Lord’s quickened ones fail, for a season at least, to see what the Lord has done for them, if thus humbled, and broken, and contrite before Him, and made indeed willing and anxious to receive salvation precisely upon the same terms as the vilest, the filthiest, the foulest, the most ill-and-hell-deserving. Oh, what a mercy it is when the wretched Pharisaism of our poor fallen nature is cut up root and branch, and we are brought into the dust as the very scum of the earth!

Reader, is our language repulsive to you? or are you so humbled and broken before the Lord as to feel a little something springing up which seems to whisper, “Can there, then, be hope for me—EVEN ME?”

*St. Luke’s, Bedminster, June, 1883.*

THE EDITOR.

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### MY FATHER.

ONE name there is my God doth bear—  
One name above the rest—  
Which seems to me more tender, dear—  
The one I love the best.

The name of “Father” seems so sweet,  
To me especially dear;  
It seems to draw me to His feet,  
And then to keep me there.

A little child I, Lord, would be,  
Knowing no thought or care,  
Except that I belong to Thee,  
And in Thy love do share.

’Tis not with slavish fear or awe,  
But by Thy love to me  
In various ways, Thou dost draw  
Me closer still to Thee.

True, fickle, feeble is my heart,  
And I am wayward, wild;  
Yet, Lord, if Thou my Father art,  
Then I am Thy own child.

Thy own! relationship divine,  
Which no thing can sever;  
If Thou art mine, then I am Thine,  
And that, too, for ever.

Keep me, my Father, close to Thee,  
With nothing of my own,  
But like a child, simple and free,  
Trusting to Thee alone.

E. A.

Wayside Notes.

GOD'S "PECULIAR PEOPLE."

"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."—TITUS ii. 13, 14.

THERE are so-called "Peculiar People" who at this time are coming to the forefront of observation in striking and painful prominence. I do not think it would be irrelevant to glance at their position, and the peculiar views they hold, especially as, at the moment of writing, a fellow-man and a father of a family has been committed for trial for manslaughter, having a second time refused to call in medical assistance to his child, under the plea of belonging to a sect, part of whose creed is, not to send for a doctor in case of illness, but to anoint the person with oil, and trust in God. This creed they take from the well-known passage, "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the Church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him" (James v. 14, 15).

Now, if we take these words as they are, the following points are clear—First, the sick person must be "among you"—a true believer, walking in fellowship with the saints. Second, he or she is the person who is to call—"let him call." It is the sick man whose faith is first to be put forth, not the godly and sympathizing friend. Third, he is to "call for the elders of the Church." Who are "the elders of the Church"? We are told, "those whom the Holy Ghost hath made overseers." Fourth, "the prayer of faith" was to avail—"and the Lord shall raise him up: and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him." Some think, therefore, that the sickness referred to is spiritual sickness, and not bodily, and that such suffering is sent by the Lord in the way of discipline, as Paul, speaking of those who are eating and drinking unworthily, adds, "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep;" and so such are "chastened of the Lord," that they "should not be condemned with the world" (1 Cor. xi. 30, 32).

But, presuming that the divine Teacher means *bodily* and not *soul* sickness, we may remember that, at the time the Apostle James wrote these words, the Lord had given the Church the especial gift of working miracles. Among those gifts was "the gift of healing" in case of sickness, which gift was to be exercised by prayer and faith, and then, if the will of God, the sick person should recover. But, as "the gift of tongues" was not to last for ever, neither was the gift of healing to continue for ever, but only for a time. Still, there can be no doubt that, in all ages, God has been pleased to put honour on the faith of His children by direct interposition. He is a prayer-hearing and prayer-answering God, but this does not ignore the use of means. Elders

may have been sent for, but this does not imply that the aid of physicians was never to be sought. "Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of My people recovered?" Full well do we know the spiritual truth here taught; but, in the simile used, surely the Lord is referring to a place where the healing balm is found in abundance, and physicians are there to make use of it, that health may be restored; and the stupidity of the people of Gilead, in not availing themselves of such means, results in their hurt. So also our Lord, when on earth, would never have conveyed a spiritual fact by a literal truth, if it were not so, when He said, "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick."

I should have thought that every sensible person would have held that medicines are a great boon given by God for the alleviation and cure of human ailments. Now, we know that the medicinal properties used by the ancients were principally vegetable; but, being constantly liable to dry up, and lose their virtue, no dependence could be placed in them. Hence the introduction of extracts by distillation came into use, and mineral products, which are more to be depended upon; and this fact, with the rapidly-increasing population of the world, made necessary the rising up of a class of men whose study it has been to adapt the properties of vegetable life and mineral products to the alleviation of particular diseases and ailments; and what the world would be without such aid—ordained, I believe, of God—I cannot imagine. The writer is deeply interested in the work of hospitals, especially one important London hospital. There I have witnessed the blessing of medical aid in innumerable cases of bodily ailments. What if we close the doors of our hospitals—tell the people to send for the elder, anoint the patient with oil, and pray to God, without using the blessings He has given—what indeed would happen? And yet such would have to be done, if the views of these "Peculiar People" are correct; for, if right in one case, it must be right in thousands. Would the Wise Man, gifted with spiritual wisdom, have said, "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine" (Prov. xvii. 22), if medicine did no good? If the Lord Jesus Christ ignored physicians and doctors, He would hardly have called Luke the physician to be one of His apostles.

Now, God's "peculiar people" are grounded on far deeper principles and divine ordering than the peculiarities of the "Peculiar People" we have referred to. Let us proceed to notice some of the features of those people whom the Lord is pleased to call His own, and inquire how it is they are designated "peculiar people." And, at the onset, we notice—

*God's people are a "peculiar people" in the sight of the Eternal Three.* They are *God's* people, not *man's*. It is very common, in these days, to hear clergymen and Nonconformist ministers speak of "their people," "My people," "My dear people." This may be done without any wrong intention, but we must remember, in these times of sacerdotal assumption, that men are but men; and, where a minister has been useful in a congregation, those that are benefited are not "his people," but brethren and sisters in Christ. All such are God's people. "We are His people, and the sheep of His pasture."

Well, then, we are God's people, and His "*peculiar* people," too. The word is significant. In it we get at the thought of something specially belonging to one person. It is peculiarly that person's own—his rightful property—which nobody else can touch—something also that is not common, but exclusive. Now, apply this to spiritual things, and how true! God's people are peculiarly His own by eternal choice and by special love. The Word of God tells us that He has a peculiar love for them; that He has a peculiar delight in them; that He grants them peculiar nearness to Himself; bestows upon them peculiar blessings; calls them His own possession and inheritance; declares them to be a distinct and separate people, taken out of the world; tells us that they are the conquest of divine power, redeemed by blood, and sanctified, or set apart, as vessels of mercy for the Master's use; and that they are His peculiar treasures, His "*jewels.*" All these points, which are declarations of the Word, the reader can search out for himself.

There is another thought occurs to us in connection with this word "*peculiar,*" namely, it implies "something found only in one." So is it spiritually. The Lord's people are found in Him.

Now, here we have a blessed and hallowed groundwork—something real and substantial—a vital hold. Yes, I thank God that I have a religion that I *would* not give up for ten thousand worlds. Yea, more, I thank God that I have a religion that I *cannot* give up, for it has a vital hold of me—the life of God in the soul. Yea, more, I thank God I have a religion that will not *give me up,* for, as grace rescued, so grace holds, and grace will raise to eternal glory.

But a step further. *God's people are a "peculiar people" in the sight of the professing Church.* The professors of a so-called religion are universal, and the vagaries of men in their ideas of religion are legion. One feels bewildered at the review. But whatever form is taken up and put down, those who hold the doctrines of grace and the good old verities of the Gospel will be "a sect always spoken against." Anything will be borne with in our days but so-called Calvinism, which we are told has died out—is a thing of the past—and, if held at all, is only held by a few foolish and weak-minded people. Let them say what they will, we affirm upon Scriptural ground that the only religion that will stand in the great day of account is, vital godliness—the life of God in the soul—union with a precious Christ. These and such like are peculiarities we glory in—a personal, heartfelt realization of Christ.

Oh, how the true child of God *sighs for Christ*; and, if the day passes without any intercourse with Jesus—without any unfolding of the Word, which is his meat and drink—a misery is felt which it is difficult to describe. Is it not so, dear reader? Such experience, however, gives lively proof of union with our living Head. If the members thereof are not "ministered unto," and have not drawn from the fulness which is in Him, they droop; but the very drooping tells the tale of life divine, which needs nourishing from above. Yes, beloved, we sink in spirit if Christ does not "come in and sup with us." We cannot live without the endearments of His love and the preciousness of His presence.

I know I talk a strange language to the Christless world and the

Christless professor; but it is no strange language to the Spirit-taught and redeemed child of God.

You go to some church or chapel, desiring some spiritual benefit, and hoping to catch something from the minister's lips that will cheer you by the way, and endear Jesus more to you. Alas! there is nothing to commend itself to your judgment. But why can you not take it all in? True, it is a sapless sermon, without unction or power; yet the congregation seem satisfied, and go away peaceful and contented, while you faint at heart—come away as empty as you went. What a peculiar person you must be! Ah! who is it that has made you thus peculiar, beloved? It is the Holy Spirit, who has spoiled you for anything short of a precious Christ.

I often think it is not what the minister *does* say; it is what he *does not* say. What he does say may be all very well in its way, but what he does not say is just the thing wanted and needed, and so you come away dejected and downcast. The fact is, you want Christ in the embrace of His love, the communication of His grace, and the preciousness of His person; and the other gospel which is not *the* Gospel is as emptiness to your Spirit-taught soul. You have been spoiled by the Holy Spirit's teaching for man's opinions and sentiments; and this spoiling proves you have life divine. The sheep of slaughter must expect to be thus slaughtered.

Then, again, *God's people are a "peculiar people" in the sight of the possessing Church.* When brother tells brother of the merciful and marvellous dealings of the Lord—of the way in which such were brought out of an ungodly world to the feet of Jesus—of the wondrous divine leadings realized—and all this to one so undeserving, how it does melt the heart to hear of God manifesting peculiar blessings to His sought-out and saved ones! "As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man." So also do such recountings give the Christian joy. If there is joy among the angels of heaven over one sinner that is brought to true, heartfelt repentance, so is there joy in the Church militant when God the Spirit is manifestly at work, bringing the Lord's own to Himself.

Oh, it seems almost a rare thing in our days to hear of the recountings of a real work of grace in the soul—of the heavenly beginnings of grace divine—of deep penitence at a felt knowledge of self, and the joy at the recognition of a Saviour who is all our salvation! It seems now a rushing into so-called "conversion"—boisterous talk, inflated and presumptuous tellings, marked by an absence of that humility and nothingness which is the test of a genuine work within.\* Still, in spite of much that is unreal and hollow in our day, the Lord has His hidden ones; and, when they get together, and are drawn out by the cords of love—

"Jesus, their Lord, their hearts do know—  
The Spring whence all their blessings flow."

But, to trace further, *God's people are a "peculiar people" in the sight of the world.* Mark those words of our blessed Lord—oh, how true we find them to be—"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me

\* Observant reader, we ask, Is not this a special characteristic of the present day's so-called religion?—Ed.

before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." Are we not finding this to be the case in daily experience? Quiet and unoffending as we may try to be, there is something about us that the world hates; therefore they either shun our company, or spurn us and our principles. If this is not the case, we may suspect our religion and standing; for "the friendship of this world is enmity with God; whosoever, therefore, will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."

And, again, in connection with the surprise of the world at God's "peculiar people," we observe, *God's "peculiar people" have a language of their own*, and it is of such a character that heart responds to heart, because the teaching is of the Holy Spirit. All God's people are taught of the Lord. Worldlings smile at their phraseology. They understand not such expressions as these—"The Lord's dear people;" "One in Christ;" "Brethren and sisters in the Lord;" "Dearly beloved," and such like. They say, "Whatever do such expressions mean?" We respond, It means a secret that the unregenerate are not led into. It means a knitting together in a spiritual bond that is not of earth. It means that such are anticipating living together in everlasting happiness with Jesus. We repeat, therefore, if the world understands your religion, and can be one with you in it, you may have grave doubts that your religion is not true, and is that which will not avail you when most you need it. But, if the world says, "We cannot understand these people," you have a precious evidence of that peculiarity which has distinguished you as one of God's elect.

Again, *God's people are a "peculiar people" in their own sight*. With a consciousness of our own sinfulness, it must become a marvel to us that the Lord should take notice of such unworthy creatures as we are, and we can only attribute it to the fact which the Lord Himself declares, "I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy." Certainly we have nothing to say of ourselves, and everything to say about our salvation being a matter of sovereign grace and mercy. "Go thy way, for He is a chosen vessel unto Me," is our only ground why we are saved. Love, even eternal love, must be the moving cause; and therefore we say, the creature nothing—Christ "All and in all."

I know this seems to some a peculiar standing, but we remember our point. God's people *are* a "peculiar people," made so and kept so by the Lord Jehovah Himself. Thus do we realize and understand what it is to rest in His love.

Do you follow us, dear reader? I am sure you do, if you feel your salvation is all a matter of grace.

But perhaps there may be a reader who is saying, "But this is a strange religion! I cannot understand a kind and benevolent Being loving some and rejecting others. Surely all have a chance, if they will only come?" Very well; try it. Take your stand upon the creature will and universal salvation, and ignore the divine prerogative and will; for, of course, you place yourself in the peril of doing as you say, and God will judge you upon your own ground. Can you carry it through? I cannot, and, therefore, I am obliged to rest upon the

divine sovereignty of God, and declare, if saved at all, I am saved in God's way, not mine.

But, again, *the Lord's dear people have peculiar discipline.* Worldly people are not exempt from affliction, for "man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward;" but the Lord's people seem to be especially afflicted, no doubt for a wise and gracious purpose, and to bring them to wholesome experience. This, though, is hard for flesh and blood to bear. It is all very well to say cheerily, "Thy will be done," when that will squares with our feelings, and it is smooth work for us; but, when things are completely contrary, and we are brought to say, "I cannot see the need of this suffering. Why is it?" then it is no easy matter to say, "Thy will be done." Indeed, we cannot, except under the grace of patience, which the Lord alone can give.

Then another feature that marks them is, that *God's people are a looking, longing, and loving people.* This our passage affirms—"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God." What a precious word that word "hope" is! There are hopes, it is true, far from blessed. There are the hopes of the worldling for earthly gain and fame, which, even if attained, often prove most disappointing. But there is nothing disappointing in the Christian's "hope." It will never make him ashamed; and that "hope" is centred in "the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." "For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it: because it will surely come; it will not tarry." Oh, my God, keep us waiting and watching for that glorious vision, which will indeed be more than a vision—yea, a reality—for then "we which are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with them [that is, 'the dead in Christ'] in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

And this precious "hope" reminds us that *God's people are a "peculiar people" in the sight of heaven.* There is a precious oneness between the Church militant and the Church triumphant. Only a narrow stream divides them—we this side, they the other—both one—we struggling still, they at rest. Fast—ah! fast indeed—are the elect joining the ranks of the elevated. God is thinning the ranks down here, and calling His own home, previous to the last day of account, with the greatest rapidity. There will be no empty mansions in heaven. Oh, the great thing is, to have oil in our lamps, and our lamps trimmed, waiting for the coming of the Church's precious Bridegroom. The old world is groaning with wickedness, but the Lord is gathering His own out of its wickedness to Himself. I am convinced of this; the signs of the times point to it. I do not wish to fall into the error which some have of prophesying dates and times; but, for all this, I am perfectly certain that the end draweth nigh. The harvest is ripening, and God's reaping-time is not far distant.

This reminds us that our passage speaks of "that blessed hope," the anticipation of "the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ"—that is, the great God who is our Saviour. He will appear when a restless, Godless world is unprepared for His return—

“ Even thus, amidst thy pride and luxury,  
 Oh, earth, shall that last coming burst on thee  
 That secret coming of the Son of Man,  
 When the Great Husbandman shall wave His fan,  
 Sweeping like chaff earth's wealth and pomp away!”

Oh, who shall then survive? Oh, who shall stand and live? Why, those who have been looking for His appearing—those who have oil in their lamps, and their lamps trimmed, and are waiting for the Bridegroom—His own blood-bought ones—the Church, His bright and mystic bride. Shall I be there? Will you, dear reader? The thought melts one's heart, as we respond, “ Lord, I believe I shall. Help Thou mine unbelief!”

And, beloved, what will be the fulfilment of this hope set before us? It will be *rest* from the wearying labours of life; it will be *peace* in the calm of heaven; it will be *joy* with “the spirits of just men made perfect”; it will be the enjoyment of a sweet *home* of continual love; it will be the receiving of “*a crown* which fadeth not away”; it will be the entering into an abiding-place of eternal quietude; it will be *the presence of Jesus*, whose smile will lighten a bright eternity. Oh, it is a blessed hope indeed!

We have thus been dealing with effect rather than cause. We may ask, “What is the cause of all this experience, discipline, and anticipation on the part of God's peculiar people?” Our passage meets the enquiry—“Our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people.” Oh, then, it is all through *redeeming grace*. He gave *Himself*. Nothing short of Himself would afford a ransom for His chosen people; and, in giving Himself, He became our Substitute, Surety, Sin-Bearer, and Salvation. As the Word tells us so clearly, “He hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, *being made a curse for us*; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth upon a tree.”

Oh, was ever love like this?—the result of which is, we are delivered from the power of darkness, and are “translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son: in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins”—or, as our passage has it, “has redeemed us from all iniquity, and purified unto Himself a peculiar people.” In such a redemption, we see our deliverance, security, and salvation.

Oh, beloved, these are facts that may well afford us abounding consolation! A poor, weak mortal, sinful by nature, saved by grace, washed and purified by the precious blood of Jesus, and rendered by such redemption heir to an eternal inheritance with the saints in light above!

But one may ask, “What will be the result in the life on earth of such ‘peculiar people’ as you have described? Surely, if chosen of God, redeemed by Christ, it little matters how they live. They will be just as safe, let their conduct be what it will.” Such language is the utterance of foolish people, who leave out that important point, namely, the “sanctification of the Spirit.”

