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from a Believers Garden

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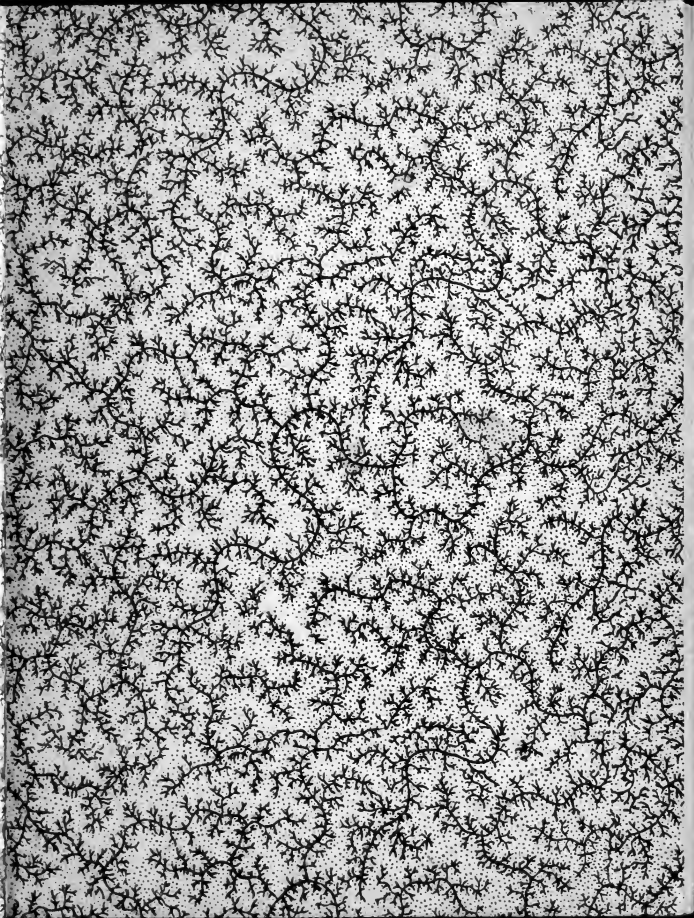
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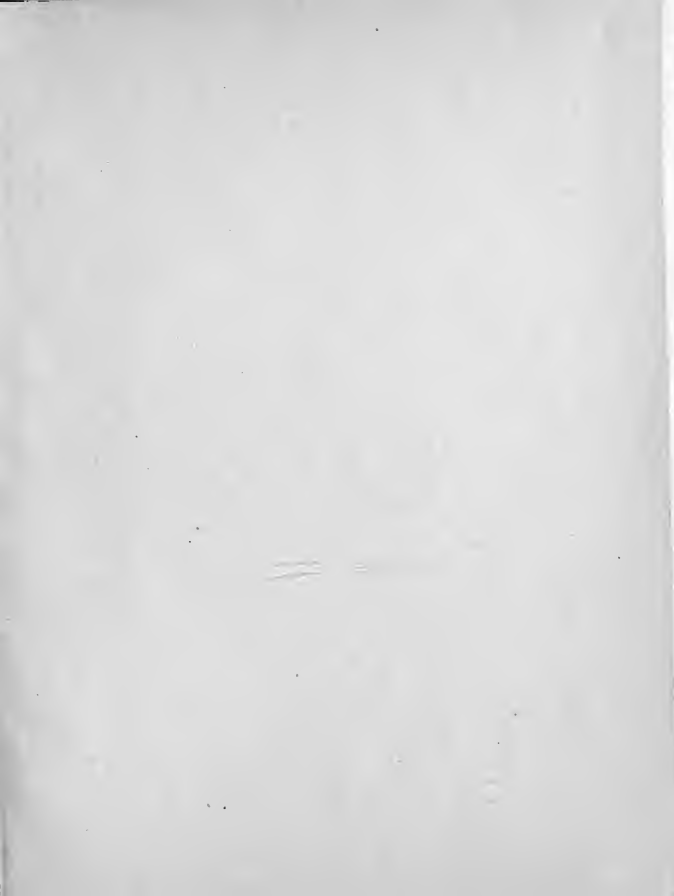
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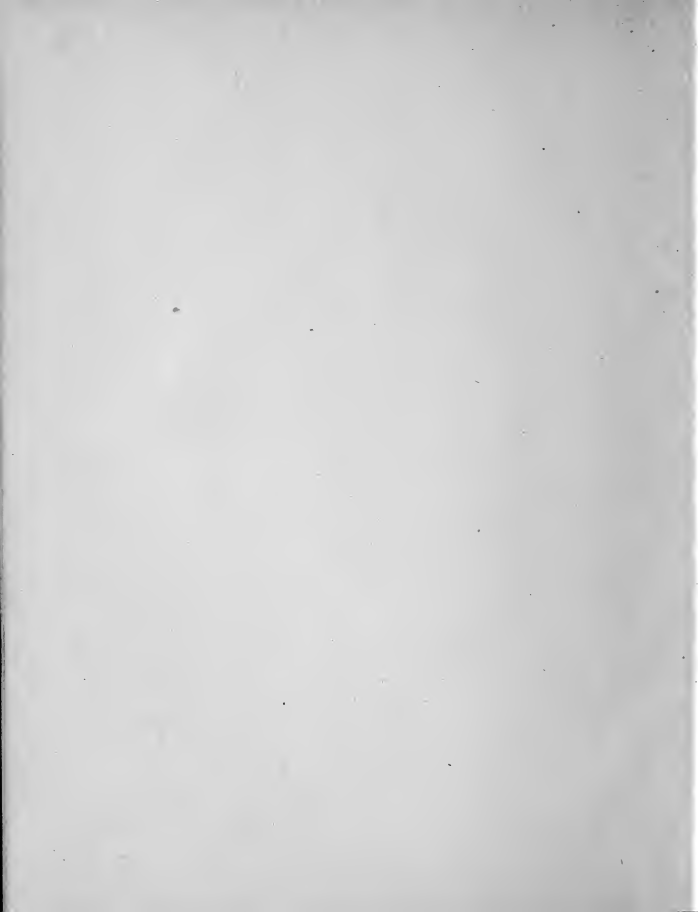
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BLOSSOMS

