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"In doctrine shewing uncorruptness."

"Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees which is Hypocrisy."

To the Editors of the Gospel Magazine.

THE SONG OF THE RANSOMED ON EARTH AND IN HEAVEN;

"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain." Rev. v. 12.

MESSRS EDITORS,

THERE is no subject more sweet and engaging to a real Christian, than the sufferings and triumphs of Immanuel, while passing through this vale of tears; and the redeemed in heaven make these glorious topics the burden of their song. Saints on earth and those in glory, all unite to celebrate the wonders of redeeming love. In the upper world they sing without ceasing, while in this inferior sphere, the believer can only be joyful in his Lord in proportion to the light, support, and influences that are afforded him from heaven. Mourning and rejoicing, sorrow and gladness, weeping and triumph, make up the Christian's true portion; but the heavenly world for ever excludes all mourning, sorrow, and tears; for beyond the Jordan of death, all must be joy, gladness, and triumph to the Christian.

I trust I may state without presumption, that I have often found sweet and solemn pleasure in meditating upon the perfections, and gracious acts of the Lord Jesus Christ. This friend of guilty sinners is above all praise. I have read of kings who have been flattered, of warriors who have been unjustly extolled, and of men, who by their historians have been said, to possess excellences they were utter strangers to; but, Mr. Editor, never did I peruse any theological production, in which the one half of the excellences and glories, of our illustrious Lord were recorded; and I here confess myself utterly inadequate to the task, of setting forth the worthiness of the blessed Redeemer; and whether I think upon his perfections, titles, works, benevolence, or his acts of mercy, in the redemption of his elect people, I find my thoughts impoverished,

and all the language I can command, left at an infinite distance beneath the blaze of his ineffable greatness and glory.

It evidently appears that the ever blessed Spirit of Truth, who indited the sacred scriptures, has in their composition studied the frailty and short-sightedness of the Lord's people; hence we find that the most solemn and important truths, are handed down to us in figures so humble and explicit, that the weakest babe in the church of Christ, cannot fail having some degree of information concerning the person and kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. As a proof of this, it may be stated, that the passage of scripture at the head of this paper, exhibits the dear Redeemer in a figurative point of view. There he is called the Lamb, and not only so, but the Lamb that was slain. We read of his being the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and we have many discoveries in the word of life, of his august Majesty and uncreated glories, as the true God, the mighty God, and the everlasting Father; but perhaps no description of the Saviour, can be said to be equally lovely and attracting with that of a Lamb slain for the offences of the guilty. I apprehend, that few of your readers have failed to witness the innocency and meekness expressed in a lamb, either in the field, or as driven through the streets to the place of slaughter. No doubt, some have gone further than this, and have seen the little innocents bleed under the hands of their slayers; these things cannot be void of interest to a regenerated mind. The prophet Isaiah had a gospel view of the mediatorial work of the Lord Christ,—he is led as a Lamb to the slaughter,—and if any ask, who led as a Lamb? we reply, the Maker and Governor of all worlds; and if asked to what he was led, we reply, to be slaughtered by the hands of justice for the sins of his chosen.

I am sensible that none ever did see the worthiness of the Saviour, who were not first of all convinced of their own unworthiness. The Holy Ghost has given a full description of this subject in the gospel; Christ is there exhibited as all lovely, and the sinner is described as being in himself altogether unlovely. The fulness of Christ is set against the emptiness of the sinner,—the wisdom of Christ against the sinner's folly, and the righteousness of Christ against the wickedness of the sinner; and not only so, but the Spirit of Truth teaches all the heaven-born, to lament the dreadful and total depravity of their nature, and to glory alone in salvation as accomplished by the sufferings and death of the blessed Redeemer.

None can sing this song from the heart, 'worthy is the Lamb that was slain,' but those who are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise; these own him to be worthy of a seat on the triumphant throne—worthy to sit at the helm of affairs both in heaven, and on the earth—worthy of the homage of all his creatures—worthy of the elevated positions he fills in the pages of the gospel—worthy to reign in the throne of their hearts, and to be brief; they own him worthy of their esteem, confidence, and religious adoration.

My limits will not allow me to make a few remarks upon each of the above particulars, touching the worthiness of Christ, I shall therefore content myself with the following, and observe, that the Lord Jesus Christ is worthy of the *esteem* of all his dear people. Every called vessel of mercy is taught to regard the Redeemer as the chiefest among ten thousand. A Christian esteems the Saviour to be infinitely precious. Could he call the world and all it contains his own, he knows, that without Christ and his salvation his death would be embittered, and his future existence miserable; earthly esteem is subject to certain restrictions; our best friends on earth are not inflexible, and our foes have worn the veil of friendship, to conceal their real motives, have convinced us how easy it is for mortals to be mistaken and deluded; but, if sincerity of purpose, benevolence of disposition, fidelity of character and deeds of mercy have any claim upon our attention, so as to merit our regard, all these, and infinitely more, meet in the Lamb that was slain.

Every sensible sinner, either feels, or has felt, what it is to be tried, cast, and condemned at the bar of his own conscience. Well can the Lord's called ones remember the bitterness and anguish they felt, when the arrows of the Almighty held them prisoners; and well may they recollect the season when the Lamb that was slain, proclaimed peace and pardon to their minds; this to them was indeed a time of love; and if a literal criminal under sentence of death, would esteem and feel grateful to some kind friend, through whose influence he might be delivered from corporeal death,—What, I ask, does the man feel who has the evidence in his own soul, of being delivered from the wrath to come? It is the design of the Holy Ghost, that the Lamb that was slain shall not be destitute of admirers. In order to effect this purpose, he first opens to the Lord's family, the dreadful secrets of their own hearts, and unfolds a futurity of existence to their view, in which they must suffer endless torment unless a surety, or days man can be found; thus a never dying soul, and a never ending state of suffering, are subjects, that chiefly occupy the minds of the newly regenerated. This emptying process, is only a preparatory work. The Holy Spirit after he has drawn the veil from the foul heart of the sinner, and given him an insight into his own defection, then exhibits to his view, the glory, condescension and mercy of the Saviour in dying for the guilty. Now astonishment fills the breast of the penitent; the infinite contrast overwhelms the sinner so much, that he is lost in wonder and amazement at the grace and compassion of the great head of the church; and to close this scene, the unworthy beholder, is enabled with weeping to fall down at the feet of the crucified, there to confess his sins, and when he rises under a sense of pardoning and forgiving love, he exclaims,—O unexemplified mercy! Hallelujah!—worthy is the Lamb that was slain!

Again, the omnipotent Lamb is also worthy of his people's con-

fidence, upon his oath and promise they may rely with safety ; others may deceive them, but he never will ; he has accomplished the work of salvation in such a glorious manner, that sin cannot reverse it, nor Satan nullify it. It is finished ! the work is done, and this affords the greatest encouragement to the redeemed ; faith has no other resting place, and a gospel hope can find no anchorage save the cross of Jesus Christ. The Lamb that was slain was the confidence of the patriarchs and prophets, and he has been the prop and stay of elect millions down to the present time ; and all the Lord's people, yet to be called by grace, shall be brought to confide alone in the Saviour of sinners for life and salvation. The child of God may fear presumption, and the devil will often attempt to sink him in despair, and in seasons of darkness and bondage, he may conclude, that he has neither part nor lot in the great matter of salvation ; still his fears cannot alter facts, and as he feels himself a poor, lost, condemned, and sinful worm, who dares not confide or trust in himself, or in his own performances, he has every encouragement to adopt the language of the church, "in the Lord have I righteousness and strength." A believer may trust the Lamb that was slain, with his soul, his body, his secrets, and with all that relates to his well-being here, and to future glory above the skies. Never did the Saviour flatter the expectations of a sinner ; never did he abandon and delude any, who placed their hope and confidence in his great salvation ; his power, his wisdom, his godhead, and matchless benevolence, proclaim him an object worthy of the confidence of his people : he never gave a promise that shall fail in its accomplishment—never undertook a cause in the sinner's soul, that shall miscarry,—never wounded a sinner's heart but with the intention of healing it,—never laid a burthen or cross on the Christian that was too heavy,—never chastised his chosen, but with a compassionate intention, and never met with a case however necessitous and dreadful, that baffled his skill, or outstripped the mighty influence of his arm.

This glorious Messiah is the confidence of his chosen through all the discouraging, and diversified stages of life. In every furnace, in every valley, and in every storm, he is their safe-guard ; amid pining sickness, and exquisite suffering, he is their constant attendant ; and when nature's last effort is made, in the very article of death itself, Jesus is with his family, and wipes the last falling tear from their faces ; and then, O wonderful grace ! he receives their spirits to his bosom, and lands them safely in the kingdom of glory. Jesus they worship on earth ; Jesus they will worship in heaven. There they will own him, equal in majesty and glory to the Father and Holy Ghost, and join with the heavenly throng, to sing the grand anthem of,—*"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain."*

Manchester.

A DWARF.

ON THE BIRTH OF THE CHURCH.

THE church of God may be considered as one and indivisible, or divisible; yet but one.

If the former be the fixed subject for consideration; then a view must be taken of the church in her essential parts.

The natural or constitutional members of this church—are not angels, for they are *ministering spirits*, or servants to the church; Not all men, for some men are eternally consigned to *everlasting fire*. But the election of grace are considered and accounted the natural and constitutional members of this body: *a seed shall serve him, it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. In thy book all my members were written.*

The eternal point or head of this body, is the Lord Christ; the central point of this church, in whom every member of the election of grace met—as the fruit, blossom, bud, leaf, and branch, meet in the vine. And he is the head of the same;—because there is no living body without a living head,—and a living head supposes a living body: this is clear in the figure—that is, Adam, in whom Eve lived or existed before she was brought into form; and Adam being constituted the head—supposes or proves the life of his body, which was Eve. As this is clear in the figure or shadow so is it true and full in the original or substance: *for Adam was a figure of him who was to come.* According to this doctrine the election of grace, or all the chosen family, have had an existence in Christ ever since Christ was set up. But, Christ was set up as the head of his body the church from everlasting—therefore the church has had Christ as a head from everlasting. Adam, because he was the first man that appeared in our world, and because that he stood in covenant relation to us in Eden, is generally supposed to be the natural head of the church; but such reasoning is not judicious; for the head of the church ought to exist and to be in character as the head when the church began to exist;—the church of God is saved with an everlasting salvation. Therefore the head must have existed and been in character as the head, when this salvation was settled upon the church, *even from everlasting.* This is true, not of Adam, but of Adam's Lord, who is Christ Jesus, *the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending*, anointed to the office and work as the head of the church.

The office and work of Christ, in the unalterable and eternal act of settlement for the church may be comprehended by considering that all the attributes and perfections of infinite majesty should, in all the harmony and glory of infinite perfection, be made manifest in the salvation of the church: *The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.* Therefore, to him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end, Amen.

The second person in the glorious Trinity clothed himself with human nature; and this human nature had in itself the intrinsic

or essential properties of every member of that church but sinless, which church is saved with an everlasting salvation. As I live, saith the Lord, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all.

In the fulness of time constituted his humanity : "the Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old ; *I was set up from everlasting or ever the earth was.*"

By a joint display of the infinite wisdom and power of the Trinity this work was begun ; and in the fulness of time his humanity was conceived in the womb of the Virgin Mary. It was this blessed person who from everlasting gave himself to be manifested in due time.

This mysterious person having in himself *the fulness of the God-head bodily*, must have an eternal sufficiency of life, grace, power, and glory, for the supply of the wants of his body for ever and ever :—*My God shall supply all your need, according to his riches, in glory by Christ Jesus.*

This amazingly wonderful person was set up as the head of his body, the church, from everlasting, as upon a mountain ; *I have set my king upon the holy hill of Zion.*—And in this character he was to proceed on the work of creation ; in which performance he has proved himself to be *the Lord of Hosts which is mighty in council and excellent in working*. Here it must and will with the whole elect family, be said—"*Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power : for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.*"

He is a member of our body ; being flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone ; and therefore, as the supreme, *appointed in all things to have the preeminence.*

Thus as Christ is the head of the church, his body ; so is the church natural to him as such : so natural, so near, and so dear, as the apple of his eye ;—As the palms of his hands,—As a seal upon his heart. He took and wears now the same flesh as his children, as in all their afflictions he was afflicted, as in all our infirmities he is touched with a feeling sense of our *sensible absence* from him, he is the head of his body the church ; and the church having such a head, *is*, by nature and grace ; by reason, and the fitness of things, *ONE* and *INDIVISIBLE*.

This church, though one, is distributed out by divisions ; not one part from another, but on different parts of the earth at different times. The mystical body of Christ is called the "*king's daughter*," to show or bespeak the interest which the church elect bath in the everlasting love of God, and the nearness of the union in the whole family. The scriptures, generally considered, speak but of two children—Christ *THE SON*, and the church *THE DAUGHTER* : Hence, she is acknowledged by Christ to be his sister, because but one flesh or humanity is peculiar to both ; and his spouse, because he, as God, passed by the nature of angels, and took the church's nature into union with his divine ; so, making one person of an innu-

merable number of members. *I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.*

This body of Christ is called the *house*, the *temple*, the *dwelling place*, and *habitation* of and for God, because every act of grace has, by the church, been considered as so many steps towards the accomplishment and manifestation of eternal life by the death of Christ:—*They have seen thy goings, O God; even the goings of my God, my king, in the sanctuary*; and because this body of Christ, as the dwelling-place or seat of God, *is the salt of the earth*; and, because only in this body *is God worshipped in spirit and in the truth.*

The qualifications for this body, is essential to its character, as the church of God, the body of Christ, the election of grace, a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, the general assembly of the first born which are written in heaven,—Christ, and all fullness of the God-head in him; which in infinite treasures of wisdom and grace, were settled upon this body from all eternity as its unalienable right: and Christ the head is from everlasting made—wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, to his church: therefore the elect of God are complete in him, in the possession of every grace that could be devised by infinite majesty.

