

THE
GOSPEL MAGAZINE.

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

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

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

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The Family Portion;

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

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

A LEAF OR TWO FROM OUR NOTE-BOOK.—
GLEANING.

"Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not."—
RUTH ii. 15.

PASSING a field where the wheat had been cut, and was standing in sheaves, the word of a sudden came rolling into the heart with that peculiar and special sweetness which the Holy Ghost alone can give to His Word, "Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not."

As we drove on, the mind was drawn out in precious musings upon the Word, and in regard to the Lord's gracious dealings with His dear people. If the Lord the Spirit is pleased to act as the Remembrancer, we will endeavour to give the reader a summary of our thoughts upon the occasion to which we have referred.

The first thought, then, which presented itself to the mind, as we saw the women gleaning among the sheaves, was, that they were *within the field*. Moreover, having just before met the farmer to whom we supposed the field belonged, we thought that they were *there by permission*—they were not trespassers or intruders. And we thought how satisfactory this must have been to the women. How much more at ease they must have been than had they known they had been there stealthily, or without permission.

Passing from the natural to the spiritual, we thought of the satisfaction and the blessedness of being *within the fold of the Great Husbandman*. To know it, too. To feel it. To be sensible of being *there by right and title*.

Mark, dear reader, what the Lord Himself said upon this momentous subject, in the days of His flesh (John x. 1—5): "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheep-fold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep

hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers." Not less weighty is the testimony of Jesus which follows in the next few verses.

Oh, beloved, there is a special blessedness about this knowledge of a divine call—the realization of this right and title, which the Lord—and He alone—can give.

This necessarily brings us to consider the *character of the gleaner*. An essential characteristic is *poverty, necessity*, and, we may add, *life and earnestness of purpose*.

Whoever saw a rich or well-to-do person *gleaning*? Is not listlessness, indifference, half-heartedness, equally out of place in the harvest-field? However lowly or humble their occupation, do not gleaners work with a will? Do they not throw their hearts into their labour? Moreover, is not their spirit kept up, and are not their energies maintained, by the success they meet with? Although it be but the occasional ear of corn they pick up, yet does not that suffice to keep them at it hopefully and perseveringly? Has not *companionship* likewise a cheering and stimulating influence?

Reader, contemplate the spiritual gleaner—the venturer into Zion's field and Zion's fold—in this particular. Oh, mark the earnestness, the anxiety, the perseverance. The seeking to pick up a precept here, and to gather a promise there; and, if there be the cheering word from a fellow-gleaner, how timely and how strengthening that word!

Ah! is there not in the day in which we live a coldness and a supineness, in regard to seeking help and succour in connection with Gospel ordinances, as they were wont in days gone by to be sought? True it is that there is an abundance of so-called "religious" excitement; there is no lack of "*working*" after a fleshly, free-will kind; but where the *waiting*, the *watching*, the *wrestling*, after a Gospel manner? When do we now-a-days hear the old-fashioned exclamation, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord"? How seldom do we see illustrated and confirmed in these days: "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it; and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name" (Mal. iii. 16). No, in place of this, "the ways of Zion do mourn, because few [not to say, none] come to the solemn feasts." That state of things has come of which the Apostle spoke in 2 Timothy iv. 3, 4: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away *their ears* from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

But to return. Upon the occasion to which we have referred, we not only saw several *women* gleaning, but, at a little distance, we saw some *children* also. One or two of the latter, if we mistake not, were, at the moment we passed, rubbing out an ear or two of the corn they had picked up. Thought we, "This resembles the little gleaners just venturing within the borders of the Gospel-field. A word dropped here, or a promise there, so suits their hungry, needy condition, that they have not patience to store up and carry home, like some of the elder gleaners. These latter hear approvingly with their judgment. They gather, they treasure up, they carry home with them, their gleanings, that, so to speak, they may undergo the regular process of threshing, winnowing, and grinding, affording them deliberately, but not less substantially and effectually, solid, continuous, much-needed nourishment!

Reader, if we mistake not, some of we old—but none the less *poor* and *needy*—*gleaners* overlook this. In our contemplation of the elasticity and delight and joy with which the little gleaners, there and then, feast upon their gatherings, masticating with such relish and appetite the precious grain—in our envy of their gladness and enjoyment—we forget the "stablishing, strengthening, settling," of which the Apostle Peter speaks. We lose sight likewise of the injunction of his brother Apostle: "Cast not, therefore, away your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward."

Alas! alas! we are too apt to overlook how, as gleaners in the Gospel-field, for so many, many years, we have been supported and nourished and maintained. Have we not, numberless times, proved in heartfelt experience the truth of the testimony: "And he arose, and did eat and drink, and *went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights* unto Horeb, the mount of God"? There was no gleaning—no fresh supply—no picking up an ear here or one there—in the interval; no, but the prophet "*went in the strength of the meat*" he had already received. He had to *digest* it—to live and to walk by virtue of it. It had, instrumentally, infused strength and animation into his system. It had a reviving, invigorating power. And where did it help him to journey to? To Horeb, the mount of God. And what took place there? or rather, what did not take place? What contact! what intercourse! what pleading and remonstrating and arguing! what a taking heaven by storm!

Ah! ye old and perhaps murmuring *gleaners*, in your envy of the little ones' animation and transport and joy, as they revel among the sheaves, and taste of the precious grain, do not lose sight of the fact that such would be little prepared to grapple with the combined powers with which not merely the prophet, but yourselves also, have been called again and again to do battle. No; be assured the mere transient and effervescent delight attendant upon the first tasting of the good old corn of the land would not have yielded

that *strength* and *stability* which were needed for the *deeper*, the *darker*, the *denser trial* of *faith*! No; it must be the *infusion* of *strength*—the *engrafting* of *power*—in a word, it must be that special and peculiar something which is involved in the expression, “*in the strength of that meat.*”

Moreover, this condition of things—this stage of experience—which is familiar only to the old and practised *gleaners*, stands intimately and most blessedly associated with the declaration: “Thou hast known my soul in adversities.”

Reader, we lay special stress, mark you, upon the word “*gleaners*;” for neither you nor ourselves shall ever get beyond *that*. We shall be *gleaners*, and *gleaners* only, throughout our sojourn in this vale of tears. And, although at first sight we may appear as though we were contradicting ourselves in regard to what we have already said about the gathering, the winnowing, the grinding, and the storing—in other words, the treasuring up in our judgment the precious truths which, by grace divine, we have tasted and handled and felt—yet there is another sense in which we shall never get beyond the practice of *gleaning*. No store in self—no resource in the creature—no, not even in our personal knowledge and heart-felt experience—if so be that is in the leastwise to divert us from our heavenly Storehouse, or from Him in whom all our wisdom, grace, and strength are treasured up. *Gleaners*, young or old, can never be independent, nor boast themselves in their possessions.

In regard to the practice of *gleaning*, the reader may well take encouragement. How many a gleaner has temporarily gone forth at early morn with heaviness of heart, in the recollection of the weary and (comparatively speaking) useless toil of the previous day; and yet it may be upon the very days thus commenced with a certain fear and trembling of heart, unusual success has attended.

But how true is this in grace! How many a poor, sick-and-sorrowful gleaner has ventured into the Gospel-field, or, in other words, betaken themselves to Gospel ordinances, with the faint hope and most ardent desire that there may be some handfuls let fall on purpose for them. The remembrance of past successes in this respect—the sweetness, savour, refreshing power that has attended past seasons—prompts and encourages them to venture afresh with the secret, “Who can tell but the heavenly Boáz may have given a tender hint, a loving word, some gracious counsel, even for me, stranger as I am and unworthy though I be? He did meet me once. He did smile, and not repel nor rebuke; and, though I have proved a wanderer, and a wayward one, yet who can tell but what He may again take compassion on His handmaid, seeing my poverty, destitution, and absolute want; and seeing, moreover, that I am sick, sad, and sorrowful? Oh, one word from Himself—one smile—one tender, loving, compassionate whisper—would revive my spirit, and refresh and renew my weary soul!”

But there is a hint we would give to the gleaners in Zion. With respect to the Lord's words, as occasionally spoken home to the heart, there is one thing it behoves us to remember. It is not only that the Lord cannot *forget*, nor will He ever *forfeit*, His word; but that He often speaks of the *future* in the *present* tense. How commonly do we find this in the prophet Isaiah, for example. There, although he prophesied of Christ upwards of seven hundred years before His incarnation, the Lord, by the prophet, speaks of Him as in the *present*—yea, more, as in the *past*—tense: "He is despised and rejected of men; a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from Him; He was despised, and we esteemed Him not. Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." What could be more definite or conclusive than this language? It admits not of the shadow of a doubt, but speaks with all the certainty imaginable. And why? Because it was the word of the living God—the testimony of Him who cannot lie! But we speak it with reverence when we say, did this language, firm, full, blessed as it was, supersede all after-exercises or intense soul-conflict upon the part of Him of whom it was spoken? That Jesus, as Mediator, could have been in ignorance of this testimony concerning Himself was a moral impossibility. Notwithstanding this, however, mark the apparent disparity in the dearest Lord's exercises and experience—

"Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of Me, I delight to do Thy will, O my God: yea, Thy law is within My heart" (Psalm xl. 7, 8).

"Then saith He unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with Me. And 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" (Matt. xxvi. 38, 39).

Now, we contend that, if Jesus, the Lord of life and glory, the eternal, the immutable, the everlasting I AM—One with the Father and the ever-blessed Spirit—so came down into the dust of death, and was so completely the Forerunner of His Church, in all the sinless weakness and frailty of that Church, what may its members expect, possessed and encompassed as they are with sin and sorrow, deathliness and death?

We have no wish by any means to nurse the fears or encourage the doubts of the Lord's dear children. God forbid! But this we contend for, that such doubts and fears are nothing new in the

experience of the living family. HART, than whom none were more tried or deeply experienced, said, in his day—

“Dream not of faith so clear
As shuts all doubtings out.”

Be it remembered that the Lord Jehovah's words are so precious that He will have them tested, and this in order that His own glorious attributes as the faithful, promise-keeping, and all-sufficient God may be ratified and confirmed. Moreover, the plainer, the more forcible and conclusive, His word of promise, the severer and commonly the longer the test with respect to its accomplishment. How marked was this in respect to the promise to Abraham that he should have a son! Now, even in the case of the Father of the Faithful, is there proof lacking that he—yea, even Abraham—was the subject of numberless doubts and fears about the fulfilment of the Lord's word? Had he been “steadfast in faith” and “joyful through hope” throughout, he certainly never would have yielded to the carnal suggestions of poor unbelieving Sarah.

With respect, then, to the “handfuls of purpose,” or those gracious promises which the Lord may aforesaid have dropped into the heart, and sealed home upon the soul, what we have to say, dear reader, is this: by no means consider that the non-fulfilment of the same disproves the fact of their having aforesaid been spoken. The death may be upon the promises, and, as to appearances, there may seem less likelihood than ever of their accomplishment; but, in reality, so far from this implying forgetfulness, failure, or forfeiture, upon the part of the Lord, it is just the reverse!

“God is His own Interpreter,
And He will make it plain.”

Take Jacob or Joseph, David or Daniel, Peter or Paul, at certain stages of their experience, and, humanly speaking, what prospect was there of their realizing this or that upon which the Lord had caused them to hope? Jacob said, “All these things are against me.” “Make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house: for indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews: and here also have I done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon,” said Joseph. David exclaimed, “Truly, as the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death.” “Then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions: that they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret; that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon” (Dan. ii. 17, 18). “Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing” (John xxi. 3).

“And when Paul’s sister’s son heard of their lying in wait, he went and entered into the castle, and told Paul. Then Paul called one of the centurions unto him, and said, Bring this young man unto the chief captain: for he hath a certain thing to tell him” (Acts xxiii. 16, 17).

Now, if the reader will turn to the several passages, and see the connection in which they stand, he will perceive not only the apparent jeopardy and peril in which these servants of the Most High God stood, but he will discover, moreover, how strikingly connected were their very *dangers* with their *deliverances*. In their varied experiences the saying, “Man’s extremity is God’s opportunity,” was so blessedly illustrated and confirmed.

And, depend on it, dear reader, if we were not such “fools, and so slow of heart to believe,” we should have seen in our own personal experiences that the very things about which (Jacob-like) we have been disposed to say, if we have not actually said, “All these things are against me,” have, in the wise and wondrous providence of God, been the very means and instrumentalities which the Lord had graciously deigned to employ for our succour and deliverance. We have thereby most blessedly proved that—

“Just in the last distressing hour,
Our God displays delivering power;
The mount of danger is the place
Where we shall see surprising grace.”

Oh, how well may these facts—for facts indeed they are—cause us to “trust, and not be afraid.” How well may past experiences and bygone evidences of the Lord’s tender care, loving discipline, and all-sufficient goodness and mercy, lead us to exclaim, “Because Thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of Thy wings will I rejoice.”

Aias! alas! that we should ever doubt, or call in question, the faithfulness or all-sufficiency of such a God! such a Father! such a Friend!

Oh, help us, Thou eternal and ever-blessed Spirit, to say, “What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee;” “Remember the word unto Thy servant, upon which Thou hast caused me to hope;” “Do as Thou hast said.”

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

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

There is one more thought with respect to the gleaner that

suggests itself: it is the bare and desolate condition in which he leaves the field, after he has done his work of searching, and the precious grain has been carried to the barn or the stack. In place of the waving corn, there is nothing left but the stubble; the ground looking dry and parched, as though every particle of verdure were gone, and not another blade of grass were ever likely to spring up there.

Dear reader, you that know something of *heart-work*, is not this oftentimes the case with respect to your poor soul? Not only do you feel that there *is* no fruit, as to present realization or appearance; there seems even the dry stubble lacking, in proof that there *had been* "first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear;" but, according to present feeling, your whole heart and soul appear to present the barren waste, the desert, the wilderness. Well, were such *fact*, rather than the *fear* of the *fact*, no such *feeling* or *fear* would exist. The sandy desert, the stony ground, or the wide-spread wilderness, has (so to speak) no sense of lack or barrenness or destitution. That barrenness or destitution is its nature—its very element.

But look again at the field—just now only in appearance a stubble waste. The plough and the harrow have done their work, and even now the general aspect is changed. To say the least, there seems a capability of yield. Again we visit the spot, and another change presents itself. The seed sowing has followed the ploughing and the harrowing, and from the *seeding* has come the *springing*. Even the broken and the moistened soil is covered with a beautiful carpet of green, the growth of which, under the nightly dews, the refreshing showers, and the warming sun, goes on and on to perfection.

And oh, how, under the sweet power and blessed operation of the Holy Ghost, and beneath the genial rays of the Sun of Righteousness, is the soul—however barren and seemingly destitute before—revived, and refreshed, and renewed! How does "the wilderness and the solitary place become glad," under the sweet bedewings and anointings of the Holy Ghost! When that precious word is verified with respect to the seemingly poor, parched, and dry and barren soul, "He maketh it soft with showers," how blessedly comes forth that glorious truth, in rich and happy experience: "Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water."

Oh, what a blessedness there is in this reviving and renewing; the Lord, as to manifestation, "putting His hand a second time to the work," or, in other words, carrying on and carrying out His sovereign designs of love and mercy in the hearts of His dear people. How gloriously does He then ratify and confirm His own promise in their happy and heartfelt experience: "Whosoever drinketh of this

water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John iv. 13, 14).

St. Luke's, Bedford, Jan. 26, 1879.

THE EDITOR.

"CROWNLESS SAINTS IN HEAVEN."*

[AT the time we wrote the observations attached to the article at page 156, entitled, "I am not going alone; Jesus is coming for me!" the following piece had not come to hand. We were, therefore, the more impressed with the oneness of sentiment expressed by the writer ("M. A. C.") with our own views upon the subject.—ED.]

I CANNOT but believe, while here,
That holiest saints have most of cheer;
That those who dry the widow's eye,
And multiply the children's joy,
Whose God is honoured with their
breath,
May justly hope His smile in death.

But, when the pearly gates unfold,
And God's own arms the ransomed
hold,

Will He speak then, to heighten bliss,
Of cultivated tenderness?
Or could we bear—received, forgiven—
The mention of *our works* in heaven?

Hush the "idea"! the risen Lamb
Bears the full glory of His name;
"Saviour of sinners," God's free boon
Of glory to the lost alone;
And when He shares the crowns they
gain,

His eye is fixed on Calvary's pain.

The wretch who hung at Jesu's side
Was taught, forgiven, glorified;
And those who live and love the
truth,

To hoary age from early youth,
Take the same wage,† a pardon free,
And Christ throughout eternity.

There are *no crownless saints* above,
God knoweth not a meaner love;
"Chosen in Christ," like Him beloved,
And (mystery sweet!) like Him ap-
proved;
Chastened and led, but, in the end,
Crowned glorious by the sinner's
Friend.

