

THE
GOSPEL MAGAZINE.

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

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

"JESUS CHRIST, THE SAME YESTERDAY, AND TO-DAY, AND FOR EVER."

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The Family Portion ;

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

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

OLD TESTAMENT BELIEVERS.

"So great a cloud of Witnesses."—HEB. xii. 1.

THE faith of Old Testament believers in our COVENANT GOD is sometimes spoken of as being inferior to that of the LORD'S people in the present Dispensation. We consider this to be inaccurate. If it were true, what explanation could be advanced of the fact that the worthies whose names appear in the 11th chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews are exhibited by the HOLY SPIRIT as exemplars of the life of faith for New Testament believers to imitate? And how are the words of the APOSTLE PAUL to be explained, when, referring to the faith of the PSALMIST, he says: "We" [New Testament believers] "having *the same spirit of faith*, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak"? While it is true that the Divine revelation on which the faith of Old Testament believers rested was incomplete—as compared with that which to-day historically embraces the death and resurrection of CHRIST and the Pentecostal gift of the HOLY GHOST—yet the faith itself possessed by ABEL and the other Patriarchs cited in the Epistle to the Hebrews was "like precious faith" equally in kind and degree with that bestowed by GOD in the present Gospel Dispensation.

The term "witnesses," used in the passage—"a great cloud of

witnesses"—is sometimes mistaken to refer to onlookers, or spectators, whereas its meaning is *testifiers*, such as bear witness or testimony, as we speak of those who give evidence in courts of justice. For instance, "Ye are My witnesses, saith the LORD." In Greek a "witness" is *μάρτυς*—from which we have our word "martyr," one who gives testimony to the truth at the expense of his life. Thus, believing ABEL was a witness for the truth of GOD in two senses: he testified it both by his life and his death. That blessed proto-martyr stands at the head of the holy phalanx of JEHOVAH'S believing people—an eminent example of faith in the PROMISED SEED. "By faith ABEL offered unto GOD a more excellent sacrifice than CAIN, by which [*faith*] he obtained witness that he was righteous, GOD testifying of his gifts: and by it [*faith*] he, being dead, yet speaketh." GOD publicly sealed ABEL'S faith in the revealed truth that without the shedding of blood—a vicarious sacrifice—there can be no remission of the guilt of human sin, by accepting his typical offering. That same revealed doctrine was uninterruptedly the confidence of all believers from ABEL'S day to the moment when CHRIST on the cross declared—"It is finished!" There has never been more than one way of salvation since the Fall. It has always been by faith; that is, by gracious reliance on the merits of the divinely provided REDEEMER.

Another of the "witnesses," or testifiers, whose names are cited in GOD'S "Book of Martyrs," is ENOCH. "By faith ENOCH was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because GOD had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased GOD." The seal of JEHOVAH'S approbation was thus early set on the life and walk of faith. For all aftertime the example of the holy PATRIARCH has stood out on the page of the inspired Word of what it is to "walk worthy of the LORD unto all pleasing" (Col. i. 10). Grace enabled ENOCH to set his heart upon habitually walking with his GOD. He communed with him with fixed purpose of heart. By faith the INVISIBLE ONE was constantly realized by ENOCH as present—very present. This persistent faith was the more remarkable because it was exercised in an age of abounding wickedness and popular unbelief. Never is the faith of the believer more truly pleasing to his GOD than when it trusts in Him "before the sons of men,"

men of the world who scoff at what they do not possess or understand. ENOCH'S walk with his GOD separated him from the world and the evil fashion of it. And faith still so acts. This is "the path" of which JOB speaks when he says: "There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen: the lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it" (Job xxviii. 7, 8). The flesh has no place in the realm of faith. SATAN cannot spoil GOD'S people of their heritage. Said JESUS to Satan-tempted PETER: "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not" (Luke xxii. 32). ENOCH, no doubt, was often sorely buffeted and taunted by the DEVIL, but by grace his bow abode in strength. The LORD was the ADVOCATE of His servant, and shielded him from the poisoned shafts of the ADVERSARY. In all this the believer of to-day finds encouragement and strength. ENOCH'S walk of faith bears witness to this hour that the Lord "knoweth them that trust in Him." Yes, He knoweth, and delighteth in them. That certainly was a marvellous token of His satisfaction that He translated His faithful WITNESS from an unbelieving world to the heavenly inheritance without his "tasting death."

And another of these early "testifiers"—NOAH—was the recipient of distinguishing favour from JEHOVAH, in Whom he trusted. "NOAH found grace in the eyes of the LORD" in an age of universal apostasy, and was elected, with seven others—"few souls"—to pass safely through the judgment of the Flood (Gen. vi. 8; Heb. xi. 7; 1 Pet. iii. 20). It has been remarked that three results are attributed to NOAH'S faith: (1) He prepared an Ark in faith of the truth of GOD'S word that there should be a destroying flood; (2) By faith he became heir of righteousness; (3) His faith condemned an unbelieving, guilty world. NOAH accepted implicitly the truth of GOD'S warning concerning "things not seen as yet." Such is the real province of faith. It deals with things "not seen," upon the bare Word of Divine testimony. We note "the obedience of faith" in NOAH'S patient building of the Ark, extending over a period of 120 years. Like ENOCH, NOAH "walked with GOD." He believed GOD'S prediction of approaching judgment on an apostate world. The world believed it not. So did the faith of the patriarch condemn, or convict, the world. His building of the Ark was the external evidence of his faith. Gracious

faith is known by the fruit it produces. "Faith worketh—by love."

"Time would fail to tell" in detail of the vast cloud of Old Testament witnesses to whom reference is made by the HOLY SPIRIT in the 11th chapter of the Hebrews. It must suffice to ask,—What was the nature of *the testimony* borne by those gracious multitudes, all through the long ages preceding the First Coming of the promised CHRIST of GOD? Surely, it was testimony to *the efficacy of faith—of faith in GOD*. These worthies, from righteous ABEL downwards, were strangers and pilgrims in the earth, who looked for an inheritance in heavenly places, according to Divine promise. Their temporal lot was largely one of privation, tribulation, persecution, but their hopes were founded on the revealed purposes of GOD's love and grace toward them, and they patiently "endured as seeing Him Who is invisible." They thus "obtained a good report through faith," though they lived not to behold the blessed coming of the PROMISED SEED. They had all, in their day and generation, testified full confidence in JEHOVAH's Covenant Word, and they "died in faith." Their stimulating example may well confirm believers to-day in unwavering reliance on the holy promises, as they concern both time and eternity.

Let us, then, give good heed to the Scriptures, which tell of the enduring exemplary trustfulness of the saints and servants of GOD of old. They are written for our learning, on whom the ends of the world have come. "The race" set before us is identical with that which the ABELS, ENOCHS, and others ran in their day, and it demands the constant graces of faith, perseverance, self-denial, vigilance, and prayer. Never may it be forgotten that JESUS Himself is the sole *object* of our faith. "Looking off unto JESUS"—not to ABEL, or ENOCH, or NOAH, or ABRAHAM—and "laying aside the sin" of unbelief which "most easily" besets us, let us humbly, hopefully, and patiently press on toward the goal, "toward *the mark* for the prize of the high calling of GOD in CHRIST JESUS" (Phil. iii. 14). This race is not to the swift and self-satisfied, but to such as "wait upon the LORD to renew their strength," for to these the promise is given, "they shall run, and not be weary, and they shall walk, and not faint." CHRIST is "the Finisher" of faith as well as its Author. So long as the eye of faith is kept fixed on the LORD JESUS at the

right hand of the FATHER, the discouragements and difficulties of our course will not be allowed to hinder our progress. We learn from His life on earth that faith in His FATHER was the secret of His endurance as SON of MAN. "Who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame"—the joy, observe, that was "set before Him" in His FATHER'S promise—not for any joy He possessed on the cross. JESUS died in implicit faith. Harken to the declaration of His lips as predicted by the inspired prophet ISAIAH: "For the LORD GOD will help Me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set My face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed" (Isaiah l. 7). In the matter of *believing*, as in all things else, "*He* must have the pre-eminence."

THE EDITOR.

HUMILITY is a thing pleasing to God, pride a sin pleasing to the devil (Isa. lvii. 15; 1 Tim. iii. 6). God requires us to be humble, especially under affliction, "and be clothed with humility" (1 Pet. v. 5, 6). That is our becoming garment. The humble publican was accepted, the proud pharisee rejected. We may say of the generation of the proud, as 1 Thess. ii. 16, "Wrath is come upon them to the uttermost." They please neither God nor men, but only themselves and Satan, whom they resemble in it. Now duty is better than sin at any rate.—*Boston*.

THE Holy Spirit is given, in the Covenant, to all the children of God, and received by each in due course; and yet, upon our Lord Jesus Christ did the Spirit first descend, and alighted upon Him as our Covenant Head, "like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments." The Father hath given the Holy Spirit without measure unto His Son; and from Him, in measure, though still in abundance, do all "the brethren who dwell together in unity" (or union with Christ) partake of the Spirit. This holy anointing flows down from Jesus, the anointed One, to every part of His mystical body, to every individual member of His Church. The Lord's declaration concerning Christ was, "I have put My Spirit upon HIM;" and He said, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon ME, because He hath anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the broken-hearted." The Spirit was first poured upon Christ, and from Him descends to all those who are in union with His adorable person. Let us bless the name of Christ if we are united to Him; and let us look up to our Covenant Head, expecting that from Him will flow down the heavenly unction which shall anoint our souls.—*Spurgeon*.

Wayside Notes.

THE FATHER OF MERCIES.

“Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort.”—1 COR. i. 3.

To a poor and needy sinner who knows painfully the plague of his own heart, and mourns the ever-presence of evil in his inmost natural being, no inspired word is more precious and gracious than—“*mercy.*” Mercy is the antithesis of misery. Hence that petition in our public worship—“Have *mercy* upon us, *miserable* sinners.” As Joseph Hart sings:—

“Mercy is welcome news indeed
To those that guilty stand;
Wretches that feel what help they need
Will bless the helping hand.”

How dear to us is that Scripture expression—“But God who is *rich in mercy*—for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins!” The heart of God is the spring of His tender mercy.

“LORD, how tender is Thy mercy,
Free as tender, rich as free,
Pitying, pardoning chief of sinners,
Pitying, pardoning even me!

Mercy tender, Pity tearful,
Find their fount Divine in Thee;
Flowing thence, they seek the thirsty,
Seeking, find that thirst in me.

'Twas Thy Mercy, 'twas Thy Pity,—
Ere creation, sin, or man,—
Moved Thee, true and faithful Kinsman,
To secure redemption's plan.

Then, when time had coursed the ages,
Mercy, Pity, sped to earth;
Cam'st Thou forth the Man of Sorrows,
For our sorrows, lo, Thy birth!

Sweet Thy Mercy, deep Thy Pity,
Sweeter, deeper, day by day;
Deeper as life's shadows deepen,
Sweeter as earth's joys decay.

Soon, oh ! soon, in Salem's city,
Midst the ransomed sinner-host,
I shall sing the Mercy Triune—
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ! ”

If God were not “ rich in mercy,” His people would have exhausted it long ago, as someone has well said. Every step in the believer's pilgrimage is taken by him in entire dependence on the free mercy of “ the Father of Mercies ! ” True, He does not always realise this fact, nevertheless the fact remains. A Christian writer, dwelling on the *tenderness* of God's Covenant mercy, has said : “ God's mercies are unbounded, and they are tender. Our mercy is not tender. What little mercy we find in man is often harsh and hard. It is not tender at all. It is a common saying among us, ‘ I forgive, but I do not forget. ’ We ‘ forgive ’ with an air of superiority—superciliously. There is often harshness, hardness, unkindness, in the way in which our mercy is bestowed. You have often received mercy in such a way as to make you feel that you had nearly paid for it, in having to suffer the rude, unkindly manner in which it was bestowed. And even when that is not so, but when man bestows his kindness and vouchsafes his mercy in the blandest way, you could not think of calling it tender. That would be about the last epithet you could think of applying to it. But God forgives, and when He forgives, He does it tenderly. There is no upbraiding. He blots out the transgression, and there is no remembrance of it at all. He forgets as soon as He forgives. It is done in a gentle way. There is nothing but kindness in the glance of the eye, and nothing but tenderness in the tone of His voice. ‘ Be of good cheer ; thy sins are forgiven thee. ’ The sin is swept away ; it is cast behind His back into the depths of the sea. He says to a weeping woman, ‘ She has been forgiven much, and therefore she loveth much. ’ To another, ‘ Go in peace. ’ And when Saul of Tarsus is persecuting the saints of the Lord Jesus, and the Lord comes down to pardon him, He says, ‘ *It is hard for thee : thou persecutest Me ; but it is hard for thee.* ’ God's mercies are tender.” These remarks are blessedly and sweetly true. Oh, beloved fellow-pilgrims, let us dwell much and often on the tenderness of our heavenly Father's manifold mercies towards us in Christ. For, it is in Him, and for His dear sake, that we are partakers of the

tender mercies which are ordered in God's everlasting Covenant. The believer finds perfect delight in the mercy of God. He repudiates all confidence in anything of his own. It is reported of the learned divine, Hooker, that, when he was dying, someone said to him, "Brother, you are going to receive the reward of your labours." He humbly replied, "Brother, I am going to receive *mercy!*" The sovereignty of our heavenly Father's tender and manifold mercies is made very evident in Scripture by the fact that He, of old, bestowed so many of them just when the recipients of them were sinning against Him! Thus, Jacob was favoured with the vision of the ladder at Bethel, immediately after his deceit had made him an exile from his father's house. The Israelites were fed with manna in return for their ungrateful murmurings against Jehovah. And at the very time that Aaron was framing the golden calf—in compliance with a sinful people—the God of all grace was conferring upon him the Priesthood, and giving the commission to Moses in the Mount! Alas, how imperfectly sensible are we to the freeness of God's countless favours towards us as His sinful people! The good Puritan, Bishop Reynolds, the gracious composer of the General Thanksgiving in the Prayer Book, observes, "As the Dead Sea drinks in the Jordan, and is never the sweeter, and the ocean all other rivers, and is never the fresher, so we are apt to receive daily mercies from God, and yet remain insensible of them and unthankful for them." In face of these sinful infirmities, well might the Psalmist plead with his soul, "Forget not all His benefits." Ingratitude towards the Father of Mercies is the basest of all the sins of His children. As the gracious Puritan divine, Richard Sibbes, observes, "What unthankfulness is it to forget our consolations, and to look only upon matters of grievance; to think so much upon two or three crosses, as to forget a hundred blessings!" It should be the habitual desire and aim of every grace-saved sinner to be filled with gratitude and praise towards the Father of Mercies. "Be ye thankful"—literally, "*become* thankful"—is an inspired exhortation of God's Word, as though thankfulness were a tender plant that needed watchful treatment. It is so, indeed. "Ebenezer" should be deeply inscribed on every milestone the heaven-bound pilgrim passes day after day. The "Unspeakable Gift" of God's dear Son alone demands an unbroken song of

praise and thanksgiving. The atoning blood of the Lamb is, in itself, a theme for eternal praise. The donation of the Holy Spirit to quicken, sanctify, seal, teach, comfort, and guide, is yet another demand on our gratitude. The Everlasting Covenant, "ordered in all things, and sure," together with the blood-confirmed promises of the Father of Mercies, go further to place us under sacred obligation to "shew forth the praises" of Him who, in His infinite love, grace, and mercy, has numbered us among His saints on earth, and who will yet give us a place among them "in glory everlasting." The ceaseless worship of the redeemed hereafter will be *a service of praise* in honour of the three Co-equal and Co-eternal Persons in the Eternal Godhead!

Clifton.

J. O.

COULD men once be brought to believe, that it is better to have their minds bend to the crook in their lot, than to force the crook to their mind, they would be in a fair way to bring their matters to a good account.—*Boston.*

GOD'S children may have such great afflictions brought upon them that their souls may even cleave to the dust. "My soul cleaveth unto the dust; quicken Thou me according to Thy word."—*A Puritan Divine.*

THE Word of God will truly enrich a man, and make him happy. The difference between God's people and others doth not lie in this, that one seeketh after riches and the other not; they both seek to enrich themselves, only the one seeketh after false and the other true riches.

THERE are some things good but not pleasant, as *sorrow* and *affliction*. Sin is pleasant, but unprofitable; and sorrow is profitable, but unpleasant. By affliction, the Lord separates the sin that He hates from the soul that He loves. He does not always ordain it to take your spirit out of your flesh, but your flesh out of your spirit. It is not sent to take down the tabernacle of nature; but to rear up the temple of grace within you. As waters are purest when they are in motion, so saints are generally holiest when in affliction. A fowl fescue frequently points to a fair lesson. Some Christians resemble those children who will learn their books no longer than while the rod is on their backs. It is well known that by the greatest affliction the Lord has sealed the sweetest instruction. Many are not bettered by the judgments they see, when they are by the judgments they have felt. The purest gold is the most pliable. That is the best blade which bends well without retaining its crooked figure.—*Secker.*

Pilgrim Papers.

WELLSPRINGS.

"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God."—HEB. iv. 9.

LAST month it was intended to continue and conclude our meditation in a single paper. The subject of the promised land and the antitype of the heavenly Canaan, however, was somewhat extended, and we were compelled to divide the article. We take up the pen again and renew the subject. We saw how Canaan was a type of the heavenly inheritance, and where it fell short. We endeavoured to trace the pilgrims in their wanderings, their hopes and disappointments, and how even they who were permitted to enter into the promised land saw not the fulfilment of their hopes and expectations. For the promised Messiah had not come! "These all died in faith, not having received the promises." Again and again were the children of Israel reminded of their pilgrim character. Day by day these sojourners were shown how here they were as "strangers and pilgrims upon the earth," and lest they should "settle upon their lees," there was oft in mercy given them a thorn in the nest. The command came, "Arise ye and depart. This is not your rest, it is polluted." The enemy was still there to encounter; disappointments oft met their expectations, and hope died in their breasts. They understood not!