These, and nothing else, will, nor can satisfy that family which is appointed, not to wrath, but to obtain salvation by Christ Jesus, and all attempts to add to these perfections is madness in the extreme.

After the church had been, in the every member thereof, numerated or numbered,—nominated or named, to be the body of Christ, fixed, founded, and settled on its everlasting foundation,—secure for eternal glory, the distribution or appearance began in the creation of Adam, and from the creation in various revolutions of nations, kingdoms, and people, until the adorable Jesus assumed that body which had been prepared for him.

In the period of his ministry, three of the most grand, most awful, and the most convulsive events to human nature took place, that ever the earth had experienced or the heavens had witnessed. The death of Christ was the first; the dissolution of the Jewish church and nation, the second; and the commencement or birth of the Gentile church, the third. These three events, so awfully grand in themselves, so general and effective in their operations, and so convulsive in their effects, to the thrones, principalities, and powers of earth and hell, took place within the space or term of fifty years.

J. CARTER.

CHRIST'S VISIT TO THIS EARTH.

WHAT the condition of the old creation was before the forming of light, that is man's before regeneration; the old creation was "without form, and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep;" so is man; man, he is *without form or comeliness*, a mass of darkness, and disorder, and misery. As the darkness of the night overspreads the face of the earth before the spring of day; so a melancholy night of darkness overspreads all the children of men. Immediately upon the entry of sin, a curtain, a vail, was drawn between God and man, by the justice and holiness of God, till it was rent again by the death and blood of Christ. What darkness was upon our first parents before Christ was revealed in the first promise! such a darkness as caused horror and trembling, and flying in among the thickets of paradise. There is a manifold darkness that sin has brought upon man: a darkness of ignorance; the eyes of the understanding are blind by the fall, that he cannot know, cannot receive the things of God; a darkness of error, full of mistaken notions about God and the things of God; so as to change the truth of God into a lie, to put darkness for light, and light for darkness: a darkness of enmity and prejudice against God; man by nature is at "enmity against him, and alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in him." The very darkness of death is upon him; "he sits in the regions and shadow of death," the darkness of a legal death, being "*condemned already*, and the wrath of God abiding on him:" the darkness of spiritual death, being *without* God, and consequently without life, "in the world, dead in trespasses and sins, like the slain that lie in the grave." Now, my dear reader, this is your condition by nature, if Christ has not come in a way of grace to visit you with mercy.

Christ is a glorious sun, whose coming brings light along with him. "Unto you that fear my name, shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." All the stars in the firmament, and constellations of the heavenly bodies, cannot make day till the sun arise; so neither could the angels of heaven afford the least glimmering of comfort or relief to a lost world, till the Son of God came and paid us a visit; he alone is "the God of salvation, to whom belong the issues from death."

When Christ came upon this errand, for our salvation, he was unconstrained, without any manner of force. What is said of the natural sun, that he "rejoiceth as a strong man to run his race," is much more true of Christ the sun of righteousness; he "rejoiced in the habitable parts of the earth, and his delights werewith the sons of men." And as the sun in the firmament, with the greatest freedom, scatters his beams through the world, so doth Christ scatter the rays and beams of his grace and love among sinners in the dispensation of the everlasting gospel. And when he comes by his Spirit, either in a day of conversion, or of a renewed manifestation of himself to a believer, it is with delight and pleasure that he doth it:

“Behold he cometh, leaping upon the mountains, and skipping upon the hills.”

When we were brought low by our iniquities, lying upon the very confines of hell; Christ who lay in his Father's bosom from eternity, he “who inhabits eternity, and dwells in the high and holy place,” came to this lower abode, he humbled and abased himself to meet us; he left the upper regions of glory, to dwell or tabernacle with us upon earth. Hence we are told, that though he was “in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, yet he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

From the ancient years of eternity before ever the world was made, Christ set his love upon us. “But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be ruler in Israel: whose goings forth have been from old, from everlasting.” Which denotes the eternal generation of the Son; he was begotten of his Father from eternity, being the same eternal, independant, self-existent God with him: and pointed out his eternal destination by the Father to be the Redeemer and Saviour of lost sinners; agreeable unto which is said of Christ, “I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.” This was, as it were, his first motion towards us, though, as yet, at a great and inconceivable distance, who wonder at this wonderful grace and love of God, looked upon us when he saw us in our blood, and before we had any other being save in his own decree! “When I saw thee in thy blood, I said unto thee, live.”

Our first parents after the fall, were told, that “the seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent.” This was, as it were, the first peep of day-light on a lost world; for no sooner had man sinned, but a dark and dismal night of wrath from the Lord of hosts did overspread our horizon, which struck our first parents with such horror, that they endeavoured to hide themselves among the bushes of paradise: even while they were every moment expecting to be stricken through with the barbed arrows of divine vengeance and wrath, the Messiah is revealed and promised, and light and deliverance appear with him. And all the prophecies, types, promises, and ceremonies of the Old Testament dispensation, were nothing else but the gradual advances of the sun of righteousness toward our earth.

The actual incarnation or manifestation of Christ in our nature, was the rising of the sun in the open view of the world, and glorious it was, we are told by those that saw it, that, “the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth.” The angels, these morning stars, they sing together, and proclaim the tidings of his arrival, as a matter of joy and triumph. We “bring

you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." And thereupon they break forth with an anthem of praise, saying, "glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men." How did this sun of righteousness rejoice to run his race of humiliation in this lower world, having his divine glory obscured with a vail of flesh, lest his dazzling glory should have overwhelmed us! The beams of divine glory were ever breaking through the vail of flesh, in his doctrine, in his miracles, in his birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension. He fulfilled the law, satisfied justice, finished transgression, made an end of sin, brought in everlasting righteousness, confirmed the covenant, overthrew principalities and powers, destroyed death, opened up the way to the holy of holies, laid a bridge of communication between heaven and earth, by which God might come to man without prejudice to his justice, and man might come unto God without being consumed or overwhelmed.

When the gospel revelation was first to be published, and "life and immortality brought to light," to a people or nation. What a day of gladness was it, when, after the resurrection of Christ, the apostles, and other ministers, as the heralds of the great Messiah, began to proclaim pardon, peace, and salvation through his blood, first to the Jews, and afterward to the Gentile nations! how did the dark mists of Jewish rites, types, and ceremonies, and of Gentile idolatry and abominations, vanish, before the bright rays of the sun of righteousness conveyed in the dispensation of the gospel! and what multitudes of converts were added unto the church compared, for their innumerable number, unto the drops of the dew from the womb of the morning! and what a day was it in our own land, when the gospel came at first to be preached to our forefathers, who were lying under a dark night of Pagan Idolatry! and when after that a dark night of Popish blindness.

Thus it is, "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shines into the heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ." O how sweet and surprising is this! and what a day does then break and spring up in the soul! It brings light, and such a light as turns the shadow of death into a pleasant morning. It is a light that not only shines upon the man, but shines into his heart irradiating all the powers of his soul, and translating him from darkness to a marvellous light. It is "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God." The Spirit now begins to rend the face of the covering that was upon the soul, so that the beams of divine glory, which shined externally in a gospel dispensation, do now break in upon the soul, changing him from glory to glory; the Spirit now glorifies Christ, by taking the things of Christ, and shewing them unto the soul. And all this in the face or person of Christ. The man who before could see no form or comeliness in him why he should be

desired, he now sees him to be, "fairer than the children of men, the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person" and his heart rises at every word or doctrine that has the least tendency to disparage his divine glory. If this is your experience, then I may safely say, as Christ did to Zaccheus, "This day is salvation come to thy house," to thy heart, to thy soul. Perhaps the reader of these lines is experiencing a dark night of desertion. Perhaps he has been walking in darkness, and can see no light; clouds and darkness are round about him; God is hiding, Satan harrasing him with his fiery darts, iniquities prevailing, trouble and distress surrounding him on every hand, and the soul brought to that pinch, as to be crying out, "O that it were with me as in months past! I am cast out of his sight; his mercy is clean gone, he hath forgotten to be gracious;" like Zion, "the Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me." However, take courage, the day will soon break, the sun of righteousness will arise and break through all interposing clouds, giving a challenge of grace. "Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, my way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God?" for he takes the poor soul all in his arms and bosom, saying to it, as he did to Ephraim, "Thou art my dear son, thou art my pleasant child, I remember thee still, my bowels are troubled for thee, I will surely have mercy upon thee; and with everlasting kindness am I now returned to thee, though for a moment I had forsaken thee." How is unbelief, jealousy, despondency, and false surmises of God, put out of countenance! And heartily does the soul blame itself for its rash and hasty conclusions of the Lord's love and faithfulness, saying, "so foolish was I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee." I see that "his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

Take courage believer, there is a sweet visit, that Christ makes to his people at death; "I go *away*, but I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." This will be the day-spring of eternal glory, which shall never suffer an eclipse, and which shall never end in a night of desertion, or affliction, or death. Lift up thy head believer, for this day of complete redemption is drawing near; the day of complete redemption to thy soul is coming at death, and complete redemption to thy soul and body is a coming: for "when Christ who is thy life shall appear, then shalt thou also appear with him in glory;" thou shalt then sing, and say, "Lo this is our God, we have waited for him, we will be glad, and rejoice in his salvation."

E.

To the Editors of the Gospel Magazine.

REMARKS BY RALPH VENING.

DEAR BRETHREN,

My heart has been warmed and profited in the perusal of the following remarks, by Ralph Vening : I hope to see it arranged in your Armour-house at your discretion, praying God the Holy Spirit to make it a precious blessing to his dear children, who peruse your dauntless publication.

PHILEMON.

THE TRIUMPH OF ASSURANCE OVER THE LAW, SIN, THE WORLD, WANTS, AND PRESENT ENJOYMENTS.

WHEN the all blessed Spirit of the ever living and ever loving God hath given his testimony, and set his seal to the soul, which before sat quivering and trembling, at the door of hope, that God doth own, accept, and pardon it : when he comes and kisseth it with the kisses of his mouth, and pours out the savour of his sweet ointments upon it, Oh ! what a calm is there in the soul ! Oh what halcyon days doth it then live in ! it enjoys a jubilee in every moment. Oh the holy clasplings and celestial interweavings of love ! Oh the breathings and mutual stammerings forth of love, that are between God and this soul ! Oh the ineffable mystery which lies in their reciprocal enjoyments ! you (nay itself) can scarcely tell, who enjoys, and who is enjoyed ; who fills, and who is filled ; who possesseth, and who is possessed ; there is such a spiritual mixture in the union, without confusion or composition. Time stealeth away in these enjoyments and is not perceived, the soul is so busily employed, in taking in, and going out to God. Hours are not accounted for minutes, nor days for hours ; it rather seems an eternity than time. O how doth the soul dance and leap for joy within itself, at the harmonious melody, and well tuned music, which is played within it by the finger of God ! Oh the heavenly laughter which ariseth in it, from the gentle touches of the Spirit upon the tender conscience ! Oh ! how it is ravished with the thing for the rays of light, and the flowerings forth of love ; the soul forgets itself to mind its God, or rather minds itself in minding God. Am I in heaven, or is heaven in me ? is time gone up, or eternity come down ? Oh what a consenting of happiness do I find within me ! methinks I see the first fruits of Canaan brought into my hungering soul, upon the staff of consolation, by the two supporters of the saints, Christ and the Spirit. Methinks I hear my beloved calling, arise my love, my dove, my fair one, and come away : come forth from among the clefts. Let me see thy face ; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance comely. Arise my love and come away. Oh how do the love speaking words of Christ affect the heart, and even transport the soul into admiration ! all the pangs of the new birth, all the throws of its travail, all its after birth of sorrow are now forgotten, and swallowed up in ravishment, in raptures, for joy, that this man-child

of assurance begotten by the Spirit of God is at last borne into the soul ; the soul is now surrounded with the glittering rays of the sun beams of love ; it even weeps for joy ; it is even sick of love, while healed by it. Now it begins to feast itself upon loves, and to cheer itself with the bridegroom's voice. My beloved hath pronounced me fair, and there is no spot in me ; now the day of mine espousals is come, wherein all the hidden treasures—all the precious jewels—all the rich possessions—all the sparkling beauties—all the glorious holiness—all the divine wisdom—all the all sufficient power ; yea, all the all of Christ is made over to me. What shall I fear now, who am more than a conqueror ; what shall I want, who have all things richly to enjoy ; who shall lay any thing to my charge, being freed from all my sins ; who shall hurt me ; what shall daunt me ; who have love to controul, and power to guard me ? I am one with love, and nothing shall dissolve this knot of love ; nothing shall separate between my beloved and me : for he is mine and I am his for ever. Now I shall in short, lay down how-much a saint, to whom the Lord by his Spirit, hath given testimony of his union with Jesus Christ, is born above the law, above sin, above wants and troubles, above the world, yea, above what he hath from God, *here in grace and by grace,*

HIS TRIUMPH OVER THE LAW.

