

THE  
GOSPEL MAGAZINE

AND

PROTESTANT BEACON.

“COMFORT YE, COMFORT YE MY PEOPLE, SAITH YOUR GOD.”

“ENDEAVOURING TO KEEP THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE BOND OF PEACE.”

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

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## P R E F A C E .

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### “HITHERTO” AND “HENCEFORTH.”

“THE Christian’s whole course,” said the late FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL, “is summed up in these two words,” and she was right. “Hitherto.” Yes, Hitherto the Lord has indeed helped us. “I am as a wonder unto many : Thou art my strong Refuge.” Again and again has our mouth been filled with Thy praise, and, as Thou hast bidden us, we have shown forth Thy righteousness and Thy salvation. “O God, who is a God like unto Thee?” “My lips greatly rejoice when I sing and testify of Thee.” Beloved, let us think together of the “Hitherto” of our lives. “What hath God wrought !” To look back is to survey a pathway over which mercies and blessings have been thickly strewn. True, we have had our miseries, our desponding and down-cast times, but through all He has brought us with a loving hand and a loving heart. What a mercy to have been called by grace in penitence and contrition to the feet of Jesus. What a mercy to have had the revelation of His Person as just the Saviour we needed ; to have been melted under the Word, and to have had it sealed home as the Word of truth unto our souls, telling us our position through the Fall, and revealing to us our standing in grace. Oh, how precious was the good news, telling us of salvation procured “without money and without price.” How gracious the words of the dear Redeemer, saying to us, “Thy sins are forgiven thee : go in peace.” And then how wonderful have been the providences ! How, under some of them, apparently adverse, has He proved Himself faithful, opening out the hedged-up way, and bringing us out into fresh paths to walk in ; and under affliction bitter and severe has He upheld, and proved that “underneath are the Everlasting Arms.” Yes, beloved, a review of the “*hitherto*” brings us to sing—

“I love to think of mercies past,  
And future good implore ;  
And all my cares and sorrows cast  
On Him whom I adore.”

But now we want more especially to think of the "*hitherto*" of our dear Family Magazine; and, first, we rejoice in

#### ITS ABIDING AND UNCHANGING CHARACTER.

*Its Creed a Century ago is its Creed now.* The religious world is full of creeds of a questionable character, the result of man's ingenuity and caprice, of which we can only say, in the language of the poet,

"Vain are the thousand creeds  
That move man's heart, unutterably vain;  
Worthless as withered weeds,  
Or idle froth amid the boundless main."

But our creed, or, as we believe it to be, the *Bible creed*, as laid down in the Word of God, and as taught in these pages (bless God!) is of no shifting character, no trumpet giving an uncertain sound. We are called *pronounced*, and we glory in the title. It may be summed up briefly thus. We stand forth as one who is not ashamed to declare the whole counsel of God, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear. We hold to the grand doctrine of Jehovah's Sovereignty as displayed in Election, Justification, Regeneration, and Glorification of His people. We wage war with Rome, and look upon Ritualism as a curse to the Church of England, and if persisted in and increased, will, we believe, eventually pull her to pieces as an Establishment. We look upon Baptismal Regeneration as a lie of the devil, deceiving multitudes who have only a name to live and are dead. We hold the so-called *Higher Criticism* of the day (and which, alas! is increasing) as teaching that which does despite to the Word of God, and dishonours Him who hath declared, "The Scriptures cannot be broken." We glory in the name of *Protestant*, and in the Gospel of the grace of God, and in the power of God the Holy Spirit to make it effectual in leading the poor sinner to Christ, and of building up the saint in the truth as it is in Jesus. We know, for all this outspoken declaration, we stand much alone, but the Lord is our Helper, and as long as He spares us and gives us ability, such is our standing, and we feel in it an honour to follow in the wake of such men as ROMAINE, TOPLADY, NEWTON, HAWKER, IRONS, DOUDNEY, and the like. We look, then, at the purposes and plans of God as one *grand whole*; and amidst all the strife and discord which earthly feelings have raised in the world, and even in the nominal Church, it is our comfort and consolation to know that God has His spiritual Church, made up of living stones, which are fitted by His own hand into His spiritual temple, and duly shaped and polished by Divine grace for His own use. Nothing can touch or