"The 'Exodus' was only the beginning
Of countless tender mercies by the way;
God went before His people He had chosen,
With fire by night and with a cloud by day.

"God's leadings often crossed their inclinations—
The Pillar went too fast, or went too slow;
It stayed too long to suit their restless temper,
Or when they wished to stay, it bade them go.

"And so they murmured!—murmured very often:
Their sullen hearts rebelled against the light;
And had not God been strong and very patient,
They never would have found their way aright."

It was but the shadow! The substance was not yet come! "For if Jesus [that is, Joshua] had given them rest, then would He not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." The chapter commences with an exhortation, lest, like hardened Israel of old, any of us should fail and seem to come short of the promised inheritance. "Let us therefore fear," for we have the Gospel preached as well as had they; and it behoves each one of us to see whether faith is mixed with the hearing to profit, for "without faith it is impossible to please God." And we have a Trinity of Rest above. God rested. Jesus has entered into His rest as God did into His. And then we have the Holy Ghost declaring His "to-day" of rest.

It is just the very opposite out of Him. Unrest is the condition into which sin brings every child of Adam's lost and ruined state. And rest comes only when the fruit of faith is worked in us, and we "cast our deadly doings down—down at Jesus' feet," and from legal bondage enter into Gospel rest. Toil we may unceasingly, unavailingly, unacceptably under the law; whilst rest in perfect satisfaction and acceptance in His sight is our blessed condition under the Gospel. "We which believe *do* enter into rest." Oh yes, there are seasons of rest even now for the child of God! True, they may be very brief and transitory, but they are blessed experiences; and as we are stirred up to press forward again on our desert journey, we are consciously strengthened and rested. And this Gospel rest abideth, continueth in *Him*, whatever change, unrest, and fluctuations we experience in ourselves.

Now, to set forth this rest, this attainment, this gracious provision and glorious prospect, we see how "God rested" on the seventh day from all creation's work. God needed not to rest! Omnipotence was not dependent upon that ordained means: but He ceased from His work in order to set forth how He would in His perfect wisdom appoint a rest day for man, that so physically and spiritually he should resuscitate his powers, and how thereby Jehovah would remind him of a coming rest, a rest that "remaineth." Thus "God rested on the seventh day, and blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it." Thus Noah preached it from the ark, when "he stayed yet other seven days; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark," etc. Moses enforced it in the law, "Thou shalt remember the Sabbath day, the day of rest, to keep it holy." David wrote of it in his sanctuary Psalm: "To-day, if ye will hear His voice," etc. The prophet Isaiah declares, "Blessed is the man that keepeth the Sabbath" and "calls the Sabbath a delight." And Jesus observed it whilst He declared, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath."

Shall not you and I say, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee"? Return unto thy rest, thy Noah!—for so it may be rendered. Beloved, we have yet a rest to come, thank God! Blessed as are these rests and halts in the journey, how transitory, how fleeting they are! One moment at rest in the bosom of Jesus, the next in hot combat on the enemy's field. Rest in the ark, and next, "like Noah's dove we flit, 'mid seas and stormy skies." Oh, blessed hope! glorious provision! bright prospect! to these travel-stained bodies, these thorn-pierced feet of ours. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." *The keeping of a Sabbath! A sabbath rest!* The word does not occur anywhere else, I believe, in the New Testament, or in the Greek version of the Old Testament. The corresponding verb is, however, found in Exod. xvi. 30, "So the people rested on the seventh day," i.e., "kept Sabbath," and Lev. xxiii. 32, R.V., "In the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even shall ye keep your Sabbath," "a Sabbath of holy rest."

And it is in this sense, therefore, that there is a holy rest for the people of God, into which they may even now enter. Thank God for the rest we find in Jesus *now*, amid the turmoil of earthly duties and thronging cares; a rest from the world's restlessness; a rest from temptation's fiery furnace; a rest from Satan's wily crafts. "There *abideth*," writes one very sweetly, "a rest which cannot be worn out—a period cannot be put to it. The rest which He has for His restless ones is simply Himself. 'We which have believed *do* enter into rest,' into the rest prepared, provided and preserved for every elect vessel of mercy, every sinner saved by the blood of the Lamb; every redeemed offender justified in the righteousness of his Redeemer; a rest for those according to the will, desire and determination of a sovereign God."

It is thus a promise of more to come—a foretaste of that which will abide for ever. Here our rest is all too transient, too fleeting, too soon broken by sin, Satan, and the world. But Zion's pilgrims "go from strength to strength," and thus they rest and recruit their powers to go forward again, to press toward the mark for the prize of their high calling, and count upon that period when they shall enter once and for all into that rest which is reserved for them in heaven. As each returning Sabbath comes round, and they find sweet moments in the sanctuary, and rest in Christ, their hope is encouraged and they sing with blest anticipation with the sainted Kelly:—

"Sweet day of rest! for thee I'd wait,
Emblem and earnest of a state
Where saints are fully blest;
For thee I'd look, for thee I'd sigh,
I'd count the days till thou art nigh,
Sweet day of sacred rest!

"But oft (with shame I will confess)
My privilege a burden is,
No joy, alas! have I;
When I would take my harp and sing,
I find it oft without a string,
And lay it coldly by.

"But while I thus confess my shame,
'Tis right that I should praise *His* name
Who makes me sometimes sing;
Yes, Lord (I'll speak it to Thy praise),
My cheerful song I sometimes raise,
And triumph in my King."

"Oh, let the case be always so,
My song no interruption know,
Till death shall seal my tongue;
In heaven, a nobler strain I'll raise,
And rest from everything but praise,
My heaven an endless song."

Beloved! it was granted unto Joshua to lead the children of Israel into the promised rest of Canaan. It is left for Jesus in His kingly rights to lead His people into their purchased rest; and up yonder

there remaineth—with Him and His together—the eternal keeping of a Sabbath! “*There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.*” Let us cheer one another with the prospect of that glad and glorious resurrection morning, and seek the grace now that will keep us walking as Children of the Resurrection, Children of the Day, Children of the Light!

R.

“WHERE HAST THOU GLEANED TO-DAY?”

DEUTERONOMY xxxiii. 10.

“AND of Levi he said . . . they shall put incense before thee, and whole burnt sacrifices upon thine altar.” Levi has passed away. Our Great High Priest has come, after the Order of Melchisedec. He has constituted another priesthood that the Word of God might be fulfilled, but it is a word for all times; the holy priesthood, the royal priesthood, still offer sacrifices; they present incense of prayers and praises on the golden altar of Christ’s own person before the throne of God, Who ever liveth to make intercession for us; they fill His golden censer, they offer whole burnt sacrifices, they present His merits, a whole Christ, before the Father; on the ground of acceptance they have nothing of their own to bring, they do not glory in their own righteousness, for it is as filthy rags.

They present meat offerings—His holy life on their account. It was fine flour not mingled with any coarseness, but it was mingled with the holy oil of the Spirit of God in His incarnation, and Christ was anointed with the holy oil in His baptism.

He is our peace offering. He has made peace by the blood of His cross. He is our sin offering. We are ignorant of much sin, but when it is brought to mind as the Psalmist says, in time of finding out sin, we confess it and present the blood which cleanses from all sin. It is wonderful how God deals with us in grace as we confess our sins to Him.

He is our trespass offering, “having forgiven you all trespasses.”

“O Judah, keep thy solemn feasts.” It is a feast unto the Lord; if we present a whole Christ for our acceptance before Him, put whole burnt sacrifices on the altar, we have the mind of God. He is well pleased for His righteousness’ sake. He is “My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.” We are well pleased with all His righteousness and sacrifices.

MARY.

WORDS are leaves, deeds are fruit.—*Anon.*

THE mercies of God are not styled the swift, but the “sure” mercies of David; and therefore a gracious soul patiently waits for them.—*Brooks.*

SOME NOTES ON THE CLIFTON CONFERENCE, 1907.

THE Forty-Fifth Clifton Conference with its glorious subject, "The Believer in Christ: the Conflicts of his faith, and the Victories of his faith," was opened at the Victoria Rooms on October 1st. Many well-known and much-loved faces were there. I may pay a small tribute here to the dear memory of those who gathered with us last year, who mingled their voices with ours, and listened to the gracious words we listened to, but who have now passed into the—

"Sweeter far His face to see,
And in His presence rest."

They know in all its most glorious aspects the triumphs of faith, the bliss of sight. They have

"Seen the morning
Break on the golden shore."

Dear Dr. Baedeker, whose voice surely even yet rings in our ears in his fervent pleading for Russia—how soon he passed into the presence-chamber of the King! Another who drank in the Word with great delight, so seldom of late years able to join the worshippers below, so often enduring the *conflicts* of faith, but enabled calmly to rest in the last days on the everlasting arms, she, too, has entered the joy of victory and home. "She rests, not 'awhile,' but 'evermore' above."

Another who worshipped with us at dear St. Mary-le-port, who struggled bravely with her great sorrow in the removal of her dear husband, has now joined him in the rapture above. Just as many of us were going away in the summer to different places for a change, she said, "Ah, you are all talking of going away. I, too, am going on a journey, and *I shall not want to come back.*" No, indeed; she is abundantly satisfied there. And another, who passed through much suffering in her last days, thought of the little children she was leaving behind, and was troubled for them, was graciously enabled to leave them in perfect confidence in the care of Him whose love and power are stronger than hers. So without one more care she went calmly to her Saviour's joy.

This present year's gathering, under the presidency of the Rev. J. ORMISTON, was the twenty-eighth of his convening. And surely, in all the twenty-eight years we never had a more practical, profitable subject, or one more full of matter for joyous anticipation. There was a large assemblage, and after silent prayer, and Mr. Ormiston's kind welcome, and the singing of the first hymn in the Special Conference Hymn Book: "Come ye yourselves apart and rest awhile," the dear Convener read "the Conference Psalm," as he happily phrased it—the cxxxiii.—and also part of Romans x. He expressed regret at the absence of Canon Head, who was unable to be present; and after prayer by Rev. F. Sumner, Vicar of St. Bartholomew's, Bristol, he called upon the Rev. W. T. Turpin, Vicar of Emmanuel, Eastbourne, to address the Conference.

Mr. TURPIN took as the basis of his remarks 1 Cor. i. 30, "But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption." The keynote of St. Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians is "in Christ," and this sums up the position and privileges of "the believer in Christ." Mr. Turpin dwelt chiefly on the types of the believer as shown in the wilderness journey of Israel and the entry into Canaan—they are the two-fold types of the history of the children of God, and correspond to life in this world. Some of us have looked upon Canaan as the type of heaven; but this can hardly be so, for conflicts will be absent there. The Israelites had much to contend with in Canaan—very many battles. Canaan is more probably the present heaven, in which, while in the flesh, conflicts take place, and the battles of God and for Him are being fought. After the Red Sea of redemption there was wilderness wandering, and conflict was there. The world's pleasures have now become a desert to us. There was a two-fold purpose of conflict in Deut. viii. 2—to humble and to prove. Mr. Turpin delineated in a most interesting way the contrast between the periodical overflowing of the Nile in the Egypt life left behind, requiring such labour, and the land of Canaan watered by "the rain of heaven" (Deut. xi. 11), also manna and "the old corn of the land." The speaker said how very mysterious the dealings of God with His people often are, suffering and pressure and trial on every hand, whilst men of the world seem to prosper. Like Asaph in Ps. lxxiii., "Until I went into the sanctuary, then understood I." The life of conflict leads to victory; victory implies conflict. But the believer will be enabled to say shortly, "Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory."

After another hymn, the Rev. S. F. Alford (Vicar of St. Andrew-the-Less) continued the subject. The believer's standing is in Christ. St. Paul's desire was to be found in Him, not having his own righteousness. The Book of Joshua in the Old Testament corresponds with the Epistle to the Ephesians in the New Testament. In Joshua the conflicts of the Israelites are recorded, and in Ephesians is much of the great spiritual conflict. Mr. Alford proceeded to delineate conflict with the world, the flesh, and the devil, the three great enemies of the soul. There are three passages in the Scripture in which the world, the flesh, and the devil are brought together (Eph. ii. 2, 3; James iv. 2, 4, 7; and 1 John ii. 13-16). In the first passage the world, the devil, and the flesh; in the second the flesh, the world, and the devil; and in the third the devil, the world, and the flesh. Sometimes we are very apt to ask, "Why am I so sorely tempted and tried?" It is just *because* you are a believer. God's children are His witnesses, and they are to reflect the light of Christ living in this world, letting the world know their "citizenship is in Heaven;" they are strangers and pilgrims passing through the world—in it but not of it—to the city whose Builder and Maker is God.

Prayer followed, and COLONEL SAVILE was the concluding speaker. He said the object of their meeting together was to contemplate Jesus.

With trials within and trials without, which are the portion of every believer in Jesus, we are instructed to take upon us the whole armour of God, which is Jesus Christ, and to be praying always—always in communion with Him. Colonel Savile remarked upon the preciousness of the saying of Jesus, “Men ought *always* to pray and *not* to faint,” and urged daily constant prayer.

After prayer by Rev. T. Houghton, of Bath, the Rev. W. T. Turpin pronounced the benediction.

The evening meeting was again opened with silent prayer. The Rev. J. Ormiston read Eph. ii., and after prayer by Rev. W. T. Turpin, and the hymn, “A mind at perfect peace with God,” the subject was opened by the VEN. ARCHDEACON NOYES (Vicar of St. John’s, Harborne, Birmingham). Referring to the passage (Habakkuk ii. 4), “The just shall live by his faith,” quoted three times in the New Testament (Rom. i. 17 ; Gal. iii. 11 ; Heb. x. 38), he spoke of the term “believers” not being a Scriptural one in actuality, but in the substance of it, men of faith, and the source, believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, as of constant occurrence. That faith is God-given, implanted by the Holy Spirit. Belief is a proof of the new birth. There is a faithful people—people who believe and walk by faith. This is an unmistakable fact. Amidst the many errors of the day, the “Higher Criticism” and “New Theology,” it is a common matter to be told the standard to ascertain truth is inner consciousness, but “the natural man discerneth not the things of God, for they are foolishness unto him ; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” The spiritual man’s standard is the Holy Scriptures, known and discerned by the light and teaching of the Holy Spirit. The exponents of the “New Theology” see not the exceeding sinfulness of sin—they make light of sin ; but the child of God, by the Holy Spirit’s enlightening, sees sin—sin in all he does—hence his conflicts, the conflicts of faith. Victory however is assured. In Christ he stands and in Christ he triumphs. Archdeacon Noyes then read a very beautiful extract from Watson, describing the ark riding above all storms, and the safety of the believer safely conveyed and protected from all danger—billows and tempests all around, but safe in the shelter of the Ark borne above all. Nothing can pluck him from his Saviour’s hands. We may say with the Apostle, “Who can be against us ? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect ? Who shall condemn us ? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ ?” Christ died and is risen again, and nothing, nothing can separate us from Him.

After a hymn, CANON SPENCE gave an address, referring to St. Paul’s frequent references to soldiers and conflicts and battles, so typical of the Christian believer. One of the most subtle temptations often whispered in the ear by the great enemy of souls is that there is no such thing as sin and temptation and the devil. But the Master Himself endured temptation, and as He was, so are we. Difficulties and trials are in the very nature of our allegiance. Conflict with the world brings us into many perplexities, but “My grace is sufficient for

thee." "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." Conflicts are from inbred sin, with Satan and the powers of darkness. There are many who put on the king's uniform, and are in the army, who were never on a battlefield, and have never fired a shot against an enemy. But not so with the soldiers of Christ; all must fight in the spiritual war against spiritual enemies. The whole armour is of God's providing, and consists in this Scripture, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ." Standing in Him is victory.

After the hymn, "Safe in the arms of Jesus," Mr. JOHN WOOD gave the closing address, saying we are so safe, held by an Everlasting Hand, and another Hand is laid on the top of that: Christ says, "No man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." Satan is desirous to have *you*; but Christ has prayed, and He exhorts His people likewise to pray. And "they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint."

Mr. Wood referred to "Christian Science," so-called, and its alarming spread, a new centre being formed every four days, and though only twenty-eight years in existence, yet numbering millions of adherents. But the Lord is mightier than all, and will not suffer His people to be deceived. "The Lord is on your right hand."

On Wednesday morning, after silent prayer and singing, "None but Christ, His merit hides us," the Rev. J. ORMISTON read Col. ii. After prayer by Col. SAVILE, the Rev. T. C. CHAPMAN (Vicar of Christ Church, Clifton) gave the opening address, saying Conflict is a very real thing, but thank God, it never leads to defeat, but to victory. The word victory immediately takes us to the battlefield, and warfare and war. Mr. Chapman referred to Rom. xiii. 12, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light." Night and morning rising, not as you and I rise to simply put off sleep, and for activity, but to put on armour for real conflict, in confidence of victory through Christ. Not now beautiful garments, not now songs of triumph, but equipped for the battlefield. "Put on the armour of light," or as in verse 14, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ," all titles contained in Him. We are not mere spectators of battle; not merely military *attachés*, sent to study warfare, but to take up weapons and engage in warfare. Sin is a stern, terrible thing, and with that we have to wage war every day and every hour and moment of our lives. The sinner's need is beyond his own strength to supply; but God has made provision, not only to meet the need, but to make us more than conquerors.