FROM

A BELIEVER'S GARDEN,

KEPT BY THE LATE

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL,

AND ARRANGED FOR

THE AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION,

1122 CHESTNUT STREET, PHILADELPHIA.

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PREFACE.

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL was the youngest daughter of the Rev. William Henry Havergal, of Astley, Worcestershire, England. She was born Dec. 14, 1836. At a very early age she began charitable and missionary labors in Worcester, to which city her father moved in 1845. She taught a Sunday-school class of very young children, and the story of this period is pleasantly told in one of her books for children. She was a diligent student and mastered five or six languages, including Greek and Hebrew, while she was equally skilled in musical composition and in needle-work. As a solo-singer, her voice possessed a sweet and sympathetic quality. She could render on the piano or the organ, with great ease and expression, the most difficult of Handel's, Mendelssohn's and Beethoven's compositions. Her voice, like her pen, was fully consecrated and kept for the Master's use. Her health was frail, and her hymns and poems were written out of the depth of her experience, and often of suffering. Miss Havergal died in Swansea, Wales, June 3, 1879.

PREFACE.

Her last hours well-befitted the close of such a life as she lived.

On Whit Monday morning they thought she was departing. Her brother knelt by her, inquiring if he should pray. "Yes," she replied, "let it be a sacramental service." She softly but emphatically joined in the words, "Therefore with angels, &c." After some peaceful rest, she whispered, "Frank dear, it is not the performance of the rite, no safety in that; but it is obedience to His command and as a remembrance of His dying love."

One of her doctors leaving her said :

"Good-by, I shall not see you again." "Then do you really think I am going?" "Yes." "To-day?" "Probably." "Beautiful, too good to be true!" she replied. Soon after looking up smiling, she said. "Splendid to be so near the gates of heaven!" Later, after a convulsive sickness she folded her hands on her breast: "There, now it is all over! Blessed Rest!" Looking up steadfastly as though she saw the Lord, her face reflected a glorious radiance; and she tried to sing with one high sweet note "He—" her voice faltered, and as her brother prayed, she passed away "satisfied, glorified, within the palace of her King!"

NOTE.

“AWAKE, O north wind, and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out” in blossoms of “love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.” Possessing a more subtle essence than the fairest flowers of earth, which bud and bloom and fade and die, these blossoms are ever sweet and fresh and laden with perfume. Wafted by the gale from the trees of a garden well watered by the dews of the Divine Word, and pruned by the Heavenly Husbandman, may they bear to many believers new burdens of fragrance, and so refresh and strengthen them anew with the Father’s love and favor, the Son’s pity and compassion, and the Holy Spirit’s blessed presence.