harm this Church. "Change and decay in all around I see," but no change and decay can come upon God's spiritual Church, and on the grand purposes of redeeming love and grace. When some one spoke to JOHN NEWTON of the leading principles he had preached to sustain and gladden the soul in the last hours of weakness, "Yes," said he, "it is to the principles I look. It is upon the broad, grand principles of the Gospel that I repose. It is not upon any particular promise here or there—any little portions of the Word, which some people seem to take comfort from—but I wish to look at the *grand whole*, at the vast scheme of redemption as from eternity to eternity." Such are the principles which we hold dear, founded as they are upon the Word of God.

And this brings us to another reflection with regard to our Family Magazine—

*We rejoice in its Scriptural Character.* It is anchored on that steadfast rock of immortality, the Word of God. Its articles are invariably founded on scriptural truth and the unfoldings of the Person and work of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. Oh, how feeble is man's power! If we rested here, never should we gain the blessing which attends its circulation.

We rejoice in the *Sympathetic Character* of our Magazine. It holds out the right hand of fellowship to all those who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth, and asks not to what denomination they belong, whether they attend church or chapel. Are they the Lord's living and longing ones? This is sufficient for us to give them the embrace of love.

Again, we rejoice in the *Wide Circulation* our Family Magazine has attained. Not only does it find its way to all parts of the British Isles, but it turns up in distant lands where least expected.

The following striking and encouraging case has been brought recently to our knowledge on this point, of the GOSPEL MAGAZINE being found in the Far West. The Rev. Dr. FLETCHER, Vicar of Christ Church, Bradford, Manchester, was travelling through the north-west territory of Canada, when he received an invitation from some hospitable people who lived miles away, and who would so rejoice to have a visit from a Christian minister. Thither the Doctor wended his way. In the course of conversation, the farmer and his wife were lamenting their inability to attend the only church in the district, through the Ritualistic practices of the young clergyman appointed there, adding that they found more profit in meditating on the Word at home, and in reading spiritual books. "Such as these," said the lady, handing the Doctor an old number of the GOSPEL MAGAZINE.

Great was their astonishment and delight when they found that not only did Dr. FLETCHER know the Editor, but that a son of his was married to his second daughter.

Another instance of the wide circulation is the following. We were informed that a chaplain in the army, located in the West Indies, had thrown a copy of the GOSPEL MAGAZINE into his waste-paper basket. On being extracted by a soldier's wife, it was made a great blessing to her soul. A third instance we might mention, is that of a gentleman in Australia, who stated that he had long read our "Wayside Notes" in cottages of the scattered villages of that colony, to the comfort and profit of many precious souls. Thus are we carrying out the Scriptural injunction, "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days." "Give a portion to seven and also to eight, for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth." "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper" (or, as it is in the Hebrew, "shall be right"), "either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good."

We rejoice also in the *Solacing Character* of our Magazine. It can but be observed by all, that the profane and religious world is in a state of unrest. With regard to the former, we have nothing to do, and never expect to receive a welcome from it; but as regards the latter, apart from the Ritualism and Higher Criticism that abounds, there is a negative theology which ignores all distinctive preaching and teaching, and leaves the poor sinner in a state of uncertainty and unrest. This is increasing immensely, and our mission is to point to the precious blood of Jesus, and to Him who alone can give pardon, peace, and joy.