After a hymn, the Rev. N. F. DUNCAN (Vicar of St. Julian's, Shrewsbury) took up the subject. He spoke of several instances in the New Testament, of Thomas in St. John xx., of Simon Peter in St. John xxi., of St. Paul in Acts ix., and of the beloved disciple in the Isle of Patmos in Rev. i., alluding to the blessed way in which the Lord Jesus confirmed the faith of His disciples. In each case He, the Crucified One, was a personal reality, and we shall know nothing of victory except through

a personal Saviour. This knowledge is Spirit-given, and the blood-bought salvation assured in Christ. We shall be shut in, in the ark of safety, the Lord Jesus Christ. There is something very beautiful in the thought of being shut in with Him, the door closed and fastened, and we ourselves shut in with Jesus. Then victory (see 2 Tim. ii. 12), the great result of fellowship with Him. "It is a faithful saying . . . If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him."

After a hymn and prayer, the Rev. T. HOUGHTON, of Bath, resumed the subject, taking as the basis of his remarks 1 Cor. i. 5, "In everything ye are enriched by Him." The wealth of the believer in Christ is unspeakable, and the victories wrought in his faith. He is enriched by being called from darkness into marvellous light, in his eternally complete salvation. "Oh! how great is Thy goodness, which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee," exclaimed the Psalmist, and truly it is inexhaustible. There are three passages concerning these riches that I would call attention to. First, Eph. iii. 19, "Filled with all the fulness of God." Oh! how full and gracious the assurance. His wealth is unsearchable—no limit. Second, Rom. x. 12, "Rich unto all that call upon Him." Yes, and rich to those who continue to call upon Him—not only once, but constantly. Third, 2 Cor. viii. 9, "Though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich." Remarkable riches! Oh! what remarkable poverty, that we might be rich.

Look at the character of this enrichment. First the believer is enriched with the "washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." "Not by works of righteousness which we have done." Then secondly, he is enriched with faith—faith which is the gift of God. "This is the victory which overcometh the world, even our faith." Then he is enriched by forgiveness of sins; and another phase of enrichment is trial. "It is given to you on behalf of Christ to suffer for His sake," and like Moses, "esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt." Finally, there will be the enrichment in glory; victory in heavenly places with Him for ever.

The morning's proceedings were closed with singing the concluding verse of Hymn 9, "For me, Lord Jesus, Thou hast died, and I have died in Thee." Rev. T. C. Chapman pronounced the benediction.

On Wednesday evening, at the concluding meeting, silent prayer was again the commencement, and the hymn, "Oh Christ, what burdens bowed Thy Head." The Rev. J. ORMISTON read 2 Tim. iii. from verse 14; and after prayer by CANON SPENCE, Dr. J. W. THIRTLE gave the opening address, based on 1 John v. 4, 5, "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" There is the secret, there is the mystery explained: faith, which unites us with the Great Victor and His conquests. Disbelief is a rejection not of ideas but of faith. There are many assailants of faith; there are,

through unbelief of Christ, various dogmas as to His Person and Power. But faith will overcome, will deny and renounce the world of unbelief. Day by day we walk by faith; we are as an epistle of Christ, known and read of all men. We have conflicts, but the hand of God is upon us to guide and protect, and victory is ours; not the believer's victory, but we conquer in Christ the Conqueror. "What think ye of Christ?" asked Dr. Thirtle. "Who is Christ, and what is He to you?" For our estimate of Christ is fundamental in all our faith. Victories strengthen faith, increase assurance, and are pledges of continued everlasting blessing. The believer passes on from one victory to another, and at length in and through Christ, not apart from Him, the faith that overcometh casts down all at His feet in glory.

The Rev. ISAAC HAWKER followed by asking, first of all, "What is a believer?" He is one who believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, and receives his belief by the authority of another. There is such a thing in the world as a believer resting for his salvation on the Word of God. All men have not faith, but God-given faith is invincible. "I have prayed for thee," said Jesus, "that thy faith fail not," and so His people shall never be overcome. Faith is a living principle. Faith abides and works in the heart. Faith keeps the soul in union with the Lord Jesus Christ. Faith in heart is all the difference to faith in mind. Faith is in a *living* Christ. "I am the Living One." Faith is active. Faith enters into and entails a warfare between flesh and spirit. Faith, wearing God's armour, goes forward in belief that victory not only may be ours or shall be ours, but *is already* won. "The battle is not yours, but God's." We are not always smoothly borne along on angel's wings here, but have to fight manfully under His banner, and to bear witness clearly for Him until called to live with Him for ever.

After a prayer Mr. F. BICKFORD HEARD resumed the subject, saying the believer *must* eventually overcome and be made not only conqueror, but *more than conqueror*; no defeat, no disappointment. The purpose and the result of the death of Christ is that the believer shall overcome. There is one Body; the believer is joined to Christ in one Body, one Spirit (see 1 Cor. xii. 12-14). Do you believe you have been saved from everlasting; united to Christ, so joined to Him that you are part of His mystical Body? We died with Christ, were buried with Christ, and are risen with Christ; so sure of victory because He has conquered. We shall not be deceived, for the Spirit will guide us into all truth. There are many enemies to the truth, "New Theology" adherents, Christian Scientists, etc., but they do not affect the believer. We shall not be deceived, for He has saved. It is union with Him that brings us to suffer with Him; but fire brings out the graces and defeats Satan. Then in the end we shall *not all* sleep, but we *shall all* be changed—caught up; one Church without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; the Church He loved, the Church He died for, His Body, to be for ever in eternal glory.

After this Mr. J. L. STANLEY gave the concluding address, speaking of the grand faith of David in encountering Goliath; of the three men of

faith who were cast into the burning fiery furnace ; and of Daniel with the lion's den in view. Every one of us, day by day, has conflict with sin. God knows what battles are being fought and won ; conflicts with circumstances, with morals, and battles with spiritual enemies of all kinds. Nothing of this life can possibly endanger ultimate safety. Nay, God turns these things round and makes them the very instruments that shall make His children thus exercised more than conquerors. Mr. Stanley gave a beautiful illustration of exquisite flowers, some of them attaining their ethereal loveliness through great heat, and others from the other extreme of temperature, Alpine ice and snow. And so in Revelation we read the question asked before the Throne of God, "Whence came they?" And the answer, "Out of great tribulation." All, all there have washed their robes and are white in the blood of the Lamb.

The dear CONVENER in closing made a few touching references to those who were with us last year, but are now in glory everlasting. We sang, "God be with you till we meet again," and the benediction from the Rev. J. Ormiston concluded the Clifton Conference of 1907. The following evening the Rev. N. F. Duncan gave us three watch-words, preaching the Conference sermon: "The Lord reigneth," "The Lord loveth," and "The Lord cometh." These may well encourage us in our walk of faith here, till we all meet where faith is lost in sight and grace crowned with glory, not only looking *unto* Jesus, but looking *upon* Jesus. Not one hair of glory missing ; all together again for ever and for ever. Dear reader, what a Hallelujah chorus—what a triumph song that will be !

NETTIE.

GRACE AND PEACE.*

WELL do I remember Mrs. S——. Above the middle height, with expressive dark eyes, pleasing smile, and artless manners, she won her way silently into people's hearts, without the slightest pretensions to what the world calls beauty, or even the lesser term, good-looking.

From early childhood she had been the subject of deep soul-trouble, and her marriage with an ungodly young tradesman, that brought her into contact with the world, produced untiring conflict with her conscience, and added to her wretchedness. The only religious means she had was Sabbath attendance at a place of worship, where a legal ministry riveted the fetters whereby she was already bound.

Her eldest child being of an age to go to school, and hearing that a female in narrow circumstances was compelled to teach in order to support herself, Mrs. S——, who had a feeling heart for the wants of others, determined to send her little girl to this school, though at an inconvenient distance from her abode.

* This narrative by the late Mrs. Hoblyn, of Bath, forms No. xvi. of the series, "Tracts for the People," and may be had as a booklet (price one half-penny) from Mr. J. C. Pembrey, 164, Walton Street, Oxford.

When the child returned home in the evening, there was much to hear and much to tell of all that had transpired in the schoolroom. The little girl was intelligent, and had been carefully instructed by her mother, in so far as she thought was the way of salvation; therefore, with surprise and interest she heard that before the school duties of the day commenced, a chapter in the Bible had been read by the children and explained by the governess. Fearing she had made a mistake through her benevolence, and put her child, it might be, under evil tuition, Mrs. S—— began to question her as to what the teacher had said. “Mamma,” replied the little girl, “it was quite different to what you tell me. I paid great attention to Miss C——’s words, and she said, ‘God only loved His people, and He loved them before ever they were born;’ and she said, ‘Jesus Christ did everything for them, and quite saved them without their doing anything.’” As Mrs. S—— listened to the child, a conviction fell powerfully into her mind, that the schoolmistress was in the secret as to religion, and she determined that moment to take an early opportunity of conversing with her. After an interval of a few days, during which time the child was carefully questioned by the mother, and every word of Gospel truth treasured up and pondered over, Mrs. S—— found leisure to call on the governess. Before many minutes had passed the conversation turned upon the subject of religion, by Mrs. S—— expressing her gratitude at the kind interest Miss C—— took in the spiritual welfare of the little child. Miss C—— replied, “The things of God were of the first importance to herself, and she wished to impress what she knew of the truth upon her pupils; and with regard to what she taught, it was her maxim to make no difference between a child and an adult, but just teach what God had taught her; and thus if the children entrusted to her care should ever realise the Gospel, her desire was, they should not be compelled to unlearn what she had taught them, but, on the contrary, find all they had been taught in the letter, agreed with the work of the Spirit in the heart.”

This led to further enquiries about the plan of salvation from Mrs. S——, and Miss C—— replied, as one who was at a point about divine truth, and in full possession of Gospel liberty. “Now tell me,” asked Mrs. S——, “wherein lies the difference between what you teach my child and what she has learnt of me.” “I believe,” replied Miss C——, “from God’s testimony in His Word, and His teaching in my heart, that He is beforehand with the sinner in every respect; but the teaching of nature and Satan is to put the creature first and God next. You taught your child, therefore, if she was good, God would love her. I tell her, on the contrary, this is only true with respect to her relatives and friends. They will love her if she is a good child, and behaves well; but God loves His people when dead in sin, and saves them by grace alone, and not for any goodness in them; neither their goodness nor badness has any influence upon His love, which took its rise before the world began, as Scripture teaches.” “But surely,” asked Mrs. S——, with surprise, “you don’t teach little

children these things ? ” “ I certainly do,” said Miss C—— ; “ children can take in the letter of truth as well as the letter of error, and I am neither afraid nor ashamed to tell others what God has made plain to my soul. He can bless His truth to a child as well as to an adult. My work is to sow good seed in the field, it is God’s work to make it grow.” Much interesting conversation passed upon these points, never forgotten by Mrs. S——, and repeated with thankfulness in an after day, when light, liberty, and peace visited her soul ; often gratefully tracing back the sovereign steps of God in leading her to place her little child with one who became the means of instructing the mother in the way of salvation.

Her next inquiry was, where she could hear these same truths preached ; and being directed by Miss C——, she went, heard with power, and was never absent from her seat while health lasted. Liberty and peace were vouchsafed to her, and the house of God was truly a house of mercy to her soul. But heavy trials followed up closely upon this manifestation of grace. A long and severe illness brought her to the gates of death ; but to the surprise of everyone, she recovered, and took her place as usual in the house of God. A Christian friend called upon her at this time, to whom she said, “ I never was better in my life. God has removed many trying little crosses, and brought me to ease and much domestic comfort, but my heart is in heaven. I look at my husband and children, and I say to myself, You are all very dear to me, but Jesus is dearer still. I look around my house, and I see everything I need ; but I feel I would rather be in heaven. Sometimes I am constrained to get alone, in order to pour out to God all I feel of intense longings to be with Him. Now,” she continued, “ mind, this is not because I am made unhappy by things around me, it is quite contrary now ; but God seems to have weaned my heart from earth. I feel like one halting on a journey, only here for a few days ; and these are days of happy anticipation of joys to come.” She continued in this state three months, in excellent health, but waiting for her Lord ; and often saying to one with whom she conversed much upon the subject, “ Whatever the doctors may say, I am sure I shall die soon. This loosened spirit from earth is the prelude to heaven.” Her grateful notice of the footsteps of Providence in the orderings of her household was remarkable ; as she observed to the same friend, that God had sent her a trustworthy and affectionate nurse for her little one, and given her a Christian servant, who would regulate her household wisely when she was gone. The babe upon one occasion being brought in for a friend to see, the little child turned from its mother’s out-stretched arms to embrace its nurse. Mrs. S—— said, with a smile, “ I see the love of my Father in that. Once it would have cut me to the heart, but now it is a token I am going home, and that my God will take care of those I leave behind.”

She continued in this happy state for three months, testifying to all around of God’s gracious dealings with her soul. The summer heat setting in about this time, she made arrangements to go to the

seaside for a few weeks. Everything was prepared for her departure, when the sudden death of her uncle, whom she was going to visit, unsettled all her plans. She observed to a friend, "I do not know what this disappointment means, but I am quite sure my Father has some kind and gracious purpose toward me in it. Perhaps I may never know why He has done it; but He makes me trust Him, and that is enough. Faith says it is all right; and I am sure love is at the bottom of this disappointment."

A few days after, all was explained to her; she burst a blood-vessel in the middle of the night, and before morning was as weak and helpless as a babe. To the same friend she said, in a whisper, "Ah! I knew love was ordering all my way. What should I do now had I gone to B——? away from my home, my friends, my doctor. What a kind, what a gracious God He has been to me! How I long to see Him, that I may praise Him evermore!"

From this time she lingered for about five weeks, suffering from difficulty of breathing and intense weakness; but when able to speak, it was to testify of the lovingkindness of her Lord. Upon one occasion she said, "How blessed it is to be based on the covenant, and to see my times are in His hands." On being asked, did she fear death? she said, with a smile, "Well, I never think about it; I feel when I die I shall be with my Lord, and the sooner He takes me the better." In answer to enquiries she used to say, "He is keeping His word, 'Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end.'" On being told of one brought out into Gospel liberty, she said (her countenance full of joy as she spoke), "Ah! Zion is near and dear to my heart; I hope my interest in the Lord's family will continue to the last, however weaned I may be from everything else." Two days before her death she heard of the serious illness of a friend. "Oh, how I wish," she said, "some Christian could see her, and set before her the blessedness of a Covenant salvation! I am afraid she is where I once stood, thinking she must do something to obtain heaven. But oh, what grace and kindness it was that opened my blind eyes to see it was all done for me by a precious Christ! I am resting there—on His finished work."

During the last five weeks of life, she had two days of darkness; the sight of her children, especially her infant, distressed her. The enemy of souls injected his *ifs* and *buts*, and set before her the importance of her life to her children and husband. Earth seemed to cloud her hopes and darken all her evidences; and she stood like Mary, while it was yet dark, weeping at the sepulchre of a departed Jesus. But the Lord returned, and all was peace again. She said to a sister who was with her, "I do not mean to see my children again; Satan takes advantage of them to worry me. I have done with this world, and I do not want to look at anything that will draw my heart away from Jesus." For some hours before her death she was unable to speak; but her countenance betokened her peace within, and her last breath was unperceived by those who watched her. "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord."

THE MYSTERY AND MARROW OF THE BIBLE IN GOD'S
COVENANTS.—No. XV.

By FRANCIS ROBERTS, M.A., 1657, A.D.—Edited by the Rev. J. E.
WALKER, M.A.

(Continued from page 597.)

OUR Author does not enter very definitely upon the vital controversy between Rome and the Reformed Churches upon justification. It may, however, be of interest to state succinctly the Tridentine doctrine upon which there is a very insufficient idea commonly entertained, that it teaches, purely and absolutely, salvation by works. This, however, is distinctly inconsistent with the definition of justification in the Canons and Decrees of that Council. In the authoritative statements of the Papal Council there is not only very evident a certain confusion of definition, the necessary result of attempting to reflect the opinions of the fathers and to harmonise them with the semi-Pelagian views held by the dominant Jesuit influence.* There is direct proof also of a subtlety, that would emulate, and was surely under the inspiration of the prince of falsehood, who in the temptation could quote the words of the Divine Truth against the Truth Himself. The doctrine of justification by works is, it is true, to be found in the Roman creed, as defined at Trent, but by a division into a first and second justification—as the Papal theologians are accustomed to divide what in Holy Scripture is one indivisible act of God—it is attempted to present the appearance and semblance of a justification by grace through faith. Justification, then, according to the Council of Trent, is “a translation from that state in which the man is born a son of the first Adam, into a state of grace and adoption of the sons of God by the Second Adam, Jesus Christ, our Saviour, which translation cannot be accomplished under the Gospel without the laver of regeneration† or the desire of it, as it is written (St. John iii. 5),‡ “By the laver of regeneration” baptism, outwardly and visibly administered, is intended.† Further, the Papal Church teaches that a preparation of the mind for its right reception in adults must precede this justification, and in this preparation the man himself has an active co-operation. These are the words of the Council (Sess. VI., cap 6) :—

“Now they are disposed unto the said justice (righteousness), when quickened and assisted by the Divine grace, conceiving faith by hearing, they are freely moved towards God, believing those things

* This Jesuit influence in the Council is mentioned in the *Encyclo. Brit.*, vol. XXIII. p. 548.

† For the Papal doctrine of baptismal regeneration, see Ch. II. of the Tridentine Catechism, and Concil. Trident. Sess. V.

‡ Concil. Trident. Sess. VI. cap. 4. Notice the confusion and inconsistency of these words.

to be true which have been divinely revealed and promised, and this especially that the sinful is justified of God by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and when, understanding themselves to be sinners, they, through the fear of Divine justice, whereby they are profitably agitated, by turning themselves to consider the mercy of God, are raised unto hope, trusting that God will be propitious unto them for Christ's sake."