The first part of the paper is devoted to a general
 discussion of the problem. It is shown that the
 problem is equivalent to the problem of finding
 the minimum of a certain functional. This
 functional is defined as follows:

$$J(u) = \int_{\Omega} |\nabla u|^2 dx + \int_{\Omega} f(x) u dx$$

where Ω is the domain of interest, ∇ is the gradient operator, and $f(x)$ is a given function. The minimum of this functional is attained at a function u which satisfies the boundary value problem

$$\Delta u = -f(x) \text{ in } \Omega, \quad u = 0 \text{ on } \partial\Omega$$

where Δ is the Laplace operator and $\partial\Omega$ is the boundary of the domain. The existence and uniqueness of the solution of this problem is guaranteed by the theory of elliptic partial differential equations.

In the second part of the paper, the problem is solved numerically. The domain Ω is discretized by a finite difference grid. The resulting system of linear equations is solved by the Gauss-Seidel method. The accuracy of the numerical solution is compared with the exact solution.

The results of the numerical solution are shown in Figure 1. It is seen that the numerical solution is in good agreement with the exact solution.

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—
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—
JESUS LEADS SAFELY.

“As a beast goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the LORD caused him to rest” (Isa. lxiii. 14). Can you not see the steep stony path of the rocky descent into a desert valley, and the careful owner's hand leading the hesitating horse, keeping fast hold of his head, and encouraging him with tones which he can understand, till the halting place at the bottom is safely reached? “So didst thou lead thy people,” says Isaiah. So he leadeth me! responds your heart, does it not? Softly and safely, step by step, and mile by mile,

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till the desert journey is over and the Father's home reached! Jesus "goeth before." He prepares the earthly as well as the heavenly places for us. He will be there when we get to the new place. He went in the way before to search us out a place to pitch our tents in.

JESUS KNOWS THE WAY.

We have not passed this way heretofore, but the Lord Jesus has. "For we have not an high-priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities" (Heb. iv. 15). It is all untrodden and unknown ground to us, but he knows it all by personal experience; the steep bits that take away our breath, the stony bits that make our feet ache so, the hot, shadeless stretches that make us feel so exhausted, the rushing rivers that we have to pass through, Jesus has gone through it all before us. For "Himself took our infirmities and bare *our* sicknesses" (Matt. viii. 17.) Oh, think of "the things that he suffered," over and above the great atoning suffering on the cross, just that he might

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personally know our little sorrows, and personally enter into our insignificant sufferings, and succor us in them with his own mighty help!

JESUS KNOWS OUR STRENGTH.

“For he knoweth our frame” (Ps. ciii. 14). And he does not only know with that sort of up-on-the-shelf knowledge, which is often guilty of want of thought among ourselves, but he *remembereth* that we are dust. “For he remembered that they *were but flesh*” (Ps. lxxviii. 39). Think of that when you are tempted to question the gentleness of the leading. He is remembering all the time; and not one step will he make you take beyond what your foot is able to endure. Never mind if you think it will not be able for the step that seems to come next; either he will so strengthen it that it shall be able, or he will call a sudden halt, and you shall not have to take it at all. Think of Jesus not merely entering into the fact, but into the feeling of what you are going through. “Touched with the *feeling*.” How deep

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that goes! When we turn away to him in our wordless weariness of pain, which *only* he understands, we find out that we have to do with him in quite a different sense from how we have to do with any one else. We could not do without him, and thank God we shall never have to do without him.

JESUS LEADS SOFTLY.

It is only when we are coming up from the wilderness, leaning on our Beloved that we can realize how softly he is leading us. "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?" (Cant. viii. 5). For if we are pulling this way and that way, straggling and struggling, and wasting our steps by little turnings aside, he may have to resort to other means to keep us in the way at all. But if we are willing to lean, we shall find that he is leading, not only rightly (that we never doubted), but softly too. And leading softly will not be leading slowly. "And he led them forth by the right way" (Ps. cvii. 7).

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JESUS WAS LED ROUGHLY.

Never once was he gently led. He was led into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil (Matt. iv. 1). He was led by men filled with wrath to the brow of the hill, that they might cast him down headlong (Luke iv. 29). He was led away to Annas; led away to Caiaphas (John xviii. 13, Matt. xxvi. 57); led into the council of the elders and chief priests and scribes (Luke xxii. 66); led to Pontius Pilate (Matt. xxvii. 2), and into the hall of judgment (John xviii. 28). And then, he, our Lord Jesus Christ, was led as a sheep to the slaughter (Acts viii. 32); led away to be crucified! (John xix. 16). Verily, "His way was rougher and darker than mine."

THE REASON WHY JESUS WAS SO LED.

"The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep" (John x. 11). Oh, wonderful gift! not promised, but *given*; not to friends, but to enemies. Given without condition, without reserve, without return!