Yet say not that I think it vain
To dry a tear or soothe a pain—
To bear before a scoffing world
The banner of the cross unfurled—
Upholding to its eager eye
An uniform sincerity.

Glad payment springs from such employ,
A fund of conscientious joy;
Yet, when God's love and light appears,
How sinful seem our holiest years!
We can but pray to be forgiven,
And bless Him that He won our heaven.

Essex.

M. A. C.

* These verses were written on seeing this notion in a printed sermon by a popular Independent minister:—"I have an *idea* that there are *thousands of crownless saints in heaven*. They just barely get in at the doors. They have, indeed, been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, but there is no *reward for them!!* They have *sought their own ease* in this world; they have not sought to *work for Christ* here below, therefore, though admitted to heaven, they enjoy no distinguished reward. 'They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.' But none of those that have lost heart and have given up working for the Master here will shine as the stars, or receive the great reward hereafter. For those careless ones there is no bright glory—no place near the throne. They have just got in at the gates—that's all!"

Are not all believers "made *kings* and priests unto God"? (Rev. i. 6.)

† "They received every man a penny. But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny" (Matt. xx. 9, 10).

Wayside Notes.

IS GRACE IRRESISTIBLE AS WELL AS INVINCIBLE?

"Behold, I have received commandment to bless: and He hath blessed: and I cannot reverse it."—NUMBERS xxiii. 20.

"The work which Wisdom undertakes,
Eternal Mercy ne'er forsakes."

THE assertion of modern—and even so-called Evangelical—preaching is, that "grace is invincible, but not irresistible;" that is, God has done His part, but that man can refuse the offer of salvation, and resist the operation of the Spirit. Against such an unscriptural error we must ever protest.

The passage which heads our paper are the words of Balaam, the son of Beor, the man whose eyes the Lord opened, that he knew the knowledge of the Most High, but of whom there is no proof that the Lord opened his heart. God granted him "gifts" to proclaim truths, but we cannot find that he realized the inward grace of the Holy Ghost. With these gifts he asserts that, where God blesses, man cannot reverse it.

This assertion has struck us, "I cannot reverse it," although we do not purpose further referring to Balaam, it being our object, beloved, at this time to seek the Lord the Spirit's help to show that grace is both invincible and irresistible; for never will we believe that Omnipotency can be frustrated by feeble man. Where God blesses, and means to bless, man cannot reverse or resist it. We cannot alter or resist His natural laws. For instance, we desire fine weather in order to carry out our arrangements, but there comes hail, rain, and snow, that sends us indoors shivering. Can we resist God's will in this matter? No; we are powerless. Or, again, we desire a goodly harvest—a calm of plenty—calculating, if gained, it must result in good to our country; instead of which, the Lord blows upon our fair prospects, puts a worm at the root of our gourd, and lets the rude and inclement elements swamp and spoil our golden grain. Can we resist His power? No; we are powerless; we cannot resist His will. The Lord goes forth as a mighty man. He says, "I will make waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their herbs; and I will make the rivers islands, and I will dry up the pools." And, when He works, how powerless is man! Well, if man is powerless to frustrate God's will in His ways of nature and providence, can he do so in the higher order of things? His spiritual kingdom—can he frustrate anything it pleases Him to do in His great work of salvation? Impossible!

Now, before we give proof of this, it will be but fair to look at some of the *objections* which are raised to the position we have taken. It is said, "Is it not written, '*Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost*'?" (Acts vii. 51.) It is. This is spoken concerning those stiff-necked ones who had observed the mark of circumcision of the flesh, but who were uncircumcised in heart. They had not the Spirit of God within them to resist. It was the Spirit of God in the apostles, especially in Stephen,

whom they resisted at that time. The external ministry of the Word, and the evidences proclaimed of Christ being the Messiah, they would not receive—a resistance common enough, even in these days of so-called Christianity.

Again, it is asked, "Is it not written, '*Quench not the Spirit*'?" (1 Thess. v. 19.) Yes; that is, lean not to those worldly things that draw away from and damp the graces of the Spirit, but so walk in the ways of the Lord that they may be in lively exercise in your experience. So we see that this injunction is directed to the children of God. Indeed, Paul says, "We exhort you, brethren," &c. And have we not need of such an injunction, "brethren"? For myself, I must say the burden of my constant cry at the throne of grace is for *quicken*ing grace.

But, again, it may be said, "Is it not written, '*So do these also resist the truth*'?" (2 Tim. iii. 8.) The Apostle is speaking of those who were ever learning, but never coming to the knowledge of the truth: "As Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth." And why? Because they were "men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith," resisting the truth as proclaimed; but, when the grace of the truth enters a man's heart, and melts him in contrition before God, they will have no desire to resist it. They are made willing in the day of His power.

But, again, they say, "Is it not written, '*Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out My hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all My counsel, and would none of My reproof*'?" (Prov. i. 24, 25.) This is not the internal call of the Spirit, which is always effectual, but the external call to the means of grace, which many despise and reject, having a deep-seated aversion to religion altogether.

But another objection raised to irresistible grace is, that *thereby you make men out to be mere machines*. I should think no one could deny that it was irresistible grace and omnipotent power that felled Saul of Tarsus to the earth, as he was on his way to Damascus, "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord;" and yet, when it did so, his cry was, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" Nor was his life one of passive nothingness and folding of the arms. Far from it; although experimentally, to his joy, he learned that, as far as salvation was concerned, it was all done; and dear TOPLADY says to the point: "Surely He who, without our consent, made us reasonable beings, can, by virtue of His own omnipotent power and transforming grace, make us holy beings; and that without making us mere machines. 'He that planted the ear, shall He not hear? He that formed the eye, shall He not see?'"

These, then, are some of the passages and theories which are brought forth by modern theologians to disprove there being such a thing as "irresistible grace." We shall, by God the Spirit's help, bring forth abundant proof to the contrary; and, to do so, we first observe that *the grand scheme of salvation, as devised and effected by the Eternal Three, makes grace both invincible and irresistible*. The divine sovereignty of God is as clearly the basis of all that is spiritual as it is in all that is natural. If perfection marks the lowest order, perfection is stamped upon the higher. In creation, providence, and grace alike, divine sovereignty is exercised and maintained. The scheme of redemption

and the work of grace are according to the counsel of His will, which "standeth and abideth for ever."

"The daring worm who lifts his puny arm
Against Jehovah's sovereignty, attempts
No less than that which hurled from heaven above
Apostate angels to the lowest hell!
A King, and not to reign! Preposterous thought!
A God and not a King! Strange Deity!
Such are the Pagan gods—such is not mine."

So sang JOSEPH IRONS, and so sings "G. C."

And, referring again to dear TOPLADY, look at this splendid passage in his writings: "Predestination is the only ground on which the divine foreknowledge and providence can stand. Abstracted from the will and purpose of God, neither persons, nor things, nor events could have any certain fruition; consequently, they could not be entirely foreknown. And Providence must regulate every punctilio of its dispensations by the same pre-constructed plan, or it would follow that God is liable to unforeseen emergencies, and acts either ignorantly or contrary to His own will."

But, above all, read the Word of God concerning His own will and ways. For example, that grand Psalm, the thirty-third: "The word of the Lord is right; and all His works are done in truth." Then follows what He doeth by His own divine fiat, affirming that "the counsel of the Lord standeth for ever; the thoughts of His heart from generation to generation."

Thus, having referred to the divine sovereignty, prerogative, and will of our God, we affirm that this purpose and power is put forth in the plan of salvation; and that God the Father having in secret purpose determined the salvation of those whose names are in the book of life; that God the Son voluntarily entered upon the Mediatorial work to effect the complete salvation of the Church and people thus chosen, God the Holy Ghost engaging, at the set time, to bring out all such from an ungodly world into the blessings of the covenant of grace, we ask again, can man frustrate such a work as this? Impossible! As well might the tiny insect attempt to stay the progress of the lion of the forest; as well might a strip of pasteboard be placed to stop the mountain torrent.

"This plan was drawn by covenant love;
The structure cannot fall;
God has enrolled each saint above,
And He will save them all."

This will be further seen if we think of *the new covenant, which decrees the salvation of those interested therein, and thereby makes grace irresistible.* Who ever heard of a man's resisting a covenant, signed and sealed in his benefit? A person is left, say, ten thousand pounds, and he refuses to have it! We certainly have never met with such an individual. Now, the covenant of grace is that grand stipulation between the Persons in the adorable Trinity, whereby the salvation of the Church of God is designed, secured, and manifested to every member thereof. Let men cavil as they will, the Scriptures teach us that God the Father wrote

the names of every elect vessel of mercy in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world, giving them into the hand of His Son, who declares, "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me in glory;" God the Son voluntarily left the glory He had with the Father before the world was, took our nature, and in that nature carried out all that is necessary to secure their salvation; and God the Spirit separating them at the appointed time from an ungodly world, and causing them to realize the present blessings of the covenant, as well as assuring them of future bliss. A covenant left doubtful would be useless, and we contend it must be left doubtful, if left to the caprice of the creature. No; the Lord Jesus Christ has carried out all the terms of the covenant. He has finished the work the Father gave Him to do to secure salvation for His Church.

Did you ever ponder, dear reader, over that sublime chapter, the fifty-first of Isaiah? There you will find this fact substantiated. God says, "Hearken!" and, when He says, "Hearken!" there is something of immense importance declared. Note it in this case, as the word of prophecy goes forth: "Hearken unto Me, My people; and give ear unto Me, O My nation: for a law shall proceed from Me, and I will make My judgment to rest for a light of the people. My righteousness is near; My salvation is gone forth." Who is Jehovah's righteousness and His salvation? Good old Simeon tells us. He declares the fulfilment of this prophecy: "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word: for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation." You see the dear old man calls Him God's salvation. "A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel." This lifts it all out of the area of man's work; and who can resist God's salvation, concerning which the Lord goes on to say, in the passage in Isaiah referred to, "But My righteousness shall be for ever, and My salvation from generation to generation"?

We have said this covenant decrees the salvation of those interested in it, which brings us to another assertion, namely, *personal election, in which man's will is not sought, makes grace irresistible*. The Rector of Tansley* tells us that in the Bible the words "election" and "elect," "predestinate" and "predestinated," occur no less than twenty-four times as applied to the heir of God; and the word "chosen," past reckoning; and we always feel that, if a person reads carefully the Scriptures, and denies the doctrine of election, his denial must be *wilful*, or else his eyes are blinded by the god of this world. One has well said, "God's everlasting love, His decrees of election, and the eternal covenant of redemption, are the three hinges on which the door of man's salvation turns."

And this reminds us of another point worthy of consideration, namely, *the Source of grace will show that it is irresistible*. "I will pour out upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication: and they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced." Mark, "I"—the "Great I"—will do it; and yet in spirit, if not in words, man, who is crushed before the moth, rises up

* We should advise all lovers of free-grace truths (if able) to get the Rev. H. A. Smith's "Foundation Stones." It is a most valuable little book. The arguments therein are unanswerable.

and says God shall not do as He pleases. He must ask man whether He will or will not, may or may not.

But, again, it is Jehovah who works for and in His people *for His name's sake*. For instance, what were the children of Israel to do, when God was about to bring them out from Egypt? They were to do nothing—indeed, they were in such a helpless state that they could do nothing—hence Moses said unto the people, “Fear ye not: stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord.” It is precisely so with God’s spiritual Israel. They are brought to such a helpless and hopeless state that they cannot do anything but “stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord.” And you who know the Lord feel, with us, it was so when He brought you to the knowledge of the truth, and personally revealed Himself as your Saviour. You stood still—a miracle of mercy and grace, amazed beyond expression at His goodness and love. For myself, I must say that the origin of my knowledge of divine things was, that *He*—the omnipotent *He*—passed by, when I was lying in my own blood in a state of unregeneracy. He said, “Live!” as an act of His own will and sovereign grace and mercy; and there can be no “coming to Christ” unless He comes thus to us. “Where the word of a King is, there is power.”

“ His every word of grace is strong As that which built the skies ;	The voice that rolls the stars along Spoke all the promises.”
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And this view of the matter brings us to another assertion, namely, *the effectual operation of the Holy Spirit makes grace irresistible*. When the set time comes, God knocks to pieces all man’s resistance.

“ We strove, we sinned, rebelled, and strayed ;
We said to Christ, ‘ Depart !’
But, after that, our God displayed
His grace to change the heart.”

We hear it often said, in connection with the whole family of God reaching heaven, “not a hoof shall be left behind.” This is blessedly true—every member of the family shall be gathered safely home—but the words, as they occur in the Scriptures, are the declaration of God concerning His people being brought out of Pharaoh’s grasp and out of Egyptian bondage. So it is with regard to the spiritual deliverance. All the “shall comes” of the Lord must be “brought out”—“not a hoof left behind.” It does not depend upon their repenting, although this will issue from their divine calling. It is all a matter of sovereign grace and mercy. Divine calling shows us grace is irresistible, for, if God speaks to the heart, it is impossible He can speak in vain. No call of His can fall to the ground; no word of His return to Him void. It must accomplish the end for which it is sent.

Let us take a few cases to the point, drawn from the Word of God, to substantiate this. GIDEON might argue with the Lord that his family were poor in Manasseh, and he the least in his father’s house; but God’s will and God’s grace were irresistible. He was obliged to go against the enemy of Israel, and to become, by the grace and strength of the Lord, their conqueror.

When SAMUEL said to Jesse, “Go and fetch the youngest, the keeper of the sheep, for we will not sit down till he come hither,” we do not

read of David's refusing or resisting. He was made willing in the day of God's power, and went as he was bidden; and the Lord said, "Arise, anoint him: for this is he."

MANASSEH, as a graceless soul, was permitted to run riot for a time; but, when the Lord began to work for him and in him, "then Manasseh cried unto the Lord, and knew that the Lord He was God."

To JEREMIAH the Lord said, "Before I formed thee, I knew thee; before thou camest forth, I sanctified thee." Had Jeremiah any power to resist Jehovah's will? He said, it is true, "Lord, behold, I cannot speak; for I am a child;" but the Lord said unto him, "Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee, thou shalt speak."

MATTHEW is also a case to the point: "Jesus went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi [or Matthew] sitting at the receipt of custom: and He said unto him, Follow Me. And he left all, rose up, and followed Him."

And then, if any could resist the grace of God, surely it would have been SAUL OF TARSUS, the violent of the violent against Christ and His people; but note his own precious statement concerning the matter: "But it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the heathen."

But here we might say that, although we have drawn the foregoing cases from the Scriptures to show that grace is irresistible, it by no means follows that God the Spirit works generally in what we may call a violent and coercive way. The Lord's people are "made willing in the day of His power." Their wills are brought into subjection to His, and—at all events, in the majority of cases—He draws gently, giving no remarkable manifestations, but drawing and alluring by His hallowed power.

Then, again, *regeneration makes grace irresistible*. We have recently read of one who bade his hearers "summon up courage to be born again," as if regeneration was an act of the creature; but my Bible tells me, speaking of God, "Of His own will He hath begotten us, by the Word of truth." This we can understand, and the saving grace that effects this is irresistible.

We cannot forbear here quoting another passage from TOPLADY'S writings. He says, "If you understand by irresistible grace that it is efficacious, invincible, and certainly victorious, we are authorised, both by Scripture, reason, and the strictest maxims of philosophy, to term converting grace irresistible, since, where God really designs to renew a sinner unto righteousness and true holiness, we think it incompatible with every notion of Deity to suppose that the intent of an all-wise Being should be eventually defeated, and His plan disconcerted, or that the measures made use of by an Almighty Agent should be baffled and issue in nothing."

And then, referring to regeneration again, the Apostle Peter says, "Blessed be God the Father, who, according to His abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." The same God who hath given us a natural being hath given us a spiritual being; and we ask, how can a spiritual

and heavenly birth be resisted? And mark, the resurrection of Christ is here said to be the virtual cause of regeneration; and, because He has risen from the dead, we are raised to newness of life, which life in its consummation must be "to be with Him in glory." This is a grand and gracious work, that none can hinder or resist.

But, again, *the eternal union of Christ to His people must make grace irresistible.* They are not invited, if they will, to come into union with Him. This would indeed be a curious disarrangement. But what is "union to Christ"? Is it a mere figure of speech, or is it a fact? It is a blessed fact—a hallowed realization. This union is indissoluble—planned in the secret purpose of the Most High from all eternity—effected in the fulness of time, and, manifested by the Holy Spirit, is productive of incalculable blessings to the recipient thereof. When we thus have to deal with God's great eternals, how can we resist them, if so inclined? That it is a great mystery is indeed true—one that words fail to explain, but which must be realized to be understood. Dwell much, beloved, upon this hallowed union. It is a choice certainty and blessed reality, and will tend to lift you out of the area of uncertainty, and lead you to grasp by faith the fact of how certain and secure is all in Christ.