Now, what does the Holy Spirit declare? Why, He tells us in our

passage that God's people will be "zealous of good works." Of course they will, because good works are the outgoing of the good work within. Take the case of a clergyman who, in his church, dares to "declare the whole counsel of God," and will not his parish, in the way of district visitation, the distribution of soup to the poor, and every other philanthropic work, compare with any other parish? I am perfectly certain it will; and that, when God has worked a blessed work within, there will be a blessed work without. And I challenge the position I can unhesitatingly take, namely, that, where free grace is maintained, good works will most assuredly follow—not as any ground of merit, but as the inevitable result of the true work of grace within. The Master went about doing good, and I am sure the servant who drinks into the Master's spirit will do the same. There is no free-will in good works carried out in this spirit—nay, such are the practical outgoings of free grace.

I have been struck with that passage in the Proverbs to the point: "He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker, but he that honoureth Him hath mercy on the poor."

Well, now, in the foregoing we have referred to the peculiarities of the so-called "Peculiar People," who, in these days, are being brought into painful prominence from what we think mistaken notions of the teaching of the Scriptures. God's "peculiar people," as we have seen, are grounded on far deeper principles. They are a "peculiar people" in the sight of the Eternal Three—God's people, not man's. They are His inheritance—His rightful property—His by purchase. Herein we have safe and precious groundwork. Then we have seen how God's "peculiar people" are an astonishment to the professing Church, and a joy and source of rejoicing to the possessing Church, while the world looks upon them with surprise and indignation. Other features have been pointed at, namely, that they have a language of their own; are a wonder to themselves; are the subjects of a sovereign and sanctified discipline; while all the while they are a looking, longing, and loving people, "looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." The cause of their being a "peculiar people" in the sight of earth and heaven is, as we have seen, redeeming grace. Christ gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a "peculiar people;" while the result in the daily life and walk will be that, in spite of all the taunts and sneers they will be subject to, they will be "zealous of good works," testifying outwardly of the work of grace, inwardly to the glory of their God and Saviour.

Here, then, we have, beloved, the old, old truths, and to our mind ever new and ever acceptable. Must not our song be one of gratitude that the Lord has marked us out, and put us among His "peculiar people," chosen by the eternal Father, redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus, and sanctified by the Holy Spirit? Power, truth, and love combine to render us safe for eternal glory.

"Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen."

*Burton-on-Trent.*

G. C.

## "THE PERFECTION OF BEAUTY."

"Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined."—PSALM 1. 2.

As when an artist, conquered by some  
face

Whose beauty haunts his visions day  
and night,

Bends o'er his canvas, striving hard to  
trace

The sweet ideal which fills him with  
delight ;

But finding toil no beauty brings to  
view,

Yields to his grief for days without  
control ;

His birth of anguish—the old truth,  
still true,

The hand but a poor artist of the  
soul :

As when the prodigal, with weary feet,  
Halting and trembling, seeks the  
well-known door.

Wondering what smiles or frowns his  
face will greet,

Mourning those joys he never can  
restore ;

Feels his wan cheeks wet with a father's  
tears,

Clasped by a love his merits could  
not reach ;

With cries and sobs pours forth the  
grief of years,

And looks a love too great for human  
speech :

As when the stricken heart looks on  
the grave

Where sleeps the first-born and the  
early love,

Turns to the Arm which only now can  
save,

And looks for help and comfort from  
above ;

Flies from the crowd to seek the quiet  
way,

Shrinks from the public gaze, like  
timid dove,

Loathing the trappings of death's proud  
array,

And feels that silence must proclaim  
its love :

Brighton.

So through the changes of the passing  
years,

My heart has laboured hard its song  
to raise

To One whose love, through both our  
smiles and tears,

Must ever claim, but doth not need  
our praise :

But vain my words, though filled with  
love's own fire,

The varied forms of that sweet love  
to trace ;

My efforts all in poverty expire

Before the beauty of that Kingly  
face.

As early dew reflects the light of  
day,

And trembles 'neath the beauty  
which it brings,

Exhales to nothingness and hides  
away,

So melts my soul e'en while Thy  
love she sings.

With faltering hand again I take the  
lyre ;

O Spirit, come, and breathe upon its  
strings !

Give life to words, and every thought  
inspire ;

Make these notes sweet as when an  
angel sings !

As 'neath the wing of night morn's  
blushes sleep,

The beauteous flower lies hidden in  
its seed,

Rich odours in the tears the heavens  
oft weep,

And beauty veils her face 'neath  
many a weed ;

As in true love there dwell unnum-  
bered fires,

Which wait the spark to kindle to a  
flame ;

So in the song which heaven itself  
inspires,

A fragrance dwells which preaches  
whence it came.

W. POOLE BALFERN.

How little of the sea can a child carry in his hand! As little do I take away of my great sea—the boundless love of Christ.—*Rutherford.*

## Pilgrim Papers.

## ISOLATION WITH JESUS.

*"When they were alone, He expounded all things to His disciples."*—

MARK iv. 34.

How do the hearts of the living children of God thrill with rapturous delight at the mention of these words, "when they were alone"! Who but those whose blessed lot it is to be *alone with Jesus*, can tell the joy, the peace, the tranquillity thereof? How oft do they mourn because these seasons are so brief, so fleeting, and so transient! They know the spiritual meaning of these words, "It is not good that the man should be alone" (Gen. ii. 18), and oftentimes the plaintive sigh ascends to their Head, their Husband, and their Friend, "Oh, when wilt Thou come unto me?" Yes, when, according to the all-wise appointment of their heavenly Friend, the Bridegroom of their souls, their Saviour, Succourer, and Sympathizer is "taken away," they mourn in lonely places, and sigh for His embrace and His appearing again.

Few, in these days of universal charity, believe in divine favour; yet the favoured ones cannot help but believe in the same. Having received so much free grace at His sovereign hands, their exercised spirits find expression in the language of one of old: "Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that Thou bearest unto Thy people." Oh, yes; having loved His own with an everlasting love, simply because He "had a delight" in them—having saved them with an everlasting salvation, given them a place in His home, in His heart, and in His glory—He must manifest that favour now and then to them as they journey on through this waste, howling wilderness. For this cause He takes them "aside from the multitude" (Mark vii. 33), and speaks to their weary and waiting spirits words of purest, sweetest grace, and draws forth from their adoring hearts the confession, "Never man spake like this Man."

In humble dependence upon the guidance and grace of God the Holy Ghost, we will look for a few moments at this sweet portion. How marked is the difference in the way in which Jesus dealt with the multitudes and His own favoured few! Of the former it is written, "He taught them many things by parables"; while to His own, "it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables, that seeing, they may see and not perceive, and hearing, they may hear and not understand." Yes, "without a parable spake He not unto them; and when they were alone, He expounded all things to His disciples." Oh, what matchless favour! what distinguishing grace! He knew the ignorance and blindness of their hearts was quite as great as that of the multitude, so, in rich compassion, He comes down to the very spot of their necessities, and expounded all things to them, while He left the numbers who followed Him destitute of His gracious explanations. He sweetly allures His eternally-loved ones away from earth and earthly things. He draws them

away from every human teacher, companion, or friend. It is then He warms their hearts with His love. It is then He causes them to pour into His ears the tale of all their sins, sorrows, cares, anxieties, and perplexities. They commune with Him of all that is in their hearts, and what is written concerning Solomon and the Queen of Sheba is true of Jesus: "And Solomon told her all her questions" (1 Kings x. 3). Yes, it is in this spot, "alone with Him," that He unveils Himself, for on resurrection ground all we can ever know of Him is by His own revelation. With a sad and broken heart, poor Mary sought Him in the sepulchre, and found Him not. She wept, and stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre once more. She saw two angels in white, sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. Angelic spirits, fair messengers from heaven, suffice not to raise her downcast soul. She seeks Jesus, and till she sees Him she can find no rest. "They have taken away *my Lord*, and I know not where they have laid Him." "The Lord *is nigh* unto all them that call upon Him," and He was at that moment nigh unto her. "She turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, *and knew not that it was Jesus.*" Yes, we repeat again, all we can see or know of Jesus, so as to bring any consolation to our wanting souls, must be by direct revelation. Mary knew Him not until He revealed to her the gracious fact that she had found favour in His sight, and He knew her by name: "Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself and saith unto Him, Rabboni, which is to say, Master."

"*When they were alone.*" The first communications of His grace to any soul must be with Himself alone. This is revealed most sweetly in type in the history of Joseph—that history which speaks so gloriously of Jesus, who knows His brethren even while they know not Him, and are altogether unconscious of the blessed relationship existing between themselves and Him. Blessed be His name, their ignorance alters not the glorious fact. In covenant He took them into eternal union with Himself, and in time He will give each member of His mystical body to know it. Yes, while still in the ruin of the fall He knows them. He knows them as His Father's gift, He knows them as His own purchase, He knows them as His body, for whom He has perfectly fulfilled the law, but they know not Him. Indeed, their hearts are enmity against Him, and are not subject to His law. In His first dealings with them, "He makes Himself strange, and speaks roughly to them." He knows well how to bring down their proud hearts and to humble them in the dust at His sacred feet. He brings former sins to remembrance, and they are troubled; and, as He beholds the distress and anguish of their spirits, His heart is touched with tenderness and His bowels do yearn upon His brethren, and He anticipates the time when, according to the eternal councils, He will make Himself known.

Dear reader, turn with us to the sweet, heart-melting account of Joseph, and may the Holy Ghost reveal unto us a Greater than Joseph here. "Then"—in the appointed time of favour—"Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause

every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren" (Gen. xlv. 1). Oh, sweet and precious words, as seen in reference to our most glorious Immanuel: "There stood no man with Him"! "When they were alone," He "made Himself known." Ye whose eyes so frequently fail with looking upwards—ye who oftentimes strain your eyes to catch a glimpse of Jesus—mark well the grace, the free, uninfluenced favour, beaming in the declaration, "He made Himself known!" The recipients of that grace knew nought of the relationship existing between themselves and Joseph. It could never have entered into their minds that "the man who was lord of the land" was their own brother; nor does it enter into the minds of His chosen and redeemed ones, who plead for mercy at His throne, that the Lord Jesus is their *Brother*, and that He will raise them up to the same position in His Father's house as His own. Mark well the gradual revelation of Joseph. At first he only says, "I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled [margin, 'terrified'] at his presence." Kindly and graciously does he drive away their fears, and says, "Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt." Just so does Jesus speak to His brethren: "I am Jesus your Brother; I am Jesus your Saviour. For you I suffered upon Calvary's bloody tree; for you I lived a life of sinless obedience; for you I learned what sorrow, weariness, and suffering mean; for you I visited the darkest spots of desertion, desolation, and death. Truly your sins caused Me to be nailed to the tree, and sorrow as never man sorrowed. 'Now, therefore, be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold Me hither: for God did send Me before you to preserve life.' It was so ordained of God, that you might have a place in My Father's home, and be preserved from that death your sins so richly deserve."

Dear reader, know you anything of such a revelation as this? See how grace is more abundant at every step. He continues, "Thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto Me; . . . and there will I nourish thee, . . . lest thou come to poverty. And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of My brother Benjamin, that it is My mouth that speaketh unto you." Oh, what precious words! How hallowed is that spot where Jesus thus speaks face to face with the favourites of His breast! "Moreover, He kissed all His brethren." This is the kiss of reconciliation (see Gen. xxxiii. 4; and Luke xv. 20). "And after that *His brethren talked with Him.*"

"Thou shalt be near unto Me." There is no spot of rest or satisfaction, no place of repose, in all this dreary wild, save in the land of Goshen—nearness to Jesus, the covenant Protector and Provider—yea, the great Sympathizer—of His weak and falling brethren. The more they experience its sweetness—the more often they are indulged with His company alone—and the more earnestly do they beseech Him that they may ever be with Him; but, as with the healed Gadarene, "Jesus sends them away," that faith may be tried, and desire may become more ardent for that rest which remaineth.

Yes, sometimes, even in the land of Goshen, the eyes of His children are holden, and they cannot see Him whom their soul loveth; but—

“E'en when their eyes are holden  
They know that He is near.”

And He would have them ever bear in mind the oft-repeated truth, “This is not your rest; it is polluted.”

“When they were alone.” Oh, how “passing sweet” it is to be indulged with the companionship of our best, our only Friend! Without Him, all below is dark and desolate. Apart from Him, we can but mourn and sigh. From scene to scene our restless spirits wander, seeking peace and finding none; and we return with the cry, “I have seen all the works that are done *under the sun*; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit.” To Him these lonely wanderers lift their weary eyes and say—

“Tossed on the world's tempestuous deep,  
While threatening billows round me sweep,  
Jesus, I look to Thee;  
Alone, I dare not stem the main—  
Alone, the port I cannot gain—  
My strength is gone, my toiling vain;  
When wilt Thou come to me?”

How precious then to hear the voice of the once sorrowing, but now exalted Man saying to our weary hearts, “Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile” (Mark vi. 31). When allured into the wilderness with Him, He speaks words of life, words of love, words of power. Alone with Him, His unbelieving ones are brought to put their finger into the wounded hands, and their hand into the riven side of a precious Christ, and there they hear His loving words, “Be not faithless, but believing.” To the heights of Tabor He takes His favoured three, to behold His glory; and to the dark shades of sad Gethsemane He allures them to behold His humiliation. There, in that low spot, He turned to them for sympathy, but He found it not, for they were fast asleep. Oh, what a picture of poor, helpless humanity! What an exhibition of human weakness! The Lord of life and glory, in “exceeding sorrow” and “sore amazement,” revealing the fact that He was a “real Man,” sought for human sympathy. He says, “Tarry ye here, and watch with Me.” “He went a little farther, and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me: nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt. And He cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with Me one hour?” Three times He left them, and three times He found them sleeping. Marvellous compassion and boundless pity filled His tender heart, for though “He came and found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy,” He reproached them not: “And He left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time.” And now oftentimes He takes His loved ones to Gethsemane, to expound all things to them. In that lone vale with Him they learn the true nature of sin. There they see what it cost Him to redeem; there His heart of love is opened up to their

astonished gaze; and there they are melted into lowly adoration and perfect nothingness at His pierced feet—

“Such precious rest, Lord Jesus,  
Alone with Thee to be!  
The desert is a garden  
With Thy blest company.

“With crowds I might forget, Lord,  
That I am all Thine own;  
I bless Thee for the desert,  
With Thee, my Lord, alone.”

Alone with Him at Peniel, Jacob received His blessing. Alone with Him on Samaria's well, the poor harlot drank of the water of life. Alone with Him in the temple, the fallen adulteress heard His words of love and mercy, “Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more.” At His feet, Mary could listen to His gracious instruction. On His breast, John could lean all his care, make known his wants, and unbosom his woes. Jesus could speak freely to the eleven when Judas had gone out. When they were alone, and all restraint was gone, He could breathe those tender words, “Little children!” Yes, sweetly THEN could He counsel, cheer, and comfort the loved ones of His heart.

Dear reader, dost thou mourn because thy pathway is so sad and lonely? When Jesus is absent, whether thou art alone or not, thou canst do nought else but mourn; but, when thou art “a stranger with Him”—when thou dost feel His loving arms around thee, hear His gracious words, and see His lovely face—thou canst do nothing but rejoice, though every earthly friend is severed from thee.

Be assured of this, that, if thou art blessed with the companionship of Jesus alone, and He expounds all things to thee, there will be times in thy experience when, instead of face-to-face communion with Him, thou wilt endure face-to-face conflict with Satan; and, as in the former thou dost experience the gracious teaching and instruction of the great Expounder of all things, so, in the latter, the fiery darts of thy powerful enemy, his fierce temptations, his blasphemous suggestions and vile insinuations, will cause thee to tremble before him, and fill thee with dismay and dread bewilderment; but He who hath delivered in times past will deliver thee again, and bring thee safely home. Yes, thine enemy may come close—thou mayest almost see the malicious twinkling of his eye—and he may deafen thee with his blasts from hell's dark regions; but, since the Stronger than he has cast him out of thy heart, he can never gain the citadel again, for “greater is He that is in you than all they that are against you.”

May the Lord Jehovah cause His separated ones to realize more and more the sweetness of that word, “They saw no man any more save Jesus only with themselves.” His power alone can save, His arm alone can support, His voice alone can soothe and cheer.

And oh, dear reader, there is a day coming when the nearest and dearest earthly friend must fail in the attempt to minister to any of thy necessities. Thine ear will be deaf to their voice; thine eye will

be closing upon all below. Friends may gather round thy couch, but only to realize that they can do nothing but commend thee to the care of Him who alone can succour thee in the dark valley of the shadow of death.

Gracious Lord Jesus, grant unto Thy lonely wanderers more and more of Thy sweet company alone, as they journey on through the desert, that they may indeed know Thee, and thus may find the blessedness of that glorious knowledge when passing through the chilly waters of Jordan; and there may they hear Thee say to their fainting hearts, "I am with you always, even unto the end."

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#### GODLY AND WORLDLY SORROW.

THERE is, perhaps, nothing from which the human mind so shrinks as sorrow. This dark shadow ever and anon covers and casts down the human heart. Well may Holy Writ assert that "man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward." No one is free from sorrow, and the Christian appears to have a larger share than the worldling. Our Lord told His disciples that, though they now had sorrow, yet "He would see them again, and their hearts should rejoice, and their joy no man should take from them." This promise belongs to the believer in every age, and should enable him to bear all things, for, though "weeping may endure for a night, joy cometh in the morning."

Christianity, however, has dignified and sanctified sorrow. Our Lord said, "Blessed are ye that mourn, for ye shall be comforted." The Holy Ghost transforms our tears into pearls so costly that God says He "puts them in His bottle;" our sighs into music, which enters into the ears of the Lord God of Sabaoth, thus proving how greatly the religion of Jesus surpasses the habits and estimates of the world. Verily, God's thoughts are above our thoughts, and His ways above our ways.

Paul says, "Godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death." Sorrow is internal grief; it affects the heart. Its universality is well known and attested. We cannot find a nation, a city, a town, a village, or a house, nor yet even a heart, that has not some sorrow, which lies like a heavy weight upon the peace and enjoyment of the mind; and this is our state from infancy, for our first sound is a cry of want—an incipient sorrow.