Penitence and a desire for baptism are included in this preparation or disposition. The fourth Canon makes the Papal assertion of synergism—that is the co-operation of man's free will in the act of regeneration—more clear and certain still:—

"If any shall say that the free will of man, moved and excited by God, by assenting to God, exciting and calling, nowise co-operates to the end that it shall dispose and prepare itself for obtaining the grace of justification, let him be anathema."

The Council of Trent further defines justification itself thus (Sess. VI. cap. 8):—

"Justification is not the mere remission of sin, but also the sanctification and renovation of the inward man through the voluntary reception of grace and gifts of grace, whereby an unjust man becomes just, the enemy a friend, so that he may become an heir according to the hope of eternal life. The only formal cause of justification is the justice of God, not that by which He Himself is just, but that by which He makes us just, that, namely, by which we are gratuitously renewed by Him in the spirit of our mind, and are not only reputed, but really are, and are denominated just, receiving justice into ourselves, each one according to his own measure, which the Holy Spirit imparts to each as He pleases, and also according to each one's own disposition and co-operation."

Now this last clause most distinctly proves that the fatal error of the Roman Apostasy begins in an essentially defective conception of the Fall. This is made yet more clear in the anathema attached:—

"If any shall say that the sinner is justified by faith alone in the sense that nothing else is required to co-operate towards the attainment of the grace of justification, and that the sinner does not need to be prepared and disposed by the motion of his own will, let him be accursed."

The doctrine of the fallen estate of man, in the Roman Church, may be best understood from the Tridentine Catechism.* This says that in the creation of man the Creator *added* the gift and endowment of original righteousness. This implies that man was "created in Papal phrase, '*in puris naturalibus*,' i.e., without positive righteousness and without positive unrighteousness; that the body (of Adam as created) was full of natural carnal propensities, and so tending downward, that the soul was rational and immortal, and so tending upward. But there is no harmony between the two *by creation*, an act, subsequent

* I. cap. ii. 19.

to that of creation and additional to it, having been necessary to bring this harmony about, and this is that act by which the gift of original righteousness was *super*-added to the gifts of creation. This," Dr. Shedd has further said (from whose valuable book * these words are taken), "is absolutely contrary to Augustine's theory of creation, in which man comes from his Maker's hands every way perfect. It involves, indeed, the Gnostic idea of evil as necessarily inherent in matter. We can see, then, to what this Papal tenet reduced original sin. Original righteousness being a supernatural gift, original sin is the loss of it, and in reality the restoration of man to the state in which he was created. Original sin brings man back to a negative condition in which he is neither sinful nor holy. The Augustinian doctrine regarded the conflict between the flesh and the spirit (in the regenerate) as a consequence and evidence of a (former) apostasy; † the Papal regarded it as the primitive and natural condition in which man was created." Then it must follow, as Dr. Shedd points out, that "in the Papal belief original sin is not, and cannot be, regarded as truly and properly sin at all. This follows necessarily from the position, that human nature is not created with holiness, but that holiness was a supernatural endowment specially bestowed after the act of creation proper was complete. For the loss of this endowment simply puts man back to the negative and characterless position upon which he stands by creation. But this cannot be a position of guilt or sin properly so-called. Original sin, according to the Tridentine theologians, is indeed a conflict between the flesh and the spirit, a state of corruption and inordinate desire, but this is not a state of sin or guilt. This conflict is necessary from the nature of the case, for, *by creation*, the flesh is inordinate and weak. The act of original transgression is not (according to them) one that plunged man into guilt proper, but only into corruption or an inordinate condition of the lower nature, which inordinate condition belongs to the flesh (necessarily) by creation, just as the properties of matter belong to matter by creation. So the Council of Trent placed on record this extraordinary conclusion:—

"The concupiscence in the regenerate, which the Apostle sometimes denominates sin (Rom. vi. 12; vii. 8), the holy Synod declares the Catholic Church never understood to be called sin, because it is really and truly sin in the regenerate, but because it is from sin and inclines to sin." ‡

We cannot, then, wonder if the Tridentine Council threw the entire weight of its authority into the semi-Pelagian scale, asserting that the will of man has been only "attenuated and bent down" (Sess. VI. cap. 1) by the Fall, and "that it can by assenting to God, exciting and calling," (Canon 4) co-operate with God in the act of regeneration; so disposing and preparing itself (these, we have seen, are the words

* *History of Christian Doctrine*, II. 144.

† Aug. Op. c. Jul. V.

‡ Concil. Trid., Sess. V. 5.

of its own Canon 6) for obtaining the grace of justification. Thus absolutely did they separate themselves from the faith and teaching of Augustine, Anselm, and all those who adhered to the doctrine of Holy Scripture, that God made man upright, that he was created positively righteous under a covenant of works, from which, being fallen into guilt and unrighteousness, only a Covenant of grace—grace everlasting, sovereign, and “reigning unto life in Christ Jesus”—can recover him. The eternal predestination of the saints, in which predestination their redemption and justification were provided in the Divine counsels, and not these only, but the grace also by which those counsels should be made effectual unto them, alone excludes all merit and self-glorying (1 Cor. i. 30, 31; Eph. i. 3–12).

We can now understand where the cleavage, that widens until the separation becomes absolute, begins, and how necessary to the right understanding of the justification of the soul is the true doctrine of God’s Covenants. But let us proceed to examine still further the Tridentine heresy. The Tridentine doctrine, it has been truly said by the same clear and able writer, Dr. Shedd, makes inward holiness in conjunction with the merits of Christ the ground of justification. Christ merited that we might be justified, but not His merit, but our holiness, is that justification. “In the Pauline and in the Reformed signification, justification is the acquittal from condemnation in Christ and for the sake of *His merit only*.” It is the *acceptance* of the soul in His righteousness imputed unto “the faith of the operation of God,” and not in the least the positive infusion of righteousness: “a declarative, therefore, and not a renewing act on the part of God; a single and complete act, not a gradual process in the soul of man.” These, on the contrary, are the words of the seventh and tenth chapters of the decrees of the Council of Trent concerning justification:—

“Of justification the causes are these: the final cause, indeed, is the glory of God and of Christ and eternal life, while the efficient cause is the merciful God, who gratuitously washes and sanctifies, sealing and anointing with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the earnest of our inheritance; but the meritorious cause is His most beloved only begotten, our Lord Jesus Christ, who, when we were enemies, for the great charity wherewith He loved us, merited justification for us by His most holy Passion on the wood of the Cross, and for us made satisfaction unto God the Father; the instrumental cause, moreover, is the Sacrament of Baptism, which is the sacrament of faith, without which justification never befell any man: lastly the sole formal cause is the justice of God. For although none can be just, but he to whom the merits of the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ are communicated, yet is this brought to pass in the justification of the impious (sinful), when by the merit of that same most holy Passion the charity of God is shed abroad by the Holy Ghost in the hearts of those who are justified, and is inherent in them; whence man, in the said justification through Jesus Christ into whom he is ingrafted, receives,

together with the remission of sins, all these things infused at once, faith, hope, and charity.”

And in chapter x. it is continued :—

“ Having, therefore, been thus justified, they (the justified) through the observance of the commandments of God and of the Church, faith co-operating with good works, increase in the justice (righteousness) received through the grace of Christ, and are still more justified, as it is written : ‘ He that is righteous, let him be made righteous still.’ ”*

Dr. Shedd justly infers from this definition of justification, that “ in the Papal doctrine the element of guilt is lost sight of, and the piacular work of Christ lost sight of with it. Redemption is interpreted to be merely a method of purification. Justification is not instantaneous and complete,” (nor is it, we may add, equally and identically perfect, as given in the self-same righteousness and most precious blood of Christ to all the justified) “ but gradual and incomplete, because the infused righteousness, out of which it issues, is incomplete. The ground of justification is thus a personal and subjective one, and must be supplemented by greater measures of holiness and attainments in piety, and also by the external penances and good works required by the Church.”† This last sentence leads us to what is known to the Roman theologians as the “ second justification,” which is thus defined :—

“ By the observance of the commandments of God and the Church, faith co-operating with good works, they (the faithful) gain an increase of that righteousness which was received by the grace of Christ, and are the more justified.”‡

The thirty-second Canon also sufficiently declares how human merit is thus introduced :—

“ If anyone shall say that the good works of a justified man are the gift of God in such a sense that they are not also the good merits of the justified man himself, or that a justified man by the good works which are done by him through the grace of God and the merit of Christ, of whom he is a living member, does not truly deserve increase of grace, *eternal life, and the actual possession of eternal life*, if he die in grace, and also an increase of glory, let him be anathema.”§

So it comes to this, that all our Lord has merited are those good dispositions imparted in baptism as “ the laver of regeneration ” for the soul’s justification, and then the soul, so endowed, fortified, and enriched by the rites of the Church, restored also upon occasion of its lapse from justification by penance, can itself merit heaven !

“ The work of Christ ”—says the most distinguished of Roman controversialists, the Jesuit-Cardinal Bellarmine—“ has not only

* Rev. xxii. 11. The Council were here misled by the Vulgate. The entire consensus of MSS. authority reads, “ let him do righteousness still.”

† Dr. Shedd, Vol. II. 328.

‡ Concil. Trid. Sess. VI. cap. 10.

§ Sess. VI. cap. 32. The italics are ours.

deserved of God that we should obtain salvation, but also that we should obtain it by our own merits."

In the following passage, extracted from the same work of Dr. Shedd, the Papal theory of justification is summarised, and certain grave reflections must surely suggest themselves, when the whole character and even the distinctive phraseology of much of the free-will and humanistic preaching, now so popular, is brought into comparison with the Jesuit-reconciliation of grace (as they supposed) and free-will, by which the operation of the Divine grace was so maintained that it was in reality denied: the merit of Christ so asserted that it merely merited that the subjective acts of the sinful soul should merit; and that His righteousness, though named in word, should be wholly excluded in fact from the sinner's justification before God. Is not the "humanistic" teaching, which is filtering into the evangelism of the present day, justifying the proverbial saying that extremes may often meet, and is not the reason this, that the assertion of creature-will, from which creature-merit cannot be at a distance, must eventually mean the virtual denial of grace?

"The theory, enunciated at Trent, received a further expansion and defence from Roman Catholic theologians. The disputations of Robert Bellarmine, published in 1581, constitute the most elaborate explication and defence that has yet been made of the Papal dogmatics. The theory of justification as stated in detail by the expounders of the Decrees and Canons of Trent, embraces the following particulars. Justification is two-fold, and is denominated the 'first' and 'second.' The first justification is the infusion or communication of an inherent principle or habit (*habitus*) of grace or charity; the second justification is the good works, or right life, that results from this. By the first justification original sin is extinguished, and the habits of sin are expelled. This justification is obtained by the exercise of faith, of which the meritorious and procuring cause is the obedience and satisfaction of Christ. But at this point the Romish theory introduces a distinction that *wholly neutralises* the evangelical element introduced by this latter statement. This distinction is one borrowed from the later schoolmen, particularly Thomas Aquinas—the distinction between *meritum ex condigno*, and *meritum ex congruo*, or merit from desert and merit from fitness. This distinction is thus defined by Aquinas, with his usual acuteness and clearness. A meritorious work of man may be considered in two aspects: first as proceeding from the free-will of man, and secondly as proceeding from the grace of the Holy Spirit. If it be considered from the first point of view, there can be in it no merit of condignity or absolute desert, because of the inequality between man and God, whereby it is impossible for the creature to bring the Creator under absolute obligations. But if it be considered from the second point of view, as proceeding from the influence of the Holy Spirit, the work of man *may* have the *merit* of *congruity* or *fitness*, because it is fitting that God should reward His own grace as a thing excellent in itself. This distinction between two species of merit is

connected, in the Tridentine theory of justification, with the doctrine of a "preparation" and predisposition for justification in such a manner that *although the name of merit is warily avoided, the thing itself is not*. Man is prepared for justification, i.e., for the infusion of righteousness, by the common operations of his mind under common or prevenient grace. But this grace of preparation merits more grace, not by virtue of the merit of condignity indeed, but of congruity. And so onward, step by step, to the very end of the process of justification. It is easy to see how this subtle distinction, when coupled with the doctrine of an antecedent preparation, nullifies all the force of the statement that the obedience and satisfaction of Christ is the meritorious cause of a sinner's justification. For this antecedent preparation, as defined by the Canons of the Council, amounts to nothing more than an historical faith or an assent to divine revelation. But this is called a species of believing, which, upon the principal of congruity or fitness, deserves more grace. And this increase or fresh accession of grace is a *gratia gratum faciens*—that is, an infused grace that expels the habits of sin, and thus justifies or makes acceptable to God. *So that justification, in the last analysis, takes its start from the ordinary operations of the human mind under the common influences* of God's Spirit and Providence, and ends with being an inward and infused righteousness upon the ground of which the ungodly is set in right relations to God.*"

What an infinite relief it is to turn from the confused and self-contradictory doctrines of Rome to the clear and luminous words of the Holy Ghost: "For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they, which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by One, Jesus Christ:" and this righteousness is His obedience, by which "many are made righteous" (Rom. v. 17-19).

Sermons and Notes of Sermons.

"THE WORDS OF LIFE."

SERMON BY THE LATE BISHOP SAMUEL WALDEGRAVE, D.D.

"From that time many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered Him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."—JOHN vi. 66-69.

THE position of the twelve at this juncture was one of peculiar trial.

Brought up from their infancy in the Church of Israel, it had at the first required no little resolution to attach themselves to the

* The italics again are ours.

Nazarene, Whom the rulers of that Church at once despised and rejected. And, since then, how often must they have been in peril of being drawn aside from their allegiance; awed at one time by the pretentious devotion of the Pharisees—and allured at another by the specious philosophy of the Sadducees.

Still they had held on their way, and thus far continued with Him in His temptations. Nor had they been without companions in their course. "The common people," we are told, "heard Him gladly." Nay, more than this, many, very many, gave credence to His word, and were by baptism numbered amongst His disciples.

But now a sudden reverse takes place. Many even of the disciples are offended. They cannot endure to be told of the exclusiveness of His salvation—the necessity of His grace. Yes: "the exclusiveness of His salvation." "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you."

I added, "the necessity of His grace." "No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."

These were hard sayings—who could hear them? "They went back, and walked no more with Him."

Surely it was but natural if, at such a crisis, the twelve were for a moment shaken in their purpose. Nor would the tempter fail to insinuate perplexing doubts. Were they not perhaps, after all, mistaken (he would suggest) in having set at nought the counsel of the greatest, the wisest, and the best men of their Church and nation, to listen to the instructions of One Whom, almost with one consent, they denounced as a deceiver?

And was not the Lord Jesus giving expression to the very thoughts which agitated their minds when, turning to them with those heart-searching, those pathetic words, "Will ye also go away?" He invited them to pause for a season, and re-consider their position. How was that question solved? By one simple consideration:—

"Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

Let us, my brethren, now—

I. *Examine well the basis of the apostolic loyalty.*

II. *Draw from it such lessons as may be serviceable to ourselves.*

May utterance be given unto me, to open my mouth boldly: may true nobility of spirit be bestowed upon you, to receive with meekness the engrafted Word, which is able to save your souls.

And first, *Examine well the basis of the apostolic loyalty*—or rather, I would say, examine a portion of it—examine that single clause—"Thou hast the words of eternal life"; for time will not suffice to explore the treasures contained in the following words, "We believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."

"Thou hast the words of eternal life." What did the Holy Ghost signify, as He spake thus by the mouth of Peter?

He signified, *first*, that the Lord Jesus preached the words which *revealed* eternal life.

And was it not even so? For call to mind that memorable declaration of St. Paul:—

“Jesus Christ . . . hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.”

Mark well that saying: He “hath brought life and immortality,”—that is (translating the idiom as well as the words), immortal or eternal life—“to light through the Gospel.” Surely it is taught herein that eternal life was, to say the least, left in the gloom of a deep obscurity by previous revelations.

Now this was most true. Take the most illustrious of them all. Take that law which was given amid the blackness and darkness, and thunders, and voices of the burning mount; did *it* make known how the sinner might live?

No! the moral law, while it seemed to give life, really told only of death. “This do, and thou shalt live,” was its decree; but how fearful—how destructive of all hope to the really awakened soul its sanction! “Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.”

And then, as to the ceremonial law: richly instructive as it is to us, now that it has been illuminated with all the rays of the New Testament sun; it only proclaimed to its votaries from day to day, and from year to year, at once the need of an atonement, and its own powerlessness to provide that atonement. It proclaimed the need of an atonement—“Without shedding of blood is no remission.” It confessed its own inability to effect a reconciliation. For “in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.”

Passing from the law to the prophets, in the most evangelical of them all, symbol and imagery rather veiled than made manifest the glory of those glad tidings, which we now discern to be the very soul of all the prophetic harmonies; for the prophets themselves searched “what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.”

What a burst, then, of light must the Gospel, preached at the first coming of the Redeemer, have been to those who, in the observance of the law and the study of the prophets, were looking for redemption in Jerusalem! Truly, they would say, “The darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.”

Take only two specimens; listen to the words of the Lord’s forerunner:—

“Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” As though he would say, “The lambs of man’s providing, which have been offered day by day and year by year continually, were but local in their application, and ineffectual in their operation. They were for Israel alone, and even his sin they never put away. Behold now a Lamb of God’s providing—it is His own incarnate Son, the immaculate

Jesus : His sacrifice shall be wide in its application, Gentile as well as Jew shall share its benefits ; it shall be effectual in its operation, it shall blot out as a cloud their sin and as a thick cloud their iniquities—behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”

Or, listen again, to the words of the Lord Himself :—

“ Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation ; but is passed from death unto life.” As though he would say, “ The law worketh only wrath : this do and thou shalt live, is the tenor of its decree. But none can do and therefore none can live. Harken now to the Gospel : it bringeth life—Believe and thou shalt be saved, is the burden of its proclamation ; and this, though thou be the chief of sinners, still, confessing and forsaking thy sin, thou hast passed from a state in which all is condemnation into a state in which there is no condemnation, neither shall there be any ; thou hast, in the fullest sense of the word, everlasting life.”