THE law is so far from being Boanerges to such a saint, that it speaks him fair, and calls him blessed ; the law comes not to him, (as of old from Sinai) with terrible thunderings, but it passeth by as a *still voice* ; being silenced by Jesus Christ, who hath stopped its mouth and sealed it up from cursing. Do this and live, is no law to him, and cursed be every one that abideth not in all the things of the law to do them, infers no curse upon him ; such statutes are all repealed as to him ; and the date of all such patents is expired. The law cannot without injustice, serve an arrest on him as an unrighteous person, though he be not as yet without sin. For the large bills of indictment which the law had to charge upon him, are all cancelled ; and whatever it plead against him, it can never cast him. He hath an everlasting counsellor, a righteous advocate at God's right hand, and God's discharge within his own breast for his acquittance. Free grace doth clasp him within her arms as her heart's delight ; mercy embraces and embosoms him as her dearest darling ; and for grace and mercy sake, the very judge and justice itself is become his friend ; so that though he be found a breaker of the law, yet a pardon makes up that breach ; and that the law may not suffer wrong, nor have any complaint to make, the debt is paid by his surety for him : which gives God as much content, and makes as much to the saint's discharge, as if he had paid the debt ; yea, Jesus Christ hath made God more reparation than ever the saint by breaking the law did do him wrong ; and God is more contented, and better pleased with the satisfaction of Christ, than he was either discontented or displeased for the breach of the law ;

so that the law may with as much equity curse Christ himself, as curse the saint. For as Christ was in the world, well pleasing and acceptable, yea, altogether lovely in his Father's eye; so is the saint in Christ and for Christ, and of this righteousness hath Christ himself convinced the world, in that he is to sit for ever at his Father's right hand in glory; to which honour and dignity he had never been (as now he is on behalf of the saints) advanced if he had not fulfilled his Father's will and paid all dues and demands to the utmost farthing. And on this account though a saint cannot keep the law, his righteousness is not, (though his obedience be) the less complete, for he is complete in Christ who hath *outlaw'd* the law, and turned the curse into a blessing; and though a saint cannot be justified by the law, yet the law itself cannot but clear him, and give him the white stone of absolution.

(To be continued.)

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ON THE EFFECTS OF SIN.

(Concluded from p. 442.)

THERE is such a valley of humiliation contained in such truths, when contrasted with the proud and haughty spirits of the sons and daughters of Adam, as the teachings of the Holy Ghost can alone unfold, or enable us to enter into. But into such a valley, sooner or later, the redeemed of the Lord must enter. We must in the main, as we say, be stripped of all help from self-sufficiency, and made bare, and in reality, not in word only, as absolutely dependent upon our Heavenly Father, for every thing necessary to life and godliness; as an helpless, inexperienced child, is to its natural parent for every thing necessary to its well being. Consider believer, for a moment, what your wisdom amounts to in what lays before you, either in temporal or spiritual things. You know not the deceivableness of your great adversary in his next mode of attack upon you,—how subtle his devices are,—the wily snares he is master of,—nor how much yet within you he has to work upon, sweetly congenial to thy fleshly appetites.—How terrific, and raging, and overwhelming in the force of his power, he sometimes pours down upon the feeble spirits of the Lord's people, swallowing them up, as it were, in the vortex of confusion, fear, and dismay, that they feel no spiritual breath in them; they know not for the moment where they are, what is coming upon them, or who can send them deliverance. Thus handled, how pitiable the condition of the Lord's people in this wilderness; and what would the issue to them be, but wreck and ruin, were it not for the wisdom, love, and care, and power, of their precious Redeemer. In such soul-exercise as this, they have some light and insight into such a scripture as this, *If the righteous scarcely be saved; where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?* 1 Pet. iv. 18. But on the other hand should the Lord enlarge our hearts in himself, or his cause, in his great and glorious salvation; what a ready something will be wait-

ing within, to array us with an air of self-confidence, and self-sufficiency; against which, if the Lord withhold some humbling stroke of his hand, it will ere long, make us appear any thing and every thing, but a sinner saved by the free favor and grace of God, which was given to his redeemed in Christ Jesus before the world was. Alas! alas! what are we in our best estate but vanity!! A humble, meek, and lowly Jesus, in the travail of his soul in the garden of Gethsemane, and the remaining humiliation attendant upon his mortal existence, (applied to the conscience by the sweet power of the Spirit as endured by him for us) is the best and all-efficacious antidote, to the bloated swellings of that fountain of evil, that insatiable, and many-headed monster, PRIDE.

A serious glance over such experience as this, tried believer, contrasted with the scripture before us, will almost bear any complexion in its meaning, rather than the construction, M. K. H. would fix upon it.—But say you, What meaning has it then? I answer, it appears to me in this light, and without a doubt to the contrary, and I believe it to be the mind of the Holy Ghost thereon too, who inspired John to record it, viz: That it contains the tender bowels of our covenant God in Christ, stooping down in sweet condescending tokens of his loving heart, to his mourning and sorrowing family in their low estate in the wilderness. He speaks to us in such language, as a man speaketh to his friend. It is not so much to express his own heart and mind in reference to the atonement of Christ, nor what his thoughts upon it are, in the kingdom of his glory, as what he knows to be the state of our feelings upon it, from a combination of painful circumstances in the course of our earthly pilgrimage; which like Job's messengers, tread in such quick succession one upon the heel of another, that we cannot breathe between. The result is, we have fightings without, and fears within, which the Lord knows his tried ones are often (or seem to be) a prey unto, and but for his preventing and restraining grace, would in the end utterly sink under. Therefore by his servant John, an earthen vessel like ourselves, in whom he hath put the treasure, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of the vessel, he encourages the faith, hope, and love of his people, whilst it is written, *my little children, these things write I unto you that ye sin not; and if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins.* Instead therefore of finding room to impeach the veracity, or wisdom of God, (which appears to be the spirit of M. K. H. if his views of the atonement of Christ be wrong) from such amazing stoops of his gracious heart, to such faint-hearted, ignorant and untoward worms as we are,—we rather feel amazed at, we wonder, and adore, the God of our salvation, who so abidingly loves us (not our sins, or sinful doings, but our persons) and will do so, till there shall no cloud remain between his face and ours—when we shall no longer see through a glass darkly, as is the case now, but

face to face;—and at times we feel the want of language, much sweeter than what we are acquainted with, or ever shall be, in this world, sufficiently to love and praise his name, for such blessed openings of his bowels and mercies towards us, here and there in his world, who feel so slow of heart to believe the record God gives of his Son.

It is therefore to the experience of the believer, and for his encouragement to hope still in God, that we say such condescending means are used in God, and in the ministry of his servants the apostles, and every other faithful ambassador of his word; and in no instance is such language recorded, in respect to God himself, as at one time being satisfied with the atonement of his Son, and at another time as dissatisfied, and then demanding, as M. K. H. says a second payment at the church's hands.—It is an old saying but a true one, that none are so blind as they who wont see. How far such an adage is really applicable to the mental vision of my opponent, is not for me to determine; but I do consider, that a few moments serious reflection upon the subject, unshackled by prejudice, would have set him right. But on the contrary, if what M. K. H. has written, be the real and deliberate sentiments of his heart, it verily appears to me, that from his expression, *a second payment of one debt* he exerts all his ability to establish two points. The one is, to render contemptible the truth, that the blood of Jesus was shed for the sins of his people, as well believers as when unbelievers, which verily and truly is scripture truth, however contemptible it may appear to M. K. H. and the other is to convince the believer, that sin in him is now so nullified in its nature, that God's chastenings of him in his own person, and his sorrow on account of it, is all prevalent and meritorious before God to put away the guilt of it. These two points are twin brothers, and such a fatality attends them, that they stand or fall together. But so antichristian they appear to me, that I must say my spirit shrinks, and recoils from such opinions, as the tender plant from the northern blast; from which in the full rigour of winter, nothing is seen or felt but what is gloomy, chilling, frozen, and deathly.

But considering the language of the apostle, as it is really meant to be, applicable with other portions of a similar nature, to the backsliding feelings of the believer, in one way or another; we behold beauty, not deformity, and symmetry, not disproportion:—and it is to the humbled soul under the teachings of the Spirit, that such condescending stoops of our Emanuel are peculiarly sweet, grateful, and encouraging.—O, M. K. H. do remember, and not forget this! It will not lead the Lord's people to licentiousness, but break and melt their poor hearts into love and thankfulness, that they have such a God to go to in their worst estate; for at times they really feel so less than nothing, and vanity, that they know not what language to make use of, or how to put sentences together, as at all indicative of their disjointed spirits (to use a phrase so homely) in their frequent approaches to God.

M. K. H. should have more wisdom and experience in the deeps of scripture truth, in unison with Christian experience, than lump things together in such an unmeaning mass: but when in some measure rightly divided, the beauty and fitness of scripture is manifest, and its truths harmonious, not contradictory, unless carnal reason is to take the chair as umpire or judge.

Having therefore (and as I conceive will be generally thought) sufficiently canvassed the subject in dispute, I now take my farewell leave of it; and in conclusion, only add a word or two to each of my opponents. In reference to J. H.—I have lately been told that J. H. who is a Baptist minister, was called upon by some of his friends here, honestly to declare his sentiments either for or against what he has advanced in the Gospel Magazine upon the atonement of Christ. He publicly did so in the pulpit; and I have been informed by a friend who heard him, that this decided expression, or words the same in signification, fell from his lips, viz: “that he really could not live from day to day, without an application of the atonement of Christ for his sins.”—This profession of faith decidedly contradicts his former assertion, namely, that the blood of Christ was never shed for the sins of believers; therefore I call upon him in a few lines (and I care not how few) in the Gospel Magazine, honestly to recant his former opinions, to the glory of God, and the satisfaction of such who may halt between two opinions; and to M. K. H.—I trust that he will, or rather reasonably expect that he should, before that he can substantiate in the hearts and minds of his readers, the communication of his sentiments, contained in his pieces “On the Effects of Sin in answer to P. T.” first prove that what I have been enabled to advance in opposition thereto, from scripture, Christian experience, and other comparison, is false in its meaning and application; and in the next place, produce scripture proof, &c. more pointed to establish his opinions, than those I have brought forward to invalidate them; this done, there will be something to recommend it to notice, but not till then.

May the redeemed of the Lord be frequent at a throne of grace, for the teachings of the Spirit in this cloudy and dark day, to guide them into all truth. I cannot but believe, from my own experience, and personal observation on every hand, that the real church of Christ is fast descending into the twilight of that midnight darkness, foretold by the Lord in his parable of the Ten Virgins. It must as surely come to pass, as Peter's denial. May a double portion of the Lord's Spirit rest upon Zion's watchmen, in every grace and gift of her Lord, for Zion's sake. But blessed be God, though inevitably they sleep, as soundly as the mere professing church, as to all outward appearances of fruitfulness and spirituality, yet in the mind of God there remains a distinction still: for as was revealed to Balaam concerning Israel of old, the same truth in the mind of God, is still permanent, and ever will be, while the world stands,

viz:—*That the people of God shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations.* May we be prayerful and watchful, and so kept near unto him as his chosen people, come what will, whether in the dispensations of his providence or his grace, for his mercies sake, Amen.

Manchester, July, 1831. T. W.

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GRATITUDE.

WE praise the Holy Spirit, who dwellest in us, and walkest in us, and comfortest us in the truth of the Saviour's love, and art his blessed witness in our hearts. Jesus, thou king of saints, we give thanks to thee for thy great glory, who reignest for us above, and reignest in us by faith and love. Thou, O God, and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our Almighty God and Father in him; "the Father of all our mercies, and the God of all our comforts;" we give thanks to thee, for that thou "hast loved us, and hast given thy Son for us;" and, in the faith and knowledge of him, hast given "us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace." "Thus in all things, the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped." And, thus the praises of the holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, are proclaimed from gracious hearts. So it was in the church of old: "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name," Jehovah, the covenant-God, the Trinity of persons, in the unity of essence, "we give glory for thy mercy and truth's sake." Thou hast shewed mercy to the miserable, therefore our praises ascend to the merciful one. We are the objects relieved by thee; and thy mercy is bestowed on us for truth's sake. For the sake of the truth of covenant engagements, according to the truth of everlasting love; agreeable to the promise of truth, and the oath of truth, ratified and confirmed by the blood of Jesus, who is emphatically, the truth. Therefore we call upon him.

The Spirit of Inspiration stiles the saints of God, "the faithful in Christ Jesus," Eph. i. 1. As "they are in him, who is the truth;" so they confess, call upon him, and worship him in truth, as the Lord, the Lord God Jesus, the only begotten of the Father. "God of the substance of the Father, begotten before all worlds; and man of the substance of his mother, born in the world; "perfect God and perfect man;" who, as a Lamb without spot of sin, was once sacrificed to redeem a lost world—who is the Lamb of God, that "taketh away the sin of the world;" and whoever lives to save all, who cry to him for mercy. Those, who do not believe Jesus is both Lord and God cannot worship with us; cannot call upon Jesus with us, nor hope for mercy from him; and yet without the mercy of Jesus, our Lord, and our God, they must remain miserable sinners, and perish everlastingly. "But to them who believe, Christ is precious," as our God-man and Mediator. So we

believe. We know we constantly stand in need of his mercy ; and therefore we cry again and again to him for it.