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Himself unknown and unloved, his gift unsought and unasked, he gave his life for thee—a more than royal bounty—the greatest gift that Deity could devise. Oh, grandeur of love! “I lay down my life for the sheep!” (John x. 15). And we for whom he gave it have held back, and hesitated to give our lives, not even *for* him (he has not asked us to do that), but *to* him! But that is past, and he has tenderly pardoned the unloving, ungrateful reserve, and has graciously accepted the poor little fleeting breath and speck of dust which was all we had to offer. And now his precious death and his glorious life are all “for thee.”

THE LORD WAITS FOR OUR FAITH.

Does it make no difference if the patient quietly lets the surgeon do what he thinks best? A remedy applied by force, or submitted to unwillingly, may be quite counteracted by fidget, or by feverishness induced or increased through setting one's self against what is prescribed or advised. The Lord's remedies do not have fair

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play, when we set ourselves against them. Even Omnipotence waits for the faith that will *let* it act.

FAITH THE KEY TO UNSEARCHABLE
RICHES WHEN PUT INTO THE LORD'S
HAND.

Faith is the key to the infinite treasury of "the unsearchable riches of Christ" (Eph. iii. 8), and in giving us faith he gives us measure for measure. He is ready to make us "rich in faith" (Jas. ii. 5), and then, still to "increase our faith" (Luke xvii. 5) "unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding" (Col. ii. 2). Ask for this golden key, and then put it into the Lord's hand, that he may turn it in the lock.

UNRESERVED SUBMISSION TO THE WILL
OF THE LORD.

How often God's dear children tremble to say an unreserved "Let him do what seemeth him good" (1 Sam. iii. 18), though they are under no such shadow

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of certainly coming events! It is almost easier to say it when a crushing blow has actually fallen, than when there is suspense and uncertainty as to what the Lord may be going to do. The Lord who loves you, the Lord who thinks about you and cares for you, the Lord who understands you, the Lord who never makes a mistake, the Lord who spared not his own Son, but gave him up for you, will you not let *him* do what seemeth him good? Then think *what* it is you are to let him do. Something out of your sight, perhaps, but not out of his sight. For the original word in every case is, "what is good *in his eyes.*"

"Now, O LORD, thou *art* our father; we *are* the clay, and thou our potter" (Isa. lxiv. 8). Whatever may be our potter's mysterious mouldings, or our Father's mysterious dealings (I do not mean abstract, or possible, or future; but real, and present, and pressing), let us give the one sweet answer which meets *everything*: "Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight" (Luke x. 21).

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THE FRUITION OF UNRESERVED SUB-
MISSION.

“According to thine own heart hast thou done all these great things” (2 Sam. vii. 21); and again: “Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O LORD, according unto thy word” (Ps. cxix. 65). His hand, his heart, his word—what an unmeasurable measure of his bounty! The great hand that holds the ocean in its hollow is opened to satisfy our desire, and to go beyond that, exceeding abundantly, giving us according to the heart that “so loved the world,” and according to the word which is so deep and full that all the saints that ever drew their hope and joy from it cannot fathom its ever upspringing fountain.

Perhaps nobody knows the Bible well enough to know the full significance of the saying, “Be it unto me according to thy word.” How much less can we imagine what shall yet be the unrevealed royal bounty according to his heart of infinite love and hand of infinite power! “What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter” (John xiii. 7). “And ye

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shall be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you" (Joel ii. 26).

THE REFRESHMENT OF SILENCE.

Only real friends understand silence. With a passing guest or ceremonial acquaintance you feel under an obligation to talk; you make efforts to entertain them as a matter of courtesy; you may be tired or weak; but no matter, you feel you must exert yourself. But with a very dear and intimate friend sitting by you, there is no feeling of the kind. To be sure, you may talk if you feel able, pouring out all sorts of confidences, relieved and refreshed by the interchange of thoughts and sympathies. But if you are very tired, you know you do not need to say a word.

None but our Lord can interpret the unseen pulsings of that which to human ken is *only* silence. He hears the music they are measuring out before him. He takes the confidence of that hush at its full value of golden love. He sees the soul's attitude of devotion and faith through the shadows which hide it from itself.

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THE RESPONSE TO SILENCE.

An invalid was left alone one evening for a little while. After many days of acute pain there was a lull. "Now," she thought, "I shall be able to pray a little." But she was too wearied out and exhausted for this. Only one whisper came: "Lord Jesus, I am so tired!" She prayed no more; she could not frame even a petition that, as she could not speak to him, he would speak to her. But the Lord Jesus knew all the rest. Very tenderly did he, who knows how to speak a word in season to the weary, choose a message in reply to that little whisper. "Be silent to the Lord!" It came like a mother's "hush" to one whom his mother comforteth.