Truly life and immortality were brought to light by that Gospel which Jesus preached. Can we marvel that, in the retrospect of the many times that he had hung upon the lips of his Master, and drunk in the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth, Peter should say, “ Lord, to whom shall we go ? Thou hast the words of eternal life ” ?

But the Holy Ghost meant more than this.

He meant, *secondly*, that Jesus preached the words, which *imparted* eternal life.

Hearken to the testimony of St. Peter’s brother apostle, St. James :

“ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with Whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of His creatures.”

I would have you ponder those words—“ Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth.”

What solemn verities are we instructed in thereby ! That we must be born from above before we can enter into the kingdom of God. That the instrument by which the Father of lights effects that new creation, is the word of truth.

Yes, brethren, “ Ye must be born again.” This is what the Lord said to the aged, the dignified, the learned, the exemplary, the religious, the candid Nicodemus : and to which of us, let me ask, would He not say the like ?

And the instrument by which He effects this change is the Word—not the personal word—not the baptismal formula—but the preached Gospel. For, hearken again to the words of Peter himself :—

“ Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently :

“ Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh

is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away : but the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the Gospel is preached unto you."

Mark well ; we read not here of a seed which lies dormant—much less which perishes ; no, we read of a seed which is incorruptible, a seed which takes root downwards, and bears fruit upwards, even to life eternal.

Now, if the Gospel preached by such miserable sinners as are we, the servants of Jesus Christ, doth yet become the power of God in quickening the spiritually dead to life eternal, shall we not be certain that that power was abundantly shown forth in the congregational ministrations of our Master himself ? Yea, doubtless, as He preached the Gospel greater miracles were accomplished in the souls of the hearers, than were wrought on their bodies ; the ear, spiritually deaf, was unstopped ; the eye, spiritually blind, was opened ; the foot, spiritually lame, was taught to run the way of God's commands—yea, and souls, spiritually dead in trespasses and sins, were quickened. And of this He spake Himself, when He said :—

" Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God : and they that hear shall live."

The eleven had themselves been subjects of this stupendous work of distinguishing grace. It is " a work so real, so grand, so utterly beyond the comprehension of any but those who have experienced it, that the language, even of inspiration, labours in vain to produce an adequate expression of its greatness, and takes refuge in a throng of startling metaphors ; it is a calling out of darkness into marvellous light—a passing of death unto life—a first resurrection—a birth from above—a new creation—a partaking of the Divine nature ! " And, can we marvel that, as they reflected that this had been achieved by the ministry of Him Who came down, not only to reveal, but also to communicate eternal life, they should say :—

" Lord, to whom shall we go ? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

But this clause has, *thirdly*, a yet further significance. The Lord Jesus might well be said to have the words of eternal life, because He preached the words which *nourished* eternal life.

The spiritual life needs food as surely as the animal life. And what, according to Scripture, is its appointed aliment ? Let the apostle, who speaks in my text, himself reply :—

" Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby."

Observe, it is a good thing to be babes in Christ ; and it is better to be ever *like* them : but it is not a good thing to *continue* always babes : we should aspire to manhood, " unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." And how shall we be nourished unto spiritual maturity ? " Desire the sincere milk of the Word,"

—the full, pure, unmixed, truth of God—“that ye may grow thereby.”

St. Peter must surely have spoken from experience when thus he commended the sincere milk of the Word.

For just revert, in thought, to that Gospel which contains the most abundant account of the directly ministerial teaching of the Lord Jesus—I mean the Gospel of St. John—and learn from thence how simple, and yet, at the same time, how rich and how full was His pastoral instruction.

Need I remind you of this very chapter from which my text is taken, wherein under the similitude of eating His flesh and drinking His blood, the Lord inculcates the wondrous result of a simple trust in His name?

“This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.”

Or shall I rehearse the tenth chapter, in which, claiming as His own the Old Testament title of the Good Shepherd, He tells of the certainty and perpetuity of faith in His elect? “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father’s hand.”

Or, once more, shall we cite the seventeenth chapter; a chapter in which pleading with the Father on behalf of those who had been given to Him in the counsels of eternity, He claims for them, as a right, the highest blessedness which that Father could bestow?

“Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given me: for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world.”

No marvel that, taught, quickened, nourished by such a ministry, St. Peter said, “Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.” Shall we go to the chief priests, with their divers washings and carnal ordinances? No: these are but a shadow of good things to come; the body is of Christ. Shall we go to the Pharisees, with their long prayers, their broad phylacteries, their tithing of mint, and anise, and cummin? No: in vain do they worship God, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men! Shall we go to the Sadducees, with their philosophy and vain deceit? No: the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God; they do err, not knowing the Scriptures. No: none of these will do! Our souls are perishing, hungry souls—they need the words of eternal life—and those words Thou hast, and only Thou!

Having now examined thus far the basis of the apostolic loyalty, let us briefly draw from what has been discovered such lessons as may be serviceable to ourselves.

And first, let hearers of the Word take this memorable reply of St. Peter as a criterion of their own spiritual state before God.

When you attend in the house of the Lord upon the ministry of His servants, is it your one desire to hear the words of eternal life? Or is it the excitement of feeling, the indulgence of fancy, the quickening of intellect, the lulling of conscience, or, worse than all, the mere observance of custom, that brings you to the sanctuary? Alas, brethren, conscience may be soothed by many a flattering word, intellect may be exercised by many a subtle speculation, imagination may revel in many a pleasant phantasy, yea, and the affections may be roused by many a pathetic appeal, in a heart to which not one single word of eternal life has found a saving entrance!

O for such a heart as the Holy Ghost alone can give!—an honest and good heart, a heart cleared from the thorns and briars of known and permitted sin, a heart ploughed up by the deep furrows of conviction, a heart softened by the dews and the rain of heaven's good Spirit—for into such a heart the Word will find entrance, even though it come not with excellency of speech, and man's wisdom; and finding entrance, it will give long life, even for ever and ever.

But, secondly and lastly, let preachers of the Word take this memorable reply of St. Peter as a test of their own ministerial faithfulness.

We claim to be the ambassadors of Christ—do we justify that claim by bringing with us the words of eternal life?

Suppose, for an instant, that we speak other words, how fearful the consequences!

We may give present satisfaction to one or all the numerous classes of the children of this world—to the literary, the intellectual, the imaginative, the moral, the ascetic, but what will the end be?

“If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.”

But if, on the contrary, by the grace of God, we emulate the apostolic example; if, by the grace of God, being determined to know nothing among you but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified, we do in very deed set before you the words of eternal life; how blessed the fruit shall certainly be!

Truly, Christ crucified has always been, and will always be, “unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness”; yet will He be also to the called, both Jews and Greeks, “Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”

Instructed, quickened, nourished, even by our unworthy instrumentality, “the poor of the flock” shall know that ours is indeed the Word of the Lord. And hereafter shall the promise be verified to the utmost, “They that be teachers shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.”

MANY a Christian has been made worse by the good things of this world; but where is the Christian that has been bettered by them?—*Brooks.*

WHAT IS OUR HOPE?*

WHAT is our Hope ?	Joshua i. 9
Is it a power	
Like sun that shines	Gen. ix. 14
Through April shower	
When friends forsake	Ps. xlvi.
Or dear ones die,	Is. xli. 10
That cheers the heart	
And dries the eye ?	Is. xlix. 15, 16
What is our Hope ?	1 Pet. iii. 14-19
Doth it support	
When evil by	Ps. cxx. 6 & xxi. 7, 8
The world is wrought	
When no grace shines	Matt. xi. 28, 29
In midst of strife,	Acts iv. 26-32
To cleanse such hearts	
And gladden life ?	Jude 17-22
What is our Hope ?	Phil. iv. 6, 7
And doth it keep	Is. xxvi. 3 & xxx. 15 & xxxii. 17
Our hearts all calm	Heb. iv. 3
As waters deep ?	John xiv. 27
Through sorrow's waves	Prov. xxiv. 10
Do we still know	Rom. xii. 12
That God rules all	Luke viii. 24
On earth below ?	Matt. x. 29, 30
What is our Hope ?	Matt. xv. 28
When friends so dear	Mark i. 30, 31, 32 & ii. 3, 5
Are threatened oft	
By dangers near ?	Phil. i. 6
Do we believe,	
That every hour	2 Tim. i. 12
God shelters them	
Neath wings of power ?	Matt. viii. 5, 6, 7
What is our Hope ?	Deut. xxxiii. 27
In sickness dread,	Ps. xci.
Can we, on God	
Then lay our head,	Is. lxvi. 13
Sure that beneath	Phil. i. 29
Us His strong arm	
Is keeping us	Heb. xii. 6
From every harm ?	James v. 15

* We print the above lines by the kind permission of Mrs. UPCHER, their author, from whom copies may be purchased in sheet form.

- What is our Hope ?
 When we are weak,
 And cannot do
 The good we seek ?
 God knows—though we
 But know in part,
 And He accepts
 The willing heart.
- 1 Peter iv. 19 & v. 7
 Phil. iv. 19 & iii. 21 & ii. 13
 2 Cor. xiii. 4 & xii. 9 & ix. 8
 Rom. vii. 18, 24, 25 & viii. 27, 28
 1 Cor. xiii. 12
 2 Cor. viii. 12
- What is our Hope ?
 When looking in,
 We truly grieve
 O'er all our sin ?
 Is our full trust
 In God alone,
 And not by our
 Own works to atone ?
- Is. i. 18, & xlv. 22 & lv. 7
 Luke vii. 47
 1 Tim. i. 15
 Titus iii. 6
 Heb. viii. 12
 1 Pet. ii. 24
- What is our Hope ?
 And doth this plea,
 That Christ has died
 For you and me,
 Make grateful hearts
 To serve by love—
 And not as slaves—
 The God above ?
- Is. liii. 6
 Ps. cxvi. 12, 1
 1 Pet. ii. 24
 1 John iii. 16 & v. 3
 Rom. v. 1, 8 & xiii. 10
 John xv. 13, 14, 15
 Gal. v. 8
 Acts v. 41
- What is our Hope ?
 When tempter's power
 Ever assails,
 From hour to hour,
 Do we believe
 That God is nigh,
 And listening for
 Our faintest cry ?
- James i. 2, 12
 1 Pet. i. 3-10
 1 Cor. x. 13
 Luke xxii. 28, 29
 Heb. ii. 18 & iv. 15 & vii. 25
 1 John i. 9
 Rev. xxi. 7
 Is. lxxv. 24
- What is our Hope ?
 Doth it exclude
 Longing for things
 God sees not good ?
 So that, resigned,
 With joy we take
 Our cross to bear,
 For His dear sake ?
- Acts xxi. 14
 2 Sam. xxv. 26
 Phil. iv. 11
 Num. xi. 1, 4, 5, 6
 1 Cor. x. 10, 11
 Heb. xiii. 5
 John xviii. 11 & xix. 17
 Heb. xii. 2, 3, 5
- What is our Hope ?
 And do its seeds,
- Matt. v. 43-48
 1 Sam. xxvi. 7-25

Bring forth the fruit Of loving deeds ? And doth it make Us long to impart The truth that's sown Within our heart ?	John xiii. 34, 3 Heb. iii. 13 & x. 24 1 Pet. iv. 10 James v. 19, 20
What is our Hope ? Doth it make glad, When earthly cares Would make us sad ? So that men may In passing by, Something of Heaven In us descry ?	Rom. xiv. 17, 18 2 Cor. vi. 10 1 Pet. v. 7 Phil. iv. 4, 5, 6 Luke ii. 52 Acts iv. 13, & vi. 15 1 Pet. ii. 12 1 Cor. xii. 1-6
What is our Hope ? And do we know 'Tis God alone Can it bestow ? 'Tis only God Alone can give This blessed hope By which we live ?	1 Cor. xv. 57 2 Cor. iii. Rom. v. 5 & vi. 23 & viii. 32 Job xxviii. 12-28 Ps. cxix. 72 Matt. xiii. 44, 45, 46
What is our Hope ? And doth it reign O'er all this world Would count as gain ? And would we part With all earth's store, To keep it with Us evermore ?	Phil. ii. 8 1 John ii. 15, 16, 17 Heb. xi. 13, 14, 15, 26
Our hope is God ! Oh ! Trust Him still, Through sorrow, and Through every ill. Believe ! Rejoice ! Above all, love ! Until we gain His courts above.	Rom. viii. 24, 25 Heb. iii. 6, 14 & vi. 11-20 Rom. xv. 13 1 Thess. v. 8, 9, 10 1 Pet. vi. 7, 8 1 Cor. xiii. 13 1 Tim. i. 5

The Rectory, Halesworth, 1907.

ALICE UPCHER.

THANKFULNESS is a wise way of begging.—*Ann Dutton.*

THE PORTRAIT.—MR. F. BICKFORD HEARD.

THOSE of our readers who were present at the recent Clifton Conference, and heard Mr. HEARD, of Weston-super-Mare, speak with remarkable power on the victories of faith which characterize the spiritual life of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, will, we feel sure, be pleased to have his portrait. Mr. HEARD, whose effective ministry of the Gospel of God's free grace at Folkestone, was formerly prized highly by such discriminating hearers as the late General Sir William Stirling, Mr. Charles Walter, "K. B.," and others, possesses spiritual gifts of a somewhat exceptional order. Amongst these is a clear perception and firm grasp of revealed truth, with a facile and forceful style when unfolding it in the pulpit and on the platform.

In early years Mr. HEARD came under extreme Ritualistic influence. Asked to go and hear the Rev. W. R. Mowll preach the Gospel, he went several times, and by the Spirit was convinced of sin, and led to Christ. Some months later he was taught more distinctively the doctrines of God's grace, and through deep study of the holy Scriptures he realized his personal election unto salvation. He then bore public testimony to God's truth, and engaged in open-air preaching. Later, he met the Rev. Dr. Barnes, of Folkestone, and eventually succeeded him in charge of the congregation. For three and a half years he continued to minister the Word of truth at that place. "Many," he writes, "were converted to God, amongst whom were an atheist, an agnostic, a Ritualistic schoolmistress, a Bible Society worker, and a churchworker of thirty-five years' standing." Long exercised in soul as to the need of sovereign grace mission work, he presently resigned his stated charge of Emmanuel Church, Folkestone. The Lord opened many doors of service. His methods were to employ no choir, to use old-fashioned free-grace hymns, and to simply expound God's Word, looking to the Spirit for blessing thereon, and without "after-meetings" or appeals. The expenses of these meetings were provided in answer to prayer—sometimes in remarkable ways. On one occasion a series of meetings had been held, and the proceedings closed with a deficit in the funds. On the way to his lodgings a man came up to him, and said, "Let me have the joy of meeting the expenses of the mission." So the Lord provided.

Mr. HEARD writes to us: "Several ministers have tried to prejudice their flocks against me, because I have shown from God's Word that the modern Arianism is false, and because I have preached the atoning sacrifice of our Lord Jesus, and the certainty of eternal punishment for the unpardoned. But the people have none the less seen their need of the precious blood, and have been drawn to Christ. To God be all the praise! Satan has more than once tried to prevent a mission being held. Some very remarkable instances of the Lord's overruling providence in this connection are related by His servant.

Mr. HEARD is at present engaged in giving expositions of the Scriptures at Weston-super-Mare, and preaching in that town. He hopes to be able to take active mission work, God willing, in the approaching year.



MR. F. BICKFORD HEARD.

SOME NOTES ON I THESSALONIANS i. BY MR. HEARD.

THIS chapter shows the entire history of the believer in the Lord Jesus—his election, his calling, his enjoyment, his experience, his testimony, his service, and his deliverance by resurrection or translation from this present evil world. It commences with the believer in heaven, in purpose, and closes with the believer in heaven in reality.

Verse 1: "The Church . . . in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ."

This is where every believer has been placed by the Covenant of Grace. We are in Christ, and, because in Christ, in God. "For ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." God made the Church one with Himself in Christ before "eternal times." "Blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ, according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world." Hence our everlasting security. We are doubly united to God. We are in the hand of our Lord Jesus, and are also in the hand of God, and none can pluck us thence (John x. 27, 28).

"Grace . . . and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

By nature we have neither of these wondrous possessions. As to grace we read: "Neither were ye salted at all." Only guilt belonged to us. As to peace we are told that we were at "enmity against God." It is the message of the Gospel of God that He is bestowing grace and peace upon lost sinners without money and without price. Grace and peace are quite distinct. Grace is God's favour towards us in Christ. Peace is the result of our Lord Jesus procuring peace through the blood of His cross, and the Holy Spirit giving us to rest in the grace manifested towards us in the precious death of Christ. Notice the order, "Grace and peace," not "Peace and grace." Grace ever precedes peace, for except God had counselled grace for us we never had peace.

Notice how often this salutation is addressed to us in the Word of God. It is no mere repetition. One lesson we may gather from this emphasis is that we are always needing fresh supplies of grace, and continuous visions of our great peace-Maker and peace-Giver. Notice also the equality of the Father and the Son. Both are the one source of blessing. How needful to emphasize this foundation truth in these days of Socinianism.

Verse 2: "We give thanks to God always for you."