As verily, as we believe, thy righteous Father did lay all our iniquities upon thee—as truly as thou didst “bear all our sins in thine own body upon the tree,”—as surely as thou, O holy Lamb of God hast “put away our sins by the sacrifice of thyself,” removing its punishment from us, and its filth, and its guilt, from before the sight of God, thy righteous Father ; so take away the guilt of sin from our consciences—so pardon sin in our hearts—so save us from its power—that it reign not in us, nor have dominion over us.

On the belief of thy sacrifice, O Lamb of God, for our sins, our prayer is founded. As we plead thine atonement for mercy, so for an answer to our prayers. Hast thou not said, “whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son ? Yea, Lord : and, as knowing, how slow of heart we are to believe thy love, and how backward, to ask thy greatest blessings and richest comforts ; therefore, to quicken and encourage us, thou hast again repeated, “If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I “will do it,” John xiv. 13. Thanks to thee, Lord, for these sweet words of promise. It is enough. Thou hast said it, I will do it. In humble prayer we call, in humble hope we will wait. We have thy word for the object of our faith, and the warrant of our hope. That keeps our souls looking up to thee, and waiting upon thee, till thou shalt accomplished all thy will in us, and save us to the very uttermost.

Thou, Lord of life and glory, who wast once “crucified between two thieves, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left ;” and, when thou wast hanging on the cross, didst answer that prayer, from the lips of a dying malefactor ; “Lord remember me, when thou comest into thy kingdom !” O hear us, Lord, remember us, now thou art in thy kingdom. We also stand in need of the very same mercy, as that thief, whom thou savedst in the last hour. For, we also are malefactors, miserable evil doers, as he was. There is no way for us to be saved, and to enter into thy kingdom, O Jesus, but by thy free, unmerited mercy. Therefore, Lord, have mercy upon us, who are “looking for the mercy of thee, unto eternal life.”

W. M.

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To the Editor of the Gospel Magazine.

MESSRS EDITORS,

I TAKE the liberty to ask of you a favour, that is, the insertion of the following remarks in your Valuable Publication. I have often found sweet fellowship with you and your correspondents in the blessed truths of God—The Lord bless you and keep you faithful, as he hath heretofore, and I believe he will ; so that your last days may be your best days—so writes one who dwells in Mesech at the sign of the Harp, by the Brooks of the Willows.

AN ADDRESS TO AN OLD SOLDIER.

As I am a young recruit, it may be deemed ambition in me to address one of such an age as you are; but as youth is prone to folly I would say to you, as Paul the aged said once,—“bear with me a little in my folly.”

I have read over your piece, and I am so incredulous, I cannot take all things upon trust or hearsay from man; I therefore observe that whenever God the Father or the Holy Ghost speaks to, or of Christ, or the church, it cannot be spoken of one without the other—they, twain being one flesh; but it appears to me, that you, and your valuable friend T. R. will have it only spoken to Christ abstractedly. But the Lord saith, What God hath joined together let no one put asunder.

I read that Christ in all things is to have the preeminence, therefore I think that you have rather dishonoured him by saying, that “the preciousness of Christ in God the Father’s esteem, is of this relative nature, and his honorableness arises from his union with his betrothed bride, who is the fulness of him that filleth all in all;”—this seems to be darkening counsel. Remember, all the fulness of the Godhead personally dwells in him—all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are in him—the fulness of grace, life, light, and every love blessing of Jehovah to his one church, are in him; and the church are called his fulness also.—But it is himself in the infinite fulness, suitability, and glory of his person and work as God-Man, Al-Gibbor that filleth all in all.

I find a similarity of feeling with one of old, I am jealous for the Lord of Hosts, and I don’t like to hear him spoke light of. If it be true what you say, then the church makes Christ what he is in the Father’s esteem, both honorable and glorious; this is attempting to rob him, instead of crowning him Lord of all.—I had rather abide by the testimony of the Lord in his words.—I have often been much pleased with that sweet saying of that dear servant of the Lord, Dr. Hawker, from whose mouth I have heard it flow from the warm emotions of his heart.—“The church are like so many cyphers, nothing in themselves, but it is that great Mighty One, as their head, that gives them all things, and makes them all they ever will be, in time and to all eternity.”

I cannot apprehend another assertion of yours; you say the cause of the Father’s loving Christ was for his laying down his life for his sheep. It is written and Jesus sayeth it, “therefore doth my Father love me because I lay down my life for the sheep.” You certainly ought to have been particular and explained yourself, that is, by stating Whether it was the act of Christ in laying down his life for the sheep that merited the love of the Father towards him? if so, then it did also towards the church; or Whether it increased the love of God thereby, towards Christ and the church? or, Whether God loved either before?—these inferences certainly arise from your statement.

I find you are for taking all the scriptures as having no reference to the church, only to Christ, and so by your statement the following hath only Christ in view. When I believe with all my soul that the prophet, speaking by the Lord, is speaking particularly of the church—"I have given the dearly beloved of my soul into the hands of her enemies," I would refer you to the state of the church in Egypt; that proves they were in the hands of enemies, and in sore oppression by them; and the Lord saith I have seen the affliction of *my people* and I have heard their groans, and I am come down to deliver them. Go through all their journey from Egypt to Canaan, I think they had enemies enough, yet the Lord delivered them, and proved to them, that in all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them. If we go into Canaan with them we see the Lord subdued those nations, though sometimes his dearly beloved fell into their hands; see through the book of Judges, how oft did the Lord give the dearly beloved of his soul into the hands of her enemies. Mark the Babylonian captivity, the same truth is plainly demonstrated. Let me beg you to pause with me over one statement in Isa. lxiii. But they rebelled and vexed his Holy Ruach, then he was turned to be their enemy and fought against them. And when the enemy shall come in like a flood, &c. And some of God's children know what it is to be delivered unto Satan that enemy (and I do know this for one) for the destruction of the flesh that the Spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. I find daily fightings without, and fears within,—the world, flesh, and the devil, and am often in their clutches; yet hitherto the Lord hath helped me, and by this I know that the Lord doth favour me because he hath not given me over to the will of my enemies to destroy me, so that I have not fallen a total prey to their teeth. It is blessed to know that we do not suffer these things apart from Christ,—yet, in the world we must have tribulation; and it is through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom. It appears from your remarks that you do not want the armour, sword, and shoes of iron and brass. I like Paul's statement; troubles on every side cast down but not destroyed, persecuted but not forsaken; and though I am one of a fearful heart and verily of little faith, yet I do believe the righteous will hold on his way, and nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure. I remain yours in Gospel bonds,

July, 1831.

A YOUNG RECRUIT.

ON FALLING FROM GRACE.

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost; and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come. If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. *HEB. VI. 4-6.*

MESSRS. EDITORS,

ADMIRING as I do, the decided integrity of your proceedings, and more especially the very bold stand you are enabled to make against error in all its subtle forms, and deceitful coverings, I submit (with your approbation) to the readers of your excellent Periodical, a few thoughts on the above passage.

Being lately in company with a few select friends, the conversation turned in a way of comment, upon this passage, when the question proposed was, Of whom did the apostle speak; of the church of Christ; or, of a finished apostate?

As I am one of those who after a very close examination of these words, still think, the apostle hath herein drawn the portrait of a finished hypocrite! I cannot but express my regret in being obliged to dissent from the opinion of men so pre-eminently learned in the church of God; men, at whose feet I would otherwise most willingly set to be taught, but who nevertheless, I think, are in this particular, of a contrary opinion from the writer, was, I think, the late John Bradford, as also some, whose writings shed a lustre on the pages of the Gospel Magazine, and whose praise is in the church of Christ.

Should it be thought however, by any of your readers, presumption, in so humble an individual, to advance an opinion at issue with men so renowned in the church, the writer would observe once for all, that the following remarks are submitted, more with a view to information than a positive assertion, and should I err in this respect, I should most heartily rejoice in any correction that may fall from the pen of your more able correspondents, hoping however, the gall of bitterness will be smitten, so evident in a late controversy, and that in imitation of our brethren, Reed and Layman, we shall aim to state our differences of opinion in the spirit of brotherly love and affection.

With these preliminary observations, I shall now proceed to state briefly, my views of the passage in question,—and in support of the opinion I have advanced above.

And 1st. They are said to be *once enlightened*, this seems to me expressive, only of light in the understanding, without the saving operation of the Holy Ghost in the soul, and that such an awful state is possible; Balaam, Caiaphas, and Judas are fearful witnesses—again, there seems to be a more than ordinary emphasis laid upon the word (once) implying I think that there is herein, no progression, as is the case with all who are truly born from above; such are represented as pressing forward, these have repeated visits of the Holy Comforter, and by his Almighty aid, *they go from strength to strength*;—and I am the more inclined to this view of the sub-

ject, from the manner in which the apostle introduces the chapter, which seems an exhortation to living souls, for their advancement in the Christian path, and he then immediately proceeds to draw the character of those who make no advance as evidence of their graceless state.

2dly. They are represented as having tasted the heavenly gift, by which I understand Christ in his word, now as to taste (only) as certainly not to eat ; so many who seem to have an outward relish for the gospel are utterly destitute of its life-giving power ; the faith which feeds upon the Lamb they are wholly strangers to ; as in tasting, there is frequently an aversion shewn to the thing tasted, so it is often seen that persons hear of Christ, only to shew their aversion ; to how many thousands who wish to be thought excellent Christians, is the doctrine and cross of Christ extremely irksome, like unto the food which is received only in the mouth but speedily evacuated, and consequently reaches not the stomach ; so the truths of God are by thousands received judgmentally, but the event shews they reach not the heart, nor should it be forgotten, that whenever this term (tasting) is used in relation to the church of Christ, it is always connected with growth and feeling, which is evidently not the case before us, I therefore conclude the apostle is not speaking of believers in these words.

3dly. It is added they *were made partakers of the Holy Ghost*, that is as I conceive of his external operations. The Lord put a word in Balaam's mouth—very different this from putting his truth in our hearts,—Paul hath said, a man may have the gift of prophecy which is certainly the Spirit's gift, and yet be nothing,—and our dear Lord bears witness to the awful fact ; that many will urge their gifts in the great day, as a plea before God, but will plead in vain ; *I never knew you*, will then be the solemn and awful address to many who have prophesied.—see Matt. vii. 22, 23.

4thly. It is declared they had tasted the good word of God,—that is, they sat under the word with joy—but without the joy of the word, like many who imagine they are healed who were never wounded, their joy is but natural so that for a while they endure, and in time of trial fall away.

Lastly. And the powers of the world to come ; this is a solemn terminous. By the world to come, I understand eternity, which often strikes terror into an ungodly man, and shakes professors to their centre with an awful dread ; what a most solemn instance we have in the case of Balaam, who under the impelling force of the Spirit, must predict his eternal perdition, “I shall see him, but not now ; I shall behold him, but not nigh ;”—How many Balaam's are there in the professing world ? What importance is attached to the apostle's exhortation, *examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith* ?

But to conclude my observations, it is declared of these persons “if they shall fall away, it is impossible to renew them unto repentance, seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and

put him to an open shame,—now nothing can be impossible to God, but what he wills shall be so.” To suppose, therefore, that believers are intended in this passage, is to plunge ourselves into an ample dilemma indeed. What, impossible with God to renew believers? most certainly not, discarded be so unholy a thought as unworthy of God, and most awfully distressing to every humble seeker of of the Lamb. This, Mr. Editor, is another reason why I cannot think believers are herein addressed. The apostle himself declares he was persuaded better things than these of the church, and things which did accompany salvation, from which I also deduce the inference, that salvation is not intended in any of these declarations.

I trust Mr. Editor, you will excuse that prolixity into which I have been led, I have studied brevity, and should any of my observations be thought irrelevant to the question, your good sense will exchange them, and your candour will pass them by. I remain yours truly in the ties of love and blood,

March, Isle of Ely, June 19th, 1831.

EBENEZER.

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To the Editors of the Gospel Magazine.

AN IMPORTANT QUESTION.