There are two sorrows mentioned by Paul, the first of which is godly sorrow. Whilst the world abounds with sorrow, godly sorrow is rare. Naturally, we have no sorrow for sin. We love it too much to lament its commission. Our hearts are hard, our wills are stubborn, and, therefore, do not see the wickedness of sin. Godly sorrow is the work of the Holy Ghost. He reveals to us our real state by holding up to us the law of God, which acts as a looking-glass in the hands of the Spirit, so that we see ourselves as God's holy law views us. Previously the soul was undisturbed. It was asleep in carnal security. It was like a man sleeping at the top of a mast, or smoking upon a barrel of gunpowder, or hanging over a fearful precipice, and yet entirely unconscious of his danger. Satan, as a strong man armed, kept his

palace, and his goods were in peace. In looking back upon the past, how surprised we are that we could live, as we did, "without God, and without hope in the world"—

" Lord, how secure my conscience was,  
And felt no inward dread !  
I was alive without the law,  
And thought my sins were dead."

But how different it becomes when godly sorrow lays hold of us ! Then appears the first indication of the divine life. It is the moving of the waters—the pool is disturbed. The flinty heart has been struck by the rod of the Almighty, and the waters of sorrow and life gush out.

We must not forget, however, that this sorrow manifests itself differently in different persons. Sometimes it is like the mountain torrent, sweeping everything before it, as in the case of the Philippian jailor, who cried out, "What must I do to be saved ?" At other times like the gentle brook, as in the case of Lydia, "whose heart the Lord opened." But, in either case, "it is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes."

And, as this sorrow comes from God, so it invariably leads to Him. Yes, as the needle trembles, and turns to the pole, so does the heart, convinced and humbled by Jehovah, turn towards Him with that fear, that reverence, that affection, which accompany godly sorrow all through this wilderness.

Let us now glance at the effect of this godly sorrow. It worketh repentance. Sorrow is not repentance—it is only the forerunner of it. Repentance is a change of mind. That which we once loved we now hate. Sin was viewed before as trifling and harmless—now it is exceedingly sinful. The believer's eyes have been opened, the scales removed, and sin appears in its naked colour. Hence, David, when he repented, cried out, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me ! Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." The publican would not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, and cried, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner !" We know how Peter sorrowed when his Lord turned and looked upon him, and we read that he "went out and wept bitterly." There can be no true religion without this godly sorrow working repentance ; for, as no one has it who is a stranger to the presence of Christ, so no one can be in His presence without possessing it.

We are further informed that this repentance is unto salvation. Religion begins with sorrow, but ends with joy. It is a sense of extreme danger, bringing us into the consciousness and enjoyment of a great and lasting salvation. We cannot, indeed, experience the blessedness of salvation till we have felt our lost and ruined state by nature. Faith, like a Phoenix, rises out of the ashes of doubt and despair. Never will any one flee to the stronghold, except he feel that he is pursued by the man-slayer ; never to the Rock, except he feel there is no other safety from the eternal storm ; never to the Great Physician, except he is aware that his disease is mortal, and that no other but the heavenly Physician can cure him.

We may observe here, that this salvation is a free and undeserved salvation. It is all of grace from first to last. God's gifts cannot be purchased. They are to be had "without money and without price." It was in His gracious and loving heart that they first originated. We should never even have wished for deliverance, had He not contrived a way and opened our eyes to see the necessity for it. Well may the Apostle say, "We love Him because He first loved us." This salvation is free to all who desire it. "Whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely."

To show that it was entirely undeserved, the Scriptures tell us that, "when we were sinners, Christ died for us"—"when we were enemies by wicked works"—when we neither wished for, nor knew the necessity of, this salvation.

We rejoice to know that this salvation is an eternal one. Not, as some would tell us, contingent—not mere chance—but sure and certain. Once saved, for ever saved. "My sheep shall never perish." This certainty is fixed by the eternal decrees of Him who says to the mighty and restless ocean, "Thus far shalt thou come and no farther, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed."

This godly sorrow "worketh repentance, not to be repented of." Hypocrites may fall away from the profession of the Gospel—may cease to be found among the Lord's people—and thus prove themselves to be goats instead of sheep, but John says, "They went out from us because they were not of us."

The subjects of this godly sorrow never regret the repentance which it produces. They have no desire to change, or part with the company of the Lord's people, or the presence and guidance of their blessed Lord. If there is a regret, it is as to the shortness and unworthiness of the service which they have rendered to the best of all masters. They look forward to the time when they shall love Him as they ought, and serve Him as they wish.

Our subject speaks of another sorrow, namely, that of the world. Pleasure is eagerly sought after by the carnal worldling; but Solomon tells us that the laughter of fools is like the crackling of thorns under a pot. Mirth and happiness are frequently quite distinct from each other. In truth, no worldly man has tasted real joy. The pleasures of sin are but for a season. What a pitiable sight is that of worldly sorrow! Everything lost, treasures stolen, all things empty and deceptive! What a contrast between godly sorrow and worldly sorrow—the one leading to life, and the other working death!

Look at the godly sorrow of David, bringing him in humility to the feet of Jehovah, and the worldly sorrow of his beautiful, but wicked son, Absalom. He had sorrow no doubt, as he hung from the boughs of that spreading oak, but it was the sorrow of the world that worketh death.

Take another example—that of Judas Iscariot, who betrayed his Lord and Master. Did he not have sorrow when he came and cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and said, "I have betrayed innocent blood"? Yes, but it was only worldly sorrow, for we read, "he went out and hanged himself."

Truly Satan is a hard master. How true that "the wages of sin is

death"! Worldly sorrow is like the shriek of a maniac—godly sorrow is like the broken-heartedness of a child when repenting of having offended a kind and loving parent.

Reader, what sorrow hast thou? Remember Him who is exalted to give repentance, not to be repented of. Sorrow from any other fountain will only work death. Godly sorrow, like Peter's, arises from the gracious look of Him who wounds that He may heal; who casts down so that He may lift up, and so exalt us in the way of life and peace. We must also remember that, as the Master was a Man of Sorrows, so must the disciple be. As long as we are in the flesh, so long we shall be subject to sorrow; but, thanks be to God, we have a divine Comforter, whose tenderness exceeds that of the most loving mother who ever comforted her sick and sorrowing child. Many of us have found times of sorrow to be times of special manifestations of our Saviour's love. The believer looks forward to the time when all tears shall be wiped away, and, in the presence of Jesus, he shall possess fulness of joy and everlasting peace.

E. W.

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#### "THE VOICE OF MY BELOVED!"

WHAT sweet and precious words are these! How well do they describe the state and condition of the child of faith, as he sits in the garden of delight, listening for the well-known voice of the Beloved! The words speak the state of the heart, for the lips are very often a true index of the heart's desire. And it is evident that the soul which can use this language is not in Laodicea, nor yet like the wise virgins, who, as well as the foolish, were "sleeping." No; the words are the language of wakeful, watchful love—of love which finds its sweetest pleasure in the real presence of her Well-beloved. And, if we are living near to Jesus, in the sweet fellowship of our hearts, in the divine communion of His most blessed Word, then we shall be able to say with His ancient people, "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my Beloved among the sons. I sat down under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste" (Solomon's Song ii. 3); and we shall find that the only true place of spiritual rest is to "sit down under His shadow." There is His real presence, and there He will speak words of comfort to His dear ones, and, "before they are aware, He will make their souls like the chariots of Amminadib," and He will, as their Jehovah-Shepherd, "lead them into green pastures, and beside the still waters." And oh, what sweet and precious hours of communion will the soul realize who can thus sit down in full surrender of will and heart to the loving sceptre of His sovereign grace! Here is true and abiding rest. There is none anywhere else, for there can be no true and abiding rest where His rule and sovereignty are either questioned or disputed—*none, absolutely none!* How could there be? Consider where the heart's rest is found! Is it not at the feet of Jesus—in the very realized presence of the Beloved of our souls? Hear the sweet, seraphic words of the royal Psalmist, at a time in his life "when the shadows had fled away," and he was "dwelling in the secret place of the Most High, and abiding

under the shadow of the Almighty," as a realized experience: "O God, my heart is fixed, my heart is fixed, trusting in Thee" (Psa. lvii. 7).

Here David heard the voice of his Beloved. Here he could commune with Him of whom he spake, "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee;" and here we, too, can hear his voice "at the throne of the heavenly grace," saying, "My voice shalt Thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee, and will look up" (Psa. v. 3).

"O God of Bethel, by whose hand  
Thy people still are fed;  
Who through this weary pilgrimage  
Hast all our fathers led—

"Our fervent prayers we now present  
Before Thy throne of grace;  
God of our fathers, be the God  
Of their succeeding race!

"Through each perplexing path of life  
Our wandering footsteps guide;  
Give us each day our daily bread,  
And raiment fit provide.

"Oh, spread Thy covering wings  
around.  
Till all our wanderings cease;  
And at our Father's loved abode  
Our souls arrive in peace!

"Now, with the humble voice of prayer,  
Thy mercy we implore;  
Then, with the grateful voice of praise,  
Thy goodness we'll adore."

W. FRITH.

*Martyrs' Memorial Church, Gunnersbury, London.*

#### DEW-DROPS.

"Then said she, Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall: for the man will not be in rest, until he have finished the thing this day."—RUTH iii. 18.

ANOTHER precious portion from the lips of a woman! How much comfort have their songs afforded us oftentimes, in reading God's most holy Word; and, at the same time, taught us how useful an instrument to the Church of God is a woman "whose heart the Lord has opened." Look for a moment at Miriam, singing praise unto God, that "hath triumphed gloriously." She ascribed the glory of their preservation from the Egyptians to its right source; and, under a sense of it, gives the praise due unto the God of all their victories. See another woman, with her heart tuned with praise unto her God for the victory He had given her over Sisera, and helping her with His might and strength to subdue Jabin, King of Canaan. Read that beautiful song of deliverance for yourselves, in Judges v. Again, after Hannah had proved "Him faithful that hath promised," and who was able also to perform, her heart rejoicing in the Lord, goes forth in exultation and joy, as knowing Him who "maketh poor and maketh rich; bringeth low and lifteth up. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and He hath set the world upon them. He will keep the feet of His saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail."

But time will not allow of following out here the words of Mary, Elizabeth, Anna the prophetess, the Gentile woman (of sweet, yet prevailing faith), of the Queen of Sheba (as pointing out the glories of the Heavenly Solomon), the woman of Samaria, and Lydia, "who worshipped God," and would gladly receive and serve with hospitality His messengers.

Well, now to our text, for this woman Naomi has said a sweet word of comfort to Ruth, her daughter-in-law: "Then said she, Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall: for the man will not be in rest, until he have finished the thing this day." "Sit still!" Have you ever been told to "sit still," and known the difficulty attending such a command to your restless spirit, beloved? "'Sit still' at such a moment, Lord, when it would seem that I must be most active?" "Yes, 'sit still'; and, in so doing, knowest thou not that I am glorified? for I, Jesus, am able to do exceeding abundant above all your wants and desires—to work perfectly whilst you are sitting still—and you are being taught a needful lesson, which your heart is so slow and unwilling to learn."

And sitting still denotes a free and child-like trust in Jehovah. Oh, for more of this simple obedience and firm belief, because He commands, it must be right! Oh, brethren, we are slow and dull scholars at this lesson! Our old Arminian nature keeps suggesting ways in which we ought to be doing for ourselves, and thus serving God. But we can serve Him equally on a bed of suffering as in the forefront of the battle. We can serve Him when commanded to "sit still," as well as when told to "go forward." "How do we serve Him thus?" you ask. "How can I possibly be serving Jesus from this small corner, where I am scarcely seen or known, and cannot even understand His motive in laying me aside, or showing, in some way or another, how plainly Jehovah can work without me?" Beloved, then is the time to trust Him; to "sit still," stand still, or be still. Then is the time that you feel your increasing need of Him, and could not—nay, would not—do without Him. Then is the time when your heart is taught the sweetness of the truth that Jesus never faileth, and that He is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever;" and, in so doing, you glorify Him whom your soul loveth.

Oh, the glory brought to Jehovah's name, when He commanded the Israelites to "go forward," when, the rocks on one side, the enemy advancing in the rear, they look forward upon nothing but sea! Yes, but "speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward"—and forward goes Israel, to prove again the omnipotence and faithfulness of their God, who is ever willing and able to deliver in your utmost extremity of danger and fear. Oh, let us remember that "nothing is too hard for the Lord"; that He will never bring us into any strait but what, sooner or later, He makes a way out for us; and that, if He commands us to go forward, to walk, to lie down, or to "sit still," it is right, and He has not commanded an impossible thing to be carried out, and that it is one among the "all things that work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to His purpose." "Sit still, then,

my daughter, until thou know how the matter shall fall; for the man will not be in rest, until he have finished the thing this day."

"*The man will not be in rest, until he have finished the thing this day.*" Beloved, does the eye of faith catch a glimpse here of the glorious Person and work of the Christ of God—He who by nature was both God and Man, taking upon Himself the form of man, found in fashion as a Man, humbling Himself, and becoming our "Brother born for adversity"—the Man on earth, the God-Man in heaven, one and the same—the Man that will not rest until creation's work is perfect; and not until the seventh day resting, and then because all was done—the Man that will not rest until all the covenant promises in the Old Testament be fulfilled in the revelation of Christ? *The Man will not rest* until, as a perfect Sufferer, and in righteous obedience to His Father's will, He can cry, "It is finished!"

And yet, again, *the Man will not rest* until His work in bringing many sons to glory is finished, and, in glory with Jesus, their King, *the Man*, they take their seats before the throne of God and the Lamb. There He is now, ever living to make intercession on their behalf; and, until every member gloriously complete is with Him there, the Man will not rest. Then will He rest in His love, and joy over them with singing, and *His rest shall be glorious.*

R.

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#### FORGIVENESS.

WHEN, through the mercy of God, any one experiences the pardon of sin by faith in the Redeemer's blood, the Holy Spirit, that adorable Third Person of the Trinity, is sure to accompany the grand redemption work. We must always bear in mind that vital godliness is *progressive*—"first the blade, then the ear," &c.

We are convinced of sin by the Spirit of God, who bears witness with our spirit. Jesus Christ reveals Himself to the poor, broken-hearted, contrite sinner as the one great Sacrifice for sin, "having been made sin for us," &c.; and, in our heavenly Father's own good time, the glorious truth is sealed upon the heart, when we can only wonder, love, and adore that Almighty Being for having shown us these things. Still often doubting in our mind if it can be real, yet do we feel and know a change has taken place, for now we love all those who love God. We hate sin, and strive against it, knowing what it cost our dear Saviour; and we feel a desire to tell others (especially those who are near and dear to us) the glad tidings. We cannot keep it to ourselves, or the stones would immediately "cry out." But, alas! what cool reception do we mostly meet with, so prone are we by nature to rest satisfied in our unregenerate state! I know that many faithful ministers of Christ, Scripture readers, district visitors, and others, meet with much opposition. If any such should read this, I would affectionately say, "Be not weary in well doing, for in due season you shall reap, if you faint not." Remember the cause is the *Lord's*, and "He maketh people willing in the day of His power." Consider what a privilege it is to be a fellow-worker with Jesus; and, if instrumental in bringing only *one* fellow-sinner out

of darkness to the light of the Gospel, how precious is that soul! We should bear in mind that, if every converted person brings but *one*, the number "before the throne of God and the Lamb" will be *two-fold*. Let us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch for every and any opportunity to speak a word for our divine Master; always remembering what we once were—as all others are by nature—*asleep*, or "*dead in trespasses and sins*." But Jesus has only, as of old, to speak the word, "Come forth!" and life is given. Without Him we may exhort—admonish ever so faithfully, as we may think—our words are only as "sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal." Yes, the Lord must be with our mouth, accompanying the Word with power. Has He not said, "Without *Me* ye can do nothing"?

We now and then get a "lift" when we hear of any inquiring the way to Zion. How does our heart burn within us if we are enabled to help them on, by telling them what the Lord has done for our soul, and by testifying none ever sought His face in vain, and for this reason, "*He first loved us*." He is the Alpha and the Omega in the salvation of every soul, and the very fact of His having given us His Word and His beloved Son is a proof that He loves *man*; it is the *sin* in him which He hates. Hence the importance of "forgiveness of sin." Dear HART says—

"What is it to be blest indeed,  
But to have all our sins forgiven;  
To be from guilt and terror freed;  
Redeemed from hell, and sealed for heaven:  
To worship an incarnate God.  
And know He saved us by His blood?"

Yes, dear reader, it is by "being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Some may say, perhaps, "This is nothing new. It is only the old, old story;" and so it is. We would not have it otherwise. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." Satan often tries to hinder God's work in the soul, but let us not be cast down, for "greater is He that is for us than he that is against us." Such attacks from the enemy should drive us closer to our Stronghold. "Lord, help me!" has been heard and answered many a time; and, believe me, if we could but cry unto Him, and put our trust more fully in His *great power*, we should realize much more joy and peace than we do.

It is a mercy to *hear* and *see* the wolf coming, that we may run to the Good Shepherd, who will receive us with outstretched arms, and hide us in His bosom, whispering words of comfort to our souls. It is our happiness to confide in the love of God. He knows our many infirmities and our utter helplessness; and often our multiplied cares and trials are only new avenues of acquaintance with Him.

Again, in the matter of "forgiveness," we would affectionately say, learn to forgive one another. "If any man have a quarrel against any," &c. (Col. iii. 13); and how can we repeat the Lord's prayer if we bear malice or hatred in our hearts? Let us all forgive, as we hope to be forgiven.

If at any time a wrong feeling arises in our hearts, let us "tell Jesus," and give Him "no rest" until He has made all calm. And not

only must we endeavour to check the sin in ourselves, but earnestly pray for those who have been led to differ from us, in some such words as these—"Lord, if I am wrong, put me right; if he is wrong, put him right; that each may be taught, by Thy Holy Spirit, 'to love one another.'"