All your wants lie upon him, and these wants are each and all foreseen and provided for, and supplied with untiring love. He knows in an instant when you are weary or ailing, whether in body or spirit, and knows how to speak the right word for either, speaking verily to your heart—knows, too, when to be silent for a little while.

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THE DEW OF THE WORD—IT IS SILENT.

The dew distils in silence. So does the speech of our God. Most frequently in the silence of trust. In that stillness God's silent love can be condensed into dew-like communications; not read, not heard, but made known by the direct power of the Spirit upon the soul.

THE DEW OF THE WORD—IT IS REFRESHING.

You look out some dark night after a hot, dusty day; there is no storm, no rain, there is not the least token to your senses of what is going on. You look out again in the morning, and you see every blade and leaf tipped with a dewdrop; everything is revived and freshened, prepared for the heat of the day, and smiling at the glow. Just so his words are silently falling on your souls in the darkness, and preparing them for the day. They do not come with any sensible power; nothing flashes out from the page as at other times; nothing shines so as to shed any pleasant light on your path; you do not hear any

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sound of abundance of rain. You seem as if you could not take the words in; and if you could your mind is too weary to meditate on them. But they are distilling as the dew all the time!

THE DEW OF THE WORD—IT DISTILS
IN THE DARKNESS.

Let us be trustfully content to let this dew of heaven fall in the dark, and when we cannot hear or see, recollect that he says, "My speech shall distil as the dew." Our part is to believe this, and leave ourselves open to it as we read what perhaps seems a very dim page of the Bible with very tired eyes; or, perhaps, lie still through the long hours of night, with no power to meditate on the fitful gleams of half-recollected verses that just cross our minds and seem to leave no trace. Never mind—the dew is falling!

THE DEW OF THE WORD—IT DISTILS
IN DROPS.

The dew falls not in one mass of water, but in innumerable little drops. What one

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drop does not reach another does. So it is not one overwhelmingly powerful word which does this holy night-work in the soul, but the unrealized influence of many, dropping softly on the plants of the Lord which he has planted, one resting here, another there; one touching an unrecognized need, and another reaching an unconsciously failing grace. "Each drop uncounted hath its own mission, and is duly sent to its own leaf or blade."

THE DEW OF THE WORD, THOUGH INVISIBLE, IS NOT THE LESS REFRESHING.

Do not quarrel with the invisible dew because it is not a visible shower. The Lord would send a shower if that was the true need to be supplied to his vineyard; but as he is sending his speech in another form, you may be quite sure it is because he is supplying your true need thereby. He knows which way to water his vineyard. These words of his which you are remembering so feebly, or reading without being able to grasp, are not going to return

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void. They are doing his own work, on your own soul. By and by they will sparkle out in the light of a new morning, and you will find yourself starting fresh, and perhaps wondering how it is that the leaves of life which hung so limp and drooping are so fresh and firm again on their stems.

Softly the dew in the evening descends,
Cooling the sun-heated ground and the gale;
Flow'rets all fainting it soothingly tends,
Ere the consumings of mid-day prevail.
Sweet gentle dewdrops, how mystic your fall,
Wisdom and mercy float down in you all.

Softer and sweeter by far is that Dew
Which from the Fountain of Comfort distils,
When the worn heart is created anew,
And hallowed pleasure its emptiness fills.
Lord, let thy Spirit bedew my dry fleece!
Faith then shall triumph, and trouble shall cease.
(*Rev. W. H. Havergal: last hymn, 1870.*)

THE LORD SILENT IN HIS LOVE.

“He will be silent in his love” (Zeph. iii. 17, *margin*). Can any words be more beautiful! It is as if he, even he, who made man's mouth, had made no words which could express his exceeding great love, and therefore he could only expand

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it in the silence which lies above and below and beyond all language. When we have said, as very likely we have often done, "Why art thou silent unto me, O Lord?" why did we not take his own exquisite answer, and trust the love that was veiled in the silence? For whenever we can say, "Truly my soul waiteth upon (*Heb.* is silent to) God" (Ps. lxii. 1), we may rest assured that any apparent waiting on his part is only "that he may be gracious," yes, "*very* gracious unto thee."

JESUS THE SINNER'S FRIEND.