MESSRS. EDITORS,

THE question I have in view being an apostolic one, cannot but be important; but as even the questions of apostles are not of equal importance, I would, before I proceed, raise high the expectation of our readers, by saying (as it will be acknowledged I justly may do,) that a more important one is not asked by either of them as will be more readily admitted when it is distinguished, that although it has stood upon record more than eighteen hundred years, it has never been answered, and what is still more, never will be, and yet it may profitably employ my pen, and the pens of many others after me, in discussing it; it stands in St. Paul's epistle to the Heb. ii. 3. and here follows; *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?* and as the apostle says, *it was began to be spoken of by the Lord himself, and was confirmed to him and his brother apostles, by them that heard him,* I consider myself bound to begin, by presenting it in some of Christ's own words, as recorded by some of the hearers alluded unto, and I do not know of a better first reference, than the sermon on the mount; *Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets, I am not come to destroy but to fulfil, for verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled;* that is by living a life of obedience to the first, and proving herein, and in his person, &c. the verity of the second, whence we learn that the law must be obeyed, or no man can be saved, and that for obeying it we had ourselves lost the power; *I may say as the commencement of punishment for the first transgression, in and by our natural and appointed head and representative Adam;* and most assuredly I may say, it

was to the glory of his free and unmerited grace, that our Lord obeyed the law for all who were chosen, and considered in him as their supernatural head and representative, and he now commands us *to seek in the first place*, (or in preference to all other things) *the kingdom of God*, (the internal kingdom or government of God's Spirit within us,) *and his righteousness*, the righteousness which his law requires, and which himself, and none but himself has wrought out; for that of the scribes and pharisees, who were notedly righteous, came short of it, and we are therefore told ours must exceed as the obedience of Christ, as observed does, and which of God is freely imputed to his people, Rom. iv. 6—8. who to a man, are as an evidence of it, sooner or later by his Spirit, inclined to seek after and discover and fix on it as their only plea before him; their maker, lawgiver, judge, and as asserted imputer, the latter alone a sure pledge, that he will not reject it; and we find Paul a noted Pharisee, who had even imagined himself to have been touching the righteousness required by the law, to be blameless, to be at last convinced of his folly, intrusting therein (as the law's perfection was not really herein found,) and then saying *what things were gain to me* (in my own esteem gain,) *I counted loss for Christ*, whence we learn that Christ and his work cannot be possessed in conjunction with our own works or righteousness trusted in,) *and be found in him, not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith*, Phil. iii. 6—9. (that is to say) the righteousness which is of God imputed, and received by faith, as the evidence hereof, and which faith is of God's operation, and it is by Christ (or rather his righteousness) all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified, by the law of Moses. The power also whereby to withstand sin, Satan, the world, and every temptation in and from it, comes from Christ, and was so declared by him; for says he, without me ye can do nothing, (nothing good,) included in it is, cleansing ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit; perfecting holiness, in the fear of God, stretching forth towards it as the only fixed goal, so that we never on this side of death can say truly, we have attained. That the apostle himself used this power of Christ to the same ends, and believed in its sufficiency, is clear from his saying, *I can do all things* (all things required) *through Christ which strengtheneth me*. That the great salvation we are discussing, by asking how shall we escape if we neglect it, was first under the gospel dispensation began to be spoken by the Lord himself, is clear from his saying, *I am the way*, (the way to God and his mercy now, and the personal way to heaven in future,) *and the truth*, (viz: the substance and author of scripture truth, in the scriptures and in our hearts) and the life (the quickener and sustainer or preserver, of that new Holy Life, which sooner or later is found in all his chosen people,

under the name of a new heart, so well as of all descriptions of natural life) *come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*, are also his words (rest from your vain labour to work out and merit your own salvation, by shewing you, that this work is already completely done by myself, and cannot be improved.) Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Father I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, (*viz*: in heaven.) As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the son of man be lifted up, (*viz*: on the cross bodily, and by gospel preaching descriptively) *that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life*; and the use which Peter and the other apostles made of this, and other similar sayings of our Lord, we may consider as summed up by him in these words, neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved; all that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise, (or on no account) cast out, are also our Lord's words; and this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, (body so well as spirit of my people) I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. I presume, that if nothing more could be said of the salvation under consideration, than what our Lord personally spoke of it in the texts noticed, it would be acknowledged by every reader to be great and worthy of being minded, and sought after above all things; it is to be feared that some under this acknowledgment may be among the neglecters of it, and therefore examination by every one, must be the advice of wisdom, particularly as no hesitation is necessary to saying, that more may be said of this salvation, and still more thought of it, and its value yet raised in our esteem by considering, that it is everlasting, and if not enjoyed have its place filled by everlasting misery, *as great in misery as the other is in happiness in all probability to say the least of it.*

It strikes me that the glory and happiness of this salvation in heaven, emits much splendour from its being spoken so highly of, by Isaiah in his comparatively dark day; for since the beginning of the world, men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen O God beside thee, what he, (*viz*: Christ) hath prepared for him that waiteth for him; yet superlatively, and inconceivably great as is this salvation, and as unspeakable, as will be the misery of the neglecters of it, it is neglected even by all who are left to decide for themselves, at least in that part of it, which must be partook of here in that which concerns the present life, or it will not be enjoyed in its more noble part in heaven, which latter none object unto, who have strong objection to the former; for instance they are represented as in fact saying, *we will not have this man*, (*viz*: Christ) *to reign over us*. The destruction of the dominion of sin, which is a part of this indivisible salvation, *they do not covet or seek after*; secret sins, flesh gratifying sins, in particular easy besetting

sins, they will retain or indulge themselves in, *now and then, if not quite so often as before conversion*; and therefore if we admit they are really willing to be saved from misery in hell, and to enjoy salvation in heaven, even to the entire glory of free grace alone in Christ, it will not do, they are notwithstanding among the neglecters of this great salvation, and cannot if they die in their present state, escape damnation.

It is now time to notice the question, How shall we escape if we neglect this great salvation, which we have sufficiently, but not so far as might be considered? Is it by a comparative righteousness, or a conduct superior to that of many of our neighbours, this will not do, for it is not the rule by which God has given us to judge, or by which himself will judge us when we stand before him; but this rule is the law, obedience to which is only to be found in the finished work of Christ Godman, in which the persevering neglectors of this great salvation which is granted by it, have no interest, and publicans, and harlots are more likely to find it, and to enter heaven by it, than those who confide in something or things of their own, which falls short of it; as must the highest degree of fallen man's obedience, but notwithstanding this anticipation into which I have rambled, and which certainly lessens the necessity of continuing the answer; I shall still enquire for a reason made obvious, by what has already been said, *How shall we escape misery if we neglect the great salvation, wherein alone with the bliss of heaven it is to be had?* Can it be done by sorrow for past sins, and a better life in future? this if accomplishable and perfect, would be only doing what the rule for obedience always required, and pronounced its curse against the smallest momentary failure in; indeed common sense at the lowest ebb, if seriously consulted, must tell us, that doing our duty to day, cannot be accepted as an excuse for not doing it yesterday; besides, are we not directed, when we have done our best, if it were even all we are commanded to do, that we are unprofitable servants; Luke xvii. 10. Secondly, Can we escape the denounced curse of an unchangeable God, which stands against us, *as merited by us*, by crying to him for mercy; to suppose this is to suppose that he is not unchangeable, and this supposition is in fact telling him that he is a liar, *for himself has said, I the Lord change not.* There are also some neglecters of this great salvation, who are of a humane disposition, and who therefore feel for, and as far as they can afford it, give alms up unto every poor person they meet, and are also in the habit of relieving the distresses of their neighbours, and this they think will have some weight in procuring them escape from the fruits of divine vengeance, and this thought is often strengthened by the false imagination, that this disposition is never found in any man naturally, and is therefore one of the graces, of which that new heart consists, which sooner or later is granted to all who in the divine mind are saved by Christ, from the wrath which is to come; but scripture interpreted by

scripture, (instead of being disjointed, and by a little heart made appear to be a book of yeas and nays) affords no countenance to to such suppositions, and quotations from any other book; if unhappily it should satisfy any living or dying persons, it will leave them the moment life in the body becomes extinct; but I remember having met with men, who when they have began to consider their ways, and distinguished that their conduct was not a fulfilment of that law which pronounces a curse against the breakers of it, who have encouraged hope, that the blessed God had a reserve in his mind which limited the curse or the infliction of its contents, to persons who had broken it to a certain great extent, and considered his Son as having endured it for the rest; and I recollect, that when I began to entertain serious thoughts about my own state, I derived some support to hope by thinking of it, and supposing that I had not, or might not have those lengths in sin, and destitution of goodness, which had brought me within the abandoned number. I think I have not noticed most of the thoughts that are entertained by the neglecters of God's great salvation by free grace, through his provided and accepted justice, satisfying work of his Son, and and proved the vanity and folly of any one of them imagining they shall obtain it, or escape its opposite hereby, or by any other means they may or can devise, and I may add without the smallest danger of being mistaken, that all contrivances by such persons for escaping, cannot but involve them the deeper in misery as they are virtually, if not nominally, attempting to make the Lord a liar; but I hope no one will so far mistake me as to suppose, that I mean to dissuade them from performing the moral actions which I have said and proved, will not obtain their escape from future misery, the actions themselves are not bad but commendable, it is the end for which they are engaged in, that I have condemned, and this no human or angelic eloquence can paint in colouring too degrading, or that can present any resemblance to the hatred which the blessed God bears unto them; it is in fact the uppermost attraction to his depart ye cursed in the last day, and not one who will be the subject of this command will be able to say, I did not neglect thy great salvation, or did not attempt to escape the consequences of neglecting it, by one or other of the ways named, or something of my own contriving, or performing, which if admitted, would accede to me a share in the glory of saving myself; it is in fact the only damning sins, because none are damned, that have not added one or other of them to their other sins, I mean none are, or ever will be among the damned, who have not neglected God's great salvation, and attempted to escape damnation, by something of their own; this in fact is a forbidden fruit, which although a deadly poison, all naturally are fond of feeding on, and none neauseate, or vomit up, but the selected few who are by God's Spirit illuminated to see, and by his operating influences to taste the deadly nature of. All in hell were free-willers, and merit-mongers, down to their last moments

of residence in their fleshly bodies on the earth, and doubtless still as far as permitted, contend with God for having then performed righteous and meritorious deeds, which if justly dealt with, would have procured them escape from the misery of which they are the subjects.

I shall now advance towards a conclusion by signifying my fears that there are many prevented from enquiring, *How shall we escape misery if we neglect the great salvation?* by imagining they do not neglect it, although judging by the description which the scriptures give of the accepted minders of it, the accusation unquestionably stands against them; but let it not be imagined that I entertain the idea that the accepted minders of it, or any among them do mind it, so much or so well as it deserves, but this admission is no contradiction to my having cut off some professed minders of it, as falling short of that which the Lord accepts, and by his Spirit draws his people unto, and it cannot be a proof of the want of wisdom in the best, if they should be induced from fear to be very inquisitive on this head, but I have only room to add, if you do not daily mind and seek after it, as your chief good, you are condemned neglecters of it, and without a change cannot escape everlasting misery.

Stonchouse, Sep. 4, 1830.

A DEVONSHIRE MINISTER.

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To the Editors of the Gospel Magazine.

QUESTION ON THE LAND OF CANAAN.

MESSRS EDITORS,

SHOULD I not be thought intrusive in requesting the thoughts of any of your correspondents on a subject, which good and great men are at variance, i. e. Is Canaan a type of heaven; I am inclined to think so, although my contemporaries are decidedly opposed; should your views be in accordant to the former proposition, your statement will much obliged and be thankfully received.

March, Feb. 15, 1831.

NIHIL.

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SONSHIP OF GOD.

“Now are ye the sons of God.”

THAT is a dignified and dignifying expression, “Sons of God.” This is applied to men, not while dead in trespasses and sins; but when they are born again, or possess the properties of the new birth: this honorable title, though given to the whole family, is personally considered, enjoyed but by a few, partly owing to the state of the church, as drawing towards its dissolution; and principally owing to the ignorance, inexperience, and shameful inattention to scripture, of some in the priest’s office; who, instead of constantly setting forth to sinners the blessings of the everlasting gospel, are invariably harping to both saint and sinner. Ye should keep the law—ye should keep yourselves from sin—ye should be

baptized—ye should be holy. Their language proves, that they are very dull scholars, or that they never obtained their commission as Christians, or ministers in that school where every saved soul is taught to know the things which concern the kingdom and grace of God. *Yea, he loved the people : all his saints are in thy hand : and they sat down at thy feet ; every one shall receive of thy words.* To confirm the aforesaid observation, such ministers invariably use the *conditional present*, whereas God, in a high sense, invariably uses the *absolute future*. Such men say, ye should sanctify yourselves, ye should prepare yourselves ; especially for the Lord's supper, hearing, prayer, and death. God saith, *I will be sanctified in them that come nigh to me.* By which will we are sanctified, saith Paul. *It is written and I will accept you with your sweet savour, when I bring you out from the people, and gather you out of the countries wherein you have been scattered, and I will be sanctified in you before the heathen ; and ye shall know that I am the Lord when I have wrought with you for my name's sake."* C.

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To the Editors of the Gospel Magazine.

EXTRACTS AND OBSERVATIONS FROM MR. IRVING.

MESSRS. EDITORS.

I ACCIDENTALLY met with the Gospel Magazine for October, wherein you expatiate on Mr. Irving's sentiments, which was a great relief to my mind, for in perusing his Sermons and Lectures, I have been so puzzled with assertions so diametrically at variance with others, that they have been distressing to my feelings to reconcile them. Indeed if the trumpet gives an uncertain sound who shall prepare for the battle. If you have not time or opportunity perhaps some of your friendly correspondents will favour me with their sentiments on the following positions published by Mr. Irving, so as to shew their dissonance with the analogy of faith.

1 The act of the Son of God, was to redeem *all mankind*, without exception, as God the Father loved *all mankind*.

2. Christ is *united unto all flesh*, by virtue of what he did in the flesh.

3. Christ's *doing* in the flesh, is a work for flesh in *general*.

4. Atonement, is no separation, it is not the cast, or damage.

5. Reconciliation is made between God and the whole fallen substance, therefore we may go about and preach *reconciliation unto all the world*. We preach the resurrection to all who are partakers of the death which came by Adam. We have a right to say ; that as in Adam all died, so in Christ *all* have been recovered from death, or made alive. Here then is redemption and reconciliation purchased for fallen manhood, as truly and completely, and as extensively as in the fall by one man.