Are we in the habit of giving thanks for others? Many of the miserable jealousies between Christian workers would vanish if we all possessed this unselfish spirit. There is not enough thanksgiving in the Church to-day, and the devil takes advantage of it. Much of the spiritual coldness God's children at times feel would change into holy warmth if we only sought the Lord to grant us to rejoice in Him and in each other. Many are the sermons preached and books published upon confession, penitence, and difficulty, but how few upon Praise!

“ Making mention of you in our prayers.”

Prayer and thanksgiving are continually linked together in Scripture. “ Be careful for nothing ; but in everything by prayer and supplication *with thanksgiving* let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus ” (Phil. iv. 6). In our private devotions let us ask God for a thankful spirit as well as for an intercessory one.

Verse 3 : “ Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, your labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ before God and our Father.”

Their work of faith was shown in their turning from idols. Their labour of love in their service of God. Their patience of hope in their attitude of waiting for the Lord from heaven. A very solemn contrast to these words appears in the message of the Lord to the Church at Ephesus in Rev. ii. 2. There we read : “ I know thy works and thy labour, and thy patience.” We see what is missing. It is quite possible for us to work, but not in faith, to labour and yet not in love, and to be patient and yet not in hope. How often our works seem trying, our labour irksome, our patience hopeless ! The reason, it may be, is that we are not living as in the sight of our God and Father. Spreading all before God, and walking as obedient children, we shall be spared the pains of disappointment.

Verse 4 : “ Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.”

So the verse should read. Faith, love, and hope, are the evidences of Covenant love and eternal election. The people of God are known by these graces. None would possess them except for the purpose of God in Christ.

We see here that love is the basis of election. That precious verse, Eph. i. 5, clearly shows this, where we read of God : “ Having, in love, predestinated us unto the sonship of children according to the good pleasure of His will.” We remember also the word in Deut. vii. 7, “ The Lord did not . . . choose you . . . but because the Lord loved you.” As John Kent sang :—

“ Love is the great self-moving cause
From whence salvation came ;
Free grace the channel whence it flows,
Eternally the same.”

God’s Word shows that election is a most practical truth. We are “ elect to serve ” (2 Tim. ii. 4), elect to holiness (Rom. viii. 29), and elect to suffer (Phil. i. 29). So when the conflict thickens, and when the flesh rises, and when persecution comes, let us remember that all are parts of God’s plan for us.

Verse 5 : “ For our Gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance.”

Election is made known by calling. Unless there be a personal trust and hope on the all-prevailing merit of Christ there must be no talk of election. Paul knew the election of these Thessalonian believers

by the fact that they were trusting in Christ. The Gospel came not in word only, but also in power. Man preaches the Word, God grants His people the power to believe that Word. God's Word speaks of two calls—one by the Gospel, and the other by the Spirit and the Gospel. The former produces responsibility, the latter produces repentance and faith. Proverbs i. 24, "Because I called and ye refused," illustrates the one; Rom. viii. 30, "Whom He called, them He also justified," illustrates the other.

The condition of man necessitates a call of power, since by nature he is spiritually dead, blind, deaf, and dumb. Apart from the work of the Holy Spirit, man will give no real heed to the call of God. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned." Let us, as believers, rejoice in God's love for us, and choice of us. His uninfluenced affection and invincible grace are the sole causes for all that we know or ever will know of Him.

Verse 6: "And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord."

"Followers" means "imitators." As a child will imitate his father, so the Lord's children soon begin to copy their heavenly Father. The family likeness soon becomes apparent. It cannot be counterfeited for long, since it is the Spirit's work within.

"Having received the Word in much affliction."

This is always true. Every believer remembers soul trouble. Let us beware of the "easy conversion." One thinks with sorrow of some who "received the word with joy," but continued for a while only. There was no depth of earth. Impressions are not conversions. The incoming of the Holy Ghost to a sinner will produce real anxiety and sorrow. "They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them" (Jer. xxxi. 9). Yes, tears of repentance, and appeals for mercy! These ways characterize the elect of God, as convicted of sin they seek the great Healer of souls. The Spirit of grace and supplication has been poured out upon them, and looking upon Him whom their sins pierced at Calvary, they mourn as one mourneth for his only son (Zech. xii. 10).

"With joy in the Holy Ghost."

God does not leave them mourning. He who broke their hearts binds them up again. He gives the oil of gladness for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Ah! how wondrous were those moments when low at the bleeding feet we felt the pain give place to the joy!

So in all Christian experience. If God send us afflictions, He will with the affliction send the joy of the Holy Ghost.

Verse 7: "Ye became ensamples."

The word is a curious one. It literally means "a blow." The result of a seal upon hot wax. Stamped with the image of Christ we become examples to others.

Verse 8: "From you sounded out the Word of the Lord."

Here we have testimony for God. They had the Word of the Lord,

and they sounded it forth. This is the secret of success in testimony. We need no modern devices for arresting people. Nowadays much store is set upon advertisements, monster choirs, solo singing, and anecdotes. But God's taught servants need them not. The Word of God is sufficient. Eventually additions become a snare. Armed with Scripture the messenger of salvation fears no opposition and seeks no popularity from man! Many a promising career has been wrecked by this latter. It is the source of many jealousies and envyings, and invariably leads to a toning down of distinctive truth.

“Faith to God-ward.”

Recognising God in every circumstance of life and service. In *v. 3* it was our service before God, here it is reversed. It is God ever set before us. The Psalmist says of those who thus honour God that “they shall never be moved.”

Verses 9-10: “For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and the true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, Whom He raised from the dead, Jesus, who delivereth us from the wrath to come.”

Here we have a beautiful sequence of truth. One naturally following the other:—

“God's Word enters into us and we turn,
We turn from idols to serve Him;
We serve Him and we wait for His Son.”

“Entering in” of the Word.

Going back to Acts xvii. 1-9 we have the inspired account of this entrance. Notice the dreadful antagonism from Satan. As the Lord blessed the Word to these Thessalonians, the great adversary aroused opposition. The devil hates the Gospel to be preached in all its sovereign freeness. Let us then, amidst opposition, take courage, for it clearly shows that the Holy Ghost is pulling down the strongholds of Satan. The Word of God is a savour of life unto life, or death unto death. The children of the kingdom receive it, for it enters them, while the children of the wicked one reveal all the depths of depravity, while they oppose and blaspheme the name of God.

“Turned from idols to serve the living and the true God.”

Every unregenerate heart has its idols, but the coming in of God's Word gives light and the idol falls in the blaze of it. The writer remembers how he knelt before a wafer, or a crucifix, in the days of unbelief. When God came in these idols were seen to be worthless, utterly.

“We serve the living and the true God.” The verb, “to serve,” means, “to serve as a slave.” Oh happy yoke of Christ! It is both “easy and light.” We are saved to serve. “But now, being made free from sin, ye became servants to God” (Rom. vi. 22). It becomes the daily delight of the saint to yield his members to God, that God may use them for His glory. Herein is no restless activity, no running hither and thither, but the calm and blessed enjoyment of having

committed our way to the Lord, that He will lead us out in happy service for Him. Notice also that our Father is described as the "living and true God." What a comfort! We serve One who is the source of all life, and who lives to bless us and help us onwards. The word "true" means "real." Yes, our God is a real God! Quite unlike the phantoms we once served! Again and again we prove His reality as He stoops to make Himself known, while He instructs us in the paths of duty for him.

"To wait for His Son from heaven."

Some of us are not waiting for death. We are realizing that our Lord is coming. We see all around us deepening apostasy. Sacerdotal, Rationalistic, Spiritist, and Pantheistic error is abounding, but to us these are but the indications of the coming of Him who will gather us home with all the sleeping saints. May the Lord grant us to realize something of the joy that shall be ours *and His* at that happy moment, when the trumpet shall sound, and we, with the whole family of God, shall meet our glorious Saviour in the air, and be with Him for ever. "Even so come Lord Jesus."

CHRISTIAN HUSBANDRY.

THE SEASONS—AUTUMN.

BY AMBROSE SERLE, AND RECOMMENDED BY THE REV. WILLIAM ROMAINÉ.

(Continued from page 606).

Now comes the crowning of the year. All the care and labour of the husbandman in the preceding seasons from this expect their recompense. The profusion of fruit upon the trees, the ripened corn in the fields, and the cheerful acclamations of ten thousand swains, unite to proclaim the joy of harvest, and to diffuse delight through every rural scene. The gladness of triumphant history spreads over the loaded plains. The birds, with their chirping offspring, regale on the bounty of Providence, which at this season, when their feathered tribes increase the demand, hath, with equal wisdom and goodness, increased the supply. All animated nature wears the face of joy; for is inanimate nature silent of praise? The valleys are so covered with corn that they too shout for joy and sing. In various ways, by deed or in voice, all animal and vegetable beings combine in most pleasant unison with the thankful Psalmist's song, "Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness!"

And so will the Lord God Almighty crown the consummation of all things, when earth shall no longer revolve, or the circling days and months of the year shall utterly cease. The fruits of grace shall then be finally ripened for glory. They shall appear, too, with the most perfect beauty of holiness, as well as be collected with everlasting love. God will gather the wheat into His garner, and all the objects of His

salvation unto life eternal. He will bring together His people from all nations, and His redeemed from the uttermost coasts of the earth. The sea shall give up her dead, and the whole universe of the blest, human and angelic, shall shout, like the morning stars of old, with perpetual joy. Their number also will transcend the arithmetic of man, and can only be faintly expressed by ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands. And as to their song, it will be loud to penetrate, and universal to fill all that God hath been pleased to bless. "Worthy is the Lamb (they shall shout) that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them" shall proclaim, "saying, blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever" (Rev. v. 11, etc.).

This is the voice of the first resurrection over the partakers of which the second death hath no power. It is a voice of everlasting joy and thanksgiving, of melody and of peace. Not one discordant note shall be heard among the heavenly throng; but the whole company of the blest, innumerable in members, and yet one in spirit, shall sing the high praises of their God and Saviour for evermore.

What a glorious view will this illustrious "assembly of the first-born afford?" Clad with everlasting brightness, all refulgent from the righteousness of the great Redeemer; crowned with glory, all preceding from the God-head of their Saviour, and triumphant in the victorious strength of their almighty Head; what can be thought of upon earth in comparison with this unutterable splendour? Dominions, kingdoms, empires, in their most dazzling lustre, sink into darkness or shade before this transcendent blaze of glory; more entirely than the dim spark of light in the glow-worm expires at the rising sun.

Here will commence the everlasting autumn, the ever-joyful harvest of souls. The glorious Trinity will now behold the economical labours of the gracious Covenant perfect and complete. The God-head will pronounce over His whole new creation, with a more glorious emphasis than over His first, Behold, it is very good! The Father will rejoice in the many sons brought into glory. The Son, as God-man, will triumph in the victories of redemption, now fully accomplished and obtained. The Holy Spirit will glory in the perfection of that salvation, which He carried forth with life into the souls of the redeemed, and by which He matured them for eternity. "All the company of heaven" will celebrate the wonderful love of their God in the deliverance and exaltation of myriads of perishing sinners to thrones and kingdoms from their former misery and ruin. And shall these once poor sinners themselves be silent in His praise? Shall those, for whom all this joy shall spring up in heaven, be dumb or insensible to the joy they have caused? Oh, if any can feel an excess of blessedness, and gratitude, and love, and wonder, and praise, in those heavenly regions, surely it must be they for whose sakes such astonishing glories have been shown,

when they merited nothing but weeping, and wailing, and woe! What a sense of adoration shall warm their souls when they hear that last call of grace from their dear Redeemer: "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world!" And how will they attempt to answer, in a strain of unutterable joy, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name we give the glory, for all the mercy, and all the truth, which we saw, we tasted, we felt in time, and which we now see and know to endure for ever!" O what a triumphant meeting will be here! Jesus, the Author of Salvation, receiving the whole company of His redeemed; these adoring, and wondering, and exulting in their precious Redeemer; prophets, apostles, pastors, and teachers, finding their crowns of rejoicing among the beloved souls who were called into life through their ministrations; happy believers recollecting with transport their faithful helpers, and all the near and dear friends of grace kindling fresh and fresh joy as they meet with each other in glory. What a scene will this glad day present! Is this heaven; this the joy of Thy chosen, O Lord! When wilt Thou appear? How long! how long! Blessed be God for the joyful prospect! the time of this harvest shall shortly come, when "both he that soweth, and he that reapeth, shall rejoice together."

II. The autumn of the year also preaches the autumn of a believer's life upon earth. When he is ripe for heaven, or hath fulfilled the duties appointed to him for his day and generation, it is not long before the sickle of death is put in, and the spirit gathered into the heavenly garner. As soon as the designation of grace is completed in him and by him, the voice of God will utter from heaven the reviving sound of "Come up hither!"

III. The corn, when ripe, must be cut down before it can be gathered in; and, when gathered in, it must be threshed and winnowed ere it can be applied to use.

So likewise the Christian's body must be laid low by death, before his soul can mount up to the mansion of bliss: and thus death, from being the sorest enemy, becomes one of the most blessed friends to the believer. Like a benevolent angel, he bursts the bars and chains which detain the spirit in a world of sin and misery, and ushers in the soul to a state of ineffable purity and joy. Death is yours, said the apostle; and, without death, who could fully possess the life eternal? This is among the wonders of redemption; the very curse of man becomes his blessing; and that, which of itself would have tumbled him down into hell, now wafts him with a glorious speed to the mansions of peace. In their last hours how many blessed souls have thus perceived that death was their mercy, their privilege, their joy? How many, when nature could afford no comfort, nor the objects of nature have triumphed and rejoiced in the foretaste of the glory, just revealing? How many have braved what sense considers with horror, and nobly met this reputed foe of human life in his most dismal forms? Read the martyr's pangs, but read his comforts, too; and thou wilt find,

believing soul, that murder and tyranny had no advantage over him. In all these things he was a conqueror, and more than a conqueror, through Him that loved him. Almighty strength, unseen by man, supported feeble nature, and gave to a trembling reed the unbowing stability of an oak. Founded on the Rock, the soul could not be moved; but, conscious of replenished strength, looked down upon the agitated waves with tranquillity of mind. The martyr's crown was the martyr's joy, his "blood the seed of the Church," and his portion is near to the golden altar of salvation before the throne in heaven.

However tranquil and serene, yet every believer's death is martyrdom for glory. He is cut off and becomes a witness for God, and for superior interest he parts with the world. And oh, what joy have thousands expressed at their last hour, in the prospect of what was before them! However men may boast in the days of ease, or riot in the thoughtlessness of folly, who would not wish to die like the Christian? Possessing a spirit touched with the keenest sense of immortal things, not hardened into stoical insensibility, he meets his Father's will, rejoices in His wise and holy dispensation, and receives it as the very best which could have been appointed for him. When he sees heaven just opening to his view, if he feel a reluctance for anything, it would be for his return to dwell longer upon earth. Let any one read the translations (for such their migrations from the body may be called) of Rivet, Du Moulin, and of hundreds more, and then let him ask his heart, "Can *this* be death!"—*this*, which opens the door to life; *this*, which is swallowed up with the sense of that life even here! When the soul ascends to God, and leaves nothing but what is corrupt and defiled to sink into earth, hath it not abundant reason, indeed, to exult: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

It is true, not all God's people have this joy of harvest in their departure hence; but still their harvest is safe though the weather be not so fine. When they are gathered in they will surely have their measure full of glory, and want no more. The fore-running joy (if it may be so called) is like the voice from heaven to Christ (John xii. 30), not so much for the believer's own sake as for help and encouragement of those who remain behind. Whatever be particular circumstances of their death, all God's redeemed have peace at the last, and peace for evermore.

But there some who, instead of being God's corn, are like "the grass upon the house-tops, wherewith the mower filleth not his hand, nor he, that bindeth sheaves, his bosom." To "fill the hand" means the consecration or blessing of God; and *not* to fill it, consequently, the desecration or curse. Thus we read of "withered branches, stubble, dry stubble, chaff, tares, etc., whose end is burning." The wrath of the Lord, like a devouring fire, shall (we are told) burn up the ungodly. They are not bound, as a reaper bindeth his sheaves, in the bundle of life, nor are they gathered into the heavenly bosom; but they are winnowed away like the chaff, and cast into everlasting fire. There

the worm of an accusing conscience dieth not, and there the flaming wrath of God is never extinguished. What an awful, what an everlasting separation must shortly take place between the fruit and the leaves, the corn and the chaff, the sheep and the goats; between all that Christ hath made to pass under the rod, claiming them as His own, and all that, in the wickedness of their hearts, disdained to have this Man to rule over them? It was a fearful sight to behold Mount Sinai covered with fire and clouds, with the awful magnificence of an holy, yet a paternal God; but this was a minute appearance compared with the circumstances of that tremendous day, when the Lord shall arise terribly to shake not a single mountain, but the whole earth; when the very "heavens shall pass away with a great roar, the elements melt with fervent heat, the earth and the works that are therein burnt up," and the universal frame of things dissolved. If Moses, a good man and accepted into the favour of God, could not but exceedingly fear and quake at the comparatively small display of the Holy One of Israel, appearing for salvation, what will all wicked men feel at the solemn approach of the Divine Majesty, upon "the wreck of worlds," to let loose His dreadful wrath upon them, and that fiery indignation which shall devour His adversaries? This is an affecting thought for Christians, and it should be an alarming consideration to those who "obey not the Gospel of Jesus Christ." For persons so awfully situated, one cannot help offering a prayer, that they may have such grace to tremble now, as not to tremble for ever!

IV. In this benign season of autumn the husbandman receives the benefit of all his past dependence upon the constitution of Providence, which hath ordered the seasons and appointed seedtime and harvest. The farmer sows in confidence that at a certain period he shall reap. That period he believes to be founded on the unalterable purpose of God in the arrangement of nature; and, according to his belief, so it occurs. He gives implicit credit to Providence, that it shall surely come to pass; nor is he disappointed of his hope.