There are many who love to cavil about doctrine, which generally engenders strife and bitterness. Our blessed Saviour said, "If any man will do His [God's] will, he shall know of the doctrine." Let us, then, "search the Scriptures," and give ourselves unto prayer; and assuredly that which we know not, God will reveal, that is necessary for our salvation, which indeed should be our chief concern.

May the Holy Spirit lead us into a deeper knowledge of God and of our own hearts, through His only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; and may none who read these few lines rest satisfied until some such words as these shall be applied to the heart, "Be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven thee; go in peace"—

"Oh, make me feel and know  
That all my sins are gone;  
Dear Jesus, condescend to show  
That I'm a pardoned one!"

*Cockfield.*

C. B.

#### REMARKABLE INSTANCE OF THE SPECIAL PROVIDENCE OF GOD OVER HIS CHILDREN.

SPEAKING with a friend on God's special providence, he related the following striking fact which had come across his own path. He had invited a party of friends to dine on his yacht, but he failed to catch his train for the occasion, and had to wait till the next, the consequence being that he arrived at the pier of a sea-port town, to see the steamer some distance out. Feeling much vexed and disappointed, he went to an hotel, ordered dinner, and remained indoors until late in the evening, when he went into the town. All shops were closed but one, that being a tract depôt. He went in, and, wanting some books and tracts for his sailors, he laid out a few pounds. In course of conversation with the woman of the shop, her husband came in, and, learning what had transpired, asked his wife if she had told the gentleman of their trouble. They then related to him how they had been praying all the week for the *exact sum* he had just paid, which they had to make up by the Monday morning. They had no food in the house, and were in great distress. The gentleman plainly saw the Lord's hand in his missing the train, and thus being the instrument of help to His needy ones.

It is real waste of time to bestow any great attention on the foolish and evil talking of those who find their unholy pleasure in seeking another's downfall; and one thing worth remembering is that, if there were fewer who delighted in hearing evil, there would soon be a lessening of evil speaking.

**"WHERE HAST THOU GLEANED TO-DAY?"**

(2 CHRONICLES iv. 21, WITH EXODUS xxv. 35.)

## LESSONS OF THE STILL-ROOM AND THE FURNACE.

THE Lord has shown that which I have often "sought for the meaning" of (Dan. viii. 15)—"A knop and a flower under every branch of the candlestick." Every branch of the true Church on earth needs a strengthener and an ornament. Are not some true members of the Church of Christ indeed strengtheners to the branch to which they are united? and are not humble souls ornaments—yea, "flowers" of lilies, sending forth sweet perfume in their lowly grace, that the hand of the new Creator may be admired, and the house filled with the odour of ointment? Or they may be "flowers" of almond, full of oil (of myrrh, of grace, of joy, "anointed with fresh oil"). Others are "lamps," holding forth the light, the "Word of life;" some as "tongs," to take hold of it, and convey it to others. "Snuffers" are used to remove impurities in the clear burning of the light; so some seem ever labouring to maintain sound doctrine, who "contend earnestly for the faith," snuffing out error. There are also "snuff dishes" enumerated. Perhaps these are receivers of the former, who greatly honour, uphold, and maintain those who are enabled to keep up the controversy with leavening heresies, that hinder the shining forth of the light of truth. "Basons," or bowls—some in the branch, "filled with the Spirit." "Spoons" would seem to remind us of feeding the feeble, as "spoons" feed babes. "Censers," holding incense—men like Cornelius, whose "prayers and alms go up for a memorial before God" for the Church.

All these "vessels for the Master's use" (2 Tim. ii. 21) He who walketh in the midst of the golden candlesticks employs for the diffusing of the light. Solomon made them of perfect gold (margin, Heb., "perfections of gold"—2 Chron. iv. 21). How typical of furnace work; for gold never comes out of earth pure nor perfect, nor ever becomes so without a furnace seven times heated, in which He who sits as a Refiner can at length see His own image in the full glow of its intense heat: "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial that is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy" (1 Pet. iv. 12, 13). "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. i. 7). Therefore, if you are a part of the candlestick, the Church, or as a vessel used by Him who trims the lamps to aid in diffusing His light, you cannot escape the furnace, for not a bit of any "branch" of it but was perfect gold. "Perfect in Christ Jesus;" "Perfect through sufferings;" "Conformed to the image of His Son." "When He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold," said Job. Yet how we shrink from the furnace, in which He walks with His children!

*Leicester.*

MARY.

## DIVINE LEADINGS.

*(Continued from page 357.)*

JANUARY, 1868. Now, although I had left the Church at Salendine Nook, many of the brethren and friends there were desirous that I should meet with them at their week-night meetings at cottage houses in various places, and to occasionally speak to them in the name of the Lord, as I had been in the habit of doing for some time, for they still wished to hear me. My leaving them and joining the Church at Lockwood had not changed their feelings toward me, and they hoped that I should not forsake them because I had left their communion. But, remembering the contention there was there by some because I went out preaching, as they said, without the formal sanction or recommendation of the Church, and I did not know what might be the mind of the Church at Lockwood about the matter, to prevent any contention among them, I refused to do so until I knew their mind about it. I mentioned the matter to the aged deacon, Mr. WILSON. I told him what I had been in the habit of doing for some time past, and the present request which they had made to me, notwithstanding that I had left them. I told him of the demur which some had made, and I wanted to avoid such a thing in connection with them, if possible; therefore, I wished him to make the Church acquainted with it, to know their mind on the matter, before I complied with the request. He said, "You are doing quite right, and the best thing to be done is, first, to lay the matter before the Lord; and, secondly, to talk the matter over with our minister, Mr. CROWTHER. I will mention it to him next Lord's Day, before any other step is taken." He did so, and on that day he invited me to his house to take tea with him and Mr. CROWTHER, which I did. He told Mr. CROWTHER what I had said to him, and he asked me to relate some of the Lord's dealings with me more extensively than I had done before the Church. I began where I believe the Lord began with me, and gave him an outline of what is in this narrative. He said, "I have never heard a more wonderful account of the Lord's dealings and leadings in providence and grace in my life. But my time is now up to go home [he lived at Gomersal, near Leeds], and we have not touched upon the subject for which we have met. I propose that we meet here again to tea next Lord's Day," which was agreed upon, and then we entered upon the subject. I told him what I had been doing for some time past, and how I was led to do it; the exercises of soul which I had passed through—yea, and was now passing through—on the subject, and my felt unfitness for any such thing; and I felt inclined to give it up altogether, and think no more about it, but the subject would not leave me, for I was continually exercised with it. He said, "My dear brother, it is evident to my mind that it is the mind and will of God, and cannot be stopped by you nor any one else. But it is not the practice of our Church to give a written formal sanction or recommendation to any man to go out to preach. If we are satisfied that the Lord has sent any one among us to speak in His name, we simply bid him 'God speed,' and advise him to go into any manifestly open door; and, if those friends whom you have left are still desirous

for you to go and speak to them, as formerly, do so, and the Lord be with you. Moreover, I am not able to be here on Lord's Day evenings, owing to my living so far away, and shall be glad to have a brother who can take my place, and speak at the evening meeting; and I hope you will do so at times, when convenient to you. I can assure you that what I say to you will be also the mind of the Church;" and he appealed to the deacon whether it was so, and he said, "Yes, it is so." Thus I had their sanction to do as the friends desired me to do, and, when they requested me again, I consented.

I had many sweet times in meeting with the people at cottages among those hills and valleys for many months. Sometimes I spoke at those meetings, and sometimes other brethren spoke in the name of the Lord, and we had many tokens of the sweet, refreshing presence of the Lord among us. Some of my brethren and sisters at Lockwood now began to attend those meetings, which they had not previously done, and they felt glad of such an opportunity.

One evening, at a meeting at Paddock, some one said, before it began, "Well, AQUILA, how are you to-night?" I said, "I am well, thank you;" and an aged man in the room said, "And so am I, thank you." I said, "Is your name AQUILA?" He said, "Yes, it has been so for a long time now" (he was seventy-four years of age). I said, "You are the first man I have ever met the same name as myself." We shook hands heartily, and he said, "Well, I hope we are not only the same name, but brethren in the Lord Jesus Christ, and our names recorded in the Lamb's book of life." I said, "I sincerely hope so." His name was AQUILA COCKROFT, and a more heavenly, spiritually-minded man it has never been my lot to meet on earth. He was a member of the Church at the Independent Chapel, Ramsden Street, Huddersfield. We often met afterwards, till his death; and many blessed seasons of soul profit did we enjoy together at the meetings in question, where I met with him.

At the close of the service, a man whom I had never seen before said to me, "Can you tell me where I can go to church or chapel, where I can hear the Scriptures properly and truthfully explained? I am a poor, ignorant man. I can neither read nor write; yet I have had a great desire to attend somewhere for some time past, where the Word of God is explained truthfully. I have tried many places, but do not feel satisfied; but, when I come to these meetings, I feel more than I do anywhere else. Can you tell me anywhere where I can go on Sundays, where the Scriptures are properly explained?" His name was WILLIAM DRAKE. I said, "Yes, friend DRAKE, you had better go to Rehoboth Chapel, and there you will hear the Scriptures properly explained, for I do not know a man who can do it better than our pastor, Mr. WILLIAM CROWTHER." He said, "Then I will go there;" and go he did and not only heard the Scriptures explained, but had the saving power of the Word applied to his soul by the operation of the Holy Ghost, was brought to see and feel himself a guilty sinner in need of a Saviour, and, in God's own time, the peace of God, in the atoning blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, was applied to his sin-burdened soul, and he was enabled to "read his

title clear to mansions in the skies," and went on his way rejoicing in God his Saviour. His love to the Word of God was so great that he was not satisfied by only hearing it read by others, but he wanted to be able to read it himself, and he began to learn to read. It was wonderful what progress he made, for his heart was in it. It was a happy day for him when he was able to read a chapter in the New Testament. He went before the Church, and gave in his experience; was accepted, baptized, and taken into the Church as a member, and to this day he has continued a consistent member in his walk, conduct, and conversation. He is a sincere, plodding Christian, having very low views of himself, willing to be anything or nothing, so that Jesus Christ may be his "All and in all." He loves to hear his Saviour exalted, and the sinner laid low. A sweet brotherly friendship has existed between him and me to this day, and I believe will exist as long as we are both in the body. Whenever I think of him, that precious hymn by good old BERRIDGE comes to my mind. I feel I must record it here—

"When Jesus would His grace proclaim,  
He calls the simple, blind, and lame  
To come and be His guest:  
Such simple folk the world despise;  
Yet simple folk have sharpest eyes,  
And learn to walk the best.

"They view the want of Jesu's light,  
Of Jesu's blood, and Jesu's might,  
Which others cannot view:  
They walk in Christ, the living Way,  
And fight and win the well-fought day,  
Which others cannot do.

"They all declare, 'I nothing am;  
My life is bound up in the Lamb,  
My wit and might are His:  
My worth is all in Jesus found:  
He is my Rock, my anchor's  
Ground,  
And all my Hope of bliss.'

"Such simple soul I fain would be,  
The scorn of man, the joy of Thee,  
Thy parleur guest and friend:  
Do make me, Lord, a little child,  
Right, simple-hearted, meek, and  
mild,  
And loving to the end!"

I have proved him a true, firm, and loving friend indeed. Through evil and through good report, when others have turned against me, he has remained a true and faithful friend through all; and no man ever knew me better than he did for eight years, while I lived in Huddersfield, after I first knew him. It is a sweet pleasure to be able to give this tribute to his loving faithfulness, and I do not forget to pray for a blessing upon him and his beloved wife and family. May they all be the Lord's, if His blessed will, "in that day when He shall make up His jewels." Amen.

There were a few people who had met in a room for many years at Hillhouse, and some of them loved to hear a free-grace Gospel, though a great many of their preachers did not believe in it, therefore could not preach it. Those people asked me to preach for them occasionally on Sunday evenings, which I frequently did, and spent many happy evenings with them. But there was one aged man there, named WILLIAM BROOK, who, I was informed, hated the sight of me in the place, or any one else who preached the same doctrines. He was past eighty years of age, and had been a professor of religion for fifty years, and he often boasted that he had never believed in the doctrines of JOHN CALVIN, and never intended

to do so ; yet somehow I loved the old man. At length I was informed that he was ill, and not likely to live long. I went at once to see him ; and, to my surprise, he received me very kindly, and seemed glad to see me. I talked to him, read and prayed with him ; and he asked me very earnestly to come again, and as often as I could, which I did. At length, one evening when I called, he was evidently near his end. He said, "Friend, I see it all now ! How true is the word, 'At evening time it shall be light' ! Eternal election is a truth, man's total depravity is a truth, effectual calling is a truth, particular redemption is a truth, and the final perseverance of the saints is a truth. Bless God, He has shown it to me at last, after all these years in a profession, in total ignorance of these blessed realities. My poor blind eyes are opened at last to see that salvation is all of grace, from first to last, and my poor soul can now rest upon the Rock Christ Jesus ; and my only plea is, the love, blood, and righteousness of my dear Redeemer. Oh, what precious faith to realize this as my portion ! It is the free gift of God, and the operation of the Holy Ghost. I thank you, my friend, for the kind and faithful manner in which you have shown me these things, notwithstanding my opposition to hear it so long. I bless God that I have now a good hope that I shall soon be with my precious Saviour, and I shall be like Him, for I shall see Him as He is ; and then it seems to me that I shall sing louder than all the blood-bought throng, 'Unto Him who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, be all honour and dominion, now and for ever. Amen.'" I prayed with him, and then we parted, never to meet again till we meet in our Father's home, poor sinners saved by grace.

One Sunday, in the summer, 1868, I was poorly, and did not go to chapel in the afternoon. It was Church meeting ; and, when my wife came home, she said, "They want a supply in a week or two for a Sunday, as Mr. CROWTHER will be away, and they do not know where to find one suitable. Mr. CROWTHER said, 'We have a brother who seems to be going abroad preaching a great deal. Cannot we make some use of him at home ? I think we could. Will some one propose him for that Sunday ?'" Some one did, and it was seconded and carried by the meeting that I should be asked to supply the pulpit on the day in question. One of the deacons came and informed me of it, and asked me if I would do so, and I consented to try, God helping me. I had much exercise of soul for that fortnight. However could I, such a poor fool, presume to enter the pulpit where such a man as our minister was the stated preacher ? I felt it was a presumption indeed. Still, I had promised, and I must fulfil it some way. I felt sure I should break down, and show what a fool I was. I did beg the Lord that, if it were His will, He would make that will manifest in my own soul ; and that, if it were not His will, He would prevent it somehow.

However, the day came at last, and I went to the chapel in fear and trembling—no text that I could fix my mind upon. I went into the vestry, and on the table was the book open, and the first words I saw were, "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst

come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. xxii. 17), and that was my text. I went into the pulpit. The fear of man was taken quite away. I had a sweet exercise in reading and prayer, and a sweet liberty in speaking. My own soul was blessed, and I had evidence that some others were blessed also. In the afternoon, I spoke again with sweet freedom from Romans viii. 30. In the evening, at the prayer-meeting, the brethren prayed earnestly for the brother who had been speaking to them that day. They told the Lord how their own souls had been blessed by the Word spoken by him, for which blessing they felt thankful to Him who had enabled him to speak so sweetly. Some of them went home with me, and we had a sweet and profitable conversation together at my house; so, altogether, it was a profitable day to our souls. They told Mr. CROWTHER, the next Sabbath, what a good day we had, which he said he was very glad to hear.

Now, my dear friends and readers, I have to relate to you a painful contrast to the above day's precious sweetness and freedom. Up to that time, I always had some precious sweetness and liberty in speaking, whenever I attempted to do so. But now a sad reverse was to come; and, however painful it was to bear at the time, it has proved very blessed in its results ever since. Paul said, "And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure" (2 Cor. xii. 7); and so it was with me then, for I was being lifted up with pride, and the Lord took strong measures to put a stop to it.

A short time after the day in question, Mr. CROWTHER said that he should like to hear me himself, so it was arranged that I should be requested to preach one afternoon when he was there, instead of him, so that he could hear me. I was asked if I would do so, and I said I would. The day was appointed for it, and then the Lord forsook me *manifestly*, and Satan entered into me by divine *permission*. My heart was filled with pride. As I was now to preach before such a man as Mr. CROWTHER, I would show him what I could do, &c. I had many ideas of what might follow. I might have to preach when he was away always, instead of other supplies being sought for; and he might recommend me to other places where he was in the habit of going—perhaps to London. I might be a great man some day, &c. The extent to which my poor foolish heart was lifted up in pride it is impossible to describe; and, moreover, it is a painful task to even attempt to describe it. I should be glad not to have to do so. But, in this narrative of the Lord's leadings and dealings with me, one desire is all along to be truthful as to facts, in the hope, as I have often said, that, if it should meet the eye of one poor soul who may be exercised in a like manner, it may prove a useful and profitable lesson to him. If it should be so, I shall not have written in vain, but to God be all the glory. Amen.

As I have said, I did not ask the Lord to help me on this occasion, as I had always done before. It was not, "Lord, what wilt Thou

have me to do?" but it was what *I* intended to do. It had been circulated abroad that I was to preach my trial sermon before Mr. CROWTHER and the whole congregation, previous to being sent out as a preacher by the Church. The consequence was, a great number came from all parts of the surrounding neighbourhood to hear me; and, as I was going to the chapel on that ever-memorable afternoon, and saw the people flocking together on purpose to hear me, how my heart swelled with pride at the thought of what they would all think of me! I went into the vestry this time. I had a text all ready, as I thought, and a subject too, and I had no fear as to the result. When I went into the chapel, and found it thronged with people, as if it were an anniversary, I felt that my triumph was complete in all things. I gave out a hymn, after the singing of which I read and prayed, but the thought uppermost in my mind, even in the form of prayer, was, "How I shall shine to-day!" I gave out another hymn, and sat down, when all at once a "horror of great darkness" came upon me, and my mind was thrown into a state of great confusion. Every word which I had intended to say, even the text, was taken from me. So great was the horror of my mind that I wished I could sink into the earth, anywhere out of the sight of those people. I thought of telling them that I could not preach, and asking Mr. CROWTHER to come up and take his own place. But no; the tempter said—and my heart agreed with him—"It will never do to give up now. I must try another text;" which I did, in Psalm cxviii. 23: "This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes." I have believed that it was a true text in connection with my proceedings at that time, for it was the Lord's doing, to show me what was in my own foolish, vain, proud heart, for I was determined to go on with what I had begun. He allowed me to do so, to my own confusion and disgrace in the eyes of the people, and in my own estimation. I could not get any thoughts in connection, yet I talked away for about forty minutes. I know not what I said, yet I was sensible that I was making a great fool of myself. My hair seemed to stand on end, and my body was bathed in perspiration. How I watched the clock, so that I might give over, which I at length did, and gave out another hymn and sat down. I concluded the service, and then I wished I could get out of the chapel unseen, for I felt that every one must be laughing at my foolishness and presumption, and a roaring devil within, saying, "Ah! so would we have it."