6. What is the preaching of Christ ? Is it not the forth setting of him unto all men, as having *wrought for all men*, this unspeakable

redemption? as having delivered flesh from the power of sin, and from the power of death; as having purchased for all, the good will and favour of God, which he had lost and forfeited, as having attained unto us the undisputed lordship over us. This is the ministry of reconciliation through the faith of Christ. Wherever this is proclaimed rightly, men are brought into the penalty of having *rejected* the benefit of having received God's Christ, as reason is able to apprehend the good as well as the bad. The fallen man is not one who knows evil, but one who knows good and evil.

7. Beloved brethren, the evening shadows of the *day of grace* are darkening around us, and the temple gate, though loath, is ready to be shut, and the night is thickening, and the sword of the angel of judgment is in his hand, and the snare of the tempter is spreading, and the pot of the destroyer is widening its mouth, and the time of the end is at hand; we hold out, as it were a last momentary invitation, and blow a final blast, mingled of intreating pity and warning around the world, saying, *NOW OR NEVER!!!* the day is far spent, and the night is at hand: haste, *haste* for your lives, enter, enter into the ark!!

(How does the above paragraph agree with the following section?)

8. There is a class who reject the will of the Father, by subjecting it to *conditions*, which make it dependant on the will of the creature, and that too, a depraved fallen creature, and which nothing can be more dishonorable to God, for their main spring and moving power, *their whole system is out of joint*. They offer the gospel unto all, but no one can lay hold of it, except his will be renewed after the will of God: and so in the *VERY OFFER* of the gospel they inculcate a *fatal error*, that the will of man hath a liberty in itself towards good, and towards evil!!!

9. Our office as preachers and ministers of the reconciliation is to hold up Christ risen, having wrought his work and achieved his conquests, and to lay them before you. To instal you in the possession of it by sacramentary seal, enfeoff you in its holiness with sacramental washing of water, to enfeoff you in its bodily substance with bread and wine, and in every possible way which human wisdom can devise to secure men in the assurance of that Christ's reconciliation and redemption, is as truly the *common inheritance* of the human race, and will be truly proved so by the resurrection of all, as sin is proved to be the common inheritance of the human race, by the death of Christ.

10. The baptized should believe that he hath received the Holy Ghost, and go about the works of the church, as one who hath received power from on high.

11. A baptized person ought never to doubt of his election, but to go on to make his calling and election sure. He ought to *STIR UP* the Spirit that is in him, which was given to him in the Holy sacrament of baptism.

12. The Calvinistic doctrines, Satan has got so disguised, with base intermixtures, such as the doctrine of necessity, and the doctrine of God's *propriety* in us, as man hath property in an estate.

I shall stop Mr. Editor, for my feelings are hurt, to proceed further, it is irksome to wade through such a creed that turns every thing *upside down* in divine revelation, and which is an inlet to scepticism. It is strange, and very strange, that Mr. Irving should be an advocate for the universal love of God, and for general redemption, and yet at the same time be a stickler for *particular* election, and for the doctrine of *reprobation*. The only excuse I can make for the above gentleness is, an aberration of mind, a flight of fancy without sound judgment; or that the golden chain is severed by some links broken; under every consideration it is evident, he has not been sitting at the feet of his divine Master to receive instruction, as he would not have left him to mangle the words of inspiration. With all possible respect, I am yours,
Richmond Terrace, A SINCERE ENQUIRER OF TRUTH.

Oct. 7th, 1831.

A NOTE BY THE EDITORS.

OUR Correspondent surmises truly, that we have not time, nor have we inclinations to enter upon the positions transcribed from Mr. Irving's writings, several of which we have often combated in this Magazine, it is irksome for us to return to them, therefore we shall leave them to the animadversion of some of our Christian friends, who are well tallented to overthrow such devices. We request leave to say a few words upon the three last sections, which are fraught with erroneous sentiments, destructive, if it were possible, of that foundation God has laid in Zion.

The *simple* institution of baptism, or the dedicating of the baptized to God, has been so twisted, mangled, metamorphosed and abused, by ridiculous fooleries and superstitions, and by consequences drawn therefrom, that it has tended to do more mischief in the church of God, than all the heresies put together; it has been the parent of dissensions, the nurse of continued religious animosities among Christian brethren, and not only so, but a creadle with which the arch enemy has rocked the ungodly in making an outward and visible sign, an inward and spiritual grace. The putting away the filth of the flesh, to be the answer of a good conscience, purified by the blood of Christ; designating an ordinance, an ingrafting into Christ, and a seal of the covenant, and being buried with Christ, and rising up in his likeness. Away with such deceptions, for all the water in Jordan will never wash away one sin, it is the blood of Christ only that cleanseth from all sin, and be it remembered, that circumcision or baptism, is that of the heart, in the Spirit, and not in the letter whose praise is not of men, but of God. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made, he saith not unto seeds, but only one, that is Christ. This is one

baptism of regeneration. "When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughter of Zion." He gave himself for her that he might cleanse and sanctify her with the washing of water by the word, that he may present unto himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

In reference to the doctrine of Christian necessity, which Mr. Irving call "*base*," is but a twin brother to predestination, for "a man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps." Job could attest, "God performeth the thing that is appointed for me, and many such are with him." The preamble of the new covenant runs, "I will" and "you shall,"—"I have loved thee therefore have I drawn thee." What a blessed necessity is this, to be under divine attraction, may God of his infinite mercy cause us all to be necessitarians.

What can be meant in saying that "God has no propriety in his people?" when the scriptures declare, "The Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance;" that they are a purchased possession, not their own, but bought with a price; redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. It is a most strange assertion to advance that the bridegroom has no property in his bride, nor the husbandman in his husbandry. Surely we must be either the Lord's property or Satan's, his servant ye are to whom ye obey.

We are really shocked in the cursory survey we take of Mr. Irving's creed, wherein the beautiful order, and divine harmony of the gospel is defaced; some of the strings of his lyre appear broken, as there is such a disproportion which distracts every sound from their natural combinations.

But such things are, our spiritual guides, the far greater number, grope in the dark, and stumble at the chief corner stone God hath laid in Zion, but—blessed are the people that know the gospel sound, they shall walk, O Lord in the light of thy countenance, in thy name shall they rejoice all the day, and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted.

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CHRISTIAN REMEMBRANCER.

(Continued from p. 409.)

SKELETON CXVI.

When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better it is that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay. ECCLES. V. 4, 5.

THE verses which precede my text, contain directions concerning the *worship of God*, and how persons should *behave*, when they go to the *house of God*.—Directions are given also, concerning *hearing* the word of God, to which there ought to be a readiness; and likewise concerning *prayer* to God, which should not be uttered *rashly*, nor *hastily*, nor yet with *many words*; for it is said on this

account, *let thy words be few*.—Then follow directions concerning *vows*, which should not be made *rashly*, and when made, they ought to be kept; as is evident from the words of my text.

In speaking on which, I shall,

Point out the *nature* of a *vow*,

Insist upon the *payment* of it, and

Shew, why it is better *not to vow*, than to vow and not pay.

The nature of a *vow*: here let it be remembered brethren, that a *vow* is a *solemn promise*, which is made *freely* and *voluntarily*, on the part of the person who makes it, and to which he was not *obliged*; there being no precept for *vows* in the word of God; though there are *instances* and *examples* thereof, and they may be lawfully made, when they are in the *power* of a man to perform them, and are not *inconsistent* with the *word* and *will* of God. But before a man makes a *vow*, or *promise*, either to God or man, he ought to consider whether he can pay that which he voweth, either to the one, or the other; and if he cannot, it is *better* not to vow at all.

But we may observe here, that the *vows*, or *promises* which have been made by *good men*, have been made with an eye to the Lord for strength to enable them to pay their *vows*. Accordingly we find David *vowing*, or promising the Lord, saying, *I will teach transgressors thy ways*. Psal. li. 13. Now we may observe here, that David was not called upon by the Lord to make this promise, and that when he did make it, it was with an eye to the Lord for strength, for he had before said, restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free spirit, then (says he) will I teach transgressors thy ways.

Another instance of this kind we meet with in Psalm cxix. 32. where David *promises* God, saying, *I will run the way of thy commandments*; but then, even this *promise* is made with an eye to the Lord for *strength*; as is obvious by the following words, namely, when thou shalt enlarge my heart.—But again, we find the church in the *Song of Solomon* making also a *vow*, or *solemn promise* to God, saying, *we will run after thee*, Song i. 4. but then, she had an eye to God herein, for before she makes this promise, she cries unto the Lord, and says, *draw me*; by which words it evidently appears, that if God did not draw, she could not run after him. See 1 Cor. iv. 19. Heb. vi. 3. James iv. 15.

But, there are some promises, or *vows* which are made *ignorantly*, and without an eye to God, for *strength* to perform them. Of this nature (I presume) is that promise, or *vow* made by Pharaoh, when he said to Moses and Aaron, entreat the Lord, that he may take away the *frogs* from me, and from my people, and *I will let the people go*; Exod. viii. 8. but when he saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart, and *refused* to perform his promise, or pay his *vow*.

We find also, that *Peter* made a very *hasty promise* or *vow* of this kind, when he said to Christ, if I should die with thee, *I will*

not deny thee in any wise : Mark. xiv. 31. and as this promise was made hastily, when Peter was ignorant of his own weakness, and without an eye to the Lord for strength ; so also we find, that he as *hastily broke it*, as appears from the seventy-first verse of the above mentioned chapter, where we find him denying Christ, with oaths and curses.

Of this nature also, are those promises and vows which are made by those who call themselves *godfathers and godmothers*, who promise and *vow three things* in the name of the children for whom they stand,—“ *First*, that they shall renounce the *devil* and all his *works*, the *pomps* and *vanities* of this wicked world, and *all the sinful lusts* of the flesh ;—*Secondly*, that they shall *believe all the articles* of the Christian faith ;—and *Thirdly*, that they shall *keep God’s holy will and commandments*, and walk in the same all the days of their lives.”—(Church Catechism.)

But surely none but the *thoughtless, careless, and ignorant*, would thus promise to God for another, what they never have done, nor never can do for themselves ; for where are the characters to be found that can live *sinless themselves* ? and if they cannot live *sinless themselves*, how dare they *solemnly promise and vow*, in the presence of God and the congregation, that the children for whom they stand shall so live ? and yet this is implied in the strongest terms, in keeping *God’s holy will and commandments, and walking in the same all the days of their lives*. And here I would observe, that so far are many of these godfathers and godmothers so called, from paying their vows, or performing their promises ; that sometimes they do not see the *children* for whom they stand any more ; but are equally as careless about them, as they are about the *promises* which they have made to God for them.—

Another promise or vow of this nature, is that which is made by those who are confirmed by the bishop, who solemnly *asks the children this question*, “ do you here in the presence of God, and of this congregation, renew the solemn promise and *vow*, that was made in your name at your *baptism*, ratifying and confirming the same in your *own persons*, and acknowledging yourselves bound to *believe, and to do ALL* those things, which your *godfathers and godmothers* then undertook for you ? ” to all which the children answer, “ I do ; ” that is, we do acknowledge ourselves bound to *BELIEVE* and to *do*, what they promised for us ; which in fact was, that they should *never* commit a *single sin*. But this kind of promises or vows are too awful to reflect upon ; nor need there be any thing said I presume, to expose their *absurdity and unlawfulness* ; for no man can make agreement unto God for another ; nor can any do what their godfathers and godmothers promise for them.

But *promises, or vows* are often made *ignorantly*, and without an eye to the Lord for strength, by persons who are under the *afflicting* hand of God ; for such frequently promise God at these seasons, that “ if he will but spare them, and recover their health and

strength, they will *forsake* their sinful practices, and devote themselves to him." but alas! too often it is, that promises thus made in *time of affliction* and without an eye to the Lord for strength, are broken in *time of health*; for such frequently turn, like a dog to his own vomit again; and the sow, that was *washed* to her wallowing in the mire. 2 Peter ii. 22.

Having taken notice of the *vow* I proceed now—

To insist upon the payment of it,—for says my text; when thou vowest a vow unto God, *defer not to pay it*; for, as a man when a promise is made to him by another, has a right to expect the performance of it, so it is with God, who also hath a right to expect the payment of those vows, which we make unto him; and this was really the case with Hannah, of whom we read in 1 Sam. i. 11—28. where we find, she not only *vowed*, but also *payed her vow*, which she made unto the Lord, concerning the child Samuel; and David moreover says, thou, O God, hast *heard my vows*; and again so will I sing praise unto thy name for ever, that I may *daily perform my vows*. Psal. lxi. 5—8. Now what David *vowed* or promised unto God, we have recorded in the fourth verse of the above psalm, where he says; I will abide in thy *tabernacle for ever*; I will *trust in the covert of thy wings*.

When thou vowest a vow unto God therefore, imitate Hannah and David in this respect, and defer not to pay it; for says my text he *hath no pleasure in fools*; mark brethren, the Lord looks upon, and calls all those fools, who make promises, or vows, and do not pay them; and tells us moreover, that he hath *no pleasure* in them; and surely to promise unto God, either for ourselves, or others, what we have not in our power to perform, is a display of the highest degree of *folly* and *mockery* that a man can be guilty of; but let such remember, *that God will not be mocked*, but sooner or later, he will resent such conduct.

It is well however for God's people, that there is an *atonement* made for sin, by Jesus Christ; for were that not the case, this conduct of theirs would be *eternally resented* by that God, against whom they sin, by neglecting to perform their promises, or to *pay their vows*, which they make unto him: therefore when thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it.