Keeping this precious union in view, we might think that those holding the doctrines of grace ought really not to be doubters; and yet they are a hundred times more so than Free-willers. Yet we think that this does not arise from their doubting the eternal salvation the Eternal Three have wrought for poor sinners, but the anxiety is, "Is it for me? It seems too great a matter, and too good a thing, for a poor, weak, fallen worm of the earth like me." Better be tremblers and doubters, and always anxious and on the alert, than be found among the presumptuous and bold, who, if they are the Lord's people, will, sooner or later, have a fall. But with you, dear brethren and sisters in Christ, is there no spiritual communion and fellowship with Jesus—no moments of intercourse with Him? Oh, beloved, if so, what more certain evidence of union to Christ can we have?

And then, how *the joyous secret of union to Christ* calms and cheers the poor pilgrim in his rough-shod road! Sometimes it may even be that circumstances and surroundings bring to him wild moments of despair; but, when faith looks upwards, and the soul feels inwardly the fact of this precious, indissoluble union, he is led to exclaim, "World, do what you will! Foes, trample me down as you like! Devil, do your worst!" Nothing can sever this union; nothing can separate from the love of Christ. For one, I would not give up this felt union to Christ, which faith lives upon as a vital fact, for all that this world can offer. It is an infallible deep that will never fail us; and, in its manifestation, it is the display of almighty goodness and grace irresistible.

But, again, *our precious Jesus is the mighty Conqueror, who rides "the white horse" of the glorious Gospel of the grace of God, and goes on from conquering to conquer.* Man cannot resist His progress and power. The Prince of Peace will "accomplish the number of His elect and hasten His kingdom." His course is a triumphant one, and "His way shall be known upon earth, and His saving health among all nations." Hence the Church's ascription of praise to Him who is the "blessed and only

Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light, which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see; to Him be honour and power everlasting. Amen."

And then, *who is it that can resist the grace of God?* The ungodly have not the grace to resist. "Oh, yes," say some, "it is offered to them, and they may refuse it." Man says so, but God does not. That man can and does refuse to receive *the testimony of the truth* is common enough, and becomes their condemnation. The Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, and the rejection of the outward call of the Gospel is universal. Indeed, let the pure truth of God be preached, and few will be the hearers, because such truth is hated by the carnally-minded. But only let the hard-hearted become melted by divine grace, then there will be a something beyond merely "hearing the Word"—there will be "receiving it with joy," and bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit, working to the praise and glory of God.

And then, mark, *God works in spite of our sins, unworthy as we are.* "He doeth as seemeth Him good in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth." When God calls His own by His grace, in many cases they are living in wickedness and sin; but, whether this is so outwardly or not, all have a wicked and sinful heart within, prone to evil, and that continually; yet the Lord, in spite of all this, saves; and, "where sin abounded, grace doth much more abound." Such salvation must bring its recipients to give Him all the praise and glory, who "works all things after the counsel of His will."

But to wind up our meditation upon this important subject. Having noticed some objections made by modern theologians to the fact of irresistible grace, we have drawn attention to several weighty points, which substantiate it as the truth of God, and which, we think, cannot be gainsaid. For instance, the grand scheme of salvation, as devised and effected by the Eternal Three, makes grace both invincible and irresistible, the divine sovereignty, prerogative, and will of God being the basis thereof; and "Who can resist His will, or say, What doest Thou?" Again, the covenant of grace decrees the salvation of those interested therein, and, therefore, makes grace irresistible; and, for one, we would not give ought for a religion which is not founded upon covenant love, covenant blood, and covenant mercy. Again, personal election, in which man's will is not sought, makes grace irresistible: "Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you;" while the Source of grace, its origin being the "Great I," shows us the same thing—Jehovah doing all for His name's sake—and how can puny man stand in the way of the Great Eternal? Again, that the effectual operation of the Holy Spirit makes grace irresistible. Divine calling cannot be resisted, for, "where the word of a King is, there is power;" and we have drawn from the Scriptures of truth cases in proof thereof. Further, that regeneration makes grace irresistible: "Ye must be born again;" and, where the new birth is engendered and effected, resistance on the part of the born one cannot be. Again, that the eternal union of Christ to His people must make grace irresistible—a joyous secret, which calms and cheers us by the way; and, lastly, that our precious Jesus is the mighty Conqueror, who rides "the white horse" of the glorious Gospel of the grace of God, and goes on from conquering to conquer.

One thought more, and we must lay down the pen. *The vast design of Heaven perfected, irresistible grace brings to everlasting glory.* Life closes. The *covenant of God* now has its engagements completed, and the heir of glory takes possession of his mansion in the skies. The *earth-bound children*, released from all fetters, caging and clogging, are made "kings and priests unto God" in the upper and higher courts of bliss. *The pilgrim*, having had all needful grace by the way, reaches Zion's heights at last; and, passing through the pearly gates, receives the welcome of heaven. Foes all vanquished, fears all subdued, the soldier of the cross has placed upon his head the victor's crown. *The oft-unstrung harp* now fully tuned to ascribe "blessing, and glory, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, unto their God for ever and ever." This is a religion we glory in, beloved—where all is covenant security and God-wrought certainty. Others may have their resistible grace if they like. I do not know where it comes from. Give me a work which is all of God and His grace, and I must give Him all the glory.

Now, dear reader, we contend with all humility that such truths as we have advanced will stand the test of scrutiny and experience; and that a covenant salvation secures eternal glory to all that are heirs thereof. "Being confident of this very thing, that He who hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." An old divine has well said, "The way to heaven lies not over a toll bridge, but over a free bridge, even the unmerited grace of God in Christ Jesus." God be praised that it is so; and, whatever men say, we may depend upon it God will work, and who shall let it? In vain do the potsherd of the earth array themselves against Him.

Burton-on-Trent.

G. C.

THE LATE DR. DALTON.

IF those of our readers who possess the volume of the GOSPEL MAGAZINE for 1871 will turn to page 216, they will see particulars of the very sudden removal of the late Rector of Tramore, Co. Waterford. Dr. DALTON was one of our dearest personal friends. As we remarked in the article referred to: "Who that ever was a visitor at the Rectory can forget his daily walk and conversation? His prayers, how full, fervent, and comprehensive! His words to the many applicants who daily, hourly—and month after month, and year after year—hovered round his study door and window, how gentle and forbearing!—applicants, too, of another creed, and who, strictly speaking, had no claim upon him. Although Dr. DALTON had no children, he might have been regarded, in a parochial sense, as the head of one vast household. He possessed, and he exhibited in his every-day life, the solicitude of a father, the tenderness of a brother, and the self-denying devotedness of a friend."

Most remarkable was his removal. After taking the entire services of the Sunday, and preaching, on the last morning of his life, most earnestly from the words, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate;" and, at the close of the day, bidding "good-night" to the domestics in his

own most cheerful way, he rang his bell, just after retiring to rest, became unconscious, and shortly afterwards passed away, at the age of fifty-five. In the funeral sermon that was preached on the following Sunday, the preacher, speaking of the departed, said: "His last words were prophetic. He spoke from this place last Sunday evening, and said, "'Now is the accepted time: now is the day of salvation.'" Who shall see to-morrow's sun?' and, ere to-morrow's sun, he was gone!"

We have been led, dear reader, to recall these particulars in consequence of having just found, in our MSS. drawer, the annexed lines from our beloved friend's own pen. They bear date August, 1867, so that they were written within four years of his death. They clearly bespeak his conviction of the need of Fatherly discipline. May these most telling words of our departed brother prove that, "though dead, he yet speaketh."—ED.

TRIBULATION.

TRIBULUM—A FLAIL.

"We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."—
ACTS xiv. 22.

THE flail must bruise the sheaves
To win the golden grain;
Rough blows disturb the leaves
The ripened fruit to gain.

Sharp cuttings prune the vine
To save the sap from loss;
Fierce flames the gold refine
To purge the worthless dross.

Rough billows toss the barque
That seeks the gold-fraught clime,
And clouds, with tempests dark,
Make rainbow tints sublime.

Stars in the ebon night
Illume its sable pall,
And shed their brightest light
When darkest shadows fall.

Thus may my darkest night,
By faith's strong eagle eye,
With stars of promise bright,
My brightest hopes supply.

In heated furnace cast,
The metals clearer shine;
And winter's driving blast
Roots deep the mountain pine.

So let my crosses be
Ladders of light,
To lift my spirit free
From sin's delight.

Tramore Rectory, Aug. 5th, 1867.

Baffled, smitten, scourged,
I rise the higher,
Refined, exalted, purged,
By trouble's fire.

Sift, then, the chaff away,
And thoroughly purge thy floor;
Nor slacken night or day
To cleanse it more and more.

Deep let the chisel smite;
Hard let the hammer fall;
Till, polished, smooth, and white,
The marble fits the wall.

When waves of sorrow roll,
When fiery tempests roar,
They drive my tossing soul
To Canaan's tranquil shore.

And trouble's deepest seas,
And trial's sharpest scourge,
From sloth and selfish ease
My lagging spirit purge.

And every pain-wrung tear,
And grief of crushing weight,
But tend to raise me near
To Eden's golden gate.

Till dead, with Christ, to sin,
I all His fulness share,
And purged and cleansed within,
His long-lost image bear.

EDWARD DALTON.

LETTERS TO MY CHILDREN.—No. I.

MY EVER-DEAR CHILDREN,—As God, in His all-wise and inscrutable providence, has seen fit to scatter us, as a family, so very far and wide, I thought a few words from your father—now getting into years—may not prove unacceptable.

I have, at the present time, been prompted to take up my pencil (I write a great deal in pencil, as it enables me to take my note-book out of my pocket at any odd or leisure moment) in connection with my passing thoughts during the waking hours of the past night.

You had all been very much upon my mind last evening, when I was walking alone by the sea-shore. You had come each so forcibly before me, and I endeavoured to name you, one by one, to the Lord, beseeching Him to bless with His own special blessing each and all of you. Well I know, my dear children, and increasingly do I realize the fact, that it is His blessing—and that alone—which can satisfy. That is a very favourite Scripture with me, “The blessing of the Lord maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow unto it.”

Now that my years are so rapidly declining, and that I am necessarily fast approaching the house appointed for all living, I cannot but think of you, my dear children, with so much of the journey of life before you. I am just *closing* life; you, in a sense, but just *commencing* it. Hence my thoughts can but revert to you. And, as I now write, surrounded by early associations, it brings life, with all its numerous details, the more vividly before me. Moreover, the circumstances under which I have, from time to time, visited this spot, serve to recall the past the more forcibly to my mind.

Some fourteen years ago, we all (or with only one or two exceptions) came to this pleasant watering-place; and I seem to see you now, in the thorough enjoyment of the beach and the sea and the widespread common. We occupied, if you remember, the Rev. F. BALDEY'S pretty little villa for a month. How little did we then think that the apparently halest of the group would be the first to be called away; and that our next visit to Southsea would be in consequence of her removal by the hand of death!

The early summons of our loved and lively ALICE might well remind us, my dear children, of the positive uncertainty of life. I have often thought and said that apparently there was none in our large congregation so likely to live as she, and yet she was the first to be taken. Oh, that God, of His great mercy, may grant that you, my loved remaining ones, may hear the voice spoken by this bereaving dispensation, “Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh.”

But that voice, as you are aware, has spoken, if possible, in louder and more emphatic tones since. Some five years afterwards, my illness—an illness which brought me to the very brink of the grave—was the cause of our again coming to Southsea. You, dear E—, were then far, far away; and you, dear A—, likewise. Thousands of miles of ocean then separated us. Little did I imagine, when coming upon that visit, with your dear mamma, that, as far as *she* was concerned, I should return alone. Yea, little did any one of us think,

when lodging on the terrace overlooking this beautiful sea, that within a comparatively short period her sacred remains would lie peacefully reposing in the cemetery so near at hand.

And now I want, my ever-dear children, to echo, as it were, her words of love and tenderness and affection from her grave. I pray God that "she, being dead," may "yet speak" to you by the simple means I am now adopting. I cannot tell you what I felt last evening, as I walked pensively and alone by the sea-wall. I say alone, and yet I trust I was not alone. It was a lovely evening—one of the loveliest I ever remember—a clear sky, the gentlest breeze, and the sea, which for weeks had been rough and troubled, with but the tiniest ripple. The sun was declining, but still throwing his cheering rays across both land and water. On the one hand was Portsdown Hill, commanding such an extensive view, both of land and water; on the other hand was the picturesque Isle of Wight, with its many pleasing and profitable reminiscences. You remember the prospect; I need not, therefore, enlarge upon it; and you can well imagine how, under the circumstances, all would serve to bring the past up in review. Naturally it could but lead to a comparison of the *past* with the *present*. How closely associated we had been; how severed now! And then the *present* with the *future*; and how intensely anxious I became that that *future* might at last see us, of God's great mercy, and through rich and free and sovereign grace, a *reunited* and *undivided family* before the throne of God and the Lamb!

Oh, my dear, dear children, God, of His great mercy, grant this most distinguishing favour!

I was so circumstanced, one evening last week, as to call to see a sick and aged relative, who occupies the very house where I was born; and there, when bowing the knee before the mercy-seat, the words of my long-sainted mother, which had so often been presented beneath that roof, came vividly to my mind, and were presented afresh at the self-same throne of grace unto the God of all grace: "Grant," she would say, "that all may be bound up in the bundle of life, and that not one may be found wanting in the day when Thou comest to make up Thy jewels."

Precious mother! more that forty years have rolled away since thou wert called to thy eternal rest; but thy love, and thy words, and thine example, live in liveliest and sweetest recollection; and as thy prayers, dearest mother, were heard, so God, of His great mercy, grant that my feeble petitions may be heard in God's own good time and way likewise.

I have spoken, my dear children, of two who are gone, who were here upon our first visit to this place. I may mention another who was beloved by us all. You will remember that dear Dr. and Mrs. FRYER came for a few days, during that first visit, and how thoroughly he enjoyed going with me to the pier and crossing to Ryde. He too has been recently numbered with those that are gone; and oh, of how very, very many may this be said to be the case! I have been greatly struck with the fact, during my present visit, that, familiar as I have been with the neighbourhood for so many years, not one person have I met whom I have recognised. What a proof is this of our ever-changing

state! How true it proves that, as well as all other, Scriptures to be: "Here we have no continuing city. This is not our rest: it is polluted."

But oh, my dear children, the earnest wish and prayerful desire of my heart is, that each of you, and myself increasingly, may savingly know Him who is unchangeable—He who is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." I assure you that here is the ground of my comfort, in witnessing the ever-constant change of creatures and creature things—to look back, as I do here, and contemplate old scenes and the associations of my earlier days, and then to feel that, amidst the so perishing nature of all that is connected with this poor world, THE LORD OUR GOD IS THE SAME. Yea, moreover, that "He rests in His love;" that, whatever our fluctuations in love and faithfulness, He never varies. "I, the Lord," He says, "change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

It is, moreover, so blessed to consider His pitifulness and compassion in connection with our weakness and frailty and infirmity. He has told us, for our encouragement, that, "like as a father pitieth his children, so He [the Lord] pitieth them that fear Him. He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust."

If the Lord condescends to be your Teacher, my dear children, you will, with the deepening insight into your own hearts, and the discovery of your own sin and folly, and ever-constant shortcomings, be increasingly amazed at the Lord's patience and forbearance with respect to you. But my desire for you is, that you may be led to see yet more and more clearly and Scripturally that the cause of love is not in *you*, but in *Himself*! Saith He, "I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins."

For the present, I say, farewell.

I am, my dear children, your ever-fond

FATHER.

LOOKING AND LONGING.

"To see Thy power and Thy glory, so as I have seen Thee in the sanctuary."

PSALM lxxiii. 2.

With willing feet I oft have trod
The paths that to His dwelling lead;
With joy I there have sought my God,
And grace have found for every need.

Blest was it with the saints to meet,
And, one in heart, to sing His praise;
To bow before the mercy-seat,
And glorify the God of grace.

His presence sweet He made me feel,
I knew that He unseen was near;
His "hinder part" He did reveal;
I worshipped Him with gladsome fear.

But now no more I thus enjoy
Within His house those pleasures blest;
For them I long, I pine, I sigh;
My yearning soul will have no rest.

It may not be; 'tis His design
That I awhile should bear this cross;
I to His will my soul resign,
And, since He wills, count gain this loss.

Yet not alone my soul He leaves,
His gracious Spirit is my Guest,
And in the comfort that He gives
I feel, I know, that I am blest.

Soon shall I see Him face to face;
Soon in His glorious presence be;
A sinner saved alone by grace,
To praise Him through eternity.