Mr. CROWTHER met me in the vestry with a sorrowful countenance. I saw that he felt for me, and tried to speak some words of comfort, but there was no comfort for me. My pride was crushed, and I felt the smart keenly. I went home after the people had left; but oh, with what different feelings to those which I had in coming to the chapel, so short a time before! I thought that every body I met was laughing at me, and I was glad to get home out of sight. In the evening, some of the brethren and sisters called, and tried to cheer me up. They said I had not done so badly as I thought, for there were many who heard me well, but there was no comfort for me.

I passed a wretched night. In the morning I went to my work,

but could not attend to it, and asked leave of absence for the day, and it was granted. I went home. What to do I knew not. Some of the friends came in again, to try to comfort me, but it was all to no purpose. My poor wife feared for my reason, and, when I talked of going somewhere, she feared to let me go without her; but at length I said, "I will go to Blackley, and see my dear old friend, Mr. JOSEPH HIRST." I had often gone to him before, in both joy and sorrow, and always found a faithful, sympathetic heart, for he wept when I wept, and rejoiced when I rejoiced. When I mentioned going to him, my wife gave her consent, for she loved the dear old man, as well as I did. I started for Blackley, and found him at home. As soon as he saw me, he knew that there was something wrong; and, though there was no one in the house but his beloved daughter, who lived with him, and kept house for him, he said, "My friend, let us go for a walk. I was just going to Elland; will you go with me?" I said, "Yes, anywhere." As we returned from there, we came through some fields into a wood; and, when we came to a place where we were alone, he stopped, and said, "Now, brother, tell me all;" and I did, faithfully. When I had done so, he said, "It is a painful lesson, but it will prove to be a precious and profitable one. The Lord is showing you a little of what is in your own vile heart; and I feel assured, though I may never live to see it, that He has designed you for the work of the ministry. He is taking you in hand, and bringing you through your degrees better than any human college could do; and I believe that you will see before long that He is leading you by a right way in all things." Much faithful counsel did he give me there, in that lonely wood, and then he prayed for me. While he was doing so, I felt such a sweet peace in my soul. He seemed, as he had on former occasions, to be an angel of mercy. Oh, it was a blessed time, which has not been forgotten yet! He then said, "Now we must look after the body a little. You have had a long fast, and my daughter will have tea ready by this time. Come with me." I did so, and had a good meal with him, his beloved daughter, and one of his sons, after which he went some way with me. When we were about to part, he said, "My brother, you came to me to-day for comfort, and the Lord has enabled me to give you some; and I can assure you that my own soul has been blessed also, praise the Lord." I went home to my poor wife with a sweet peace in my soul.

*(To be continued.)*

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PRAYER is a holy intercourse with God. "It is," as the martyr BRADFORD expresses it, "a simple, unfeigned, humble, and ardent offering of the heart before God, wherein we either ask things needful, or give thanks for benefits received." Acceptable prayer is the desire of the heart, offered up to God, through the influence of His Spirit, in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, for things according to His will. "The true worshippers," says our Lord, "shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship Him."

## A GREAT SURPRISE.

"For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell [τους καθημενους, those that sit] on the face of all the earth."—LUKE XXI. 35.

IT is a deeply-solemn thought that the coming of the Lord will be to many a great and sudden surprise. Such persons are here referred to as those who sit down at ease on earth, saying, "Peace and safety," when sudden destruction may be at hand. These are they who mind earthly things,\* who love this present evil world, whose religion, if they have any, is one of form without vital power, profession without practice, shadow without substance, name without reality. Such persons sit like the Apocalyptic harlot: "I sit a queen, and shall see no sorrow." Thus many an one, like the rich fool, is practically saying, "Soul, take thine ease; eat, drink, and be merry!" The ungodly, the lawless, the licentious harden themselves in their rebellion. Because vengeance is not speedily executed, for God is long-suffering, their hearts are fully set on doing evil. A great and sudden surprise awaits all such. The coming of the Lord to them will be a snare, from which there will be no escape. Compare Isaiah xxiv. 17, &c.

Of this great surprise we have already had many admonitory examples and forewarnings. The antediluvians did not believe the preaching of Noah. When the flood came, and took them all away, it was to them a great surprise. The people of Sodom and Gomorrah would not believe that the Lord would destroy their cities. They went on in their wickedness, and thought themselves safe. When the Lord rained down upon them fire and brimstone, they were greatly surprised, and suddenly consumed. The people of Jerusalem treated the prophetic warnings of Christ with contempt, and the investment and destruction of their city, as well as their own most terrible calamities and world-wide dispersion, were events of great surprise. "Even thus will it be when the Son of Man is revealed." When the men of this world are asleep in sin, in carnal security, under the cover of moral night, dreaming of peace and safety, the Lord will come as unexpectedly and as unwelcome as a thief in the night. It will indeed be a great surprise. Then will be sudden and eternal separations: "One shall be taken, and another shall be left." How believers are exhorted to guard against such a surprise as will then occur!

"Take heed to yourselves," says our Lord to His disciples, "lest that day come upon you unawares." The parable of the ten virgins shows that, owing to the tarrying of the Bridegroom, "they all slumbered and slept." Let us, therefore, see that we are not in darkness, but in light, lest that day should come upon us thus unexpectedly. To meet Him who loved us and gave Himself for us, to see Him face to face, to be like Him, filled with glory, and immersed in the joy of our Lord, will be such a great and intensely blessed surprise that, under it, we shall, with inexpressible delight, praise the Triune Jehovah and magnify Him for ever.

Bristol.

R. CORNALL.

\* God's people already "sit in heavenly places in Christ."

## TRACINGS.

"*Thou art my Hiding-place.*"—PSALM xxxii. 7.

"Hail, sovereign love, that first began  
The scheme to rescue fallen man!  
Hail, matchless, free, eternal grace,  
That gave my soul a Hiding-place!"

PERHAPS the reader is saying, "Yes, I believe there is a glorious Hiding-place for the Lord's redeemed people; but I want that blessed gift of faith to be able to say, with David, '*Thou art my Hiding-place,*' as well with the poet BREWER, '*gave my soul a Hiding-place;*'" and there cannot be a doubt that, if God the eternal Spirit has regenerated your soul, nothing but positives will satisfy you. To be thought a Christian by others, to have your name in a Church-book, to be preserved from outward sin—these, and all other outside things, will never satisfy your longing desire to know whether this Hiding-place is for you.

Let us contemplate together who is spoken of—"Thou;" secondly, the "Hiding-place;" and lastly, the language of faith—"My Hiding-place." May the blessed Spirit direct our thoughts, and sweetly lead us to realize that we are among the favoured ones to say, "He gave *my* soul a Hiding-place."

The Psalmist begins this Psalm by asserting a precious truth: "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity." There is here a three-fold cord, that cannot be broken; and it is most precious ever to have the mind taken up with the glorious Trinity in Unity in the glorious work of salvation of poor sinners. Is Jesus my Hiding-place from offended justice and the demands of a righteous law? It is because I am an object of the Father's everlasting love, and it is the work and office of God the Holy Ghost to reveal a precious Christ in all His mediatorial work, so that the sacred Three in One are in sweet harmony in pardoning the iniquity of my sin.

How blessedly the Lord Jesus refers to this precious truth: "I came not to do My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me;" and, again, to Philip, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me? He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?" Remember the words of the dear Redeemer, "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." What a blessed hiding-place is the eternal love of God! By virtue of this electing and eternal love, every poor, needy, and helpless sinner, taught by the Holy Ghost, has a life "hid with Christ in God." None can pluck them from the hand of Him who has said, their very names are engraven on the palms of His hands. A gracious God hath declared that He will be "a wall of fire round about His Zion, and the glory in the midst of her;" and if, poor child of God, you are thus protected and hid, what power can hurt or injure you? No weapon formed against you can prosper. Your Father has declared it; and, though Satan may hurl his hellish darts of infidelity, and the unbelief of your heart may cause you very anguish of soul, the Word

of the Lord shall stand, and your enemies shall be found liars unto you. Environed by Deity, all the powers of earth or hell combined can never destroy you.

The sweet singer of Israel breathed his prayer to the Lord: "Hide me under the shadow of Thy wing from the wicked that oppress me; from my deadly enemies, who compass me about." Better, dear reader, to experience the oppression of the wicked—your own evil heart—your own carnal nature—and to find deadly enemies in Satan and self, than be bolstered up in self-conceit and spiritual pride and presumption. The exercise is painful, but the wing of love and protection will guard and protect the poor trembling one who seeks for shelter under the pinions of Deity.

A few evenings ago, while reading an account of a gentleman returning from America, he states that, one day, a number of small birds alighted on the rigging, and one came and rested on the arm of the chief mate. He gently lifted it off, and let it fly. On being asked by one of the passengers why he treated it so tenderly, he replied, "I would not injure the confidence of the meanest creature who put its trust in me." My little faith was sweetly encouraged with the thought, "Shall a fallen man give utterance to such a noble sentiment, and the eternal, ever-loving, and merciful Jehovah refuse to the weakest and meanest of poor sinners, whose only trust and confidence is in Him?" No; bless His dear and holy name, His ear is ever open to the cry of the poor and needy, and His mighty arm is outstretched to protect and defend.

The Psalmist, in his twenty-seventh Psalm, declares that, in the time of trouble, his Lord would hide him in His pavilion; in the secret of His tabernacle would He hide him. Precious Hiding-place is the Lord Jesus Christ! This is that glorious Man Isaiah (xxxii. 2) tells of—"a Hiding-place from the wind, a Covert from the tempest: as rivers of water in a dry place; as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."

If, dear reader, we are found in Him, members of His mystic body, all the assaults of Satan, the malice of hell, the scorn, hatred, and persecution of the world, the evils and depravity of our own heart, with all its vile corruptions, while they may and will trouble and grieve our spirits, will never destroy nor finally injure.

Just a word or two on our last point—the language of faith—"my Hiding-place." Dear HART says—

"True religion's more than notion;  
Something must be known and felt.

Our creed may be very sound—we may see a grand consistency and harmony in the doctrines of grace—but the grace of the doctrines is vastly more important to possess. Without this our religion is only a deception. We may have "a name to live," may have a profession, and yet be enemies to God by wicked works; and, if the writer may freely express his own feeling and fear, this troubles him more than anything else—the dread of being deceived. More than forty years' experience of the loving-kindness and tender mercy of the Lord has not yet delivered him from this fear. To say, "My God," "My Father," "My Hiding-

place," "My Fortress," "My Refuge," can only be obtained by precious faith in sweet exercise. This cannot be obtained by study, by reading, by even prayer, or attending the means of grace—all precious in their way, but all ineffectual until the ever-blessed Spirit is graciously pleased, in that set time to favour Zion, to unlock the precious mystery, as the dear Lord did to the woman who was a sinner in the house of the Pharisee, saying unto her, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." And, however much the Lord, in His tender mercy, may bless His redeemed ones with manifestations of His love, the more they have the more they crave, and the longing desire of their souls is, with David, "Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation." As I once heard a dear man of God remark, "Like little children, after receiving a promise, will oftentimes plead, 'Say it again.'" Ah! beloved, we long for our loving Lord to "say it again." "Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation."

May the language of dear DANIEL HERBERT be realized by reader and writer—

"Amidst the sorrows of the way,  
Lord Jesus, teach my soul to pray;  
And let me taste Thy special grace,  
And run to Christ, my Hiding-place.

"Lord Jesus, shine, and then I can  
Feel sweetness in salvation's plan;  
And, as a sinner, plead for grace  
Through Christ, the sinner's Hiding-place."

*Eccles, Manchester.*

W. W.

#### WRITTEN FOR A DEAF LADY.

BY ONE SINCE CALLED TO HIS ETERNAL REST.

"*This Man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.*"—LUKE xv. 2.

THESE words, spoken by the enemies of our Lord, and those uttered when He hung on the cross—"He saved others, Himself He cannot save"—though spoken in contempt and derision, yet contain the very pith and marrow of the Gospel, which is, Christ died for sinners, that He might receive them to Himself, and this is good news only to sinners.

"This Man." When we think of Jehovah, in His essence and being, reason is baffled. If we think of His sovereignty, holiness, or justice, we are filled with awe, and, Adam-like, try to hide ourselves, or say, with Isaiah, "Woe is me, for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the *Lord* of hosts." But when we behold the *Man*—Jesus—hope revives. We know He, being bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, can sympathize with us. We feel there is a connecting link between us and our God—that He is our Daysman, spoken of by Job (Job ix. 33)—yea, when we enter heaven, He will be the one great Object of attraction. "We shall see His face," and shall be "lost in wonder, love, and praise."

"He receiveth sinners." Blessed truth! else who could be saved? But what is a sinner?

“ A sinner is a sacred thing ;  
The Holy Ghost hath made him so.”

It is one thing to *say*, “ We are miserable sinners,” and another to *feel* the crushing, condemning weight of our sins, so as to be compelled to cry, “ God, be merciful to me, a sinner !” Tell men that there is something yet good in them which, by education, culture, renovation, may be improved—that, by prayer, they have the power of themselves to turn to God—they will hear ; but they cannot endure the doctrine of the universal depravity of man—that he cannot, by his own natural strength, prepare himself and turn to God—that he has no power to do anything that can justify him before a holy and just God. Yet it is written, “ All have sinned ;” “ The heart is deceitful above all things,” and out of it proceeds every sin that can be named, and that there is no difference *naturally*—yea, this infection doth remain in them that are regenerated. True, there may be, and is, a great difference in men *morally*, owing to surrounding circumstances, or the restraining providence of God ; but it is only those who know, by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, their lost and ruined condition, that can say with one of old, when he saw a poor condemned criminal being led forth for execution, “ There goes JOHN BRADFORD, but for the grace of God.”

He “ receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.” What holy condescension and familiarity ! “ He brought me to the banqueting-house, and His banner over me was love.” Yes, eternal love provided the Gospel feast, and draws—yea, compels—hungry and thirsty souls to come in, that they may be filled. (See John vi. 44, 45.) “ I am the Bread of Life ; he that cometh to Me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst,” saith Jesus. It is only a clear and fixed view, with the eye of faith, of the way of salvation, that can satisfy those who know they are lost. These are the sinners Jesus receives : “ I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” “ It is finished !” Yes, poor sinner, nothing left for you to do. Doth not this satisfy thy cravings ? Remember Jesus is the same now that He was when on earth. One came to Him, “ Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.” “ I will ; be thou clean.” Sinner, the blood of Christ cleanseth thee from all sin. Another was brought to Him (Mark ii. 5) : “ Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.” To another He said, “ This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he is a son of Abraham.” To another, “ Neither do I condemn thee.” Thus He came to give the knowledge of salvation to His people for the remission of sins.

“ Eateth with them.” “ Do this in remembrance of Me” has been strictly observed for eighteen hundred years by all who profess and call themselves Christians. True, there is diversity of administration. Ignorance and superstition have surrounded it with mystery ; yet God’s believing people are strengthened and refreshed by drawing near to His table, for, though He is not there corporeally, being at the right hand of God, and the feast is only spread “ till He come,” yet by faith they feed on Him in their heart with thanksgiving, and go on their way rejoicing.

And there is a glorious festival in reserve for God’s sons and daughters. The beloved disciple saw it in vision (Rev. xix. 7)—the marriage supper of the Lamb, “ when all the ransomed Church

of God shall be saved, to sin no more." Then every holy aspiration, every ardent desire after God, every felt want of the soul, shall be fully and for ever satisfied. "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, for the Lamb shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Then shall be fulfilled the words, "I go to prepare a place for you. I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Well may it be written, "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." God grant that both reader and writer may be there—

"We sing of the realms of the blest,  
That country so bright and so  
fair;  
And oft are its glories confessed—  
But what must it be to be there?"

"We speak of its freedom from sin,  
From sorrow, temptation, and  
care,  
From trials without and within—  
But what must it be to be there?"

"Do Thou, Lord, 'midst pleasure or woe,  
For heaven our spirits prepare;  
Then, soon shall we joyfully know  
And feel what it is to be there."

R. W. J.

#### WORDS FOR SONS AND DAUGHTERS.

"*A wholesome tongue is a tree of life.*"—PROVERBS xv. 4.

"Do you remember what you said to me *forty-two years ago?*" was the question asked by a poor dying woman of a Christian gentleman, who was visiting her the Sunday before she died, and who had known her, long years before, as a servant in his father's household. "*Forty-two years ago!*" What a resurrection from the grave of oblivion for any one's words! How it should set us thinking *what* we say, and *how* we say it. The visitor answered the poor woman that he did not know to what occasion she referred, and she replied, "You saw me reading a newspaper one Sunday, and told me you wished I would read something better, and you gave me a Bible, in which you wrote, 'Seek ye the Lord while He may be found; call ye upon Him while He is near;' and I have never forgotten that text."

It is written (Eccles. xi. 1), "Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days." Here was an instance of the fulfilment of the promise. The poor sufferer had wandered far in the way of an evil world, but this word of holy counsel had been pursuing her as she strayed, and striving with her to bring her back to God. When asked about it, she said she had that Bible still, and had read it too, and this seemed to be confirmed by her acquaintance with the Scriptures.

Oh, dear young friends, sons and daughters in professedly Christian families, think seriously how *your* words may influence for good or evil the servants in the house! Pray for grace to keep your lips from folly, and say, with FRANCES HAVERGAL—

"Take my lips, and let them be  
Filled with messages from Thee."