But this leads me to shew,

Why it is better not to vow, than to vow and not pay.

It is better for yourselves. For if you do not vow, you will neither *discover* your folly, nor yet entangle your minds, which is frequently the case with many *ignorant people*, who vow unto God, but are not able to pay it. There are many for instance, who promise, or vow unto the Lord, that they will never more be guilty of some particular sin, which they have formerly committed, but alas! notwithstanding their solemn vows, they are overtaken with the same sin again; by which their vow is broken, their minds are entangled, and perhaps Satan suggests, that there is no mercy for them.

Surely then, it is better *not to vow*, than to vow and *not pay*.—But as it is better for yourselves, so also it is

Better, because it is more for God's glory; for as he is a God of *truth* and *faithfulness* himself, every thing that is *false* and *unfaithful*, must be a dishonor to him. Therefore, *pay that thou vowest*, or vow not at all; and by thus doing the glory of God will be promoted by you.—It is better

For the cause of God, not to vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay; for the cause of God can never fail of suffering by the foolish and sinful conduct of the professors of religion; and what can a *bystander* think of religion, when he hears a set of *worshippers* so called, vowing unto God, what they never mean to pay? and if they meant it, they have it not in their power so to do; surely such give great occasion to the enemies of God to blaspheme; 2 Sam. xii. 14. and to think *meanly* and *contemptibly* of that *religion*, of which they make a profession.

SKELETON CXVII.

—All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. JOB. XIV. 14.

JOB having turned himself from his friends to God, continues his address to him in this chapter; in which he discourses on the *frailty* of man, the *shortness* of life, the *troubles* that are in it, the *fulness* of it, and its *limited duration*, beyond which it cannot continue.—In the thirteenth verse, he cries out in distress, saying, O that thou wouldest appoint me a set time and remember me! Psal. xxxix. 4. or to deliver me from my affliction! but Job recollecting that there was such a time, says in the words of the text, all the days of my *appointed time*, will I wait till my change come.

In discoursing on which words, I shall,

Take notice of this *change*, and

Of Job's *willingness* to wait for it.

This change by which some understand a *change of Job's outward circumstances*, or a deliverance from his afflictions under which he laboured; but this does not appear to be the case, for although there was such a *change* befel Job, yet he was at this time in no expectation of it, and although his friends suggested it to him, he had no hope of it, but often expresses to the contrary: therefore *not a change of outward circumstances* is meant:—

But, a *change by death* is intended, that being the subject, on which he had been speaking, in the words immediately before my motto, where he says, if a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my *appointed time* will I wait till my *change* come; from which words we may learn, that Job expected to die; this appears also from another passage where he says; *I know that thou wilt bring me to death, and to the house appointed for all living*. Job. xxx. 23.

We may observe here, that death (which is a separation of the soul from the body) may very properly be called a change, because in that awful moment there is

A change of place ; for the *body* returns to the *earth* from whence it was taken ; and the spirit returns unto God who gave it ; and will either take up its abode in *mansions of bliss*, or in the *dark regions of endless woe*.

Death may be called a change also, because there is—

A change of *company*, namely, of men for *angels*, either good or bad ; the *impenitently wicked* must take up their abode with the *devil* and his *angels*, Matt. xxv. 41. and the *righteous*, with God, and the spirits of *just men* made perfect. Heb. xii. 23.

Death may be called a change also, because it is—

A *change of states*, for here the conditions of men are *changeable*, but at death, they enter upon an unalterable state of *happiness* or *misery* : for the wicked shall go away into *everlasting punishment* ; but the righteous into *life eternal*. Matt xxv. 46. Thus then doth man give up the ghost, and where is he ? Job. xiv. 10. the answer is ready ; for he is either with the glorified throng above, or with infernal spirits in the regions of black despair.

We may observe again, that man will undergo another *change* respecting his body, in the morning of the resurrection, for says the apostle, when speaking of Christ, (he) shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his *glorious body*, Phil. iii. 21. and some think, that this is the change, to which Job alludes in the words of my text ; but allowing that it be so, yet, the former *change* which takes place at death, must be included, as is evident from the text itself, and the verse that preceeds it.

Having taken notice of the *change* ; I shall proceed now to take notice,

Of Job's *willingness to wait* for it. This is expressed in these words, namely, all the days of my *appointed time* will I wait ; he well knew (no doubt) that there is a time to every purpose under heaven, Eccl. iii. 1. and if so, then there must be a set time for the deliverance of God's people out of all their afflictions ; and till that moment comes, God *waits to be gracious to them* ; Isai. xxx. 18. nor will he go out of his way to deliver, a single moment before his appointed time, either

In a way of *providence*,

In a way of *grace*, or

By *death* ;

for as there is a fixed time for a man to be *born*, so also there is a fixed time for him to die : this is evident from the words of the wise man, where he says, a time *to be born*, and a time *to die*. Eccl. iii. 2.

This is plain also from various other parts of the word of God. Job for instance, says in his seventh chapter at the first verse, is there not an *appointed time* unto man upon earth ? are not his days also like the days of an hireling ? by which questions, we are not to understand that Job *doubted* of the fact, for they imply no such thing ; but a *confirmation* of the truth of the subject on which he speaks.

The latter of the above questions, is very striking to the purpose, for when he says, are not his days like the days of an *hireling*, he evidently means to suggest, that they really are so, and as an *hireling*, or servant that is taken for an *appointed time*, is discharged at the *expiration* thereof, just so it is with man, who when he has lived his *appointed time* upon earth, his soul is dismissed from his body, which (body) then returns to the dust, from whence it was taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. Gen. iii. 19.

This same writer says also, when speaking on the *life of man*, that his days are *determined*, the number of his *months* are with thee; thou hast appointed his *bounds* which he *cannot pass*: Job xiv. 5. which passage clearly proves the truth contained in the words of my text, namely, that there is an *appointed time* for man upon earth, for which Job was willing to wait, knowing that the number of his *months, days, hours, and moments*, were determined by the Lord.

This truth may be proved also, from John's gospel, where it is said, Jesus knew that his hour was come, that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, John xiii. 1. from whence it evidently appears, that there was a *fixed hour*, for the death of Christ; beyond which he could not pass, nor could he die a moment before that time, for although the Jews sought to take him, yet no man could lay hands on him, because his hour was not yet come. John vii. 30.

Some perhaps may object, saying, the Psalmist tells us, that *bloody and deceitful men* shall not live out half their days. Psal. lv. 23. But be it remembered here, that these men (any more than any others) do not die before their *appointed time*; though they do not live out half the days, which they promise to themselves to live; or, which according to *human probability* they were *likely* to live, if they had not fallen into the hands of justice, and suffered for their blood-thirsty conduct.

But others perhaps, may bring forward the words of the wise man as an objection, who, says, the fear of the Lord *prolongeth* days; but the years of the wicked shall be shortened. Prov. x. 27. But we may observe here, that the wise man is speaking after the manner of men, for *humanly speaking*, the fear of the Lord teacheth men to walk in such ways, as have an apparent tendency to prolong life: and on the contrary, the wicked walk in such ways, as appear to have a tendency to *shorten* their lives; but neither the one nor [the other, live longer, or die sooner, than their *appointed time*. For we see many *young people* die who fear the Lord, therefore their fearing God, did not prolong their lives till old age; and the reason is, because they *were appointed* to die in their *younger days*.—On the contrary, there are many who live in wickedness all their days, and yet are spared till *old age*; and the reason is, because God had not appointed them to die in their *youthful days*. Therefore neither the *virtuous* conduct of the *righteous*; nor yet the *vicious* conduct of the *wicked*, can lengthen the life of the one,

nor shorten the life of the other ; any further, than as they are means of bringing about the appointed end.

Another objection which is frequently made, against an *appointed period of men's lives*, is the case of Hezekiah, for although the Lord had said to him, thou shalt die and not live ; he afterwards told him, I will add unto thy days. *fifteen years*. Isa. xxxviii. 5. But we may observe here, that although God said that Hezekiah *should die*, he did not say when he should die ; nor is the addition spoken of in this text an addition to his *appointed time*, but an addition to the days he had lived, in order to make up that time : or it was an *addition* to his days, because it was a longer time than he, (from the nature of the disease and the message delivered to him) expected to live.

But to return, Job knowing that there was an *appointed time* for him upon the earth, determines to wait patiently for it ; that is, to live in the constant expectation of death, at which time he knew there would be a change, that is to say, not only a change of place and a change of company, but also a change of states ; all of which would be to his advantage, agreeable to the words of the apostle ; for me to live is Christ, and to die is *gain*. Phil. i. 21.

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To the Editor of the Gospel Magazine.

REMARKS ON A SERMON BY THE REV. MR. DILLON.

MESSRS EDITORS,

I ATTENDED the worship of God, yesterday morning, at Charlotte chapel, Pimlico, after which the Rev. Mr. Dillon preached from St. James's epistle, "What doth it profit a man to say he hath faith, and hath not works, can faith save him?" In elucidating his subject, he took occasion to speak of the Antinomians, and attempted to reconcile a seeming contradiction between the apostle Paul and St. James, on the subject. What I particularly have to observe here is, that the preacher spoke a great deal of personal and practical holiness, which struck me very forcibly, as I found myself by no means a recipient of either ; for that in all my doings, I see an intermixture of sin and corruption, that at times I despair of ever reaching the kingdom of God, for it is expressly said without holiness, no one shall see God. It is grievous for me to confess, that I come far short of those superlative excellences which furnish and make perfect the servants of God. What add to my distress is, that the wanderings of mind in my addresses to the throne of mercy are so constant, that I am ashamed to rehearse them. Will you tell a young disciple in the school of Christianity, how I am to attain that steadiness of mind so as to arrive at the summit of holiness. As I see questions of this kind often put in the Gospel Magazine, I take the liberty to submit my case to your consideration. With true respect I remain yours,

Grosvenor Place, Oct. 17, 1831.

SUSAN MARIA.

A FEW OBSERVATIONS ON THE ABOVE EPISTLE

WE have a remark to make to our respectable female correspondent, that the place of worship she usually assembles in, was built by Dr. Dodd, by a prize obtained from the lottery; and in referring to a scrap book we kept in our early days, we perceive we heard him preach in the same chapel and on the same spot, on Sunday, Feb. 28, 1775, from the *above text* of scripture, which sermon he repeated the Sunday following, at Bedford chapel, Bloomsbury, against the Antinomians, Romaine and Toplady; and we have it in perfect recollection, as it were but yesterday, that he handled the subject in a *similar* strain, as Mr. Dillon is represented to us to have done. For the doctor had a little strain of the Evangelical cast, he was constantly dabbling in the superlatives; he would have made us believe, that the Christian character had no peccability, or as his contemporary John Wesley used to say, and sing, "He that is born of God sinneth not by *infirmities*, whether in act, word, or thought; no wrinkle of infirmity, no spot of sin remains!!!" This *perfect* delusive *LIE*, is left upon record in his sermon on the 8th. verse of the 5th. of Ephesians. The fact was, that the above two priests, while they were holding up a non-descript, that never existed on this earth except in the Son of God, they put on the garment of an angel of light, to cover a cadaverous body of sin and death. But why talk we of such characters, they have passed their accounts, and are gone to the place appointed for them; still their progeny exists, and will continue to exist, until the second coming of Christ, and we are sadly apprehensive, that whatever we can say will never cleanse the Augean stable. For if the prophets be deceived," the Lord declares "I HAVE DECEIVED THEM!!!" then who shall *undeceive* them? God has said it, and will he not accomplish his prediction, wherein he declares, "Mine hand shall be upon the prophets that *divine lies*; they shall not be in the *assembly of my people*. They have *SEDUCED* my people, saying *peace*, and there was no *peace*; they built up a wall, and others daubed it with dis-tempered mortar, but I will *accomplish* my wrath upon the wall, and will *break down the wall*, that ye have *daubed* with untempered mortar, and bring it down to the ground, so that the foundation thereof shall be *discovered*, and it shall fall, and ye shall be consumed, and know that I am the Lord." Our solicitude rests here. "Be still, and know that I am the Lord" who will accomplish the number of his elect and hasten his kingdom.

It is a most melancholy reflection that the church God from the most early period to the present day, should have been infested with evil men, perverters of the truth, who wear a garment not only "rough," but smooth, in order to impose, and if it were possible, would deceive the very elect.

What to us is most unaccountable, that a clergyman of the

church of England, and an evangelical one, should be a stickler for habitual holiness, and progressive sanctification, and look for it in a poor creature in whose flesh dwelleth no good thing; whose confessions are, that God would not enter into judgment with him, for doing those things he ought not to have done, and leaving undone those things he should have done; who declares there is no health in him, and that he is a miserable sinner, and under these impressions, calls upon the Lamb of God to have mercy upon him. There is a particular confession omitted at the present day in the public services of the church; our priests no doubt think they are above all such humiliating aspirations, namely, being "*tied and bound with the chain of our sins.*" These are not the extemporary effusions of a moment, but solid and preconceived ejaculations, in unison with the apostle Paul's acknowledgments, that "*He groaned being burthened.*"

We unequivocally assert, that the term practical or habitual holiness, is a phrase unfit to be used in reference to a sinful creature, "who for his evil deeds, do worthily deserve to be punished." Indeed all our holiness put together is only a mass of sin. There is none holy but the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, who is distinguished, as the Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God Almighty, before whom the angels hide their faces in their wings.