If it is sense of *sin* which does not let you be comfortable, turn *at once* to "him with whom you have to do." Remember, it is not with Satan that you have to do, nor with your accusing conscience, but with Jesus. He will deal with all the rest; you only have to deal with him. And he is your great High Priest. He has made full atonement for you—for the very sins that are weighing on you now.

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JESUS THE TRIED ONE'S TRUST.

If it is *temptation* that will not let you rest, come straight away out of the very thick of it; it may be with the fiery darts sticking in you. Come with all the haunting thoughts that you hate, just as you are, to "Him with whom you have to do." You would not or could not tell the temptations to any one else; but then you have not got to do with any one else in the matter, but *only* with Jesus. And he "suffered, being tempted."

JESUS THE SICK ONE'S SYMPATHIZER.

If it is bodily weakness, sickness, or pain, how very sweet it is to know that we have to do with Jesus, who is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities." (The word is the same that is elsewhere translated sickness: John xi. 2-4.) Don't you sometimes find it very hard to make even your doctor understand *what* the pain is like? Words don't seem to convey it. And after you have explained the trying and wearying sensation as best you can, you are con-

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vinced those who have not felt it, do not understand it. “*Thou* wilt make all his bed in his sickness.” Does not this tender, sympathetic, and continuous care in sickness militate against the idea that sickness is from Satan, and, therefore, “not to be remained under?”

JESUS OUR MEDIATOR WITH GOD.

We have to do with him *directly*. There is absolutely nothing between the soul and Jesus, if we will but have it so. We have himself as our Mediator with God, and the very characteristic of a mediator is, as Job says, “that he might lay his hand upon us both.” So the hand of Jesus, who is himself “the man of thy right hand,” is laid upon us with no intermediate link and no intervening distance.

JESUS OUR CONSTANT NEED.

I could not do without thee,
O Jesus, Saviour dear!
E'en when my eyes are holden,
I know that thou art near.
How dreary and how lonely
This changeful life would be

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Without the sweet communion,
The secret rest with thee.

I could not do without thee!
No other friend can read
The spirit's strange, deep longings,
Interpreting its need.
No human heart can enter
Each deep recess of mine,
And soothe and hush and calm it,
O blessed Lord, but thine!

THE LORD'S CHERISHING—MORE PA-
TIENT AND GENTLE THAN THE MOST
LOVING NURSE.

Think how "a nurse cherisheth her children" (1 Thess. ii. 7). How the little ailments are watched and attended to; how the little weary heads are laid on her shoulders and stroked to sleep; how the little meals are regulated and given, *never* forgotten—who ever heard of such a thing? How the little garments are kept clean and comfortable, changed and mended as need may be! How the nursery fire is looked after (while all the while the guard is kept on the bars), so that the room should not be too hot or too cold! How the little bodies are cared for and

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loved every inch, even the little fingers and toes! How the little fancies are borne with and entered into, not unheeded or scorned, and the silly little questions patiently answered, and the baby lessons taught, and the small tempers managed, and checked, and forgiven! That is cherishing. Need we trace its close resemblance to the dealings of our infinitely patient and gentle Lord?

THE LORD'S CHERISHING—MORE CAREFUL AND LOVING THAN THE MOST TENDER HUSBAND.

Think of the cherishing of the weak wife by the strong husband, itself shown by the only possible stronger figure,—“No man ever yet hated *his own flesh*, but nourisheth and cherisheth it,”—this set forth by the Holy Ghost through the pen of an apostle, to convey to *you* some dim idea of the Lord's love and care and thought for *you*. What could he say more? For even thus the Lord cherisheth you: he gives you his name to bear as your honor, and his very heart to dwell in as the home of your

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soul. He gives you the right of constant access, the right of continual dwelling in his presence. He makes you partaker of his very nature, joining you unto himself, not only in a perpetual covenant, but as "one spirit" with him.

THE LORD'S CHERISHING—CONSTANT
AND EVERLASTING AS HIS OWN
SOUL.

His cherishing goes on night and day, just as much in the dark as in the light, and will go on, faithfully, ceaselessly, all through your life-long need of it, unto the end; and there is no shadowing whisper to fall upon this life-long manifestation of love, no such word as "till death us do part." No absence of your Lord shall deprive you of it; and all that death can do is to take away the last veil, that you may see face to face, and know even as you are known. His care over you will then be exchanged for perfect joy over you. "He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied."

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THE LORD'S CHERISHING—IT IS THE BELIEVER'S PORTION.

Do not hesitate to take all the revelation of love that shines softly through this one word "cherisheth," for your own self; for the more you feel yourself to be the weakest imaginable member of Christ, unworthy to be a member at all of his glorious body, the more closely and sweetly will it apply to you.