W. H. G.

Pilgrim Papers.

"UNTIL."

"Until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ."—1 TIMOTHY vi. 14.

SOME few months since, on the auspicious morning of a given day, all Bristol and its neighbourhood waited anxiously for His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. Triumphal arches had been erected, flags could be seen flying from many housetops, as well as from all the shipping in harbour; big guns fired, bands played; regular soldiers and volunteers lined the streets to do him honour. Everybody seemed as if they meant it, too; and those who did not (a very few) were considered disloyal. English men and women are justly thankful that Queen Victoria is their earthly sovereign, therefore members of her illustrious family are always received with hearty welcome. God bless the Royal family with eternal-life blessing, in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, by His Holy Spirit.

Now, people who are not religious will carefully attend to these matters, which may be termed national. Assuredly those who are Christians in the spirit, as well as in name, should be more ready, and even anxious, to outvie each other as gracious subjects of the all-gracious King, even Jehovah-Jesus; to be found "watching," like good and faithful servants, when, according to promise, He comes the second time without sin unto salvation. The elect family of God know that it is their highly-favoured part to play on the stage of life here. Let all true believers remember that it is their happy position to wait in faithful obedience for the Royal Master's return (Phil. i. 6, 10): "Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it *until the day of Jesus Christ*;" "That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence *till the day of Christ*."

See also what God's Spirit inclined Paul to write in 1 Thess. iii. 13: "To the end He may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints." "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. v. 23).

Sinners saved by sovereign grace cannot read the Bible prayerfully without perceiving that this glorious theme of our blessed Lord's second coming should occupy their minds, as of primary consideration. It is to be feared but few observe what prominence Holy Scripture gives to the doctrine of Jesus Christ's return to this very earth again in Person, and the commands, accompanied with precious promises of peculiar blessing, to all who shall be found "ready" and waiting to receive Him.

Why, not many days ago, the people of Canada gave their new Governor-General and his royal partner a most enthusiastic reception—nay, they were anxiously waiting to receive Queen Victoria's son-in-law in the most becoming manner. A blood-ransomed people should never be

outdone by worldly-wise children—nay, rather, beloved, ascend the watch-tower, and look for heaven's everlasting King. Have your "lamps trimmed and your lights burning." Is it not written by the blessed Lord's command, "Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown"? Bright indeed is the outlook for believing disciples of Christ, however gloomy it may be with carnal professors, in these last days of rebuke and blasphemy.

We may rely upon it, God the Holy Ghost will comfort and direct anxious waiting ones as they look up for the Lord to come. Note, dear expecting watchers by faith, what is recorded in 2 Peter i. 19: "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the Day-star arise in your hearts."

J. G. S.

A RIGHT FOUNDATION.

How important it is that we should have a clear perception of our state by nature! Alas! how many imagine that they are the children of God, who bear no family likeness—who have never been led to see that "in Adam all die." Such will often, it may be, read God's Word where it is addressed to believers, and take it for granted that they are such, and will even apply His promises (made to His elect) to themselves. I know some dear ones intimately, who have for years been in the "hope-I-am-right" school, but are not able to say, "I know Him whom I have believed." Such are quite at home with the worldly, and know nothing of the "communion of saints;" albeit they consider themselves Christians, and show themselves indignant if a poor lowly one hints as to whether they have been "taught of Christ." This class of persons often seem to be on the top of the ladder, when, alas! it is quite evident they have not yet put a foot on the first step. How much grace is needed, when conversing with such, to be faithful; yet sometimes we feel afraid, and say, "I fear to tell them that all mankind are utterly lost and ruined by the fall, and to testify to the necessity of the new birth, and that God requires the whole heart or none." How often does our heart ache, and our prayer go up to Him who alone is able to take out the heart of stone, and give a heart of flesh, that He will open the eyes of their understanding, and cause the true light to shine in their hearts, that they may really feel, and know savingly, how great a gift to man was the Lord Jesus Christ, by whom alone we have redemption.

Oh, how sad it is to see so many living in a doubtful state, having never experienced a change of heart, feeling satisfied with a "form of godliness," continually putting "new wine into old bottles," which soon burst, and all their fancied good is gone. Oh, for grace to be faithful to plead with such; to seek to be clear on the matter of salvation; to urge them to read God's Word prayerfully on their knees, implore Him to grant that they may not deceive themselves, and to remember they cannot deceive Him. May such seek earnestly for that peace which the world can never give, neither can it take away; to ask God to show them where they are, and what they are. May such no longer

continue patching the old garment of the flesh, and so the rent keeps getting worse. The Holy Spirit cannot dwell in an unholy heart. May such be led to ask God for a new heart, by which they may serve Him acceptably.

Oh, how we need to pray with David, "Create in me a clean heart, O God : and renew a right spirit within me." Aye, and after we have been brought by the great love of God, through Christ Jesus, to "read our title clear to mansions in the skies," we find so much evil in our nature that, but for the grace of God, we should sometimes sink in despair. His promises are such props, and they not only support, but comfort us ; and when sorrow, sickness, or other trials arise (which all are heirs to), how should we bear them, for we are "of the earth, earthy" ? Assuredly only by the help of that blessed Comforter whom our dear Saviour said, "I will send unto you." Let us not cease to pray for more light in these words : "O send out Thy light and Thy truth : let them lead me." Let us not rest satisfied with what light we have got, but, with the Apostle Paul, say, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect : but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus" (Phil. iii. 12).

Now, in finishing up our subject on the "right foundation," let us all go more to the throne of grace, that we may have wisdom when to speak and when to be silent to our dear ones concerning these things, that they may not be able to say to us in that great day, "You never told me I was on the wrong foundation, and now, alas ! it is too late !" Now may we see to it that "Jesus Christ and Him crucified" be our "sure foundation," who also is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever."

Cockfield.

C. B.

FROM HEART TO HEART.—No. XXII.

MY DEAR MRS. L.—How often have I thought of you, though my writing has been so long deferred. I do not wish to hide any idleness of mine under God's sovereignty, but I am compelled often and often to believe "there is a time for every purpose under heaven," and this "every" must take in letter-writing as well as other things. We have a miserably poor provision here in Mr. H——'s chapel. I have not been for weeks ; and, had not the Lord watered the seed sown in the heart, I should have been in a most unprofitable state ; but, blessed be His name, He has fulfilled that which He opened up to me the other day : "I will pour My Spirit upon thy seed, and My blessing upon thy offspring," namely, the fruit arising from the seed watered by the Holy Spirit. The tracing out of this in one instance is as follows :—

Through a distressed soul writing to me, the Lord opened up to my mind much of His Word, which was the seed. This outpouring of the Holy Spirit watered my own soul first, and then some of the fruit (or in other words, offspring, namely, that which sprung off or emanated from the Holy Spirit), I sent to this tried one, and, as it was of some use, the Lord must have blessed it. Thus did this text come forth to my mind as clear as all things must be that come from that city said to be as clear as crystal (Rev. xxi. 11).

I mentioned your trial from recent blindness to my tried friend in the north of Scotland, and she writes me thus: "I can't say how deeply I sympathise with your poor tried friend, who has been bereaved of her sight."

I will here tell you, dear friend, of a case which came under my own observation. When I was a girl, I felt the thorns of the wilderness, and I thought to get rid of them in working for God; indeed, I was told it was the way, and I commenced in real earnest to visit among the poor abodes of misery. In a miserable room of an under storey of a dilapidated tenement, whose window was stuffed with rags, and large flat stones placed so as to prevent the wind from blowing away the rags, and to admit of a few rays of light; in a corner of this room stood a bed, on which lay a poor blind woman, without a person to take the smallest notice of her, since the death of a kind sister, who used to go out begging and carrying water for their support. Except for the kindness of a neighbour, who used to go and light her fire and attend to her little wants twice or thrice a day, she might have perished; but God had given her a drop from the fountain of life that made her see the infinite loveliness of Christ. She had had a pious mother, who taught her to read the Bible and the old Scotch divines, in whose theology she was well taught. She had the habit of speaking her thoughts in a half audible tone, unconscious of the presence of anyone. I have stood listening to her as she seemed in combat with the prince of darkness. She would say, "The devil had such fierce enmity against the Being of God, that he rose up to take the throne, and destroy the Royal Family." Well do I remember one bitter frosty morning, standing by her bed-side, unwilling to interrupt her until she had finished repeating—or rather, half singing—a portion of Ralph Erskine's "Gospel Sonnets." During the while a sun-beam burst through a crevice of the broken pane, illuminating the room with his rays of gold. I turned my eyes from it to the bed, and said mentally, as I pointed my finger to her, "Ah! the sun shines only *there*." Her hands were raised, and her voice; with—

"Oh, happy soul, Jehovah's bride!
The Lamb's beloved spouse;
Strong consolation's flowing tide
Thy Husband thee allows.

"In thee, though, like thy father's race,
By nature black as hell,
Yet now so beautified by *grace*,
Thy Husband loves to dwell."

This dear saint died in Sutherland, but sorry am I that I could not gather any of her sayings. Say to your afflicted friend, that God can give not merely the power of endurance, but grace to triumph over the deepest, darkest, and most forlorn adversities. He will keep His people humble to the day of their death.

A good man once said, "Although the beginning of this life was as small as a single thought, it will never, never die, because it is connected with the life of God."

I must now, my dear Mrs. L——, conclude, hoping you may enjoy the hearing of what I have copied from my friend's letter for you.

Believe me, yours most sincerely,

March 25th, 1863.

M. L. M.

THANKFULNESS FOR SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS.

THE most cursory reader of the New Testament must be struck, as he takes it in his hands, with the frequency with which the Apostle Paul urged upon the Lord's people the importance of praising God for the eternal blessings which they enjoyed. He wrote thus to the Thessalonians: "In everything give thanks" (1 Thess. v. 18); to the Philippians he said, "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication *with thanksgiving* let your requests be made known unto God" (Phil. iv. 6); to the Colossians his exhortation was, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him; rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving" (Col. ii. 6, 7); whilst to the Ephesians he wrote, "Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. v. 20); and he commenced his Epistle to them with this burst of praise: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places [margin, 'things'] in Christ." And do not the people of God need to be stirred up to exercise continually a thankful spirit—to bless and praise God for the many spiritual and eternal mercies that they enjoy? How *many* are they! How continuously do they come! Oh, that they who read these pages may use the language of the Apostle day by day—that they may bless the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ for the spiritual blessings wherewith He has blessed them! May the Holy Spirit be their Teacher, giving them a fresh experience of these covenant blessings, so shall they be stirred up afresh to praise their God.

Consider, believer, thy blessings. They are *spiritual* ones: "Who hath blessed us with *all* spiritual blessings." *How vast, then, their number!* Look at the first chapter to the Ephesians, and see them all arranged in order. See the foundation of all thy blessings. It is thy *personal* election in Christ before the foundation of the world (verse 4). Man ordinarily thinks of this blessing *last*; but see, thy God places it *first*. Art thou by nature a child of wrath? Then by grace art thou an adopted child of God, for (verse 5) "in love having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself." Art thou a poor sinner needing the forgiveness of God? Then it is written (verse 7), "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." Hast thou no righteousness in which to stand before God, and dost thou know that there is no reason in thyself why God should accept thee? Then it is written (verse 6), "Wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved." Is thy understanding darkened, so that thou canst not comprehend the truth of God? The Spirit is promised, to give to the people of God "eyes enlightened of their understandings" (verse 18). Dost thou mourn thy unholiness? Then remember that thou hast been chosen unto *holiness* (verse 4). Dost thou long for assurance? It is the Spirit that seals the promises of God upon the hearts of the people of God (verse 13). Art thou poor as regards this world's goods? Then look up. There is an inheritance above which is of more value than all the inheritances of earth (verse 11): "In whom also we have obtained an

inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will."

Take, then, this chapter, believer; examine it verse by verse, count up thy blessings, and say, are not the spiritual blessings with which thy God has blessed thee vast in number?

And *how great in degree* are they! Consider *who* is the Giver of them. It is no less a Person than the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the One after whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named. And He blesses His people not merely as their Creator, but more, as a God in covenant with them; for when God blessed Abraham, He said to him, "I am the Almighty God [El-Shaddai—God all-sufficient]; walk before Me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between Me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly" (Gen. xvii. 1, 2). This Isaac bore in mind, for when he blessed Jacob at his departure from his home to go to Padan-aram, he said, "And God Almighty [El-Shaddai—God all-sufficient] bless thee." What infinite condescension is this, that He who is of such exceeding glory that no one can look upon Him and live—that He against whom we have sinned—should deign to bless us with all spiritual blessings, as a God in covenant with us! And not only this, but that He should bless us as a *Father*, for He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and so the Father of those whom He has made by adoption and grace the brethren of Jesus. And in this relationship Christ reminded His disciples that they stood, for His words were, "I ascend unto My Father and your Father." As, then, an earthly father shows his love in blessing his children, so—and in a greater degree—does He who makes Himself known to His people as their Father bless those whom He has adopted as His children. And if we consider the blessings which earthly parents bestow upon their children of great value, what shall we say of the blessings that His adopted children receive from Him? We must, indeed, own that each single blessing is of an infinite value, for each has been devised in the exercise of the highest wisdom, each has been appointed in the exercise of the deepest faithfulness, and each has been given in the exercise of the greatest love! Then, if we consider who are the *recipients* of His bounty—not the unfallen angels, but fallen man. Here is the marvel of His grace—that He should bless with all spiritual blessings those who have rebelled against Him, and sinned against Him; whose hearts are sinful and whose lives are sinful. Yet so it is. Let us, therefore, dear readers, who have been thus blessed, ever remember *who* has blessed us, and *how unworthy* we are of the least of His mercies!

But more. Not only are the spiritual blessings with which God blesses His people of a vast number, and great in degree, but they are also *sure*, for they are all *in Christ*. Examine the catalogue of blessings given in Ephesians i., and you will see that all the blessings therein mentioned are declared to be *in Christ*: "Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings . . . *in Christ*." Christ was appointed the Head of the Church in the great council-chamber before the foundations of the world were laid. He then received at the hands of the eternal Jehovah all the great covenant blessings which an omniscient God knew that His people would need, and so it is said of the Lord, in Psalm

xxi. 6 (margin): "Thou hast set Him to be blessings for ever." Accordingly do we find the Apostle, when writing of his own and his fellow-believer's conversion and salvation, saying (2 Tim. i. 9), "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." These blessings, then, being in the hands of Christ, will He withhold a single blessing from any member of His spiritual body? The thing would be impossible. He knows each member of His body—the circumstances, the difficulties, the temptations, and the particular wants of each. Does He see one spiritually dead? He sends down His Spirit into that poor sinner's heart, so imparting spiritual life. Does He behold another lying under a sense of guilt and condemnation? He speaks unto his heart and conscience, and says, "I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by name: thou art Mine." Or does He hear fervent cries arising from one of His tried ones, praying for a renewed experience of access to God? This He grants, and similarly does He deal with others of His tried and tempted people: "For all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him amen, unto the glory of God by us." He is the covenant to the people. Here, then, is encouragement for the poor and needy ones of the Lord's people to come to Him and tell Him all their wants.

But where are these spiritual blessings? We are instructed by the Apostle that they are in *heavenly places*. In the margin of our Bibles it is stated that the Church of Christ is blessed in *heavenly things*, the reason being this, that in the original Greek we have simply the adjective "heavenly," leaving us to supply the word "places" or "things" according to the analogy of faith; and, though some writers insert the word "things," I prefer the word "places," as being more suitable to the context than the other word "things," that word appearing to me to be superfluous. Adopting, then, the word inserted by the translators of our Bibles, "places," what a view have we given us of the *security* of the spiritual blessings bestowed upon the living Church of the living God! They are in the "heavenlies"—in that place where storms are no more felt; where no waves of time ever beat. Many are the storms which sweep over the saints of God here below, and the worst are from within. But these blessings are placed out of the reach of all these storms. The world, with all its combined forces—persecution in all its forms—Satan, with all his assaults and all his temptations—cannot touch these blessings. "If then ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God" (Col. iii. 1).

(To be continued.)

FROM A BALL TO A FAST.—A contemporary, speaking of the recent perversions to Rome from a well-known Ritualistic church in Brighton, accounts in part for the Romeward movement thus:—"Often enough fashion and flirtation are elements in this parody on religion. Thus, for instance, we hear of the young lady who comes home from the ball in time for an early fasting communion. In this way, the smooth, swift current bears the unwary over the rapids of Ritualism into the Dead Sea of the Roman despotism."—*Christian Herald*.