E. L. T.

“ANOTHER,” BUT NOT “A NEW” MAN.

“*Be turned into another man.*”—“Endued with extraordinary qualities for government.”—*Bishop Patrick.*

“Turned into another man” “from what he had been while he lived in a private capacity.”—*Matthew Henry.*

“*Another heart.*”—“He had no longer the heart of a husbandman, but of a bold and wise statesman.”—*Matthew Henry.*

“Saul was wonderfully changed, and yet his heart was not savingly changed.”

“Saul was inspired with fortitude and resolution, and his mind was enlarged to great designs of governing and delivering Israel, and subduing their enemies, and thus promoting the welfare of his people. Perhaps he was also brought under religious impressions; and, indeed, his conduct for a season appeared very promising, though he afterwards became atrociously wicked.”—*Scott.*

“He had from this time another heart, as to his *disposition*, for no longer seeking *asses*, he is now seeking a *kingdom*. Instead of being employed in his father’s service, he is now another man in prosecuting his own grandeur. But I beg the reader to remark with me that these changes are from what are called the *ordinary gifts* of the Spirit, *not His special work in the heart*. Saul may be, and Saul is, among the prophets; but Saul is not renewed in the spirit of his mind for all that. Reader, do not fail to make this observation as you go. It will not only help you to make a right conclusion of this man’s history, but *many a man’s history*; and, what is more interesting than any other, *of your own*. There is not a word of the regeneration of the mind of Saul in what is here said. He was turned into another man—from a *poor man* to a *rich one*, and from a *peasant* to a *prince*—and the Lord made him *another heart*, to prefer a *court* to the *country*. But the *new creature* which, after God, is created in *righteousness* and *true holiness*, is totally different from all this. It is a *new heart*, not a *new form*—a work of *grace*, not of *nature*. ‘If any man be in Christ, he is a *new creature*.’”  
—*Dr. Hawker.*

“Turned into another man.”—“The Spirit of God would not only fit him for composing and singing psalms and hymns, but inspire him with wisdom, and prudence, and greatness of mind, and every qualification for a king, so that he would appear quite another man to what he was before. From a rustic, a husbandman, a farmer’s son, he would appear with the air of a prince and in the majesty of a king.”—*Dr. Gill.*

“*Another heart.*”—“Not in a moral or spiritual sense—not a new heart and a right spirit, as in conversion—but in a wise sense, a right heart, a heart fit for government; filled with wisdom and prudence to rule a people; with courage and magnanimity to protect and defend them against their enemies, and fight for them; a heart not taken up with the affairs of husbandry, but with schemes and contrivances for their good.”—*Dr. Gill.*

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It is a fearful problem for any man to try with how little religion he may be a real Christian.

## TALK WITH THE YOUNG :

BEING RECOLLECTIONS OF AN ADDRESS GIVEN AT THE CLIFTON PARISH CHURCH TO SOME EIGHT HUNDRED CHILDREN ATTENDING VARIOUS SCHOOLS OF THE PARISH, ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 3RD, 1883, BY THE EDITOR.

AMONG the many devices of the wicked one, my dear young friends, is to lead us to indulge the idea of *forgetfulness*. Because the freshness of what we may have said wrong, or done amiss, gradually passes away, until we forget it altogether, we may be led to suppose it will never be thought of by God, nor remembered by ourselves again. Ah! but this is not the case. There is only one way in which sin and transgression can really be put away, and never come up against us in a way of condemnation, and that is, by the application to the heart and conscience of that "blood which cleanseth us from all sin." It is not by the words of man, as so lately attempted in the cases of those hapless creatures who have just paid the penalty of their misdeeds by the forfeiture of their lives. That was a false and deceptive forgiveness. But the pardon which the Lord bestows is worthy of Himself! It is so full and so free that, in order to come down to the grasp of our little minds, He speaks after the manner of men, and says, "I have cast all your sins behind My back; and, when sought for, there shall be none." Now, you know what is behind our backs we cannot see. Again, the Lord says that He will cast the sins of His people "into the depths of the sea." Now, this is God-like indeed, is it not? But mark you, it is only through and by that precious blood—[that "fountain opened for sin and uncleanness," of which you so often sing—

"There is a fountain filled with blood,  
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,  
And sinners plunged beneath that flood  
Lose all their guilty stains.

"The dying thief rejoiced to see  
That fountain in his day;  
And there may we, though vile as he,  
Wash all our sins away."]

Now, I will tell you, dear children, why I have been led thus to speak to you about *forgetfulness*. This interesting scene this afternoon has brought fresh to my recollection a similar scene that I used to witness as a boy, between sixty and seventy years ago. In my native town, on a Good Friday afternoon, the children of the various Sunday-schools would all be collected together, at a large place of worship, with galleries all round, just the same as in this church. There would be present on these occasions from three thousand to four thousand children; and the dear old minister\* used to address them in the most loving and father-like way. In fact, it seemed to be the only sermon that I could understand throughout the year.

\* The Rev. JOHN GRIFFIN, author of "A Child's Memorial; or, The History of Dinah Doudney, who died at nine years of age."

Hence I used to long for Good Friday afternoon to return, in order that I might attend that service. I seem to see, at this moment, the dear old minister, as he stood in the pulpit. In order that he might have a better view of the dear children, I remember his requesting the teachers that they might all stand up upon the seats; and, when the next hymn was sung, he rose and raised his arms, in order that the children might again stand up, and be the better seen.

I remember, too, his describing a court-scene, and about the judge, after the poor prisoner had been tried and found guilty, putting on the black cap, and passing the dreadful sentence of death upon the culprit. Now, when I personally witnessed a similar scene, a few years ago, in the court-house of Bristol, it directly brought to my recollection that Good Friday afternoon service.

Now, I am speaking, my dear young friends, of what took place, as I said, between sixty and seventy years ago; and yet it has just all been brought as fresh to my recollection as though it had only occurred yesterday.

In proof that not only *God* remembers, but that *His creatures* remember afterwards what had, it may be, long passed from their recollection, I will tell you what once happened. My second son is a doctor, and, some years ago, he had charge of a mail steamer as surgeon. Upon one of their long voyages, they touched at a certain place, in order to take in a fresh supply of coal. No sooner had the steamer arrived at the pier than the doctor was called for, to attend upon a sick man. It being night-time, for want of better light than the pier gave, he mistook the distance between the ship and the pier; and, in jumping, fell between the one and the other. But, he said, just as he was going down into the sea, the words of his old father, spoken many years before, came instantly to his recollection—"Now, mind, there are more swimmers drowned than those who can't swim;" and why? Because they *pre-sume* upon their swimming.

Now, think, dear children, of this remark being brought so fresh to the mind, after an interval of so many years; and this, I repeat, goes to prove that what *we* may have supposed is passed by and forgotten may, at any moment, be brought back to our remembrance; yes, and that with pain and shame, unless put away—blotted out—in that only real way, namely, *Christ's precious blood*, of which I just now spoke.

But now I must ask you to open your Bibles upon 2 Kings v., and there, at the second verse, are the words, "*a little maid*," about whom I want to have a little talk with you. Now, if you look to the first verse, you will find it speaks of one who was "a great man with his master, and honourable, because by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valour." He was thought a great deal of, because he had been so successful in war. He was a great warrior. It is added, however, "but he was a leper."

Oh, dear children, let this or that one attain to whatever their hearts may have been previously set upon—let them reach such and such a standard, however high—there will always be a "*but*" in the way—a void—a blank—a *something wanting!* This is stamped

upon all beneath the skies. [No real satisfaction—no perfect contentment—no “Here will I stay”; “I have all I want,” in regard to anything earthly or human. No; this is to be found in God, and in God alone. It was said of one, “O Naphtali, satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the Lord.” Yea, “it is His blessing (alone) that maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it.”]

But the malady under which this great man suffered was a very dreadful one. Leprosy was called the scourge of the Hebrew race. It begins by little and little—perhaps a mere spot—until, by degrees, it overspread the whole frame, and the subject of it had to be shut up and shut out from his fellow-men. If he saw any one coming towards him, he was to warn them off by covering his lips, and crying, “Unclean! unclean!” No human remedy was ever discovered for the cure of the leprosy. You will find an account of it in the thirteenth and following chapters of the Book of Leviticus.

In its effects, leprosy was somewhat like the bite of the dreaded cobra in India. However strong and healthy before, no sooner was any one bitten by one of these cobras, than poison spread itself through the whole frame, and the poor victim died in an hour or two after, in a most pitiable state.

Now, dear children, if I could hear your replies, I would ask you to tell me what this disease of leprosy, or this bite of the serpent, is like? I have no doubt that many of you would tell me it sets forth even a worse malady than either the one or the other—that is, it represents *sin*!—that dreadful malady with which *all* are affected. Whatever, in these solemn days—for solemn days they are—men may say to the contrary, and however they may contradict or seek to set aside this blessed Book which lies before me, and which contains a revelation of the mind and will of God, since the fall of our forefathers in the garden of Eden, each and every child, as the Psalmist, in his fifty-first Psalm, says, has been “born in sin and shapen in iniquity.” And, as there is no human remedy for leprosy, or the bite of the cobra, so neither is there any human cure for sin! It is God, and God alone, can heal the dreadful malady of sin! No creature can do it. Do you remember who it was that said to the Psalmist, “THE LORD hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die”?

[If you turn, dear children, to the first chapter of the Book of the prophet Isaiah, you will there find a description of our state as sinners: “The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores.” But oh, what a mercy that it should be recorded in that very chapter, “Come now, and let us reason together” (or, as it may read, “Let us talk over the matter. Let us see what can be done in this dreadful state of things”), “saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” Now, how, think you, is this great change to be made? Why, it is wholly and solely through being washed in the blood of the Lamb—that which gave the key-note to the heavenly songsters, “Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings

and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”]

But now about this *little maid*, who had been taken captive in war, and brought far away from her own kindred and friends. Perhaps both her father and mother were killed, and she only left, and taken away by strangers to a long distance. It was enough to make her very sad, wasn't it?

Now, with respect to her, I believe, first, that she was a *thoughtful* child; nor were her thoughts all taken up about herself. Painful as her case was, as a poor little captive maid, she found both time and inclination to think of and care for others. Ah! it is well to be able to do this. To be so thinking of *ourselves* as to forget *others* is not well; and, when we are able to think of and care for others, it diverts us from our own pains and cares and anxieties. That this poor little captive maid was *thoughtful* is clear from the fact that she had taken notice of her master and his so painful malady. I suppose it had not yet reached the stage that would compel him to withdraw from all around him.

Then I believe this little maid was *truthful*. Oh, it is a great thing to be *truthful*; to shun a lie, or to be careful not to mislead or misrepresent. It is a great thing to have a character for *truthfulness*. I cannot but suppose that this was the case with this dear child; otherwise I fancy little or no notice would have been taken of her saying, “Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy.” Here was *thoughtfulness*, was there not? And you see her mind was stored with what she had seen or heard when in her own country and among her own people. Now, if she had not gained a character for both *thoughtfulness* and *truthfulness*, I don't believe any one would have cared to have gone to her master, in order to repeat what the little captive maid had said. And so much was thought of what she said, that it was told even to the king; and he, in turn, thought so much of the little captive's words, that he at once wrote a letter to the king of Israel; and Naaman and his servants set out on a long journey, with presents to the amount of about £5,000, with the hope that he should be cured of his leprosy. See what a sacrifice he was ready to make.

Now, see, dear children, what use the Lord is pleased to make of even the little ones. All this came about through the *thoughtfulness* and the *truthfulness* of this little captive maid.

Next, I believe she was a *prayerful* child. I think the very way in which she spoke implies this. Her saying, “Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria!” is to my mind the language of prayer.

But perhaps, my dear young friends, you will say, “Do you think that God cares about the prayers of little children?” Oh, yes, indeed He does. Don't you remember that, when they brought little children to Jesus, when He was upon earth, and His disciples rebuked them that brought them, He said, “Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God”? And, again, when there was a dispute among the disciples as to which of them should be greatest, “Jesus took a little child, and

set him in the midst, and said, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Why, I once knew a little boy who lived to become a very old man, who, whilst yet quite a child, had one of the clearest answers to prayer. It was so clear as to lead him for many years to hope that the Lord would some day be pleased to make known His forgiving love and mercy to him.

But now perhaps some may say, "Ah! but what you tell us applies to Bible-days—to a time long since gone by. There are no such answers to prayer now." Oh, yes, indeed there are. God is still as much the Hearer and the Answerer of prayer as He was in days of old.

Now, in proof of this, I will tell you of a case that has just come within my own knowledge. The sister of one I very well know, who has been for many years a member of my own congregation, was taken very ill, some two or three months ago, with typhoid fever. In an early stage of her illness, her sister said to her youngest child, a dear little girl of three years and a half, "Have you asked Jesus to make your dear mother well?" "Yes," said the dear child, "*hundreds of times, and He said, 'Yes!'*" The fever still continued, and the poor mother got worse and worse. Dr. WILLIAMS (who, as you know, lives close by here) visited her for many weeks, sometimes twice a day; and who, during the many years I have known him, has been most successful in the treatment of this special fever, yet seemed to think this case almost hopeless. I said to him, one day, that I could not give the case up, and I told him why—that my faith was based upon the prayer and the belief of this dear child; for, at a still later stage of the malady, and when the case seemed most hopeless, the question was again put to the dear child, "Have you asked Jesus to make your mother well?" She said, as before, that she had, "*and He said, 'Yes!'*" and then, changing her tone of voice, and speaking in the most solemn way, she added, "*and He couldn't say 'No!'*"

Day after day I went into town to inquire after the patient. Although with a trembling heart I walked towards the house, still, time after time, my mind was so stayed upon that dear child's prayer and dependence that I could not believe that I should see the shutters closed, to show that the poor mother was gone. No; nor did she die; but has been raised up from, as it were, the very article of death, and has enjoyed a two hours' drive round the neighbouring beautiful downs, and is now quite recovered.

Now, dear children, don't think that the Lord does not hear the prayers of the little ones. Here is a proof that He does. Oh, may He encourage you to go to Him with all your cares and all your fears! May He enable you to "cast all your care upon the Lord."

[May God the Holy Ghost help you to go to Him, dear children, with David's prayer, as given in the fifty-first Psalm: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." May He enable you to say, "My Father, be Thou the Guide of my youth." Although you are born into a wicked world, and have many and great dangers to meet, still, looking to the Lord, you have nothing to fear. His Word still stands good, "I love them that love Me, and

those that seek Me early *shall* find Me." The Lord help you, dear children, to present prayer before Him, in the simple, touching words of your well-known hymn—

"Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,  
Look upon a little child;  
Pity my simplicity;  
Suffer me to come to Thee.

"Fain I would to Thee be brought;  
Gracious God, forbid it not;  
In the kingdom of Thy grace  
Give a little child a place.

"Oh, supply my every want;  
Feed the young and tender plant;  
Day and night my Keeper be;  
Every moment watch round me."

Don't you remember that of Jesus it was said that "He shall feed His flock like a shepherd; He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom"? Oh, how kind and gentle and loving! And this is just like Jesus. Try Him, dear children. See if it be not His true character.]

And now, lastly, I think that the little captive maid was *grateful*! Don't you think so? What real pleasure and delight it must have been to her to see her master return, with all the servants who had attended him, *perfectly well*! He had, through the simple words she had spoken to her mistress, been quite rid of that dreadful malady, leprosy! He had, at the bidding of the prophet, simply dipped himself seven times in the Jordan, and "his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean." What a change! what a wonderful cure! How *thankful* he must have been, and the mistress, and the little maid!

And now, dear children, I have a word or two to add. I have told you how this meeting has reminded me of those Good Friday gatherings between sixty and seventy years ago. Now, when I have "gone the way of all the earth"—and that will soon be—I want you to remember this day, years and years to come, just as I do those seasons which have so long passed away.

Now, I hold in my hand a hymn of six-and-thirty verses, which I wrote some years ago for my dear little girl, who soon after went home to heaven. Well, I read the hymn one Sunday afternoon to our Sunday-school children, and I said that all those who learnt the hymn should have a book as a reward. Well, no less than two hundred children learnt the hymn; and, after a tea-meeting, each received a book; and a little girl, six years and a half old, stood upon a chair by my side, and repeated twelve out of the six-and-thirty verses; and I found afterwards that she was very sorry I did not allow her to repeat the whole. After that, I preached a School Anniversary Sermon at St. Gabriel's Church, and I there gave a similar challenge to that given to our own schools. When those who had learnt and repeated the hymn to their teachers, I attended a meeting to give the promised prizes; but how great was my surprise to find that the Incumbent's (Mr. THOMPSON) little boy of four years of age (Canon COOPER'S grandson) had learnt the hymn! He could not even read at the time, but learnt it from his mother's reading it over to him. He stood upon a table at that meeting, and repeated the whole of those six-and-thirty verses!

Well, now, if the children of poor Bedminster and St. Philip's could learn this hymn, "*Why Jesus came from heaven to die*," I am sure

the children of Clifton can; and then, when you have learnt and repeated it to your teachers, if they will give in the names to your kind superintendent and my old friend, Mr. INSKIP, you shall each have a book, and that will help you to remember this interesting service.

May you have grace from on high, dear children, to make use of the time and the ability for learning which you now have. You can learn whilst you are young, but you will not be able to learn should you live to grow old. I can remember what I learnt as a very little boy. For example, Dr. WATTS'S

“ How glorious is our heavenly King  
Who reigns above the sky!  
How shall a child presume to sing  
His dreadful Majesty?”

But, if you were to offer me £50 to repeat one of these six-and-thirty verses which I myself wrote, I could not do it. See, therefore, the need of learning whilst you can.

God bless you, dear children.

\*.\* Whilst endeavouring to recall what was spoken to the children, on the occasion referred to, some two or three after-thoughts were suggested to the mind whilst writing. These after-thoughts are inserted between brackets [ ].