So Abraham, both the father of the faithful and an eminent instance of what the faithful are, believed God, rested upon His truth, as a sure foundation, that what He had promised, however unlikely to human view, "He was able to perform; and therefore it was imputed to Him for righteousness." In like manner, "he that soweth to the Spirit," receiving his gracious testimony concerning Jesus, as the only atonement and justification, and proving that he has so received this testimony by the fruits of the Spirit within and without him, shall of that Spirit reap life everlasting. He believes God's word and promise concerning the mediatorial office of the God-man; and righteousness is imputed and imparted to him, upon believing. He feels some immediate benefit in this life; for, "being justified by faith, he has peace with God," accompanied with a hope, a joy, a love, which can never die. He knows in whom he hath believed, and he commits all things belonging to his body or soul to time or eternity into His hands; from a firm confidence that all will be wisely ordered and safely kept

for his present and eternal good. As those, who believe, from a natural impression of the certainty of God's dispensations, that harvest shall surely come, are justified by the event and reap the advantage of it, so the Christian, who, by the agency of the Divine Spirit is brought to cast himself upon Christ, and for the pardon of his sins and for a title to glory, is now (according to the measure of faith) as sure of salvation as the immutability of God can make him ; and the blessed event, as sure as God is true, must be life everlasting.

In this place we may digress a little to observe, that the images and symbols of divine grace, found in natural objects, though they aptly convey what is done to the redeemed, and in them here, do not reach to what the Redeemer hath done for them in heaven, nor to what He did within Himself or in His own person while upon earth. The illustrations from this world can only shadow forth what spiritually occurs to believers in the world, or while they are in the world. They ascend no higher, and probably for this reason, that we might see that our redemption, though carried on in nature, is above nature, and might be convinced that we owe the whole of it to an Almighty Hand. Hence, there are no natural productions which can represent to us the atonement, the righteousness, the intercession, and the other mediatory offices of Christ with the Godhead. These were all of too sublime a form for nature in any respect to rise to or illustrate. But, as it was necessary that God's people should comprehend these superior blessings, they were not without their illustration. It was, however, an illustration, framed, ordained, and revealed by God himself, to which no human mind could have been equal, because, since the fall, the human mind is, in itself, naturally ignorant, and consequently unable to form the ideas of spiritual things. As the objects of nature, then, cannot delineate those sublime and heavenly purposes, man, in his natural state, likewise cannot conceive them : and of this we have a striking proof in all the wisdom of the heathen. Therefore, sacrifices, oblations, and the whole economy of the ceremonial law, were divinely appointed to convey ideas, which the objects of the field, or garden, or the world at large, could not naturally convey, and for which they were not designed. These rites, taken with their commentary and fulfilment in the New Testament, beautifully and graciously express all that it is expedient for us to know ; and by them we may receive, as well as the ancient believers under that dispensation, a thousand excellent hints, both of what Christ hath done for us in the flesh, of what He is doing in heaven, and of our future state of happiness and glory with Him. Their whole purport is prophecy and doctrine : and, under one or other of these, may all the contents of the sacred volume be arranged. A spiritual faculty, indeed, is necessary to comprehend the allusions and images ; and so it is to make a right use even of the images in nature, and of all the works of God ; but the exercise of this faculty, as well as the faculty itself, is the true wisdom graciously given to man, without which his highest knowledge is but illustrious ignorance, arising from the flesh, and perishing with it. David, in the spirit of

his true wisdom, professed to all Israel that he knew the purport of the temple and its services only by Divine tuition. "All," says he, "in the writing" (or representation given by Moses) "from the hand of God upon me" (by God's holy inspiration) "He made me to understand, even all the works of the pattern," or doctrinal exemplar (1 Chron. xxviii. 19). By this power his mind received a capacity to comprehend the spiritual sense and idea of all the legal institutions, and those high purposes of grace which were implied in the visible patterns (Heb. viii. 5). Read by this capacity, there appears such an harmony between the two Testaments, and in all the revelations, ordinations, and providences of God, as strikes the believing soul with an elevated awe and delightful surprise: and he cannot but look and admire, that Jehovah should have done all, with so much holiness and wisdom in arrangement, and with so much mercy and love in manifestation, for such a creature, such a sinful creature as man.

V. Every plant in the field and garden, and indeed every work throughout the creation, is framed for some particular end or purpose, in which it finds its rest. The vegetable tribes have attained the perfection designed, when they have produced their respective flowers or seeds. The great object, with them all, is, not so much the nourishment of their own present life, as the provision for another, to obtain which they employ all their functions without remission. In all animals too, we may observe the same general law. They have an object to exercise and fill every faculty; and no faculty is at rest till it has discovered and obtained its object.

This great philosophic truth grounded upon nature, holds good, though carried much higher, in theology or grace. The great Author of all things, always acting wisely, must act as surely, and with equal design, in the spiritual as in the material world; and if with design, then necessarily with effect. As God is omnipotent, His design must also have not a partial or accidental, but a positive and complete effect; and as He is omniscient, both design and effect must be perfectly disposed and adapted to each other. Thus far a mere philosopher may follow us; and thus far have heathen philosophers, by the mere force of reason, advanced and concluded; they, like some others, agreed to the rule, but knew not how to apply it. The Christian philosopher (by which term I mean, not a poor, proud creature, puffed up with the conceit of its own knowledge, but an humble mind, made wise unto salvation) is enabled to go farther, and to enjoy in his heart those truths, which, at the most, they could but speculate upon in their heads. Like them, he sees they stand upon the ground of right reason, because they are truths; but he receives them and rests upon them most entirely, because, above all considerations of mere reason, they are founded upon the revelation of God, who is the Author of truth. One of these truths is the immortality of the human soul, which indeed the wiser heathens acknowledged upon the most rational principles; but which, to the Christian, is enlightened to a demonstration by the Gospel (2 Tim. i. 10). If then we apply the law of nature as to

this proposition, we may consider the faculty of our souls, and the object of that faculty. Looking into ourselves, we find ideas raised of an eternal state, a consciousness of that infinite duration, and a perception, not only of its possibility, but of its absolutely necessary existence ; we find also a wish to participate in that eternal existence, a grasping after it as after a clear and perceptible object before us, and a shrinking from the very notion of annihilation as a dark and unnatural void. Now, God's works cannot be useless, and therefore, as He placed the desires of immortality in the mind, He would have created an useless work in forming those desires, or faculties, or capacities, if He had not also created an end to fulfil them. This immortality, then, must be the object, the purpose, and the rest of these faculties ; for our faculties cannot be said to find their rest in ceasing to be ; because rest is a relative term, and necessarily implies a being. It is evidently absurd to say that anything rests, which does not exist. It is also evident, that the mind doth not obtain that rest in this present state which it conceives and which it covets. Neither its conceptions nor volitions are answered here. It shudders, too, with a melancholy horror, at the very thought of not obtaining them. With all the atheism of sin in our nature we cannot look with ease at this black atheism which would deprive God of some proposed end in us, and us of that end for which we exist. For to say that we exist only to crawl a few years upon earth, and to live in expectation and die in disappointment, is charging the Author of all wisdom with natural and moral defects without number, with causes deficient in design, or with ends void of all goodness, mercy, or use. But, allowing this to be impossible, we may look into ourselves and see a faculty, capable of comprehending immortality, capable, too, of desiring it as an ultimate good, and extremely unsatisfied with the very notion of not obtaining it. Either, therefore, immortality is the object of that mental faculty which seeks it as its rest, or God hath created a faculty without an object. If we would avoid this latter proposition (which is a blasphemy against the wisdom and power of God in His greatest work upon earth) we must of necessity adopt this conclusion, that God Himself hath impressed our souls with the thought of immortality, given them an impetuous desire after this immortality, and so having framed a suitable faculty for that object, hath made it the design of our being, and our ultimate rest. Thus, according to the poet :

“ The soul uneasy and confined from home,
Rests and expatiates in a life to come.”

On the other hand, remove the conclusion, and doth not this impious absurdity follow : an all-wise and omnipotent Being hath created a work without design, made a tendency which loses its end, and committed (horrible to say !) such an offence against immutable truth as to form premises with erroneous conclusions, or (what is just as erroneous) with none at all. Yet this is the logic of all the wise heads who, from the beginning of the world, have taken upon them to dispute against the immortality of the soul.

But other great and comfortable truths are suggested to us by a view of the fixed purpose of God in the objects of nature.

We have considered from reason the necessity of the soul's immortality, which is abundantly confirmed by Divine revelation. Revelation, however, doth not leave us here, but carries us on to a knowledge, which reason could never have attained ; for it not only assures us of immortality, but explains the condition of men in it, with other circumstances of the utmost magnitude and importance. We find it revealed, for instance, that, though man be created naturally immortal, he hath lost by sin the original happiness which attended his immortality and is now plunged into a state of impurity, which hath annexed misery in its stead. In other words, he hath lost that holy faculty, which finds its object in God and His will, and has obtained a sinful faculty which seeks an object of gratification anywhere and everywhere beside, and becomes wretched because it can nowhere obtain it. It is so in this world, where there are many things to meet with the animal part of his nature, though none of them do or can satisfy the longings of the immortal part. In the world of spirits, where not even these low palliations can be found, human misery is completed : and one great occasion of it will be what divines usually call the *pœna damni*, that pain of loss of which we are treating. The soul may rove and be restless, but shall not find ; and the emphasis of the distress will be, that the unhappy beings who may feel it will know that they never can find, and must therefore be restless still. On the other hand, to the children of God is imparted a spiritual faculty, in the stead of what was originally lost, which seeks God as the great object of all its exercise, and the great fulfilment of all its capacities. Here it rests. Like Noah's dove, it has at length found somewhat to stay upon. It is no longer whirled in the circumference of things, but finds a centre, which centre is rest itself. Thus (according to the Scripture) those " who have believed do enter into rest, and have ceased from their own works, as God did from His." They have found that object which fills their faculty, and, by filling it with that fulness which filleth all in all, constitutes every particle of its true happiness both here and hereafter. This object is God Himself, who only hath immortality as His own ; and in proportion as believers are enabled to exercise the spiritual faculty of Divine grace upon this object, they are happy, fixed, and at rest. They have found their centre and stay, the want of which would make them, as it doth all other men, restless and uneasy, always in chase of solid peace, but never finding more than its shadow. The faculty, filled in all its measure from God, who is its object, can want nothing, not only because itself is filled for the present, but because it will always participate that fulness, or the divine and all-sufficient Being, who fills all expansion, all time, all existence, in an instant, yet for ever ; and to whom the universal All is an infinite here and an everlasting now. Hence we see, that, as the soul of man was originally made for God, it can never be truly or eternally happy without Him. If it seek peace elsewhere, it can find none. If it depart from this

world without finding Him, it launches into an abyss, where He will not be found in peace for evermore. Hence also we see, that the Lord having granted to His redeemed the faculty of His grace and divine nature, the object of which is Himself in glory, this faculty inclines the soul to seek with holy fervour and blessed hope, through all the circumstances and obstructions of this mortal life, that heavenly object as its fulness and its end. "Whom have I in heaven but Thee," says such a soul, "or what do I desire upon earth in comparison of Thee? Thou art my Help and my Deliverer; make no long tarrying, O my God!" The answer is: "Surely, I come quickly;" and, "Ye, that hunger now, shall be filled."

One important reflection more, which seems necessarily to arise from the present matter of consideration, must not be passed by. If God hath ordained that all the powers in the natural world shall work for certain and unfrustrable ends: and if, in the spiritual world, there are like conformities between faculties and objects, then surely its operations and effects must, at the least, be equally certain and unfrustrable. The argument is convincingly drawn *a fortiori*; for if the spiritual existences are of higher importance than the merely material, as perhaps nobody will deny, then God, having established certain effects to result from certain causes in the one, will have had a proportionate regard to ensure them in the other. If the operations of nature are by no means left to chance, but are evidently carried on by the certain energy of the Divine Providence; shall not the salvation of His people, to effect which cost Him no less than the sufferings and death of His Son, be ordered in all things and sure? Shall not the final happiness of His redeemed, for which He hath through every age taken such peculiar care, and for which from before all ages framed His Covenant, as well as framed a world to illustrate it, be fixed and irrefragable? Let God be true who hath declared it by so many infallible tokens, and every man a liar who presumes to deny them. All God's works confirm the salutary truths of His word. Every operation in nature yields its portion of evidence. The reason of things also confirms the sure decree: and indeed the reason of man, that particle of truth universal, when divested of prejudice and unclogged by sin, assents to the propriety of such a determination. But, above all, the wisdom of God Himself, and the voice of God in His Word, which is unerring wisdom revealed, have rendered these conclusions, drawn from that and other evidences, infallible, because he hath showed the immutability of His counsel, and interposed Himself by an oath to accomplish them (Heb. vi. 17). "The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but My kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of My peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee" (Isa. liv. 10). Thus also saith Christ: "I give unto them (His sheep) eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of My hand. For this is the Father's will, which hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me, I shall lose nothing; but should raise it up again at the

last day. And this is the will of Him that hath sent Me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the day" (compare John x. 28, with vi. 39, 40). This is the testimony of the Father and the Son: and what saith the Spirit of Truth, speaking by the apostle? "Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. vii. 38, 39). He that cannot believe this immense, this dignified evidence, could not believe any attestations, even though one rose again from the dead to declare them.

VI. The division of numberless leaves and flowers into three members or petals upon one and the same stalk, affords the mind a hint of frequent meditation upon that fundamental doctrine of Christianity, the Trinity in Unity, and Unity in Trinity, for ever to be worshipped and adored.

It was not an unsolid maxim of the late Mr. Baxter (whatever may be thought of some of his notions) that "in a right scheme of theology, unity in trinity would go through the whole method," because (says he) "the Divine Trinity in Unity hath expressed itself in the whole frame of nature and morality" (see his life, P. ii. p. 297, and P. iii. p. 69). It is so in the heavenly fluids, in earthly animals and plants, and in the mortal and immortal part of man. It is the voice of the Scripture, the very revelation of God. If we are not wise above what is written, or what is wrought by Jehovah himself; or rather, if we are wise enough, through grace, to understand His mind and will in His works and word, we shall see that the whole of our salvation is concerned in the experimental knowledge of this truth, that the first Person is our Father in Christ and by the Spirit; that the second Person is our Redeemer and Head through the Father and Spirit; and that the third Person is our restorer and Sanctifier in the Son and the Father. The knowledge, not theoretic or speculative, but gracious and faithful, of this sublime mystery, is the master-key to unlock the other great mysteries and principles of the Christian's expectation and hope. The ignorance of this is the parent of manifold errors, mischievous and contradictory in themselves, and opposite to the light, the life, and the salvation of God.

- | | | |
|-------------------|---|--------------|
| 1. Jehovah—Father | } | One Jehovah. |
| 2. Jehovah—Son | | |
| 3. Jehovah—Spirit | | |
| 1. God—Creator | } | One God. |
| 2. God—Redeemer | | |
| 3. God—Sanctifier | | |
| 1. Essence—Love | } | One Essence. |
| 2. Essence—Wisdom | | |
| 3. Essence—Power | | |

In the Creatures.

1. Fire	}	One Sun.
2. Light		
3. Matter		
1. Body, or Substance	}	One Man.
2. Soul, or Affection		
3. Spirit, or Mind		
1. Fire	}	Three Distinctions in One Substance of the material Heavens.
2. Light		
3. Spirit		

“There are three that bear record in heaven (the spiritual world) the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one; and there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree in one. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater (John v. 7-9).”

(To be continued.)

UNBELIEF TRIUMPHANT.

BY THE REV. W. S. LEWIS, M.A.

“*They laughed Him to scorn.*”—MATT. ix. 24.

YOU must often have noticed the effect of introducing a lamp into a darkened apartment. You see the lamp itself; you see a thousand other things by its light. It is much the same with the five words of our text. Spoken, as it were, by the way, they have not only all the vivid light of reality in themselves, but they also throw light on the whole history in which they occur. In particular they enlighten us, (1) On the Nature of our Saviour's Work, and (2) On the Right Interpretation of His Words.

First: AS TO HIS WORK. How wonderfully the words reveal to us the great depth of His humiliation. It was not only that the Lord was Man, which is much; nor yet only that He was a very poor Man, even one of the homeless poor (Luke ix. 58), which is more; but, what is most of all, that He was a man derided and despised. So psalmists and prophets had foretold, and so evangelists here relate. Did it ever occur to you to consider how complete must have been the obscuration of His glory—how total the eclipse of that sun—to render this even possible? Had there been one scintillation or glimpse to the natural eye of the burning brightness of His Godhead, would any one have dared, would any one have been able, to “deride” Him? They “laughed Him down,” so some render the expression; they drowned His words in contempt! To be worshipped by all the “gods” (Ps. xcvi. 7; Heb. i. 6); that was His right. To be the laughing-stock of men such as these, of the idle crowd that collect and gossip about a death, the hireling mourners who feel least and pretend most; that was His experience. The distance from that right to that experience is the measure of His humiliation.

Notice, also, from this, the completeness of His sorrow. He was "acquainted with grief," with every side and shape and variety of it, even with that form which we should have expected to be the farthest of all from His lot. As one "born of woman," we can partly understand His exposure to the sinless infirmities of our race, His hungering, thirsting, fainting, wearying, sleeping, bleeding, dying. In so wicked a world, again, as this is, His having to suffer from the opposition of enemies, and from the treachery and desertion of professed friends, is more disgraceful than surprising. But, coming into the world as He did, and being such as He was, speaking as man never spake, silencing the wisest, curing the most desperate, casting out the strongest, changing the vilest, and speaking mercy to all—that He should, nevertheless, be derided and scorned; this is, indeed, strange. Any trial except this—so our expectation would have said. The inference is clear. If He was exposed to this, He was exempt from none. All the rest of the cup must have been exhausted before He partook of these dregs.