THE BEST WEAPON ; OR, THE BIBLE BETTER THAN PISTOLS.*

"OLD DAVID" is an aged citizen of Western North Carolina. Fifteen years ago he determined to travel through the trackless wilds of the great and sparsely-inhabited West. His route lay along the borders of Missouri and Nevada, infested at that time with more numerous clans of highway robbers than at present. He knew all this very well ; and, although urged by his neighbours to procure a couple of revolvers to defend himself, he took only his pocket Bible, and, armed thus, set out on the perilous journey. He had passed some of the clans on the northern border of Missouri, and was nearing the resort of one of the most formidable ones, headed by a notorious desperado, Jim Stevens, when he met a gentleman, who by some extraordinary tact had escaped the vigilant eye of the robber captain. The first question that he propounded to Old David was, "Are you armed?" "Yes," was the aged Christian's reply, as he produced his pocket Bible. The gentleman, who was almost weighed down with bowie-knives and pistols, laughed outright at what he considered the old man's folly, and, with considerable ridicule in his tone, remarked, "If that is all the weapon you have, you had better be saying your prayers. The den of Jim Stevens is about ten miles further on, just where you will get by night, and he cares as little for Bibles as a rattlesnake." They exchanged names, and each went his own way ; the one surprised at the other's apparent folly and recklessness, the other undismayed, and his faith in the protecting power of his Bible undiminished.

Night had thrown her dark mantle around the earth, and the chilling blasts had begun to pierce the somewhat feeble frame of Old David, when he descried a light far down in a glen a short distance from the road. He was sure that it proceeded from a robber-den, but he must have shelter, and, impelled by almost boundless faith, he directed his course thither. He halted when within a few paces of the door, and, being coarsely greeted by some uncouth, mean-looking men, was invited to alight. When he entered the humble habitation he saw significant looks pass between the inmates, and each chuckled to himself, and he knew that he was at the head-quarters of a road committee, among a desperate, relentless, and murderous clan of banditti. Nothing daunted, he occupied the proffered seat. Having partaken of a rough meal, which they furnished him at his request, he began conversation, which was continued till far in the night, when it was interrupted by the return of the captain, Jim Stevens, and a couple of his comrades in crime, from a plundering raid. Stevens, advancing within a few feet of him, asked jeeringly, "Old man, aren't you afraid to travel in this section among the robbers, alone and unarmed?" "No," was Old David's bold and fearless reply, as he again produced his Bible, continuing : "This is my weapon of defence. I always read a chapter, and pray too, before I retire. I know you are robbers, but I shall read and pray here to-night, and you must join with me." The roof of the shabby hut shook with loud, taunting peals of laughter at this expression of the old man ; but,

* This is part of one of the tracts published in Mr. T. B. Smithies' excellent "Earlham Series." S. W. Partridge, 9, Paternoster Row, F.C.

nothing dismayed, he began to read. Gradually all became silent, and, when he knelt to pray, every knee was bowed. That was a strange sight—murderers and plunderers of their fellow-men, kneeling, and attentively listening to a prayer! Long and fervently the humble servant of God prayed; nor did their interest in the solemn scene and supplications abate. When he had finished, he was conducted to a hard pallet, where he slept the live-long night undisturbed, and even free from haunting fears.

He arose very early in the morning, and read and prayed before breakfast. They refused to receive ought for his entertainment during the night, and, instead, cordially thanked him for the interest which he had manifested in their behalf. Asking for them the light of divine grace and the purification of their hearts, he bade them adieu and departed. He pressed onward, strengthened in faith and the goodness of God.

At the next settlement he learned of the death of the gentleman that he had met on the road, who ridiculed his Bible. This incident confirmed him in his belief of the superiority of the Bible as a weapon of defence.

He prosecuted his journey successfully, and soon returned safely to his home, family, and friends. Often now he gathers round him his grandchildren and the juveniles of the neighbourhood, and relates to them his adventures among the robbers. With his face animated, and his eyes glowing with superhuman light, he dwells upon the prayer-scene in the banditti's hut, ecstatically exclaiming, "My Bible palsied their arms, unnerved their hearts, and bowed their knees." He always concluded his relation of the adventure with the solemnly-spoken exhortation, "Children, you need not fear the most perilous dangers of life, provided you are armed with the Bible, and have an abiding faith in God's power of protection, who will encamp round about them that fear Him."

[The perusal of the foregoing interesting narrative instantly brought to our recollection the following fact. When we first went to Ireland, during the famine of 1846-7, among other places which we visited was a certain lane which was well known to be the resort of the very worst characters in the whole county of Tipperary. Both thieves and murderers were located there. Among the occupants of the wretched cabins of which the lane was composed was a man of the most ferocious countenance we ever remember to have seen. We were wont to compare his face to that of a bull-dog! Morose is not the word to describe it, but vicious—determined—ripe and ready for anything that was atrocious and bad in the extreme. But, somehow or other—we could scarcely account for it, unless it was the little temporary help we gave in that terrible time of famine, and the attention we paid his sick wife—the man's manner and general bearing was changed and softened, as far as we were concerned. Here is a proof of it: we were in the habit of spending two or three evenings a week at our friend's (the Rev. W. SANDFORD) house. It was commonly ten, or half-past ten, o'clock before we left it for our own lodgings. Between the one and the other was a lonely, dark lane. What was our surprise one night when, stumbling over a something just as we were leaving our friend's door, what should we find the obstacle to be but a man; and this man no other than the ferocious-looking one of whom we have just spoken? Watching our

movements, and ascertaining our whereabouts, at the same time well knowing the character of the locality, he had come and placed himself at that door that he might attend us to our lodgings *as a sort of body-guard!* Whilst thus waiting, without our knowledge, he had been overcome with sleep; hence our stumbling over him at the doorstep. This kindly act of most unsolicited service was repeated time after time; and (humanly speaking) never did we feel ourselves safer than when walking home with such an escort. It was a terrible spot. When one day walking along the lonely road of which we speak, we remember talking to a man of the dreadful sin of cold-blooded murder, for which the county was so notorious. "Ah! sir," said he, "I've known it done [that is, one man assassinating another] for a glass of whiskey." It was but a day or two after that conversation, a poor man was shot—his body being completely riddled—within a very short distance of that very spot. He was what is called in Ireland a process-server; and, as he was known to be in possession of certain notices of ejection, he was shot through a window of his own house, in order that the said notices might not be "served."

The narrative, moreover, has brought to our recollection another fact. It speaks of the precaution taken for his own security by the gentleman by whom "Old David" was met and remonstrated with for his seeming recklessness of danger. Many years ago there resided two Protestant gentlemen in the neighbourhood of Ennis, in the county of Clare. The one adopted the most strenuous measures for his own security. The doors and shutters of his house were cased with iron, and every possible precaution was adopted. Notwithstanding all this care, however, he was betrayed by his own man-servant, who opened the door and admitted the assassin who ruthlessly murdered his master in his own hall. The other gentleman took no such precautions, but simply committed himself to the guardianship of Him who neither slumbers nor sleeps. God honoured his faith. Most mercifully was he preserved through a long life, at length dying peacefully and in a good old age. His name was TYNG. He was well known to a personal friend of our own, from whom we heard the following statement. Upon one occasion Mr. TYNG was somewhere in the neighbourhood of Ennis, attended by his valet. He was shot at. The servant besought him, in consequence, to mount the grey mare he was riding and make for home. A something, however, prompted Mr. TYNG to look towards the spot whence the shot had come. At that moment he received another at his breast. The bullet penetrated his coat, passed through the cover and the Old Testament of the pocket Bible he was wont always to carry with him, and lodged at the second verse of the fifteenth chapter of the Gospel of John: "Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit. He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." Our friend and informant (the late Rev. JOHN WILSON) rode that identical mare scores of miles afterwards, and named one of his own children after Mr. TYNG. Moreover, when, some five-and-twenty years ago, we visited the town of Ennis, we stayed with the very gentleman who, together with sundry of his fellow-townsmen, called upon Mr. TYNG the day after the incident we have named, to congratulate him upon his marvellous escape.

Reader, verily the God of the Bible still lives; yea, and verifies His word even as in days of old: "Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways" (Psa. xci. 9—11).—Ed.]

Protestant Beacon.

WARNING WORDS FROM A MOTHER IN ISRAEL.

FROM the land of Moab (Isaiah xvi. 4) to the Editor of the GOSPEL MAGAZINE. The "Protestant Beacon," with its standard reared and its banners unfurled, proving that the champions for Protestant principles and bold contenders for "the faith once delivered to the saints," are neither dead nor silenced yet; and that there are "a few names left in Sardis," and "a remnant that have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal," though there are many deserters from the ranks, and some of the standard-bearers taken home before the coming storm.

In obedience to my Lord's commands, "Whatsoever thine hands find to do, do it with thy might," I embrace the earliest opportunity of sending you the enclosed. Having heard nothing of or from Mr. JOHN LINDSEY for some months past, and feeling anxious to know how he was, I sent to him on the 31st of January, the purport of which, just a few lines to inquire how it fares in every respect with the Lord's watchmen—whether such are still sounding the alarm, watching passing events, and preparing to call for the observance of another day of fasting, prayer, and humiliation before Almighty God, or whether the Lord has, in His inscrutable wisdom, taken them aside into the chamber of affliction.

I am fully persuaded that 1879 will be a further development of 1829, of the "abomination that maketh desolate," and a fulfilment of what was then predicted. On Friday, the 7th instant, I received the enclosed, which I forward to you, with the earnest hope that you may be instructed by the Spirit of truth to sound the alarm through the "Protestant Beacon," and gain the assistance of some of the valiant men, such as the worthy Editor of the *Rock*, and members of the Church Association, to come forward "to the help of the Lord against the mighty."

My valued friend, C. H.—, has sent me the *Rock* this year through the publisher, which I have read regularly since December; and, as I turn over its pages, the words of the prophet arrest me: "Turn thee yet again, O son of man, and thou shalt see greater abominations than these." I can truly say with the Editor, "we may well weep, and hang our harps upon the willows" (Psalm cxxxvii.).

Last week I turned to the GOSPEL MAGAZINE for 1829, and [compared notes. Having spread the whole matter before the Lord, I cease not to make mention of you, and all your important] work. We have indeed need to "put on the whole armour of God."

Yours to serve,

SARAH.

DEAR MRS. HAMMOND,—Just a line to acknowledge receipt of yours to Mr. LINDSEY. You will be sorry to learn that he has been confined to his bed the last seven weeks, and to all appearance is as ill as he can be, to be alive; so that he will never again, I expect, be able to take any part in a fast day. He says, “If Mrs. Hammond reads 2 Timothy iv., she will see where I stand.”

Excuse this haste, and believe me, yours faithfully,

Linslade, February 5th, 1879.

S. R.

[Our readers will remember how deeply the mind of our sick brother (Mr. LINDSEY) has been impressed for years past with the state of the nation at large, and of Christendom especially. With a zeal, a fidelity, a jealousy for Jehovah's honour, he has written words of warning, in the form of tract after tract; and these (to the number, we suppose, of little short of twenty) have been circulated of late years through the length and breadth of the land. The Lord has now seen fit to lay His afflictive hand upon the writer of these repeated cautions, admonitions, and remonstrances. It may be that He is about to call him home, so that he should not personally witness the things which have been fore-shown him as coming upon the earth. We pray God, however, that, if it be His blessed will, the valuable life of our personally unknown (yet well-known) friend and brother may be spared for a season, so that he may still by pen and voice sound the alarm in Zion.—ED.]

Since the foregoing was written, we have received the following:—

MY DEAR SIR,—Our highly-honoured friend and brother in the Lord, Mr. LINDSEY, has desired me to tender his sincere thanks to you for your kind letter and warm sympathy in his affliction. He is indeed in a serious state, and, humanly speaking, is almost as ill as he can be. The doctor pronounced his case hopeless, some days since; but we who love him still cling to the hope that the Lord will hear our prayers, and the prayers of multitudes of others, by still sparing him to us, for, humanly speaking, we can ill afford to lose such a faithful witness in these perilous times. As to himself, he is passive, happy in the Lord, and willing either to be removed or to remain, as the Lord shall determine. He says he feels, day by day, that the truth he has proclaimed is the comfort of his heart, and that a precious Christ is his All in all.

You will please accept his warmest brotherly love, and with every good wish, believe me, yours sincerely,

Linslade, February 17th, 1879.

S. R.

THE BIBLE.—Divine revelation is a discovery by God to man of Himself, or of His will, over and above what He has made known by the light of nature or reason; and on that ground it demands our assent. The holy Scriptures are divinely inspired (2 Peter i. 21); they contain all things necessary to our salvation (2 Tim. iii. 16), and are to be received by the divine command (John v. 39). The holy Scriptures were also written for our reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness (2 Tim. iii. 15—17); to be a light, a guide, a sure word of prophecy (2 Peter i. 19); that by a careful and prayerful attention to them, through the teaching of the Spirit, we may learn what is God's revealed will, and make it the rule and directory of obedience and practice.

THE GOSPEL IN SPAIN.

BY MRS. ROBERT PEDDIE, HON. SECRETARY OF THE SPANISH
EVANGELIZATION SOCIETY.

IN this, the twenty-sixth year of our work in the interests of the Gospel in Spain, permit us to call your earnest attention to the few following facts, indicative of the existing position of evangelization in Spain, in connection with the missionary stations under the auspices of the Spanish Evangelization Society.

In the beginning of the year 1877, the Spanish Evangelization Society sustained five missionary stations in Spain. So successful has been the progress of this Mission during the two years which have intervened since that time that, at the close of the year 1878, we have, in full working order, seven centre stations, namely, Madrid, Seville, Cadiz, Huelva, Granada, Cordova, and Utrera. At all of these stations native Protestant Churches exist, and all of them are in connection with the regularly constituted Reformed Church of Spain—a Church with its Confession of Faith, code of discipline, its General Assemblies Presbyteries, Congregational Sessions, and our own Shorter Catechism for Schools. This Christian Spanish Church presents at present in her General Assemblies a larger number of ministers than did our own first General Assembly when it met in Edinburgh, over three hundred years ago, in the still existing old Magdalene Kirk of the Cowgate. Our Presbyterian Church of Scotland was an infant Church then, and the Reformed Spanish Church is an infant Church now; but, in a generation hence, it is fully expected, under the divine blessing, that its influence will be paramount over a large portion, if not the whole, of Spain. Hence is seen the importance of the Spanish congregations under the auspices of this Mission being in connection with the organised "SPANISH CHRISTIAN CHURCH." We come now to the burden of this paper.

A considerable expansion of aggressive evangelistic work among the population in Spain, outside of the Protestant Churches, is at present in progress at the various stations of the Spanish Evangelization Society. The method by which this is being effected is fully detailed in the quarterly periodical, *Times of Refreshing in Spain*. That journal, however, being mainly circulated gratuitously in the interests of the Mission, only comes under the eye of a limited number of readers.

We, therefore, venture to give the following particulars on the subject. We all know and admit that Mission Churches in the foreign field ought not to exist for their own advantage alone, nor merely that they should be standing centres of light in the midst of the surrounding darkness. Something greater and much more expansive is required than this, and that is, that the pastors and members of these Churches go down among the people outside of the Churches, and by sustained active effort, seek to draw souls to the knowledge and acceptance of Christ. Well, this is the way of the missionary pastors, and of not a few of the members of the Mission Churches in connection with this Society. The consequence has been that, from the frequent removals of members to adjoining districts, bearing with them the glad tidings

of salvation by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, there is a strong and frequently reiterated cry from these parts to the pastors of the Mission centres, after the manner of the Macedonian cry, "Come over and help us."

We beg, therefore, to explain that these native Churches, in response to that cry, have, during the last two years, entered upon a system of aggressive evangelistic work, by the institution of minor missions in the towns and villages around the Mission centres, to be worked mainly by the pastors and members of the Churches.

In this way no fewer than fourteen minor missions have been formed, and have been in operation during either the whole, or a portion of the two years intervening between the beginning of 1877 and the close of 1878, besides a large number of other stations where itinerant mission services have been held.

On analysing the vidimus of the foreign agencies of this Mission on account of Spain, we find, when briefly summarised, the following to have been in operation during the whole of the years 1877 and 1878, or during a portion of these years:—

<i>Missionary Superintendent</i> .—The Rev. Henry R. Duncan, of Cordova.	
<i>Centre Stations</i> , namely, in Madrid, Seville, Cadiz, Huelva, Granada, Cordova, Utrera	7
<i>Congregations</i> in the above-named towns	7
<i>Missionary Agents</i> of Centre Stations, namely, Mr. Duncan, above-mentioned, Señores Cabrera, Alonso, Hernandez, Jiménez, Alhama, Calamita, and Abeza, City missionary in Seville	8
<i>Minor Missions</i> under the above missionary agents	14
<i>Other Stations</i> where itinerant mission services have been held	16
<i>Evangelical Night Schools</i> for adults	5
<i>Bible Day Schools</i> for children	6
<i>Teachers</i> , not including Alhama, who conducts the Night School in Granada for men, in addition to his other work	8
<i>Sabbath Schools</i> at all the centre stations	7

Some of the above *minor* and *itinerant* missions are for the present closed by clerical opposition, or by the present critical state of the country, but most of them are likely to be re-opened when the real crisis is past, as the desire for the Gospel in them is great.