[As stated in the preceding article, time after time we turned anxiously into the street where the relatives of the sick friend lived, to inquire whether the dear little child's "Yes" still held good? The reader will quite understand the ground for anxiety in regard to the sick one, when informed that she was actually, as a last means, and as a forlorn hope, kept alive by a spoonful of the juice of raw beef, mixed with water, being administered every five minutes, and that for thirty hours in succession. Humanly speaking, there was scarcely a particle of hope; and yet, personally, we could not give up, simply from our belief that the Lord had wrought upon that dear little one's heart. The earnestness and the simplicity of that dear child's faith was most striking, and may well be an encouragement to anxious parents and teachers. We have had the testimony of two deeply-taught believers in regard to it, and who were eye-witnesses of the fact.

But how remarkable are the dealings of the Most High! How true His Word, "The one shall be taken, and the other left"! After the recovery of the friend of whom we have spoken, upon turning the corner of the street through which we had again and again passed so anxiously, the shutters, we found, were closed, in token of a death in the family. Who should this be but a sister who had actually been in attendance upon the sick-bed? This one, then in comparative health, was of a sudden sweetly and gently called home, and the supposed dying one afterwards actually attended her funeral!

Reader, how true it is that we know not what a day, nor even what an hour, may bring forth! Oh, then, for grace to sit loosely to the things of time, and to be in waiting for the Master's call, come when and how it may, with our loins girt, lamps trimmed, and oil in those lamps!—ED.]

## THE RAISING OF LAZARUS.

Fast shut within a loathsome tomb,  
With grave-clothes closely bound ;  
A sharer of the common doom  
That waits the world around.

There lay an object of that love  
Whose length, and breadth, and  
height,  
No saint below or saint above  
Will ever fathom quite.

Lifeless he lies, nor breath has drawn  
For full three mournful days ;  
And now the fourth begins to dawn,  
But still the Lord delays.

At length He comes, the kingliest  
King,  
Whose voice the dead obey ;  
Whose death robbed Death of all its  
sting,  
The grave of victory.

In tones that spoke the love they bore  
The afflicted sisters cried,  
"Lord, if Thou hadst been here  
before,  
Our brother had not died !"

Then from those lips whence comfort  
flows  
For all who mourn and grieve,  
There came sweet balm for Martha's  
woes—  
"Thy brother yet shall live."

"Yea, Lord, at that great day I know  
He from the tomb shall rise,  
And leave corruption here below  
For glory in the skies."

"The Life and Resurrection I,  
And they who in Me trust,  
If living, they shall never die ;  
If dead, shall quit the dust.

"Only believe, and thou shalt see  
God's might made manifest ;  
In Him ye trust, then trust in Me,  
And be for ever blest."

Then, as He viewed the sorrowing  
crowd,  
His spirit groaned within ;  
Oh, with what woe was man endowed  
When he succumbed to sin !

Behold the Son of Man in tears !  
He weeps with those that weep ;  
Oh, mark what love the Shepherd  
bears  
Towards His suffering sheep !

But hark ! in prayer His voice is  
raised,  
In earnest prayer to heaven ;  
His Father's name must first be  
praised—  
To Him the glory given.

Then issues forth that gracious word,  
"Take ye away the stone !"  
So should our hands obey their Lord,  
And do what can be done.

Not ours to raise the dead to life,  
Not ours to save the soul,  
Give heavenly peace for earthly strife,  
Or bid the sick be whole.

But ours to point to Him whose voice  
Can pierce the thickest gloom ;  
Say to the mourning ones, "Rejoice !"  
To all, "There yet is room."

"Come forth !" He cried, and from the  
grave  
He that was dead arose :  
That word is powerful still to save,  
And quell the strongest foes.

Once more He speaks, nor speaks in  
vain,  
"Loose him, and let him go !"  
So now He breaks the captive's chain,  
And loves His grace to show.

'Twas grace that sought us when we lay  
Fast wrapped in pride and sin ;  
'Twas grace that rolled the stone away,  
And let the sunlight in.

The Gospel ray shone clear around ;  
Our Saviour's voice we heard ;  
Music ne'er dealt so sweet a sound  
As His life-giving word.

Brighton.

STEPHEN SHARP.

It cannot be spoken what power there is in a great example,  
whether to evil or good.—*Bishop Hall.*

## Sermons and Notes of Sermons.

### “THE DAY OF VISITATION.”

EXTRACT FROM A SERMON PREACHED BY THE LATE JOSEPH IRONS, IN THE WELSH CHAPEL, JEWIN CRESCENT, MARCH 24TH, 1847.

“*And what will ye do in the day of visitation?*”—ISAIAH x. 3.

In glancing at the causes of the judgments which are abroad in the earth, and which have moved all England with sympathy, we noticed two classes of causes this morning—the wickedness that has been practised. We glanced at legislation all in favour of Popery, since the fatal year 1829. We then glanced at the league existing between nominal Protestants, Papists, and infidels, to legislate for this country, all under the secret influence of Jesuits. We afterwards spake of life, and looked over all classes of society, to discover how dishonesty, profaneness, backbiting, and devouring is going on in all classes of the community; and then asked, “Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord; and shall not My soul be avenged on such a nation as this?” We then proceeded to a second class of causes—the exalted privileges with which we have been endowed, and which have been abused, as a nation. Our distinction as a Protestant nation is annihilated—it no longer exists. The deadly degeneracy of Protestant Churches has gone far to set up Popery, without the help of Popish priests at all; and the devotion which should constitute, and which used in former days to constitute, the worship of God, is exchanged for superstition, idolatry, wax candles, crucifixes, altars, bowings to the sun, vestments, Popish absolutions, and all the rest of the abominable delusions—or, as the Word of God calls them, the abominable idolatries—which have disgraced the land of our nativity. We wonder not that Jehovah should say, “Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord; and shall not My soul be avenged on such a nation as this?”

The sin which God most abhors and punishes above all others is idolatry; and that sin is not only tolerated in England, but authorized by the very legislators who have acknowledged it to be idolatry—yea, supported, in English universities and Protestant temples, as well as at Maynooth and at Rome—for which awful crime the judgments of God are already pouring out upon Ireland, and beginning also in England, for Popery has blasted Ireland, it is withering England, and is the curse of the earth.

What is the crying sin of this nation? Just the abomination of priestcraft; for you know it is not only assumed by Popish priests that they have power to forgive sins, but now, from both our universities, there are what are called Protestant priests joining hand in hand with them, and not only initiating themselves into all their forms, and going so far as to plunge headlong in the lap of “the mother of harlots,” but they vaunt themselves that they have a power on earth committed to them to forgive sins. I have even heard them assert it. Oh, tremendous delusion, that there should be men vile enough and blasphemous enough to make such an assertion for themselves, and that there should be thousands of Englishmen foolish enough to be duped by it, and to

bow down to it! We wonder not that God "should visit for these things."

Moreover, if I am asked, "What will ye do in the day of visitation?" I shall implore deliverance, as Abraham did; and I wish to be enabled to take the same means of arguing with God. You know he commenced his plea to God, respecting Sodom and Gomorrah, with asking whether, if there were fifty righteous found there, God would spare the city for their sakes; and God said yes. Abraham then descended to forty, then to thirty, then to twenty, and at last to ten; and God graciously promised that, if there were ten righteous found in it, He would spare all the city for their sake.

Now, I have taken this encouragement, that, bad as things are in England; awfully degenerate as the Churches called Protestant have become; frightful as is the extent of false doctrine in one class, and Popish fooleries in another; still there are more than ten—there are hundreds—I trust thousands—who have not bowed the knee to Baal, who have not kissed his lips, who have neither taken the mark of the beast on their foreheads or in their right hands, who are stern and firm in the truth of God; so that, in betaking myself to Jehovah (as the thing that must be done by the Christian "in the day of visitation"), I shall use Abraham's argument, "Lord, Thou hast hundreds and thousands in this country that have still loved Thee, that have not been partakers of national crimes, that have not put forth their hands to bring in the vile abominations of Popery, that have not assisted in the deadly evils that have been brought upon the land by degeneracy and departure from God. For their sakes, spare dear old England! For their sakes, turn Thy hand, and effect deliverance for us."

What I am to say of those hypocrites who advocated the dark, deadly, nation-ruining deed of 1829, I cannot tell. I doubt much if it will not damn all their souls. Assuredly it will, if God does not give them repentance. They sold the nation in that dark deed, and now they cannot recover it at any price. I know I must leave them with God, but still there are hundreds and thousands in this country who protested against that atrocious deed, and strove against all its consequences ever since; and, therefore, I shall plead with God that, for their sakes, having so much salt in the earth, He shall cause the land to be preserved from putrefaction, and send enlargement and deliverance in His own time. After all, this is a source of comfort, that there are yet many precious jewels in England for whom Jesus bled, and who are very dear to His heart; and I cling fondly to the hope that, for their sakes, and in answer to their prayers, the judgment may at least be averted. But, if I look at means, if I look at creatures, if I listen to men's voices about petitioning mortals, I am disgusted; and I have asked, in a letter to a friend the other day, who urged it upon me, "Is it not just as reasonable to petition his black majesty, as to petition any of his known agents?" I think it is just as reasonable, but I must carry my petitions to the throne of God.

But mark yet further, in this warning of "the day of visitation," that the iniquity of Antichrist must be full first. You will remember that the children of Israel of old wandered about the deserts of Arabia forty years, moving in this and that direction, and were not

allowed to enter Canaan, and this reason was given, "The iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full." So we say of the iniquity of Popery. I should have thought it had been full by the shedding of the blood of millions of God's saints in the Dark Ages, as they are called. I should have thought it had been full when it rose to such a plenitude of power as to lay nations, and kingdoms, and monarchs under its interdict. I should have thought it had been full when it made the Emperor Henry IV. to stand naked for days at the Pope's door to do penance on cold stones, and in cold weather, in the severe winter of the year 1077, as well as murdering millions of God's family. But Scripture tells us her destruction shall be sudden. A gradual decline and decay is not God's method of destroying Popery. It is when she sits as a queen, and knows no sorrow, that Jehovah-Jesus shall destroy her with the breath of His mouth, and with the brightness of His coming. It is then that sudden destruction shall come upon her, and she shall not escape. On this ground it is that I look for an awful extension of this devilish system, even in our own beloved country, until what I have told you from the Word of God shall be fully carried out; and then shall come the entire and eternal destruction of that deadly enemy of Christ and of His people.

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### Correspondence.

#### THE OLD PATHS.

*To the Editor of the Gospel Magazine.*

DEAR SIR,—Living in a town where there is no pure truth preached, either in church or chapel, a few of the Lord's people feel it a great privilege to meet from time to time in the humble dwelling of an aged saint, to listen to her wise counsel, and to hear her experience of her long wilderness journey. She was called by grace more than fifty years ago, and is now in her seventy-ninth year. Her path has been one of great trial. She knows what bereavement is, and what it is to be brought from comparative affluence to poverty, and she has drank deeply of the cup of sorrow.

Her great trouble of late has been that she does no "Christian work," that one hears so much of in these days.

It was suggested to her that she might write out the story of her conversion. This she did, and we, her friends, thinking it would prove as profitable to others as to ourselves, send it to you for insertion in the GOSPEL MAGAZINE, if you think it suitable.

I would take this opportunity of thanking you for that precious Magazine, which has been a great comfort to me for nearly eight years, and there are several others in the dark place in which our lot is cast who would testify to its being a great help by the way.

I am, dear sir, yours very gratefully,

E. M. W.

*Norfolk, May 24th, 1883.*

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MY DEAR FRIEND,—Agreeably with your wishes, I proceed to give an account of what, I trust, I may call the Lord's dealings with my

soul. It pleased Him in very early years to convince me I was a sinner—so early that I never knew a beginning, which has been a matter of much uneasiness to me. It kept me in my youth from enjoying the world, and afterwards it was a sore trial to me that I knew no real change of heart. But, as I grew in years, convictions of sin grew stronger and stronger, till they became almost unbearable. I went to prayer-meetings after public worship at the Wesleyan Chapel, but came from all more miserable than I went. Those people were holy, I was unholy. I envied them, and used to think, "Oh, if I were one of them—the less of the least of all!" I spoke to no one. I thought I should be a base hypocrite to do so—such a sinner as I. I never received any comfort from the Book of God; it cursed me. All I heard it say was, "Cursed are they that continue not in all things of the law to do them." If you offend in one point, guilty of all. The words, "Because you are neither cold nor hot," &c., were terrible to me. How I wished I was cold! How I wished I had never heard anything from the Bible! I thought I knew the Bible, and it only cursed me. If I were but cold and ignorant, the Lord might have mercy on me; *but, neither cold nor hot*, He could do nothing for me, for He said, "I would you were either cold or hot." If I were cold, I should be in the way for His mercy.

At this time I became acquainted with a female friend somewhat troubled as I was. We read the Word of God together, and there we found the word "election," which raised burning enmity against God, and I felt more hopeless than ever—

"Hard thoughts of God my mind possessed,  
I trembled at eternal fate;  
And said, 'Can God, the wise and just,  
His Jacobs love and Esaus hate?'

"Thus in rebellion long I strove  
Against the God that made me man;  
Kicked hard against electing love,  
And scoffed at mercy's sovereign plan."

In the providence of God I removed from a town to a village, but took my troubles with me. In about two years I became a wife; but, although I had a very kind husband, my troubles grew heavier. I now became acquainted with a friend—a believer in the doctrines of grace—and, though I hated the doctrines with perfect hatred, I was glad to find somebody to whom I could speak. I told her how miserable I was. She said, "You are the very one whom Jesus came to save." I said, "You don't understand me, or you would not say so." I thought I was a hypocrite for her to think as she did of me, and that increased my trouble. I wished I had never been born. I still kept to the Wesleyan Chapel, and wished—oh, so earnestly wished—I was one of those people! They so holy, so good; I so bad, so unholy! I almost worshipped them whenever I saw them. They talked of some who had not sinned for three years. "Oh, happy people! Oh, that I were like you!" was my cry.

My friend put many Gospel books into my hands, and persuaded me to read them, but I cast them away in disgust, so great was

not only my enmity, but my ignorance. At length she gave me Bunyan's "Two Covenants" to read. The name of Bunyan gave it credit, and I began to read. When I came to that part where they say, "Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name, and in Thy name done many wonderful works?" and the Lord said, "Depart, I never knew you!" I was worse than ever. At this stage I began to cry the leper's prayer, "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean." My feelings were (and here I abode a long time), Christ *could* and *would* not. I was such a sinner. I *would* believe, but *could* not. Then I cried, "Oh, that I could believe!" I did not know what believing was, but I thought it was something that would do me good. Long, very long, I cried, "Oh, that I could believe!" *but I could have created a world as easy.*

I kept reading Bunyan, and came to where he advises a helpless sinner to come to Christ for His grace, showing him to bring all his sins with him to the feet of Jesus. I bent my knees at the bed-side, as miserable as poor sinner ever was, and as full of enmity against the doctrine of election as ever one could be. The only effort of my mind was to bring *all my sins*; but all I felt of myself was, I was *a sinner, an unpardoned sinner*. For the first time the Word brought comfort to my soul. It entered with such mighty power: "The wind bloweth where it listeth; thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Then, "The water that I shall give you shall be in you a well of water springing up into everlasting life;" followed by "No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him;" and with the power of the words to my soul came *the drawing*. It was as plainly felt as a gentle moving of anything over a smooth surface. *It was the mighty power of the Spirit*. The change I experienced was instantaneous. Faith and love (I call them twin graces, for they were so to me) entered my soul without a breath of an effort of my mind. They brought peace unspeakable, and joy no language can describe. Rebellion and enmity fled before them. Electing love took possession of my soul. Jesus was most precious—the "white stone with the new name." The "Abba, Father" cry ran through my whole soul. My guilty conscience cleansed "through the Word spoken" (not thought of)—"Now are ye clean through the Word spoken." The fear of death was taken quite away. I said to my husband, as I got into bed, "Oh, G—, I am not afraid to die!" for he had been pained to witness the sore dread I had of dying.

One great thing on that memorable night I painfully must mention, for it is most true. I was so wonderfully separated from that people I had so admired with those words, "Publicans and harlots enter into heaven before they," and I was indeed separated for ever. It was such a separation that, if I had had a desire to enter their place of worship, I dare not; but I had no wish to do so. My soul was separated from them.

I cannot tell you how long or how short a time I lived in the joy of my espousals and daily caresses of my heavenly Bridegroom, but I think they were many by what followed in my experience. Yea, I did eat the heavenly manna. I fed on such precious words as

these—"He that believeth shall never perish;" "None shall pluck them out of My hand;" "He that believeth *hath* everlasting life," and many such. I had got the "Pearl of great price." I had found the treasure hid in the field of the Word of God. The heavenly leaven leavened the whole lump. I used to bless and praise the Lord that He had given me life; yea—

"I blessed the womb that bare me,  
And the paps that I had sucked."

I used to cry out, "O Naphtali, satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the Lord!" Prayer was turned to praise. I could read nowhere in the Book of God but the four last Psalms. Things animate and inanimate I called upon to praise the Lord. The Bible was a new Book; the world, too, had changed; everything looked bright and pleasant. The Songs of Solomon were precious to me. I understood not their meaning, but they were my love-sonnets that my heart sang to my Beloved, such as these—"Thou art fair and ruddy;" "The Chiefest among ten thousand;" "His mouth is most sweet;" "I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine." He caused me to "lie down in green pastures; He led me beside the still waters."

In these very happy days, my friend brought me KENT'S hymns. She put them open in my hand. The first that met my eye was one on contemplating the beauties of Jesus. She said, "Here is something to suit you." My eye fell on the words, "The sweetest note in every song," and so the name of Jesus was. KENT'S hymns became sweet food to my soul. They fastened on my mind; they were all mine. Two especially were rapturous to me—one beginning, "To banquet once the spouse was led;" and the other—

"Beneath the shadow of my Lord,  
Jesus, by every saint adored."

Read them, and may your full soul be—

"Sick of love, and faint to see  
His banner thus spread over thee."

I close this with saying, this is my anchor—an anchor which Satan hath never shaken—not my *salvation*, but my anchor. If he could shake this, I should entirely sink. Still, there is one promise that fits every trial; and, if he could shake my anchor, *that* might hold me—"My grace is sufficient for thee."