Solomon says truly, there is a generation pure in their own conceit, and yet not washed from their filthiness. Luther observes, —There is a generation who in outward appearance, seem to excel all others in good works, in holiness and straightness of life, and think themselves to be in the very lap of God, and believe they are true saints by mortification, when in truth, they are but white liars, darkening and annihilating free justification,

Most certainly the outward walk of a true Christian, and his conversation in the world, is different from the ungodly. He is circumspect in his dealings; he provides things honest in the sight of all men, not purloining or exacting filthy lucre; he is no libertine, nor voluptuary. In short, in all his transactions, either as a citizen, a neighbour, or in a relative situation, he does unto others, as he wishes them to do unto him. Then in his spiritual concerns, whether he eats or whether he drinks, he does all to the glory of God. He endeavours to follow his divine exemplar, but alas! follows him afar off. But what is the amount of all his attainments, why, imperfection in all he does and in all he says, and that he is a sinful mortal, and must die with the publican's prayer, God, be merciful to me a sinner!! Thus the people of God are blameless before men, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. They were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord, and the reflection of that light shines before men. But all this has nothing to do with creature holiness or sinless perfection. Whatever our pulpits in the church of England may say, the reading desk know of no such things; it speaks in uniform lan-

guage through all the services, "Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord, for in thy sight no flesh living can be justified." What say the words of inspiration? "By myself have I sworn, says the Lord, that IN ME, you shall have righteousness and strength, whereby the whole house of Israel shall be justified." Surely if God should set our iniquities before him, and our secret sins in the light of his countenance, where is our practical holiness, or habitual piety.

It is sad to say that Mr. Dillon, and he is not singular among our public teachers, has been travelling in a lengthened road out of the King's high-way, he never knew the plague of his own heart, and if God has mercy in store for him, his retrogradation will cost him many a weary step. He will know that it is one thing to stand just before men, and another thing to stand in ourselves holy before God.

And here let it be observed, so as to stop the mouths of gain-sayers, that though the Christian, in his very best estate, is a sinner, in thought word and deed against the Divine Majesty, and will be such to the last moment of his life, yet sin is not his element; he is by the ingrafting of the Holy Spirit, constantly mortifying the deeds of the body, and stands pure, blameless, and without rebuke, before a wicked and perverse generation; also before God, being washed in the blood of Christ, and clothed with the perfect robe of his righteousness, he stands now before a Holy God, spotless, without a stain of sin; so that by the disobedience of Adam, he was constituted a sinner, likewise by the obedience of Christ, he is made just and righteous. Thus Christ died in the body of his flesh, to make us holy, and unblameable, and without fault in God's sight. As such we render nothing unto God, but receive from him, for we have nothing holy in us inherently, nor actively. Had we all the good works done by the patriarch, prophets and apostles concentrated in us, they would not justify us, for they would but be filthy rags, before the divine holiness; we should have to take up Isaiah's lamentation. "Woe is me, for I am undone, I am a man of unclean lips," and with Peter on his knees saying. "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man O Lord!"

Our correspondent, who signs "Susan," complains of her sins and imperfections, that when she would do good evil is present with her. There is an old remark, "To know our disease is half our cure." So say we, to feel our inward corruptions, and confess them at the throne of mercy; a penitent of such a description is more than half way to the kingdom of God, and sooner or later, a sense of pardon will be sealed, "Daughter, be of good cheer, go in peace, thy faith has made thee whole, thy sins which are many are forgiven thee." For it is "a night of observation unto the Lord, for bringing thee out of the Land of Egypt. This is that night to be observed to the Lord, by all the children of Israel in their generations."

While the Pharisee and the Formalist are boasting of a speculative holiness, an increase in sanctification, and a purity of heart, be it our constant employment to make Christ, our all and in all, that we may be found in him, not having our own righteousness, but the righteousness of God by faith. If we must NEED glory, we will glory in the things concerning our infirmities. "But God forbid that we should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto us, and we unto the world." And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

Hampstead, Oct. 20th, 1831.

THE EDITORS.

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OBITUARY

ON Saturday, September 17th, 1831—Mrs. Alice Lamb, (wife of Mr. John Lamb, Sen. of Wellington, Northamptonshire,) departed from this world of sin and sorrow; she had attained the age of sixty-two, and during her pilgrimage tasted that the Lord was gracious; she was truly an affectionate wife, a tender mother, a kind neighbour and a vessel of mercy, which is the sweetest character of the whole. God was pleased to bring her into the school of affliction, (which is oftentimes the last degree, prior to our being declared of age,) here she was patient and docile. The writer has seen her (during the affliction which terminated in death,) melted in tears at the fact, that Jesus died for the ungodly; a sense of her unworthiness, made her to rejoice in this character, as that which is especially mentioned in the word of God. Her motto was peace, unity, and truth; she loved them well, but truth was her favorite, and when brought to the test, *she could not, would not give up truth, though peace and unity separated for a season from it.* She held sacred the doctrines of the Trinity, Election, Predestination, effectual Vocation, Justification by the imputed Righteousness of Christ, and the perseverance of the saints to everlasting glory. The pages of the Gospel Magazine have afforded her sweet and rich repasts for years; she loved to hear of Jesus, and if any person called upon her during her illness, and introduced any other subject, she manifested a dislike to it.

The writer cannot forget the truly heart melting seasons of prayer and conversation enjoyed with her. In the house of God she was punctual and attentive; to the servants of God, kind and liberal; to the people of God affectionate and sincere; she adopted no whining dissembling acts to make herself esteemed as religious, her meekness and placidity under the vicissitudes of life were exemplary. The last week of her abode on earth, she was particularly happy in mind; prior to this, she had been much in the dark; the nature of her complaint made her feel low in mind; and this conjoined with no visible display of divine love, caused her to grieve;

but God, who is rich in mercy, removed the gloom and took her to glory on the above mentioned day. May this afflictive dispensation be sanctified to the surviving relatives for Christ's sake. Amen.

Sister in Christ, farewell!
No more expos'd to sin,
Beyond the reach of death and hell,
Thy lasting joys begin.

The voice of wrath no more,
Assails thine humble ear,
The prey is gone, the lions roar,
And thou art far from fear.

Beyond these scenes of care,
Far from thy various foes;
Their artful weapons useless are,
In vain their hatred flows.

Of Jesus thou didst hear
In his dear courts below,
The eager look, the glistening tear,
Thy love for him did show.

His name did sweetly sound,
Upon thy raptur'd ear;
How sweet thou hast his person found,
We can but guess while here.

Yes, now he stands reveal'd,
His glories thou dost see:
Thy love, thy rock, thy sun, thy shield
Is evermore with thee.

Had I thy wings sweet dove,
I'd leave my earthly nest,
And soar to taste my Father's love;
In his abodes of rest.

O could I but behold,
What eye hath never seen,
And get within the sacred fold,
In yonder fields so green;

Then I could share thy joys,
Could equal thy sweet song;
Could treat with scorn earth's paltry toys,
And heavenly strains prolong.

Lord send in thy good time,
And fetch thy wand'rer home,
He longs to reach yon holy clime:
O come Lord Jesus! come!

What other charms can bind,
When home is full in view?
It fills with joy the Christian's mind,
And bears him conq'r'er thro'.

Farewell, for all is well,
With those whose strength is God;
In heav'n they shall for ever dwell,
And sound his praise abroad.

DIVINE FRIENDSHIP ; OR, THE KINDNESS OF JESUS TO HIS CHOSEN PEOPLE.

The kindness of Jesus, surpasses expression,
 'Tis measureless, past comprehension, and free ;
 Who, who, can define it, and tell its dimensions,
 Or sound with a plummet this bottomless sea ?

The kindness of Jesus, in Zion's redemption
 Excites admiration 'mongst angels on high ;
 But spirits unfallen, ne'er needed a ransome
 For sinners alone the blest Saviour did die.

Let us mention, believer, the friendship of Jesus,
 A friendship we find our support and our stay ;
 A friendship so ancient it cannot be dated,
 A friendship so stable it cannot decay.

What a friend is the Saviour to all his dear people,
 How tender, how constant, how faithful is he !
 His love to his chosen, will never diminish,
 His fav'rites they are, and for ever shall be.

'Twas kindness to love them, 'ere sins introduction,
 Had open'd the channel for death, grief, and care ;
 To give them a place in his holy affections,
 And save them by purpose from hell and despair.

'Twas kindness in Jesus to stand as their sponser,
 To covenant for them before they e'er fell :
 To represent millions, and undertake for them,
 That they in his kingdom for ever might dwell.

'Twas kindness beyond what an angel can fathom,
 For Jesus from glory above to descend ;
 To breathe in a manger and die on a jibbet,
 Thus proving to all, he was Zion's true friend.

His kindness at Calv'ry stands deeply recorded,
 The water, and blood, that there flow'd from his heart ;
 Proclaim'd this great truth, that whatever befell him,
 With Zion his fair one he never would part.

'Tis kind of him now, though on his throne seated,
 To notice his people where'er they reside :
 He's never unmindful of those he has purchas'd,
 His jewels they are and shall ever abide.

He's kind in their calling, for by his appointment,
 The time of their new birth was wisely design'd ;
 And when from the kingdom of darkness translated,
 True peace at his footstool through mercy they find.

He's kind in temptation, though sorely they suffer,
 When Satan's suggestions their spirits affright ;
 Then Jesus rebukes him, and grants them assistance,
 To put their Satanic opponent to flight.

He's kind, though by sin they are often backsliding,
His eye is upon them, and all their sad ways ;
They still are his people, and soon he will bring them,
To smart for their follies, and utter his praise.

He's kind on their passage, to grant them direction,
This true friend in need, is both faithful and good ;
And though to their reason, all things make against them,
He'll guard them safe through both the tempest and flood.

He's kind in distresses, when providence frowning,
Confounds his dear children and leads them to think
That none are so toss'd with trouble as they are ;
Yet, though thus surrounded, they never shall sink.

He's kind in affliction, when pain is their portion,
When threat'ning disease, disorders their frame ;
He's a nurse in their sickness, and he's their physician,
And joy he affords them, through faith in his name.

Of his kindness in death they are all made partakers,
Though some may his presence abundantly share ;
Yet, each of the ransom'd however much doubting,
Shall die in his bosom, and under his care.

He's kind to advance them to share in his glories,
In heaven above where true rest they shall find ;
And there in his presence, they'll ever adore him,
And leave all their sorrows and sufferings behind.

He's kind, Christian reader, to grant that assistance,
Which you and I need, while we're journeying here,
And though now surrounded by numerous evils,
We soon at his kingdom above shall appear.

And then to the FATHER, for love everlasting,
To JESUS the SAVIOUR, our GOD, and our KING ;
And to the BLEST SPIRIT, who made us new creatures,
To the THREE-ONE JEHOVAH, we ever will sing.

Manchester, March 30, 1831.

A DWARF.

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THE LOVE OF GOD.

God's love is sovereign and divine,
For Lord I clearly see ;
Had not thy love preceded mine,
I ne'er had loved thee.

Love was the moving cause with God,
Or I had never been
Elected, saved, and wash'd in blood,
From all my guilt and sin.

My nature is too vile and base,
For God to love me so ;
A debtor unto sovereign grace,
I am while here below.

I love the Lord because he first,
Did fix his love on me ;
Although I am the very worst,
Of all his family.

Many call me fool, and say
That I a madman am ;
But Lord preserve me in this way,
And I'll adore the Lamb.

And when my glass of life is run,
My song in Heaven shall be,
Glory to God, the Three in One,
For having loved me.

J. G. L. T.

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APPENDIX TO MR. ANDREW REED'S MISSIONARY SERMON.

Oh ! Piety ! thou goddess of the day,
At thy bright shrine we sacred homage pay ;
Fair substitute, for " Fasting" and for " Prayer,"
Take us beneath thy Missionary care.

Oh ! Piety ! thou fascinating flower,
The sweetest in the amaranthine bower ;
The " Rose of Sharon," and the " Lilly" white,
Compar'd to thee, are nothing to the sight.

Oh ! Piety ! thy odoriferous smell,
Will clear the atmosphere from fumes of hell :
Had our first parents cultivated thee,
Perhaps it had sav'd the Lord's " forbidden tree."

Oh ! Piety ! beneath thy magic wand,
They say, the worst of devils cannot stand ;
Those men of old, who could not cast him out,
It was for want of " Piety" no doubt.

Oh ! Piety ! to thee we humbly bow,
'Tis thine, to teach the *Missionary* how
He may convert an Heathen unto God,
If he but touch him, with th' enchanted Rod !

Oh ! Piety ! thy banners are unfurl'd,
Inspir'd by thee, we conquer all the world ;
Thy noble regiments gladly do confess,
That by thy standard they expect " success."

Oh ! Piety ! with Shillings, Pounds, and Pence,
Be thou our shield, our safeguard, and defence ;
Across the seas we go to proselyte,
And by thy help to wash the black-moor white.

Oh ! Piety ! if thou but dwelt within,
The " Leopards spots," " the Ethiopian's skin ;"
At thy appearance, both shall take their flight,
And vanish, like the dismal bird of night.

Oh ! Piety ! assembl'd in thy name,
We congregate to celebrate thy fame ;
Then condescend to leave thy throne of state,
And cheer thy votaries, as they pass the PLATE.

May 16, 1831.

JONAH.