The foregoing agencies are only those which are sustained by this Mission. We have accordingly not included the flourishing day schools in Madrid under Cabrera, these being sustained by a lady in Holland, nor the night school for adults under Cabrera, that being sustained mainly by a Swiss Committee. Nor do we include the flourishing schools in Cordova, Mr. Duncan's head-quarters, as these are sustained by the Mission Board of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

To the above-stated agencies maintained by this Mission, we must add the work of supplying Spaniards and Portuguese visiting our seaports, with the Scriptures, mainly single Gospels and evangelical tracts, and the holding of regular mission services in the London Docks. This Mission likewise embraces the despatch of Gospels and tracts, per book post, from Edinburgh, to the higher classes in Spain.

From many towns and villages there is an earnest and persistent cry for the Gospel. The following is an application from persons in Chiclana to Señor Hernandez, the Spanish agent of this Mission in Cadiz. It had been sent on to Mr. Duncan, and by him was translated and transmitted to us.

“REV. SR. D. JOSÉ HERNANDEZ Y ORTEGA.

“DEAR AND RESPECTED BROTHER AND PASTOR,—The subscribers have the honour of manifesting to you that, having now passed several years in which you have been coming from time to time, preaching the Word of the Lord among us poor sinners, having taken us out of the darkness and error in which we were when we belonged to the Church of Rome, we, after having truly come to know the way of salvation by means of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ preached by you, desire that you should kindly establish a Mission in this city, which has such need, as we believe that, with the Lord's blessing, said Mission once established, in a locale set apart for the service, many souls would come to receive spiritual pasturage by means of the preaching.

“We take advantage of the present occasion of having you amongst us on this day, once more to instruct us with the comforting words of the Gospel.

“We pray the Lord that He vouchsafe to bless us with His Holy and Divine Spirit.

“The brethren in the faith of Christ.

(Signatures.)

“Josefa Lopez Nabarrete, Emilio Guerra higo, Maria Guerra, Luis Dominguez, Inez Dominguez, Manuel Dominguez, Trinidad Rodriguez Bassan, Amalia Vela, Ranom Sanchez Baro, Carmen Virnel Alba, Antogio Vicario y Rodriguez, Emelio Guerra Rodriguez, Maria Guerrero Gohano, José Lunez Cortes, Antonio Lunez, Francisco Toledo, Francisco Begazo, Juan Toledo y Rendon, Antonio Toledo, Antonio Vicario, Cormen Vicario.”

This, from these *poor sinners*, as they call themselves, is evidence of itself that the Gospel is progressing in poor dark Spain.

After this manner are the missionary agencies of this Society advancing the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ in Spain. This brief story of its progress during the two past years speaks for itself. Another year's expanding operations, under the divine quickening power of the Spirit, must tell powerfully on the present and future regeneration of Spain. A year is but a short period; but if, during that time, thousands of souls now sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death have the Gospel preached to them by means of the mirror missions, and by itineracy, how great an impetus—how great an acceleration—must the Gospel message acquire throughout the sphere of such operations! And not only so, but largely beyond the immediate circle of direct missionary action, may it be expected that the Gospel will send out its glad tidings, and draw within its ever-enlarging sphere the quickened trophies of redeeming grace.

The work is of God, inasmuch as in its prosecution in the foreign field the missionary agents are, as it were, placed in the valley of vision full of dry bones, with the divine interrogation addressed to each, “Can these bones live?” followed by the express command to say unto them, “O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord.” And this is still further followed by the command, “Say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.”

For the further prosecution of this work, in building up the old waste places and raising up the foundations of many generations in the spiritually desolate kingdom of Spain, we earnestly solicit the interest, sympathy, prayers, and increased financial support of God's people in these lands. This work is most onerous; and if, as we have said, it can be accelerated in the way indicated in this paper during even the currency of *one other brief year*, the interests of the Gospel must be greatly extended, and the glory of Christ proportionally advanced.

The whole expenditure of the evangelical work, together with all the expenses in raising the funds and in management, amounted during 1877 to £2,075 12s. 7½d. It is too early yet, while this paper is being prepared—middle of January, 1879—to estimate the exact expenses for last year, namely, 1878; but it is thought that it will be shown, when the accounts are audited for the annual report, that it may not exceed that of 1877, as given above. On the moderate expense named, all the extensive agencies of this Mission have been maintained. The present commercial depression is acting most injuriously upon our funds at the present moment, and hence the appearance of this article.

We leave these considerations with the readers of this paper. With our eyes upon the Lord, we shall anxiously await early responses to this appeal in the interests of Christ's kingdom in Spain.

We shall be glad to supply parties with a copy of our last published report upon application. We shall also most gladly send free copies of our quarterly periodical, *Times of Refreshing in Spain*, and copies of our Tract Annual for children, when asked.

Attention is earnestly requested to the advertisement headed the same as this article, which appears on one of the advertising pages.

PLEADING AND PROVING.

(Suggested by a Sermon preached at H— Church, February 24th, 1878.)

“For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her.”—ZECHARIAH ii. 5.

Jesus, far from heaven I roam;
Dangers throng, and dense the gloom;
Be a wall of fire, I pray,
Round me all my pilgrim-way.

Be my light, and be my heat,
Keep from harm my wandering feet;
Shield from every deadly dart
Flung by Satan at my heart.

Jesus, I am black with sin;
In Thy blood, oh, make me clean!
Mean and tattered is my dress;
Clothe me in Thy righteousness.

I am weak, despised, and low;
Bind Thine honour on my brow:
Poor am I; of kingdoms fair
Make me, oh, my Lord, an heir.

Holy One of ancient days,
Thou art heaven's eternal praise;
Thou its “glory,” life, and crown;
Thou its plant of fair renown.

Oh, my Lord, when in Thy light,
Near the throne of sapphire bright,
Shine Thy ransomed, may I be
One with them, and one with Thee.

ISA.

“WHY is sin left in you and me? That we may lay up our hopes in Christ.”—*Romaine*.

THE LATE DEFEAT AND DESTRUCTION OF OUR TROOPS IN AFRICA.

LONG before this number of the GOSPEL MAGAZINE is in the hands of our readers, they will have heard of the dread defeat and destruction of a considerable portion of our army in South Africa. Nothing can be more humiliating than such defeat: at a time, too, when an awful plague is raging in certain parts of Russia, and we, as a nation, are liable to its being transmitted at any moment to our own shores, it does behove our rulers to appoint, without delay, a day of humiliation, in order that, as a nation, we may seek to humble ourselves before the Most High. This is the more necessary, and becomes the more urgent, because of the wide-spread distress that has of late prevailed on every hand—in part, because of the unusually-severe winter, and in part, in consequence of the long and greatly-depressed state of trade. Moreover, the disaffection of the working classes, leading to the most disastrous strikes, is another ground for a national acknowledgment of our sins and transgressions, as a people, before God.

With respect to that dire visitation—the plague—of which we have spoken, it was with deep regret we read the lightsome, presumptuous terms in which the leading English journal spoke of it. It may be argued that such style of writing was adopted in order to quell the fears of the multitude. This, however, would be no justification of such course. It savours far, far too much of disregard of divine authority, and an unbecoming and presumptuous dependence upon human skill. Of the folly of all such trust the weekly journal, the *Christian*, after quoting a paragraph from the *Times*, speaks well. Says the Editor:—

The *Times* concludes an article on the plague with the following paragraph:—
“In the event of the West being invaded, either through the railways of Central Europe, or through the traffic of the Mediterranean, before the epidemic has exhausted its force, we in this country are prepared to face and to disarm the peril. The health officers of our ports will be on the alert, and any suspicious cases of imported sickness will be promptly and effectually isolated and rendered harmless. Unless the professors of sanitary science are wrong in first principles, or unless gross negligence is displayed where vigilance is a duty, we may look for the arrival of plague without terror, and without imposing a single restriction either upon the movements of healthy persons or upon the transit of their goods.”

Such statements appear to us [says the *Christian*] utterly presumptuous, whether we think of the plague as a physical disease or as an infliction from the hand of God. We have not been able to keep out the cattle plague: we have not obtained the mastery over cholera; and this generation knows practically nothing about the plague now raging in Russia. Famine and pestilence are not only the physical consequents, but the moral penalties, of war. The rider on the black horse of famine, and Death on the livid horse of pestilence, may yet show that, if England exalts herself in ambition, pride, and covetousness, He that sitteth in the heavens will laugh at her “health officers” and her “professors of sanitary science.” If, as a nation, we have outgrown the weakness (!) of appointed days of prayer, God’s people may well cry to Him the more urgently in the present crisis.

Writing upon the same subject, the *Rock* says:—

Not a doubt can now be entertained that it is the genuine Asiatic plague, in

its most virulent form, which has broken out on the banks of the Volga, and which, according to the latest accounts, continues to spread.

The *Lancet* publishes a translation of the official report presented to the Russian Government by Dr. Döppner, the sole survivor of some half-a-dozen medical men who were instructed to investigate the disease. Dr. Döppner's report has evidently been prepared with the greatest care, and reflects the highest credit on his ability and courage. It appears that there were two or three premonitory shocks before the eruption of the malady in its full strength. According to Dr. Döppner's narrative, at the beginning of last November several inhabitants of Vetlionka were attacked by an enfeebling and intermittent fever, with a duration of from ten to twenty days; all these, however, eventually recovered. But on the 27th a new—or what seemed a new—disease appeared at the same place, of which many persons died. Dr. Döppner again repaired to Vetlionka, where he found that the fever, or pestilence, or whatever it was, had assumed a more deadly character. About half those who were attacked died, their corpses becoming discoloured and decomposed in less than twelve hours after death. After December 9th, the malady became still more acute:—

“The person attacked was suddenly seized with palpitations of the heart, irregularity of pulse, vomiting, faintings, oppression of the chest, and spitting of clear fluid blood; the aspect became pale, the expression apathetic, the eyes dull, and the pupils dilated. The patient lay for three or four hours in a state of absolute prostration, then a violent accession of fever with delirium followed, with suppression of urine, &c. . . . After the 10th, to all these symptoms were added spots upon the body of dimensions varying in size from a pea to a piece of ten copecks. The sick exhaled a peculiar odour, something like honey, and death was preceded by lethargy and collapse. The corpses became decomposed at the end of two or three hours. . . . The necessary remedies were employed to combat the disease, but everything proved useless. *Not a single patient recovered!* All the medical men who gave assistance died, the priest of the stanitza, the Cossacks employed in burying the dead—in a word, all those who approached the persons attacked with the disease, although furnished with the means of preservation used in like circumstances. Very few escaped the plague.”

With so dire a scourge hovering on the skirts of Europe, we trust that no reasonable precautions will be neglected to arrest its approach to our own shores. We are quite sure that none of our readers will neglect the still more important prophylactic which is to be found in earnest and persevering prayer, and which is the more needful because it has become the fashion of the age to look to none but secondary causes.

Such are the observations of the *Rock* at this momentous crisis. From another contemporary we gather the following in regard to our position in Africa:—

While trying to steer clear of unnecessarily gloomy anticipations, it is only by looking at the surroundings of the South African question that one can realize the terrible possibilities of the situation. Cetywayo is not alone our enemy. The few white settlers at the Cape are everywhere surrounded by hostile natives in overwhelming numbers. Leaving Cape Colony, we come first to the large country, British Kaffraria, inhabited by the Kaffirs, who number at least 200,000 persons. After passing this district, we come to the colony of Natal, where there are 22,000 white inhabitants and 290,000 natives. When we pass the colony of Natal we come to the Transvaal, the colony recently annexed by the British Crown, where there is a white population of about 40,000 and between 800,000 and 1,000,000 natives. This district is surrounded by four great tribes of Zulus, with one of which we are now at war, and though we have no exact knowledge of the numbers of these various tribes, they are known to be very great, and it is supposed that the King of

Zululand has between 30,000 and 40,000 troops who can be placed in the field, while his position is one which is within a short march of the capital city of Natal. Then in all the towns of the Cape the natives vastly outnumber the whites, and these towns are necessarily almost denuded of troops. We may hope that these half-tamed savages will not be tempted, by the knowledge of our defeat and our weakness, to revenge themselves for their previous defeats at our hands.

Thus, in point of numerical strength, we are immensely outnumbered; and hence have not the shadow of reason for indulging in creature boast. The fact of a large proportion having been cut off to a man—completely “annihilated,” as the dispatches state—may well humble us, as a nation, before God.

In a conversation we had upon the subject with one who was quartered, as a soldier, for some seven years in the very locality where this disastrous state of things has occurred, we learn that the Zulus are, in regard to build and strength, a fine race of men, but most treacherous and destructive. They approach the enemy in the most subtle and crafty way, crawling upon their hands and knees, and, once pouncing upon them, give no quarter. Annihilation is their aim. Now, this testimony from an eye-witness quite accords with recent events.

We cannot close this short article without expressing our conviction that, painful as was the last year in the many significant and disastrous occurrences which marked its progress, it would seem (from its opening thus far) that the present year bids fair to be equally fraught with the sad and sorrowful. We feel increasingly that we have but one hope and one remedy—that is in God, and God alone! We may well, dear reader, take up, and that most emphatically, the forty-sixth Psalm, and exclaim, “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.”

Deeply impressed with the present state of things in general, in our own parochial sphere we had two special Prayer-Meetings on Thursday, the 6th ult., and a third after the service on Sunday evening, the 9th ult., all of which, we are thankful to state, were attended by numerous and most devoted worshippers. From an address which was widely circulated through the parish, we extract the following:—

MY DEAR FRIENDS AND PARISHIONERS,—Painfully eventful as was the past year, it would ill become us to shut our eyes to the fact that the present year has opened with distress and disaster. That a wide-spread distress exists is readily to be seen by the number of unemployed artisans and labourers who are walking the streets; that the year has begun with calamity may be learned from the newspaper accounts of shipwrecks, both mine and marine explosions, and extensive fires; to these may be added, the numerous mercantile failures. These calamities, as well as the very severe weather that has of late prevailed, have tended materially to add to the distress of which I have spoken.

I regret, my dear parishioners, thus to address you in “heaviness of spirit.” I would far sooner speak the cheering and encouraging word. But, in faithfulness to that sacred commission with which I am entrusted, as a minister of Christ, I dare not withhold from you my conviction that there is a cause for the present very lamentable state of things. The Most High has a controversy with the land. He is visiting us with judgment and in righteous

indignation, and that for our sins and transgressions, socially as well as nationally.

As a nation, we have dishonoured God by the fostering priestcraft and superstition—the virtual setting aside His Holy Word in our Government Educational system—and the encouragement of intemperance.

Among our social sins is that of the aforementioned intemperance, the increase and extent of which is fearful to contemplate. The misery and ruin consequent thereupon is beyond conception. The wrecked homes, the broken-hearted wives, the starving children, are the result of this accursed drink.

Oh, my friends, I would say, shun the tavern as you would shun the house where fever or some most pestilential disease was known to be raging.

Again, the love of pleasure is another crying evil of our day. The charge brought against ancient Sodom (which was destroyed by fire from heaven) was “pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness.”

I believe that there are but few thoughtful wives and mothers but what (if asked the question) would regret the adoption of the Saturday half-holiday, as well as would be prepared to state that the strikes upon the part of the men had brought incalculable misery into many a once happy and comfortable home.

But now, in conclusion, my dear friends and neighbours, I must insist upon this, that, in spite of the scepticism and the infidelity of the times in which we live—that, notwithstanding the lamentable disposition to cast off the fear of the Lord—to set at naught His house, His ordinances, and His Sabbath—nothing has arisen, nor can arise, to counteract His own divine testimony, “The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich; and He addeth no sorrow with it;” “Say ye to the righteous that it shall be well with him; for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him, for the reward of his hands shall be given him.”

Finally, let me earnestly and affectionately exhort you to take heed to God's word, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” Remember that “this is not our rest; it is polluted.” “Here we have no continuing city.” Time is but the threshold of eternity. “Soon He that shall come will come, and will not tarry.” It is “through much tribulation ye must enter the kingdom.” But (blessed be God!) myriads in that kingdom *could* say, and myriads on their way thither *can* say: “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal: but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

“WITHOUT SEAM.”

“Now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout.”

—JOHN xix. 23.

JESUS, Thy righteousness divine
Needs not a seam nor join of mine;
'Tis all complete and finished quite,
Perfect in God's all-searching
sight.