GOD'S REVELATION OF HIMSELF TO BELIEVERS—IN HIS WORD.

In Deuteronomy, that wonderful book of reminders, he has caused this gracious name, "the LORD thy God," or "the LORD your God," to be written no less than two hundred and twenty-seven times. What a name for him to be revealed by to the wayward wanderers of Israel! and what comfort to us that he is the same God to us!

GOD'S REVELATION OF HIMSELF TO BELIEVERS—BY HIS SPIRIT.

Every part of God's word is a revelation,

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more or less clear, of himself. When we do not see this, it is only that we miss it, not that it is not there. Do we not know how very possible it is to read the historical parts merely *as* history, and the prophetic merely as prophecy, and the doctrinal merely as doctrine, and miss the vision of God which everywhere shines through the glass darkly, if only his good Spirit opens our eyes to see it! And even when we do trace out God himself in his recorded works and ways, how often we miss the personal comfort of remembering our own close and personal interest in what we see of his character and attributes. It makes all the difference to recollect, at every glimpse of these, that "*this* God is *our* God!"

GOD'S REVELATION OF HIMSELF TO BELIEVERS—IN HIS PROVIDENCE.

It is wonderful what a freshness and reality the simple application of this little verse will give to all our reading. Just try it at once, whatever may be the next passage you read! I question if there is a single

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chapter, from the first of Genesis to the twenty-second of Revelation, which will not reflect the light of this beautiful little lamp. First ask for the direct and present and fresh anointing of the Holy Spirit, that you may behold your God. And then whether your gaze is turned upon a promise which reveals him as the Loving One, or a warning which reveals him as the Just and Holy One: whether you read a history which shows his grand grasp in ordering the centuries, or a verse which shows his delicate touch upon the turn of a moment—as you admire, say, “*This God is our God.*”

GOD'S REVELATION OF HIMSELF TO BELIEVERS—BY HIS GRACIOUS ATTRIBUTES.

When you come to the many direct and gracious declarations of what God is, you will find these words light them up splendidly: “The LORD, the LORD God, gracious and merciful, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.” *This God is our God!* “The LORD is good, a

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stronghold in the day of trouble." *This* God is our God! "Glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders." *This* God is our God! "God is love." *This* God is our God!

GOD'S REVELATION OF HIMSELF TO BELIEVERS—BY THE GIFT OF HIS SON.

When we read the life of his dear Son and see what that beloved Son, in the infinite loveliness of his exquisite perfection, must have been to the Father, who yet spared him not; and, most of all, when we read of the hand of God being laid upon the man of his right hand, when he made the iniquities of us all to meet on him, and let him suffer unto death for us and for our salvation, then, above all, let us turn to God the Father and say, "This God, who *so* loved the world, is *our* God."

GOD'S HAND UPON US IS AS A TUNER'S.

Have you ever watched the exceedingly delicate and yet firm pressure of the hand of a skilful tuner? He will make the string produce a perfectly true note, vibrating in

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absolute accord with his own never-changing tuning-fork. The practised hand is at one with the accurate ear, and the pressure is brought to bear with most delicate adjustment to the resistance; the tension is never exceeded, he never breaks a string, but he patiently strikes the note again and again, till the tone is true and his ear is satisfied, and then the muscles relax and the pressure ceases. The string may be a poor little thin one, yielding a very small note, but that does not matter at all; it is wanted in its place, just as much as a great bass one, that can yield a volume of deep sound. The tuner takes just the same pains with it, and is just as satisfied when it vibrates true to the pitch, retaining its own individual tone. That string could not tune itself, and no machine was ever invented to accomplish it; nothing but the firm and sensitive pressure of the tuner's own living hand can bring it into tune.

Will you not trust your Tuner, and begin a note of praise even under the pressure?

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GOD'S HAND WHEN HEAVIEST IS NEAREST.

When the pressure is sorest, the hand must be nearest. What should we do in suffering if we were left to imagine that it was Satan's hand that presses so sore! Our Father has not left us in any doubt about it. This settles it: "Thy hand;" "Thou didst it" (Ps. xxxix. 9); "The blow of thine hand" (Ps. xxxix. 10); "Thy hand was heavy upon me" (Ps. xxxii. 4). It cannot be otherwise, for "in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me" (Isa. xlix. 2); and how can any other press you there? What is hid in God's hand must be out of reach of Satan's.

MARCHING ORDERS—GO!

"Go" does not mean "send." "Go" does not mean "pray." "Go" means "*Go!*" simply and literally.