Our lot has fallen in times when the very foundations of the faith are shaken by those who ought to be its chief defenders, and the people, as a result, are plunged into a state of perplexity. We point them to the only source of rest, even the Word of the living God, and rejoice in the numerous testimonies received that it is doing real service, and is heartily welcomed by the tried and afflicted among the Lord's people, to whom it is a great help. It desires to lift up the cast-down ones, and in this and other respects we do not hesitate to say it is proving a work for God. As one among the many, we may quote the following from a friend: "I feel you are indeed a friend to me; the help, comfort, and encouragement I get from your 'Notes' no one knows, when just ready to give up in despair, failing to trace one sign that I belong to the Lord." Such testimonies might be multiplied a hundred-fold.

## THE SPECIAL DETAILS OF THE GOSPEL MAGAZINE.

It will be noticed that, while keeping on the old lines, we have introduced during the year some fresh features, which we believe to have been of the Lord. Our "Leaves for the Little Ones in Zion" have borne fruit, and our "Personal and Passing Notes" have been much appreciated, and we keep thereby in touch with our valued correspondents. The "Protestant Beacon" also has been well sustained, and the articles under this head by our dear friend, the Rev. J. ORMISTON, have been greatly valued. And with regard to the "Poetry," we find a constant call for the unctuous and spiritual melody of our dear brother, Mr. W. S. ROBINSON, of Scarborough; and we would add our best thanks to all correspondents for all their kind and acceptable contributions.

Nor would we omit to mention the kind and valuable assistance rendered by our esteemed friend and brother, the Rev. D. A. DOUDNEY, Rector of Ore. The practical character of his "Pastoral Notes" shows that we combine in our teaching practice with doctrine, while his "Monthly Record of Passing Events" keeps us up to date in the religious matters of the day. We must also record our affectionate gratitude to our dear daughter RUTH, who, beside writing for the Magazine, corrects manuscripts not always clearly written, and is always zealous in other details of the work.

Before closing our reference to *details*, we may mention, with regard to the late dear Editor, who is so peacefully at rest in the home above, a hope was expressed by a Christian lady that when the mantle of that dear man of God fell upon us, we would not allow the memory of Dr. DOUDNEY to be lost sight of through these pages—at all events for two years. This lady's wish was ours, and it will be noticed, in carrying it out, that not a single copy since the dear Doctor's death has been issued without distinct reference in some way to him and his work, while it has been our privilege to give our readers unpublished manuscripts of his which were handed to us after his departure, and which we are glad to say are by no means exhausted.

And now we come to the other word in our Preface motto, "*Hitherto*" and "*Henceforth*." *Henceforth*. What about it? I cannot tell. If I look to self, I cannot see an inch before me; I may be called at any time to lay down the Editorial pen. "I die daily"; but when I open my Bible, that tells me of the *Christian's Henceforth of certainty*, comfort, and joy. "They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people, even for ever." "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we

are glad." "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again, bringing his sheaves with him." There is no uncertainty as to the result of our spiritual labours, for when we are called to lay down the weapons of our warfare, and the time of our departure is at hand, we can say with the Apostle Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; *henceforth* there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day." The *Henceforth*, beloved, is all right, all according to the covenant; and whether we are spared a little longer on earth to work on, or called up to the heavenly home, all is well.

Our work is a great and important one, and we look alone to the Spirit for guidance and help. It was the custom of the Breton fishermen, before they put out to sea, to offer this prayer, "Keep me, O God, for my boat is small, and the ocean is wide." We must say, in similar words, "Keep me, O God, for I am but a poor, weak, unworthy one, and the work is great."

O Father of eternal life and all created glories, renew to us that gift which shall enable us to describe the revelation of Thy love to Thy blood-bought people, that both penman and reader may rejoice together in the honour of Thy name, and learn those things from Thy Word which shall meeten them finally to be with Thee in the realms of eternal bliss and glory.

Beloved, the Lord abundantly bless you; and with regard to our special work in connection with our Family Magazine, may Jehovah our Triune God water His incorruptible seed with His own blessing, so as to produce an abundant harvest, to His own glory, is the prayer of

Yours in the best bonds,

THE EDITOR.