I cannot add a single thread,
Nor, in exchange, put one instead;
This vesture is, beyond all doubt,
God-woven “from the top, through-
out.”

Cardiff.

What were the worth of human might
In presence of a robe of light?
Its every fold so pure and fair,
The Father sees no blemish there.

Oh, Saviour, 'tis Thy righteousness
I covet, as my only dress;
Attired in this, I hope to stand
A monument, at Thy right hand;
And sing the gift of love, so free
For all who, trusting, follow Thee.

J. P. C.

Triumphs of Grace over Death and the Grave.

AT REST, AND THAT FOR EVER !

"YE shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel," and verily the Lord is fulfilling His word, for one by one—here one and there one—is He calling hence; taking them from the evil to come, and safely housing them in His own immediate presence, there to behold and to bask eternally in the glory of their ever-blessed and triumphant Head and Lord.

On the 1st of January, in the present year, the Lord took to Himself

HANNAH PARKER,

at the ripe age of eighty-five years. If in one more than another of the Lord's redeemed and quickened ones, we saw that "steadfastness and unmoveableness" of which the Apostle speaks in the close of the fifteenth chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, it was in the above-named HANNAH PARKER. Her words were few, but weighty in the extreme. She seemed to have a grasp of the truth as it is in Jesus, from which there was not the veriest shadow of swerving. She felt her standing upon the Rock, Christ. No Scripture, we consider, could have better depicted her character and standing than that placed on her memorial card: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee."

The first intimation we had of the removal of our old and highly-valued friend was contained in the following note from her devoted niece:—

MY DEAR FRIEND,—The memorial card enclosed will tell you that your old friend sleeps in Jesus. On New Year's morning, at half-past six, she gently passed out of time into eternity. The last word I heard her utter was "graciously." The text upon the card was given her by the Lord forty-five years ago, when, after weeks of terror and conflict, she was brought to pardon, liberty, and peace. She then took up her residence in Bath, and, under the teaching of the Spirit, was led into the truth of God through the ministry of the late Rev. J. A. Wallinger, and right loyally she adhered to the truth to the last. Her unflinching testimony to the doctrines of the grace of God is fresh in the memory of some who can bear witness to her honest, outspoken zeal in the cause of God and truth. She was made a blessing to many of her family, who are now among the white-robed throng in glory, and proved the truth of the word, "Them that honour me, I will honour." To not a few has she been the honoured instrument of communicating the truth, whereby they have been released from the fetters of a free-will religion, and brought to see that salvation is of the Lord. She was favoured with a full assurance that lasted to the end, and only two days before her departure, she said, "He told me more than forty years ago He loved me with an everlasting love, and nothing can change Him."

"Friend after friend departs;
Who has not lost a friend?"

but—

“There is a Friend that sticketh fast,
And keeps His love from first to last,
And Jesus is His name.”

It is mighty grace that reveals Christ to a poor, ruined sinner, and such are chosen, called, kept, and shall surely see His face in glory.

Yours affectionately, in covenant bonds of grace and truth,

Bath, January 16, 1879.

A. B. H.

At the close of the same month—only a few months after her beloved husband and daughter-in-law—was likewise called home

ALICE

(Wife of the late JAMES CUNLIFFE). She too had arrived at her eightieth year in this vale of tears. She was a mother in Israel indeed. Those who were privileged to know her can never forget her loving, gentle spirit. If we would sum up her character in one word, that word should be *mellowness*.

All the information we have as yet received respecting the departure of our dear aged friend, is contained in the annexed letter from her only surviving daughter:—

MY DEAR DR. DOUDNEY.—I have the painful task of sending you word of my dear mother's death. God took her home last Monday morning. Truly she has entered “the haven where she would be,” joined the blood-bought throng, and seen Him, “the Chiefest among ten thousand.” As a woman my mother had few equals, but my joy and satisfaction is the remembrance of her as a Christian. We have lost what no tongue can tell, but every murmur is hushed, because “the Lord hath need of her.”

Yours sincerely,

E. A. W.

Handforth, February 1, 1879.

“I AM NOT GOING ALONE; JESUS IS COMING FOR ME!”

MY DEAR FRIEND,—The enclosed case is one of the most remarkable displays of God's sovereignty that I think you ever had. Miss L—, who has kindly written it out for me, is the daughter of the Mrs. L—, to whom the present letters, headed “From Heart to Heart,” are addressed. The text that comes to my mind when contemplating this folded lamb is, “A short work will I make on the earth.” The words of this dear young creature, “*I am not going alone; Jesus is coming for me!*” dropped into my heart as balm to take away all the sore feeling of death, hence she had a mission before going home.

Yours in Christian bonds,

January 29, 1879.

M. L. M.

P.S.—Miss L— writes in a former letter, “Since reading your letter in December Magazine, I have purchased the little book, ‘Heart Breathings,’ and am so much pleased with its contents, and am sure I shall often enjoy reading it. There are several pieces in it which *suit me exactly.*”

DEAR MADAM,—I am writing to send you a short account of the last few days of my dear niece, E. M. H—, whom God has been

pleased to take from us in her seventeenth year; but He has done it in such a gracious and merciful way, that I think you will feel interested to hear a little concerning her.

All through her illness of two or three months, there was a great clinging to life; it was always how she hoped soon to get better. After being told her lungs were affected, she seemed much troubled in her mind, and did not like to be spoken to about the future, and said she could not bear to think about the grave. Her weakness and sufferings rapidly increased, but still she expressed a great desire to live, and it seemed impossible to tell her there was not any hope of recovery. However, it pleased God to hear and answer prayer on her behalf in His own time. We knew the end was drawing near, but there was no evidence of any knowledge of salvation, or any desire for it, till a few days before her death.

On August 22nd, she wished the doctor to be asked if he thought she would get better. On her mother telling her that he said there was not any hope of it, she said, "Oh, that *is* a blow!" and repeated it, "Oh, that *is* a blow to me!" Soon after she asked a friend who visited her to read Ecclesiastes xii. She thanked her, but made no comment on it.

Sunday, August 25th, was a day of intense suffering. Her whole frame was in a rapid state of consumption. Towards night her sufferings somewhat abated, and she became more calm, and asked to have a hymn read to her. She said, "*My sufferings are as much as I can bear, but nothing to what Jesus suffered.*" She passed a quiet night, but was too ill to talk. Next morning she told several persons about her that she should not live many days, and said to a friend sitting up with her, "I am *so happy*, and won't papa be pleased to hear it, for he has been so anxious about me?" and, upon asking her if she had ever felt so happy before, she clasped her hands together, exclaiming, "*No, never!*" and then repeated Psalm xxiii. The prostration increased much during the day, but that night, about ten o'clock, she wished all to come to her bed-side, and said, "*I can tell you now what I could not before. I feel I am dying, but I do not fear the grave now, for I am not going alone; Jesus is going with me!*" Passages of Scripture kept coming to my mind all last night. I did not know I knew so many; and that beautiful hymn, 'Abide with me,' has been such a comfort to me." She then repeated in a distinct voice, in a most emphatic manner, the verse all through, "There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons that need no repentance."

Naming a minister who had visited her, she said, "I can talk with Mr. B— now; he may come in the morning. All that I feel now is parting with you all: but it is only to sleep. We shall meet again;" and she mentioned several she should meet in heaven. She then wished us all good-bye separately, and said, "Cannot some of you sing? But there, I suppose you cannot; and, if you could, the singing here would not be worth hearing." Her joy of soul seemed too much for her poor weak body, and her look of happiness was so great. It was a sight never to be forgotten by all who witnessed it.

On Tuesday, August 27th, at one o'clock, her grandmother was sent for, and she said to her, "I should like to speak to you again. *I am dying,*

but I am so happy!" "What makes you so happy, my dear?" She quickly answered, "JESUS! You will come to me, grandma. I am not going alone; Jesus is coming for me! I do not mind the grave now, for I shall not feel it."

Shortly after this she was not conscious, and, soon after three o'clock, her happy spirit passed away to be "for ever with the Lord."

Truly our loss is her eternal gain. I think the case is a striking instance of the work of the Holy Spirit, without the aid or any intervention of man.

Believe me, yours sincerely,

To M. L. M.

E. L.

[How we glory in the closing observation about the foregoing, "I think the case is a striking instance of the work of the Holy Spirit, without the aid or intervention of man." We say, "Amen—so be it," with all our heart! Blot out the creature! set him aside altogether! Let Jehovah, in His Trinity of Persons, be the All in all! Blessed be our God for every sign, token, and proof, in these last days of rebuke and blasphemy, that His own divine word is verily true, "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts;" "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God;" yea, "let God be true, and every man a liar."

It is little short of thirty years ago, we were about to get up an infant school in Ireland. Upon going to the building one day, we missed the mason. Upon his return, he excused himself for his absence upon the ground that he had been to "the station," as it is called, at a neighbouring tradesman's house, where the priest had been hearing the confession of his poor deluded followers. "And what good has it done you?" said we to the mason. "Well, *we must assist God Almighty,*" was the answer. Now, other men may not be so plain and outspoken as this poor Irish Romanist; but, with all their pretended "better light and superior intelligence," the free-willism of the creature and the pride of the natural heart, under the garb of sanctity and service for the Lord, just comes to the selfsame thing, "*We must assist God Almighty!*"

It is, therefore, upon these grounds we glory, when the creature—be he minister or layman—has, upon the very face of things, nothing whatever to say in the matter; but the Lord Jehovah has done His own work in His own time and in His own way, and that for His own glory! And to Him, and Him alone, be immortal praise!

But now we have a word or two to say about the case itself. No doubt some will quibble, and say, "Ah! it savours too much of a death-bed repentance! We doubt," say such, "if it would have stood, had the patient got better." Our answer to this objection is, God is the best Judge in this matter. The same argument might be used about the dying thief, as to whether, had his life been spared, his faith would have stood. With this we have nothing whatever to do, but this we know, that the Lord God was able to make him "steadfast and unmovable," just as much as in the case of the poor dispossessed Gadarene, who, instead of being allowed to "be with Him," was to "go home to his friends, and tell them how great things the Lord had done for him,

and had had compassion on him. And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him, and all men did marvel."

Now, we contend that the dying thief was not only as fully *justified* as Paul the Apostle, but as *ripe for heaven* as he, although he lived to be "Paul the aged," and although the prophecy was fulfilled, spoken at his conversion, "I will show him how great things he shall suffer for My sake." Was there any merit in those sufferings, as far as his redemption was concerned, prolonged and severe as those sufferings were? We answer most emphatically, not a particle! Neither is there one iota of virtue or merit in any service or any sacrifice by any one of the Lord's followers. Were it so, it would lessen the virtue and deteriorate from the great redemption price paid by the Lord Jesus Christ, whose service and sacrifice were as perfect and complete as He, the eternal, self-existent, and immutable I AM THAT I AM, could render them.

Men are wont to consider that the parable of the labourers in the vineyard has little, if anything whatever, to say to the Lord's servants. If we are not very greatly mistaken, it has a great deal to say to them, as far as the natural pride and self-sufficiency of their own hearts are concerned. Upon merely human or carnal grounds, the old and the long-standing in the vineyard of the Lord of hosts do not like to be outdone or superseded by mere striplings! Their proud hearts say, just as emphatically as did the labourers of whom our Lord spake, "These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day."

And what has that service "in the burden and heat of the day" come to, we should like to ask, when looked upon in God's light, and when weighed in the balances of the sanctuary? What? Why, nothing, and less than nothing!

Upon the ground of merit, either in so-called service or suffering, we contend that there is *not one particle in a life-long pilgrimage!* There is so much pride and self and sin mixed up, even with our holy things, as to render them *utterly valueless, in and of themselves concerned.* Our prayers and preachings, almsdeeds and attainments, can only be accepted as they are perfumed by the much incense of the dear Redeemer's sacrifice.

What said the Psalmist, with respect to offerings or sacrifices? "But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee." And what said the Psalmist's Lord, in regard to service? "So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, *We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.*"

Now, so far from a *recently-quickened* or *converted soul* not being *meetered* or *ripened for heaven*, we contend that he or she, the moment pardon is sealed home upon the heart and conscience, is as ripe for heaven as they ever will be! This may sound strange in the ears of some, who perhaps have hitherto thought themselves perfectly clear of the pride, self-satisfaction, and fault-finding of the labourers in the vineyard, "bearing the burden and heat of the day."

If the Holy Ghost is pleased to apply it, we believe that there is one passage which will settle the question; it is Deuteronomy viii. 2: "And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep His commandments, or no." Now, for what purpose, we ask, was Israel detained in the wilderness, as far as *they* were concerned? Was it not, as this Scripture declares, that they might have an insight into their own hearts—that they might know something of themselves, of which before they were comparatively ignorant? What said Moses to them, in his summary charge, just prior to his departure from their midst? "Remember, and forget not, how thou provokedst the Lord thy God to wrath in the wilderness: *from the day that thou didst depart out of the land of Egypt, until ye came unto this place, ye have been rebellious against the Lord.*"

Can there be a child of God, who knows anything of the ingratitude, distrust, pride, rebellion, and devilism of his own heart, but must fall under this charge? Dares he say that the portraiture is overdrawn?

Again, by comparison, upon the ground of worthiness or merit, was Israel more deserving of Canaan as their promised land, *after* their wanderings in the wilderness than *before*? We contend that, upon the ground of merit, if it could be entertained at all, Israel was more worthy of Canaan at *first* than at *last*!

We unhesitatingly affirm that the selfsame argument holds good with respect to *spiritual Israel*. Upon the principle of merit (we use the term merely for argument's sake, at the same time insisting upon it that there is not a particle of such a thing either first or last), the children of God are fitter and more ready for heaven at first than at last! Were there an iota of merit (but this, we say, there is not, neither first nor last—a thousand times no!), they forfeit it in their waywardness, wantonness, base backslidings, on pilgrimage.

But we go further, and some may be startled at what we are about to say. We maintain our ground, nevertheless; and we believe that, in proportion as a poor soul is led into a discovery of the depths of depravity of his own heart, in that very proportion he will agree with us. We believe that, *upon the ground of merit, the worldling is more worthy of heaven than the child of God*. And why? Because *the one has sinned in ignorance, the other against light and knowledge!* Surely the selfsame act upon the part of a *servant* is not nearly so heinous as upon the part of a *son!* The sins of a child of God are against a Father, and such a Father! against a Brother, and such a Brother! against a Husband, and such a Husband! against a Friend, and such a Friend! aye, One that sticks closer than a brother!

Moreover, we have long contended that, could a worldling, by an act of all-powerful grace and mercy, be transferred from the very climax of all his human enjoyment and carnal revelry, to the possession of the pardon, peace, hope, expectation, and joy, now and again realized by a redeemed and quickened sinner, he would avow that *his* enjoyment of sensual pleasures and delights would bear no

more comparison to the peace, satisfaction, and prospect of a *child of God*, when (Paul-like) caught up into paradise, than the light of a farthing rushlight when contrasted with the brilliancy and glare of the midday sun. Further, that worldling, so translated, would express the utmost indignation against the ingratitude, distrust, and rebellion of the partakers of these benefits—these inestimable covenant blessings.

To what we have said some may take objection, and insinuate that, upon our theory, men may become indifferent to their general conduct and mode of life. Through ignorance of the vitality, and influences, and operations of *new creatureship*, they may imagine our testimony clashes with that of the Apostle, in his Epistle to Titus, where he declares that “the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, *denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.*” It was such sceptical reasoners and objectors the Apostle had in view where, in his Epistle to the Romans, he says, “As we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say, Let us do evil, that good may come; whose damnation is just.” Again, in the same Epistle, he argues, “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” Again, he says, “Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness.”

In a word, for what we contend is this, that “every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning;” that “that which is born of the flesh is [and will ever remain] flesh;” and that “that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” There is no improving, uniting, or amalgamating. They are as distinct as God can make them.

Moreover, we contend that, whilst the Lord’s people are designed to “shine as lights in the world,” and are “spectacles to angels and to men,” yet, as far as they themselves are concerned, they are detained in the wilderness, as we have previously sought to show, in order to have a somewhat deeper insight into the depths of iniquity of their own hearts, and to feel correspondingly somewhat more of the freeness and fulness of that grace by which alone they are saved, and be prepared, even down here, to contemplate with adoring wonder the matchless love, the astounding mercy, the wondrous forbearance, and the infinite longsuffering of a gracious God and Father in Christ. And, when they reach their eternal home, they will take up and everlastingly sing, in richer, higher, uninterrupted, and untiring song, “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.”