This consideration may teach us, yet further, the greatness of His love. All this depth of suffering was for our sake. It was because a half-exhausted cup would not have saved *us*, that He compelled Himself to drain all. Like one descending a coal shaft, who does not stop short of the very lowest depth because those he desires to rescue are known to be trembling and gasping there, so was it with the Lord. He endured even the scorn of contemptible man in order to save man. Strange, indeed, was that scorn; but stranger still His reply—not in judgment, not in anger, scarcely even in rebuke. Those who despised Him should not be witnesses of His power; that was all. Was there ever such a combination of majesty and mercy? Wherein is He the more to be admired—in His power, or in His forbearance—in raising the dead, or in sparing the living?

II. We learn much as to the right interpretation of our Lord's WORDS, and so, generally, of those Holy Scriptures which bear testimony to Him. The special saying which called forth this outburst of scorn was the following:—"The maid is not dead, but sleepeth;" and the special ground of that scorn was the intimate conviction of the hearers that she had actually died—"knowing that she was dead." It is evident, therefore, that they took the Lord's words in their most ordinary and obvious sense, never stopping to search for another, and never considering whether such a teacher and miracle-worker as He was could have really meant anything so absurd. It was a case of confounding the obvious with the true—of mistaking the apparent for the real—and of considering "first thoughts" so much better than "second," that no second thoughts are required. The mistake is very common. "He that believeth on Me shall never die"; "Ye must be born again"; "Destroy this temple"; "This is My body," all are cases in point. The mistake arises from not recollecting—(1) That the true signification of a passage is not that which the hearer imagines, but that which the speaker Himself designed; and (2) That, in the sayings of the Bible, where God is practically the speaker, and

man the hearer, these two meanings are so far from being necessarily identical, that they are often as wide asunder as the poles. The fact is, that the common clay of our earthly language must frequently be employed by the Almighty after a super-earthly and heavenly manner, and consequently must frequently mean other and more than if it had come from our lips. We must, never, therefore, run away with that notion, which seems to furnish so easy a way of closing all controversy, and which is so flattering and fascinating to dull and indolent minds, that what is called a plain man's view of a passage is necessarily its plain meaning. There is no such democratic road to the truth. It is not by one passage, but by many—it is by searching the Scriptures, not by skimming them—it is by seeking not the obvious but the consistent, that we can learn what God means. "The kingdom of heaven is a treasure hid in a field,"—not something lying on its surface like a stone, and meeting your eye the first thing.

Let us not rashly, therefore, set aside non-obvious interpretations, especially if they are old ones sanctioned by centuries of experience and investigation. Even wholly new ones, if *founded on new knowledge*, must be cautiously and candidly examined. Above all, let us maintain our deep reverence for the Scripture itself as it is. Before you despise the Bible, be sure you understand it. How much flippant talking and scornful writing this simple rule would prevent. Many sceptics are really despising nothing but their own misinterpretations, and are objects, therefore, not indeed of unchristian scorn, but of sincere compassion for their pains. It was so in this case. How true and precious the words which these scorers despised! What, indeed, was *that* death, lying in the path of His purposes, but a sleep? (See John xi. 11.) What is all death but a sleep before Him? (Luke xx. 38, etc.) What truth, what life, therefore, in His words to the parents! What truth, what life, what immortality, to all believers! How worthy of Him who "hath abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel!" And how unutterably pitiable the scorn, therefore, with which they were heard!

As a concluding thought, take notice of the profound wisdom here displayed. See how this very contempt of man was made to minister to the mission of Christ. These scorers actually built up the platform on which the evidence of the miracle stood. When the damsel arose and took food (Mark v. 43), there could be no doubt as to her being alive. The only point on which doubt was possible was as to the nature of her life. Was it resurrection-life in real truth? Had it indeed been preceded by un mistakeable death? These unhappy despisers, without meaning it, had established this beyond doubt; they had shut their own mouths on this point by their previous scorn; and, in doing so, they had for ever shut the mouths of mankind. So complete was the ultimate triumph of the wisdom of God. And even so will it be at the last with all wilful despisers of His Christ. "Every knee shall bow to Him," not only "of things in heaven and things in earth," but even of "things under the earth," such as these!

Correspondence.

ANOTHER AT REST.

To the Editor of the GOSPEL MAGAZINE.

DEAR MR. ORMISTON,—Another devoted reader of the GOSPEL MAGAZINE has been called to her eternal rest in the person of the late Mrs. Jane Baker, of Leominster; well known and well loved by all who knew her, for her consistent and godly life, walk, and conversation. She was one who, like Timothy, “from a child knew the Holy Scriptures, which made her wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” And while she loved and rejoiced in the doctrines of rich, free and sovereign grace, was enabled to show forth in her life the grace of the doctrines. When we first came to Leominster, my wife and I used to lend her back numbers of the GOSPEL MAGAZINE, which she had never before seen, and after a while she took them in herself, and would often come and have a chat with us on the precious truths contained in them. It was a privilege to have Mrs. Baker a member of my Bible Class for women, and unless illness prevented her, she was generally the first to come and the last to go, as she liked to talk over with me the lesson in hand. Ever since we knew her, her oft expressed desire was “to be with Christ, which is far better;” also, if it were the Lord’s will, that her departure might be sudden, so that others would not have the trouble and anxiety of waiting on her. The “Aged Pilgrims’ Friend Society” was very near her heart, and two days before her decease she sent me three dozen articles of her own working to send to that Society for sale. While she was very far from what we should call rich in possessions here, yet like Dorcas it can be said of her, “This woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did.” Her Lord has granted her desire, and on Sept. 11th, in her eighty-first year, after many years of widowhood, and much usefulness in the Lord’s vineyard, she passed into the presence of her Saviour (Ps. cxvi. 15).

Her redeemed remains were interred in the “Baptist Burial Ground” in this town on the following Saturday, to await a glorious resurrection. The words, “Whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation: Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever” (Heb. xiii. 7, 8), I felt to be very applicable in this case.

7, *Corn Square,*
Leominster.

I remain, Dear Mr. Ormiston,
Yours faithfully in Him,
TOM KITLEY.

 AGED PILGRIMS’ FRIEND SOCIETY.

BY THE SECRETARY OF THE SOCIETY.

At the afternoon meeting at the Clifton Conference, on October 1st, the Rev. J. Ormiston occupied the chair. Among those who addressed

the meeting was the Secretary of the Society, and, in introducing him, the Convener warmly commended the Institution. Several friends kindly handed in contributions at the close of the proceedings, and the Secretary returned thanks for tokens of quickened interest among the Lord's people, especially those in the West of England.

The Annual Meeting of the Brighton Auxiliary was held on October 8th, in the Royal Pavilion, under the superintendence of Mr. Samuel Combridge, the indefatigable Local Hon. Secretary. Mr. Samuel Hannington, J.P., presided, and addresses were given by the Revs. J. W. Dance, J. K. Popham, W. Woods, and W. Sykes, Mr. A. Hayles, and other friends. The Sale of Work, organised by the ladies, was most successful, and at the close of the day one and all, with praiseful hearts, united in thanksgiving to our faithful Covenant God and Father in Christ Jesus. The Society has had many friends in the past in Brighton, among whom may be named the Revs. J. A. Wallinger, E. Clay, T. Lanson, J. Grace, and W. Harbour, and to-day it has the privilege of the help of many equally devoted to the cause.

On Friday, November 15th, the Autumn Meeting will be held at the Hornsey Rise Home. The Lady Visitors will open a Sale of Work at 3 o'clock. Tea will be provided in the Hall at 5 o'clock, at 6d. each, and in the evening at 6.30 a sermon will be preached in the chapel by the Rev. J. W. Dance, of Leamington. The attendance of friends is cordially invited. The Centenary Fund will, it is hoped, reach the sum of £5,000; it will remain open to the end of the year, and will provide urgently needed support for the Hornsey Rise and Stamford Hill Homes. 1656 pensioners are now upon the books, and upwards of £43 daily are required to meet the cost of pensions and Homes. Sermons on behalf of the Society have been preached at Belgrave Chapel, Halkin Street, S.W., by the Revs. J. E. Weeks and H. J. R. Marston, who with sympathy advocated the cause. For many years the late Rev. Marcus Rainsford ministered here.

"Inasmuch," the Centenary History of the Society, will soon be out of print, hence any friends wishing to possess copies are invited to send to the publishers, or to the Society's office; 2s. 10d. covers cost of the volume and postage.

A letter from the children of a deceased pensioner will prove interesting: "I write to inform you that my dear father died on Feb. 4th. I, my sisters and brother, seven in all, desire heartily to thank those who have the management of the Aged Pilgrims' Friend Society, which so kindly assisted him when he could not work. We have made a collection between us, and I enclose £1 as a thank-offering to Almighty God for directing the Society to assist my dear father. May it be a help to someone else in poverty and old age. With heartfelt thanks from us all." Thus "the administration of this service not only supplieth the wants of the Society, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God."

ALL times are times of mercy to the people of God.

Protestant Beacon.

MULTUM IN PARVO.

THE Archbishop of Canterbury referred in his Visitation last month to the difficulty of obtaining Sunday-school teachers, especially in villages. This difficulty is very widely felt in town as well as country parishes, and it should give rise to serious searchings of heart on the part of Bishops and Clergy. We believe, says the *English Churchman*, that vital religion is at a low ebb in the community, and that even among those who regularly attend the public services of the Church there are few to whom religion is the chief business of life. These remarks may possibly meet the eye of some layman who feels that he is not as zealous in the cause of Christ as he might be, and perhaps once was. There is always a sphere of usefulness near at hand for one who is ready for service.—The Puseyite innovation of so-called "Harvest Festivals" recently found a typical example at the Church of St. James-the-Less, Hambridge, at which the Clergyman in Charge, the Rev. Chas. L. Marson, publicly announced "High Mass" would be sung "in thanksgiving for the harvest." The programme also included "Low Mass," "A Flower Service," "Processions," and Church decorations of fruit, flowers, and vegetables. It is deplorable that the "kindly fruits of the earth" should be associated with these Pagan rites.—The new report of the Wesleyan Sunday School Union states that there are 1,000,819 scholars, with 133,108 teachers, in the 7,566 Sunday schools of the denomination. While there are nineteen more schools, there are 623 fewer teachers and 12,572 fewer scholars than last year. The reason for this decrease is partly owing to a more careful and drastic method of enumeration, and partly owing to the rapid growth of the "Brotherhood" movement, which takes a larger proportion of elder scholars from the schools at an earlier date than formerly.—*The Letters of Queen Victoria*, a three-volume work, published by authority of King Edward, appeared a few days ago. This deeply interesting and epoch-making publication is edited by Lord Esher and Mr. Arthur Benson, and issued by Mr. John Murray. The record covers the period of the Royal life from the Accession, in 1837, to the death of the Prince Consort, in 1861. Politically, the letters are important as shedding light on the relations of the Crown and the Cabinet in the early Victorian Era, while the correspondence is replete with interesting personal details of the life of our late beloved Sovereign.—A curious action has been before the King's Bench Division of the High Court, raising the question of the genuineness of a cross-shaped casket, said to contain relics from the original cross of Calvary! An expert witness for the defence declared that the casket, instead of being one of great antiquity, was an impudent forgery!

Passing Events.

A MONTHLY RECORD.

HER Royal Highness the Duchess of Albany has kindly promised to attend the Founder's Day celebrations of Dr. Barnado's Homes, which will be held at the Girls' Village Homes, Barkingside, Essex, next year. The Council have decided to spread the celebrations over two days, Friday and Saturday, June 19 and 20, Her Royal Highness attending on the opening day.

Bishop Straton has now entered upon the important duties of his new Episcopal charge at Newcastle. We prayerfully wish for him all needed grace and guidance. Our readers will, we are sure, unite with us in this request.

At the Church Missionary House, Salisbury Square, recently, the following missionaries were seen by the Committee of Correspondence: The Rev. E. J. Barnett (South China), Dr. S. N. Babington (Fuh-Kien), the Rev. H. J. Molony (Central Provinces of India), and Mr. C. W. Hattersley (Uganda). An offer of honorary assistance in Medical Mission work at Cairo from Dr. J. B. Rudduck for a period of six months was reported, and the retirements of the Rev. J. S. Owen (Yoruba) and Miss A. J. Edgley (Punjab) were recorded. At a Meeting of the General Committee held on October 8 the retirements of the following were arranged: Miss S. C. Lloyd (Ceylon), Miss M. E. Barber (Fuh-Kien), the Rev. F. F. Komlosy (Northern Nigeria), the Rev. J. B. Purvis (Uganda), Miss M. C. J. McComas (Palestine), and Miss E. McClure (Persia).

The C.M.S. Lay Workers' Union for London held its Inaugural Meeting of the new session—the twenty-sixth of the Union's existence—at the Church Missionary House last month, Mr. Herbert Arbuthnot presiding. The Chairman, in an opening address based on the text, "The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth," made a feeling reference to the late Douglas Thornton—such a loss; so kind, pleasant, and good, with tact and qualities eminently fitting him for his work, yet taken. They could only say "The Lord God reigneth," and humbly submit to His will. Telling addresses were given by three former members returning to their work in the Mission field—namely, Mr. A. W. Cocker, Alert Bay; Mr. J. Burness, East Africa; and the Rev. E. Connor, Radiya District, Bengal. Mr. W. M. Buntine, President of the C.M.S. Lay Workers' Union for Melbourne, now in this country,

also gave a greatly appreciated address, in which he spoke of how the Melbourne L.W.U. came to be founded, and of the work it did. He expressed himself strongly on the part that laymen are called upon to take in the missionary enterprise. The attendance was a very large one, and the gathering was a most helpful start to the new session.

The Spanish and Portuguese Church Aid Society has received news of a great disaster in Malaga, involving the destruction of Señor Vila's house, where the schools and Church services were held. Here is the story as the pastor tells it to Bishop Cabrera: "The mountain torrent, Guadalmedina, suddenly rose 35ft. above its level, and covered a great part of the city to a depth of 13ft. Our district was the first flooded. Very many have been drowned. We were saved by our neighbours, who drew us on their roof with ropes. All is lost. The house is in ruins. Send us help as soon as this letter reaches you. The two bridges have been carried away. All this happened, without a moment's warning, at two in the morning."

The Rev. W. T. Gidney, Secretary of the London Jews' Society, states that the total receipts arising from the recent exhibition, "Palestine in London," amounted to £16,843. After all the expenses had been met there is a surplus of £12,011. The Exhibition was well calculated to assist the English Bible reader to understand many passages in the Scriptures of an Oriental character.

The annual prize distribution at Monkton Combe School, Bath, took place recently, when Bishop Taylor Smith, the Chaplain-General to the Forces, preached the annual sermon and presented the prizes. The weather was bad, but it did not deter a large number of parents and friends from being present. In his sermon the Bishop, taking for his text the call of Gideon, made a powerful appeal to the boys to take part in the conflict with various vices which are devastating this fair land of ours. The headmaster, the Rev. J. W. Kearns, reported that the school had been making very satisfactory progress during the year, and that once again they were starting on a new school year with a record number on the books. The stream of "old boys" going out into the Mission field still continued to flow. This year no fewer than three names had been added. Dr. Wheeler had gone to China to take up medical missionary work; E. P. Laycock, whose brother had been working in China for some time, had gone amongst the Indians of British Columbia; and J. S. Ingram would follow shortly.

During the month of September the Sovereign Grace Union continued its open-air meetings on Tuesday, Saturday, and Sunday evenings at Hillsborough, Sheffield. From September 21st to September 28th a special eight days' open-air preaching was held. For one week the special subject of "The Glorious Gospel" (1 Tim. i. 11) was taken, and addresses were given each evening by the Rev. W. Sykes. Handbills were circulated round the district, announcing the meetings and giving John Bunyan's Confession of his faith concerning Election. During the week over 2000 people heard the Gospel, and remarkable attention was shown by them. One evening a gentleman asked many questions concerning the free grace Gospel, and that night over twenty texts were publicly explained by the Rev. W. Sykes.

Reviews and Notices of Books.

"DAVID": A LITTLE SOLDIER OF CHRIST. By HIS MOTHER. 31 pp.
Price Fourpence, net. (London: Morgan and Scott, 12, Paternoster Buildings).

This pathetic narrative illustrates the inscrutable ways of the Lord in the fulfilment of His sovereign counsels, and presents many edifying lessons of truth. The story, briefly epitomised, tells of a believing child cut off under seven years of age by a painful injury. He was a nephew of the Rev. A. E. Glover, whose wife and child were among the martyred missionaries of 1900 in China. Divine grace was very early manifested in the dear boy, and many of his recorded sayings are characterised by extraordinary spiritual knowledge and experience. His great desire was to become a missionary. His courage was most remarkable, as an incident related in the narrative bears evidence. When only three years old, after being badly burned, his answer to the doctor, who enquired whether the dressing hurt, was, "I'm a so-ger! I like being hurted, doctor!" After the doctor had attended to his wounds, his grandpapa said to him, "What a mercy that God *kept* you, David!" "No, Gwan-pa," he replied, "God *is* keeping me!" We call attention to this touching relation of the actings of God's grace in a child, not only on account of its intrinsic value, but in the hope that a design of the bereaved Christian parents to perpetuate the memory of their sweet child by providing means to maintain a missionary in China—to be called after the little one—may be materially furthered. The "David Stainforth Memorial Missionary" will, God willing, work in connection with the excellent "China Inland Mission," to the Secretary of which, Mr. Marcus Wood, all communications should be addressed.