I have had many refreshings, many buildings up, from a few Gospel ministers, and from the works of OWEN, GOODWIN, and CRISP, of blessed memory, especially CRISP. I was the favoured possessor of his sermons. Those and KENT'S hymns were for some years almost my only food, for darkness and deadness had come over me. I needed the strong meat of the Gospel, and on them I often feasted, for they opened Christ to my view and enjoyment. My search in those writings was to find Christ, and my interest in Him, and I have had sweet feasts. Mr. TRYON'S ministry has been a feast of fat things to my weary soul. I think on them sometimes, but they will not stand the trial of my present wilderness dispensations. HART says—

“ Their pardon some receive at first,  
 And then, compelled to fight,  
 They find their latter stages worst,  
 And travel much by night.”

I now enter into the present stage of my experience, which I do with fear and trembling, lest I should encourage false confidence or raise groundless fears. It was pleasant to describe the heights of Zion on which I walked, or the sweet land of Beulah wherein my soul reposed—the dreadful fear of death exchanged for the triumphant cry, “ Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation”—the happy deliverance from fear that hath torment into “ perfect love which casteth out fear”—and all this not by words which man spoke, but which the Lord spoke. He whom “ the Son makes free is free indeed ”; for I testify to you, my friend, the Gospel I received was “ not of man, neither by man,” but by the Holy Ghost. It was in the autumn of 1832. It was a strong anchor, which Satan has never shaken, but oft it is hid from my sight.

You will think me loth to leave the pleasant land, but I must come into the wilderness—a land of drought—a land where I often sink so deep, there is no standing. Fears sink me down nearly to the depths of despair lest I should come short of heaven at last. That is all my fear. I question—I grieve. How can it be said, “ Well done ”? My heart confession is—

“ Here’s my claim, and here alone ;  
 None a Saviour more can need.”

I am, like Peter, sinking—as helpless and hopeless. “ Lord, save, or I perish ! ” But, to the praise of the grace of Him who “ fainteth not, neither is weary,” He sendeth His Word and helpeth me, for He is pitiful and of tender mercy. He doth not suffer me to be tempted beyond what I am able to bear. His deliverances are, and ever have been, as often as my sinkings. When all hope is out of sight, He enables me, if not according to law, to rush into His presence with, “ If I perish, I perish ; ” and the golden sceptre is held out, with these blessed words upon it, “ *I will in no wise cast out.* ” Those blessed words often afford me sweet solace amid all my fears. I could not live without these supports. When I dread death, then the Word speaks in my soul, “ I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee ”; “ Thou shalt have the latter rain in its season.” I say, “ Amen, so let it be ; ” and rest till the next wave comes.

This is my daily walk. My soul hangs between hope and fear, for the dread hour is hastening on when He shall separate the sheep from the goats ; and oh, if my sad portion—which is my dreadful dread, lest I should be on the left hand, and hear that word, “ Depart ! ”—how shall I sustain it ? Oh, Lord, save me from that hour ! I shall not call on the hills to hide me from the presence of the Lamb. No ; my last longing look shall be to Jesus. If I perish, may I be favoured to perish at His feet ! My last words shall be, “ Holy and just art Thou.”

Yours in Him,

R. C.

## HEART-CHEER.

To the Editor of the Gospel Magazine.

DEAR DR. DOUDNEY,—I feel I must write and let you know that the Lord, in His faithfulness, has, in answer to prayer, sent me "Retracings and Renewings." It was presented to me on Sunday last, at Hastings, where I had been trying to speak well of His dear name. There has been considerable *pro* and *con* going on indoors, as to whether I shall acknowledge the hand of God in the matter or not. However, if the blessed Remembrancer will help my infirmities, I will try and relate a little of His goodness and mercy to me, in answering my poor prayers from time to time. The enemy often suggests, "Why, all things are pre-ordained, and you would receive the blessings just the same if you did not ask;" and so tries to rob God of His glory and us of our peace; but we believe the prayer and the answer are both of Him. "All things come of Thee," says David, "and of Thine own have we given Thee;" and, when He condescends to answer prayer in such marked ways as He often does, I feel that, if I held my peace, the stones would cry out. But oh, the fears I am the subject of as to the future! I am so afraid, after all I hope God has done for me in providence and grace, I shall not get through honourably; and having professed the name of Christ, and espoused His cause and truth—yea, sometimes gone so far as to say, if He were to consign me to eternal perdition, my heart would try and go after Him even there, for what He has done for me in keeping me out of hell so long as He has. Oh, dear sir, I feel so fully persuaded man can neither save his own soul nor damn his own soul, or I should have damned mine years ago.

Now, for the encouragement of, perhaps, some poor, tried, and tempted soul, I will give a few instances of His appearing for me and mine in times of need, *in providence*.

"He that is surety for a friend shall smart for it." I once was, and had my furniture and all I possessed sold to meet another man's debt. My wife had only been confined a fortnight. The Lord sent a friend to buy nearly all our things in again, and nobody hardly would bid when they heard the case.

I remember once I had been out of employ for a long time, and we were in great straits. Oh, how I begged of the Lord to send help! We had then three children, and not so much as a halfpenny-worth of bread; and to have your children cry for food, and none to give them, this makes work for *faith* and prayer. "Oh," I said, "do let me see if there is a God, or no!" My wife would not eat the scanty morsel herself, neither would I; and, as we sat and looked at each other, one of the worst characters in Tunbridge Wells came to our relief—walked right into the room we were sitting in, and laid down a florin on the table, and told my wife to come to his house that evening for five shillings more. Thus the ravens sometimes are now made to feed Elijahs. "Oh," says the enemy, "you call yourself an Elijah?" Well, perhaps I may be; I hope so; but God provides for His creatures. He feeds the young ravens when they cry, but He especially does so for those He loves; and I believe He loves my

wife, and so I come in for a share of the blessing. I can believe for her when I cannot for myself. Soon after this a gentleman sent us a sovereign.

Again, I was once a teacher in the Sunday-school, and could hardly make a respectable appearance among the other teachers. I was enabled to make it known to the Lord, and, bless His dear name, He sent me, by a gentleman several miles away, a suit of clothes fit for any gentleman to appear in. "In everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto the Lord."

I remember, after I got into work again, I had a hard struggle and a hard master, but all hearts are in His keeping. I had to work from three in the morning till eight, nine, and ten sometimes at night, my wages not being sufficient to keep us respectable, as my family increased and my wife often very sadly. I did wish my master would increase my pay. I was afraid to ask him, so I asked the Lord as well as I could, and I got a rise of one shilling per week. Not long after, I had gone out of the bakehouse across on to the common, one Saturday morning, before it was light, and there, under the trees, I wrestled hard with God to move my master's hand toward me. Well, "be astonished, O heavens," when he paid me, the very same night, he gave me two shillings more! I did not count it till I had left the shop, and thought he had made a mistake. I went back, and asked him if he knew what he had given me? I told him he had given me two shillings too much. He said, "Oh, no; it is all right. I intend giving you that now." "Ah!" says the fool, "it is chance." I say it was God. Honours crown His lovely brow!

Again, I had promised to meet a payment on a particular day; and, if there is one thing tries one that desires to fear the Lord more than another, I think it is making a promise, and then not being able to fulfil it. He is so afraid of bringing reproach upon the cause of God. Well, instead of money coming in, as I expected, no one seemed to come to pay; and, as the time drew nearer and nearer, things looked darker and darker. The evening preceding the time fixed, I was six pounds short. Oh, the conflict I had all night; and early the next morning I was up, trying to plead my cause before the Lord, the enemy of souls roaring, "Now, where is your God you have boasted of so much?" What to do I did not know. I was tempted to turn coward, and leave home, so that, when they came, I should be out. "Oh, dear," I thought, "they will never trust me again. They will say, 'I don't think much of his religion, if you cannot take his word.'" Oh, how I wished I had not promised; and, to add to my grief, the post-man brought me a letter with a strange handwriting on it. I looked at it, and threw it down on the counter in a passion, saying, "Another cursed bill from somewhere, no doubt!" I stood and cried like a child, overwhelmed in grief and passion combined. At last I thought, "I may as well know the worst of the letter," and so I ventured to open it. Oh, my gracious God, forgive me my ingratitude and unbelief! It contained a cheque for six pounds—just enough to make up what I had promised!

I cannot describe my feelings at so unexpected a change. How I

sank to nothing at the feet of my adorable Lord! How I told Him the night was His, the day was His, the silver was His, the gold was His, the earth was His, the heavens were His, I was His, and all that I had was His, to do with just as it pleased Him! My tears of grief were turned to tears of joy. I said, "This God shall be my God for ever and ever." But I must not enlarge.

I can only say, in conclusion, if spared, I may some day relate a little of what He has done for my soul through prayer. These are temporal things, but blessed things nevertheless. So you see, dear friend, He has put a loaf on my table when I had none, a coat on my back, raised my wages without my having to ask my employer, sent me money to meet the demands when made. Sometimes, when I have not been prepared to meet my bills, in answer to prayer, my creditors have been detained elsewhere, and have never come near the house till I have been prepared to meet them.

The man who was the cause of my being sold out, some time after destroyed himself. "O trust in Him," says David; "ye people, pour out your hearts before Him: God is a Refuge for us."

Perhaps some will say, "If I got such answers as that, I should never doubt Him again." Then your heart is better than mine, whoever you are, for I have no more power to trust Him than I have to create a world. May He give us grace to trust Him even when we cannot trace Him.

May grace, mercy, and peace be with thee.

Yours in love,  
W. B.

*Tunbridge Wells, May 25th, 1883.*

### GOSPEL BOOK MISSION TO THE ARMY AND NAVY.

*To the Editor of the Gospel Magazine.*

DEAR FRIEND,—You will be glad to hear that your "Mornings" and "Evenings with Jesus" are well received at different stations, and, in several instances, manifest blessing from the Lord has attended the circulation. An agent writes me this morning:—

"Many thanks for the box of reading. I am particularly glad to get a few copies of 'Mornings with Jesus,' and also 'Evenings,' for I have a large fleet of fishing-smacks to visit, and these men have much time at sea when they cannot work, and are glad to read; and many among them are walking as children of light, and therefore value these books very much."

We have also heard this morning how "Retracings and Renewings" on board the *Cork*, *Shipwash*, *Sunk*, *Swim-middle*, *Mouse*, and *Nore* light-ships are read and valued by these lonely mariners.

With kind regards and Christian love,

Yours sincerely,

*May 31st, 1883.*

CHARLES BRIDER.

ALTHOUGH we banish God out of our little spot of time, He will meet us when we enter His eternity.

## THE SUNDERLAND CALAMITY.

THE annexed letter appeared in two of the Bristol papers on the 19th ult. :—

*To the Editor of the Mercury and Post.*

SIR,—Tens of thousands will read with bleeding hearts and tearful eyes the narrative you publish to-day of the above most distressing disaster. Anything more calamitous can scarcely be imagined. The desolate homes, the many rendered childless, the dreadful shock to the nervous system of the fathers and mothers (to say nothing of other branches of the various families), is painful to contemplate. But, in our deep and becoming sympathy for those thus caused, and that so unexpectedly, to suffer, let us beware of overlooking one most important fact. It is this—that not only we and ours have been personally spared the anguish of which so many of our fellow-creatures in Sunderland are this day the subjects, but that such a calamity is of so rare an occurrence. There is too great a disposition in us all to forget this. For most part, matters go on so smoothly day by day, and, comparatively speaking, there is so little interruption, that, alas! we are prone to overlook, and to become in by far too great a measure indifferent to, that watchful eye and that providential care which is so constantly and so uninterruptedly upon us. If we contemplate for a moment the mere trifling incidents which lead to such direful consequences, we shall the more readily admit our momentary dependence upon divine guidance and guardianship. The simple loss of a hat led to the so recent loss of so many lives at the Brooklyn Bridge. The partially-closed door, or the mere dropping of a bolt, it seems, sealed the fate of those well-nigh two hundred children at Sunderland. Who beforehand would for a moment have imagined such a calamity to have arisen from so trivial a cause? And yet, the more the origin of diasters is investigated, the more simple and unlikely that origin will prove to be. The fire that destroyed the *City Press*, Aldersgate Street, London, and the adjoining buildings, some three years ago, originated in the bursting of a half-gallon bottle within some few yards of where I stood. Four poor fellows lost their lives in a few minutes at that fire, and property to the tune of some fifty to sixty thousand pounds was destroyed. I maintain, therefore, that these simple facts go to prove an ever-constant need of the protection of that Almighty One in whom we live, and move, and have our being; and, so far from such calamities as that we deplore to-day rousing in us the very semblance of the inquiry, Why or wherefore should they be? let them the rather excite our gratitude, and call forth our acknowledgment, that such occurrences are so rare, and that we, both personally and relatively, have been so preserved amid the many and great dangers to which we from time to time have been exposed. So far from disputing the providential care or the divine goodness of the Most High, were we but more watchful and becomingly observant, we should have daily proof of His superintending kindness and compassion. Take, for example, this accident among the many every-day occurrences. A few days since, a waggon load of hay, whilst passing down Union Street, toppled over, and broke in two shop fronts. Most providentially, even in that great thoroughfare, not a person was walking at the moment between the waggon and the houses. Had such been the case, they must have been instantly crushed or smothered.

I am grieved at the thought of a meeting being about to be held in this ancient city on behalf of one who, in spite of the counsels and cautions of both the Word of God and the providence of God, avows himself a disbeliever in both the one and the other. I venture, however, to say that, should it please the Most High some day to test Mr. BRADLAUGH'S so-called principles by some one or other of the many means or instrumentalities He ever has at command, that test would be productive of a state of things

very unlike his who exclaimed, "God is our Refuge and Strength, a very present Help in trouble: therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea: though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swellings thereof. The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our Refuge." Faithfully yours,

St. Luke's, Bedminster, June 18th, 1883.

D. A. DOUDNEY, D.D.

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GONE ON!

To the Editor of the Gospel Magazine.

DEAR DR. DOUDNEY,—I'm now on my way home. Staying here a day or two. Have been preaching at Banbury, Oxon; and, in looking over this month's GOSPEL MAGAZINE, see no notice of "the departure to the better land" of my friend, and of the cause of Christ, Alderman OSBORN, of the above town, who departed to be with Jesus, May, 1883.

Mr. OSBORN had for years suffered from heart affection, but of late had been almost entirely confined to his house, and suffered much, which, through grace, he was enabled to bear with great resignation. Our friend was for years a subscriber and careful reader of the GOSPEL MAGAZINE.

When I have been staying at Mr. OSBORN'S, which I have done for years, I have noticed, when there, on reading the above, the attention with which he must have read the same; and the choice passages marked indicated the spiritual state of his mind, and how he was living in and upon the heavenlies.

The departure of Mr. OSBORN will be especially felt by the Baptists, being one of the deacons of the Church at Dashwood Road Chapel. By will he has left £1,000, besides clearing off debt on chapel, about £150; also £25 to four Sunday-schools, £100 to the Aged Pilgrims' Friend Society, £100 to Banbury Hospital, &c.

The late Alderman was highly esteemed. The mayor, Town Council, the Church and congregation, &c., followed his mortal remains to the cemetery.

I hope to write you a fuller account next month, containing fuller particulars of his spiritual state and experience.

Yours very truly in Jesus Christ,

Oxon, June 15th, 1883.

J. FLORY.

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A DREAM.

WHILST fresh upon the mind, I wish to record what I can remember of a remarkable dream that I had, during the past night. By the way, I have often wished I could preach with the same zeal and fervour by *day* as I have occasionally been enabled to do by *night*. I forget what my text was in my dream of last night; but I remember to have been seeking, in the most earnest and ardent manner, to set forth the kindness, the goodness, the gentleness, the Fatherly tenderness and consideration of the Lord. After a pause, however, I presumed upon at least one present among the congregation mentally replying to my

remarks, "Ah! but you don't know *my* case, or you would make it an exception to what you have said about kindness and gentleness and consideration upon the part of God." Presuming upon such an objection, in my dream I inquired, "And what is your case?" "Look at these weeds," was the reply. "I am left a widow, with eight children." Again I said, "Well, and, if so, haven't you been strengthened and supported, so as to be a wonder to yourself? Moreover, haven't you been struck with the friends that have been raised up? Haven't So-and-so and So-and-so tendered help? Didn't Mr. This and Mrs. That urge you to come to them whenever you were in need? Didn't they pledge themselves that neither you nor yours should ever want? And can you *trust* an earthly friend, and yet *doubt* your heavenly Father? Hath He not said, 'Leave your fatherless children; I will preserve them alive; and let your widows trust in Me'? Is it not written, 'A Father to the fatherless, and a Judge of the widow, is God in His holy habitation'? Moreover, through the very circumstances in which you are placed, your children will be taught to look above and beyond this poor world for comfort and satisfaction. Your very position will be a means, in the Lord's hands, of teaching them to set their affections on things above, and not on things on the earth, for 'here we have no continuing city; this is not our rest: it is polluted.'"

D. A. D.

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### Reviews and Notices of Books.

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*Short Chapters on the Sacraments.* By MOURANT BROCK (late Incumbent of Christ Church, Clifton). London: Hamilton, Adams, and Co.; Bristol: J. E. Chilcott.

WELL does the venerable author, as a man of fourscore years' experience and observation, say, "In these days of superstition, when form is put for Spirit, and ceremony for the power of the Word of God, it behoves us to look well to the books we use, and to see that they thoroughly agree with Holy Writ. Vicious books, together with books indifferent, must entirely be put away." Never was there greater need of this caution than at present; and we are thankful for such a production as that before us, at the present extremely critical condition of the professing Church. These "Short Chapters on the Sacraments" are most valuable. We, therefore, heartily recommend the work.

*Tears of the Pilgrims; or, Words of Comfort to the Tried, Afflicted, and Bereaved.* By WILLIAM FRITH, Minister of Trinity Martyrs' Memorial Church, Gunnersbury. A new edition. London: S. W. Partridge and Co.

IN his preface, Mr. FRITH says, "This little book was born in the year 1868, in the furnace of affliction, while the author was passing through great social trials." This accounts for its *mellowness*, and will, therefore, render the book acceptable to the mourners in Zion.