And now, just a few final words about the dear departed one’s remark, “*I am not going alone; Jesus is coming for me!*” How precious but how true! How sweetly in harmony with His own blessed assurance in the opening of the fourteenth of John: “I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, *I will come again*

and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Hence we learn that the Lord will not depute another to come for Him, but that *He will come Himself!* And how sweetly this agrees with the portion, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." Moreover, when we contemplate the great and glorious fact that He hath "the keys of hell and of death," to whom would He surrender them? Knowing what His own personal conflict with the powers of darkness was—"remembering the wormwood and the gall"—would He—could He—be indifferent to the sensations, the exercises, the not unfrequently bitterly-agonizing conflicts, of His trembling followers? If He said, "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened [pained] till it be accomplished"—if He exclaimed, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me"—what might He expect His poor, weak and weary, sinful and ever-erring ones to feel and say?

Adored be His name, if, in the days of their unregeneracy, when they neither knew nor cared to know Him, He watched over them so tenaciously, and preserved them from destruction—if, throughout their wilderness wanderings, He so continuously and uninterruptedly and effectually supported and sustained them—could it be possible that He would forget or forsake them at the last—the great climax of all? Nay, nay. That could never be!

All glory redound to Him, He will be "mindful of His covenant," He "will do as He has said"—"I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from Mine eyes" (Hosea xiii. 14).

THE EDITOR.

ANNUAL ADDRESS TO THE CONGREGATION OF ST. MARY-LE-PORT CHURCH, BRISTOL.

[THE second month in the year has half passed away, and our March number is well-nigh complete, when we receive the annexed New Year's Address from our friend and brother, the Rev. S. A. WALKER. We have read it with deepest interest, and can endorse his every statement. We see eye to eye with our brother, and feel, and that most forcibly, the facts he has so ably presented. Our regret is, that this valuable Address should not have appeared in these pages at an earlier period of the year, and that its length compels us to divide it. Verily we do live in most solemn and eventful days. Let the reader consider what have been the occurrences—the loud-speaking occurrences—even in the short interval since this Address was written; and well indeed may such consideration lead to the giving heed to the Master's words, "And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch!"—ED.]

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—Approaching very near to my twenty-third year among you, and conscious of advancing age, I feel that my Annual Address must now assume a deeper solemnity, as I seem like one, as Paul said of himself, "ready to depart," and only lingering on the confines of eternity to finish the work appointed for me to do,

with the certainty that the "farewell," as far as this world is concerned, cannot be far off.

It is not, however, upon matters relating to myself that I desire to address you; but upon those of far greater moment, and more intimately connected with your present and eternal good. The life and death of a minister of God are only incidents in the history of the glorious work which God is carrying on, which may appear to affect that work, but which exercise no real influence upon it. It is not ministers who carry it on, but God: they are His instruments, and of them He "puts down one, and sets up another," as seems best to His godly wisdom. They have their various parts assigned to them which, under the guidance of the Spirit, they fulfil, and then they go to their dust, and others rise up in their place to be used as they were, and to be laid aside in their turn.

God works for eternity; and the more we enter into His mind, the more we cultivate the habit of viewing His dealings with us in the light of eternity. If the minister is a man of God, he regards his work more from the divine than the human point of view. He feels that the Gospel which he preaches, and all the religious services in which he engages, belong especially to "the things which must be hereafter;" and this enables him to rise very much above the fears and anxieties of time, and to regard himself and his people as rather "bound up in the bundle of life" than subject, as of course they are, to the sundering effects of death and the grave. The union of God's people with their living Head, Christ Jesus, relieves them not only from condemnation, but from all that it involves; and it is their privilege to know that, as children of God, they are, through the death and resurrection of Him who took humanity that He might die for them, relieved not only from death, but from the fear of it, through which they, as well as all men, are "all their lifetime subject to bondage."

The world, in its present aspect, is not peculiarly calculated either to engage our affection or secure our confidence. Look wherever we may, at home or abroad, the prospect is equally dark and lowering. As regards our own country, a portentous gloom seems to have settled down upon every walk of life, and they who claim to be the best judges of human affairs give us no promise of a speedy change for the better. All the avenues of industry seem, as it were, blocked up with depression on the one hand, and distress on the other, and one expects to hear from day to day of new failures, new bankruptcies, new stoppages of payment. Commerce seems out of gear, and financial enterprises are paralysed. Meanwhile the labouring classes seem not to understand that the demand for what they produce has slackened, and that their employers have not the same ready market for their goods as they used to have, and, therefore, that neither their sales nor their profits are equal to the payment of the same amount of wages as they were in times gone by; consequently, that the workmen must expect to feel with their masters the effect of the depression in trade under which they are suffering. It is because that interested persons come between the employers and the employed, persuading the latter that they are their friends, and inducing them to insist on being paid the same wages that they received in more prosperous times, that we

have strikes and lock-outs, and that trade is driven from England to other countries, and matters here are made worse. There should always be a healthy Christian feeling between masters and men, so that in prosperity and adversity both should rejoice and sorrow together, and they should settle their affairs between themselves without the interference of other parties.

The fact is, selfishness is the bane of our nature, and by God's unerring decree we never indulge it without suffering. What is called the law of competition is only the struggle of one individual or party to become rich or great at the expense of another. It is usually marked in business or politics, where it is most conspicuous, with utter disregard for any interests but those of self; consequently, any means, however unjust, oppressive, or injurious to others, are considered quite allowable if they only seem calculated to accomplish the object in view; hence so many disreputable tricks and artifices are resorted to in trade and in rivalries of any sort. Men who would be ashamed of practising deceit or dishonesty in the transactions of private life, do not hesitate to resort to the most questionable means to complete a bargain or to outstrip a competitor. In this it is evident that self is the only object kept in view, and the interests of our fellow-men are sacrificed without scruple. This is not according to the law of simple humanity, not to speak of that far higher obligation which Christianity imposes on us of doing to others what we would wish them to do to us.

It is said that English goods are beginning to be refused in the markets of India, China, &c., by reason of the frauds discovered in their manufacture. It seems that there is a regular system in England of making up a certain material worn by the natives of those countries that looks like the genuine article, but, when it comes to be worn, proves to be eighty or ninety per cent. of paste, lime, &c., so that when acted upon by the perspiration of the body, it actually dissolves and runs down the skin in a liquid state. This conduct on the part of Englishmen and professed Christians is simply atrocious, and must bring a curse upon the country and the trade in which it is practised. We send our missionaries to these countries to proclaim the religion of the "holy, harmless, undefiled Jesus," and very probably in the same ship go out these basely fraudulent manufactures, and perhaps with them guns made to burst in the hands of those who fire them, and this is called driving a successful trade. Can we wonder that God, who is a righteous Judge, should visit with a blight the business of a country where such base practices are resorted to, with the single object of accumulating wealth, and with utter disregard of what is due to God or man in the transaction?

We cannot help feeling that the great stagnation in trade under which we are suffering is a chastisement from above, calling us to national repentance and turning to God. Those amongst us who have felt an interest in divine things, have been for some time deploring the change for the worse which the country was undergoing from many points of view. There was a time when we prided ourselves on our Protestant principles, and grateful remembrance of the Reformation and its blessings. We seemed to think that our national prosperity

had much to do with our national protest against the superstitions and idolatries of Rome. If that were the case, then the cessation of such a protest would necessarily involve the decline of the prosperity which was based upon it. One thing is certain, that, as regards the Church of Rome, we are not where we were fifty or sixty years ago. Then we dreaded her encroachments, and fenced round our Protestant constitution by every means against her assaults; now, we seem to be setting the warnings of God and man at defiance, and making all kinds of overtures to the great apostacy under which this country and the world groaned for so many centuries, and which, to warn us against all association with it, the Spirit of God brands as "the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth" (Rev. vii. 5). I am no advocate for religious persecutions of any kind, or for depriving men of their civil rights because of their religious opinions, and, therefore, I do not complain of any political privileges bestowed on Roman Catholics merely as a party or sect differing from me in any views of truth; but, when I consider the character of the Papal system—what it is, what it has been, and what it aims to be—I see something very different from a mere denomination of professing Christians, content to dwell side by side with other professors of the same religion, and to claim only their share of the political and social advantages allotted to all men in common. This Roman Catholics cannot do, because of the theory on which their system is based, and it is well that we should thoroughly understand it. They claim to be *the* Church of God on earth—that spiritual body spoken of in the New Testament, belonging to God, beloved of Him, to which all His promises are made, and to which every blessing in heaven and earth belongs. They claim for that Church infallibility, and consequent supremacy over the consciences of all baptised men, women, and children. They insist that no other Church should be tolerated on earth, and that, whenever and wherever the power exists, every human being should be compelled to enter that Church, and to adopt its teaching.

To make this system of despotism complete, there is a head provided for this Church who assumes to be the Vicar of Jesus Christ, and successor of Peter, prince of the apostles. For him the highest powers and prerogatives are claimed. He is called Pope or Father, Supreme Pontiff or High Priest, and Prince of the kings of the earth—nay, he has been called "Our Lord God the Pope," "Another God upon earth," "The Lion of the Tribe of Judah," and other blasphemous titles, indicating that he rules with an authority altogether divine, and must be submitted to as a being endowed with a power from above altogether irresponsible and irresistible. He claims to wield two swords, one of heaven and the other of earth, with which he can smite both the souls and the bodies of men. Of him it is said that he can raise to heaven or cast down to hell; but what much more concerns us is, that he asserts a power to punish, even with death, those who dare to question his authority, or to worship God in any form but that which he prescribes. Strange as it may appear, for centuries the world submitted to his pretensions, and crouched in terror beneath his sway. During the period of his dominion over the earth, millions of men, women, and children were put to death, many of them under

circumstances of cruelty and barbarity, for denying, or even appearing to deny, his claim, or refusing to bow down to the idols which he and those who worked under him had set up. The history of this country is full of the conflicts which our kings have carried on with the pretended Vicar of Jesus Christ, who demanded the right of appointing bishops—generally foreigners, and sometimes even children—to English sees, and to fill up vacant livings and other ecclesiastical offices at their own will and pleasure. Right nobly did some of our kings and statesmen struggle to shake off the foreign usurpation, and to protect the liberties of England. Sometimes they were successful, but often the craft and power of the sacerdotal party proved too much for them, and the chains of superstition and ignorance continued to be fastened on the necks of Englishmen until the dawn of our glorious Reformation.

(*To be continued.*)

Correspondence.

ROUGH AND RUGGED, BUT RIGHT.

To the Editor of the Gospel Magazine.

MY DEAR SIR,—In reading your last number of the GOSPEL MAGAZINE, I saw therein a letter signed “E.” I immediately recognised the speech as belonging to a person I well knew, and was convinced also that I knew who he meant by the friend referred to; so I procured the last December’s number, and, in perusing the account given on page 666, I could not help being struck by how much, to all appearance, it resembles my pathway for the last three years, and I trust it raised a ray of hope in my heart; and I believe it has confirmed me in what steps to take, and thrown a little ray of light on my hitherto dark and miserable pathway. Perhaps at some future time you may hear from me.

I am, yours very truly,

A LITTLE HOPE.

[We rejoice in the foregoing testimony, and pray our God that the writer may be gently and graciously led. It is the greatest mistake to suppose that the right path—that in which the Lord purposes we should travel—will always open with brightness of prospect, excluding all doubts, fears, and apprehensions. So far from this, we have found in our little day, that certain engagements upon which we have entered, or this or that course which we have ventured to pursue, have been identified with the greatest possible weakness. Aye, a thousand fears have possessed the heart as to whether we were right, and as to what would be the issue. This moment, while we write, various positions and different circumstances come crowding in upon the mind, in which, in the review, we plainly discover that the *Lord Himself* was the Leader and the Guardian and the Guide, irrespective of any wisdom, or confidence, or strength of our own. Yea, where we have at the time most *feared*, afterwards we have been most *favoured* in the retracings. On the contrary, when we have entered upon this, or undertaken that, with little or no doubt as to the correctness of our course, there subsequently we have had most cause for regret and deep humiliation. How true are those words of the poet—

“That traveller walks the safest path
Who seldom sees his way.”

We do well to remember that most gracious promise, “I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.” Now certain it is that the blind, having no sight to trust in, must necessarily be very wary and most dependent; and does not their very wariness and watchfulness act, instrumentally, as a preservative? How seldom does a blind person get into trouble; and why? Because their very infirmity is overruled for good.

And, by-and-bye, beloved, when we reach the end of our race, and when enabled, by the power of the Holy Ghost, as the Remembrancer, to look back upon all the way by which He has led us, oh, what mercy and love, wisdom and goodness, shall we discover in those very things which are now, it may be, the source of so much anxiety and discomfort! Every crook and cross, each thorn and trial, will prove in very deed to

“have been most needful;
Not one was in vain.”

Each and every trembler and traveller Zionward will exclaim, “He hath led me by the right way.” And why? Oh, that “he might go to a city of habitation.”

“He led their feet far wandering round;
’Twas the right road to Canaan’s ground.”

—THE EDITOR.]

Reviews and Notices of Books.

The Present Distress: its Causes, Remedies, Consolations, and Lessons.

SUCH is the title of a sermon recently preached by the Rev. T. DAVIS, at St. Andrew’s Parish Church, Hull. The preacher’s text was, “The present distress” (1 Cor. vii. 26). Did space permit, most gladly would we give copious extracts from this clear, outspoken, most Scriptural testimony. All we can do, however, is to quote the following, as among the causes for the present state of things:—

He believed that the irreligion of the masses was one of the great causes. Day by day he was besieged by those in want, but he had made careful inquiry, and had not found one who seemed to be a true believer. They were destitute of personal and family religion. It was said in Proverbs iii. 33, “The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked; but He blesseth the habitation of the just.” Whatever cause there was of a political character, they must look at the fact of this truth in God’s Word. He had no doubt that many of God’s people would feel the present state of things, and suffer in consequence; but he ventured to say that none were in the desperate state that the drunkard, the Godless, and others were reduced to. In Job v. 19—21, was the promise to the God-fearing, “He [the Lord] shall deliver thee in six troubles; yea, in seven shall no evil touch thee. In famine He shall redeem thee from death;” and that well-known text, “I never saw the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread.”

Then, too, our own nation was condemned and guilty of many sins. One of the most serious sins of the present generation was the character of the Education Act; not because they had insisted on the education of the young, but because they had utterly ignored the teaching of the Word of God.

Another great cause of the distress was the national sin of drunkenness. It sometimes occurred to him that God had given the nation up to that sin. When the old world left the worship of the true God, He gave them up to their own lusts; and that was what He seemed to be doing with Romanists and Ritualists—He had given them to believe a lie. In both the Old and New Testaments God speaks of His professing people working their own ruin and destruction. The present distress had hardly made any impression upon the drunkard class. These things were patent to them.

Strikes were a third cause of existing want. He had, from personal intercourse with working men, gathered this fact, that the better class—the most thoughtful of the working men—were against strikes. It was a truth, he fully believed, that these men saw their evil; and he had heard that, in the meeting of the trade councils, the more thoughtful men were outvoted upon these matters by those who were careless and less thoughtful. But, apart from this, upon the broad question, he asked, What good have strikes done? Had the workmen bettered their houses and secured independence? Had they been taken from the public-houses and been made to love the Bible? Indeed, the increase of workmen's wages had only resulted in an outburst of violence and lust. It did not necessarily follow upon increased wages that an advanced prosperity would come. Besides, how few could understand those intricate laws which govern the relationships of capital and labour. He had conversed with men, in railway trains and elsewhere, upon this subject, and he had found them altogether ignorant of the very first principles of political economy.

A fourth cause of the distress was the prevailing love for pleasure at this time. In Proverbs xxi. 17, we read, "He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man; he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich." If they looked in the margin of their Bibles, they would find that the word "pleasure" was translated "sport." To what cause did our Lord trace the prodigal's wicked course? To his love of pleasure. See also Abraham's answer to the rich man in hell: "Thou in thy lifetime receivest thy good things" (Luke xvi. 25). They could not shut their eyes to the fact that this love of pleasure had made considerable advance. Let them take the Saturday half-holiday. He believed, with Lord Shaftesbury, that this holiday has been an unmixt evil.

In speaking of the sin of intemperance, the preacher said that, in the town of Hull alone, £1,200 were spent weekly upon intoxicating drinks.

Grove Chapel Pulpit. Fifty-two Sermons of THOMAS BRADBURY, Minister of Grove Chapel. Vol. II. London: Robert Banks, Racquet Court, Fleet Street.

THREE words will give the character of these sermons—fearlessness, faithfulness, and fulness—and, in support of these three great principles, they are backed up by Scripture after Scripture. For the every statement there is the "Thus saith the Lord." But these sermons are too plain and too uncompromising ever to be palatable to the mere creature taste, or agreeable to the fleshly mind. It is only such as gathered themselves together unto David—namely, "every one that was in *distress*, and every one that was in *debt*, and every one that was *discontented*"—that can relish such food as is here provided. And such *will* relish it, and bless God for such provision.