MARCHING ORDERS—ADDRESSED TO ME!

Is it fair to accept his "*Come ye,*" and

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refuse his "Go ye?" Is the first, with its untold blessings, to be appropriated personally, notwithstanding its plural form, and the second to be merely read as an interesting general command to whomsoever it may concern, but certainly not to ourselves?

MARCHING ORDERS—MUST I GO?

As the Lord Jesus Christ said "Go ye," the obligation lies upon each of his true followers to consider definitely, at least once in his or her life, whether the circumstances in which he has placed them do or do not definitely preclude them from literally obeying this distinct and most literal commandment.

There are many who would delight to go, but whose way God has entirely hedged up. Are there none whose way is not so hedged up? He who spared not his own Son, but with him freely gives us all things, is saying, very clearly and loudly, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Will any one who *might* say, "Here am I, send me!" refuse to say it?

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MARCHING ORDERS—VOLUNTEERS
WANTED.

If our loyalty were as literal as his love, if our obedience were as literal as his sufferings, would there, could there be such want of volunteers to go where he has plainly set up his standard, and such want of free-handed pouring into his treasury, and such want of brave speaking out of heart-abundance, and such want of fervent, faithful, persevering echoes of the great prayer, "Father, glorify thy Son!"

MARCHING ORDERS—BY WHOM GIVEN.

Who gives the marching orders? Ah! that is the secret of their force, that is the secret of the thrill with which they have reached the hearts of men and women who have hazarded their lives to carry them out, faithful unto death, in their noble, literal obedience. For it was the voice of the Captain of their salvation that they recognized and followed, as the "Go ye therefore" fell upon their opened ears.

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POWER BESTOWED ON OUR MASTER.

All power is given unto him, our Saviour, our Master, absolutely, unlimitedly, eternally! It is such a happy thought! As love and knowledge gradually supplanted fear, how delighted, one might almost say how proud, the disciples must have been, as miracle after miracle revealed the power of Jesus of Nazareth! Yet they did not know that he had *all* power. *We* know it, for he has told us.

POWER BESTOWED ON OUR MASTER—ITS EXERCISE.

All power is given unto him. First, power to give eternal life to as many as his Father has given him; then power on earth to forgive sins; then power to uphold all things. And these really include all power in heaven and in earth. *All* power.

POWER BESTOWED ON OUR MASTER—ITS DISPOSAL.

How quietly he disposes of it when he says, not to veteran apostles, but to his

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mere recruits: "Behold, I give unto you power . . . over all the power of the enemy!" What must the reserve be when this small delegated share is to overmatch "all the power of the enemy!"

All power is given unto *him*, not to us, for we could neither receive it nor use it; but to him for us. For "all things are for your sakes." Joined to him by faith we change our weakness into strength, for his power flows into us, and rests upon us. It is not that our weakness is made a little stronger, but that his strength is made perfect in our weakness.

GOD'S GIFTS TO US SHOULD BE THE
MEASURE OF OUR GIFTS TO OTHERS.

"Freely ye have received, freely give."

What have we freely received? Our Bibles give us a threefold answer,—(1) Love. God, our Father, says, "I will love them freely." (2) Justification, for "we are justified freely by his grace" and "by his blood." (3) Life, for he says, "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." And unto us

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has been preached this "Gospel of God freely." The whole Bible is one long inventory of the things that are freely given to us, and yet we cannot reckon our wealth, for "*all* things are yours." Possessing the one unspeakable gift, Jesus Christ himself, is "possessing all things."

"As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same." How will you do this? Can you make it a question of shillings or pounds, dollars or cents? Is *that* what you have received? Is that *as* you have received? Will you not say, "I will freely sacrifice unto thee?" Sacrifice what? "I beseech ye therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice."

It is only with God-given treasure we can enrich others. When we want to give a word to another, it generally seems to come with more power if, instead of casting about for what we think likely to suit them, we simply hand over to them any treasure-word which he has freshly given to ourselves. When he opens to us some shining bit of treasure, let us not forget: "Freely ye have received, freely give."

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MARCHING ORDERS—WHERE TO GO!

The Lord Jesus sent out the seventy not to go where they liked; not to take their chance of lighting on the right place or persons; not to begin his work where it might or might not be followed up. But he sent them before his face into every city and place *whither he himself would come*. Unto him should the gathering of the people be, and the coming presence of the Lord of the harvest proved that a harvest was waiting for the reapers. "Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few."

THE HARVEST—ITS LABORERS.

Because the harvest is great and the laborers few, the Lord Jesus said, "Pray ye *therefore* the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth laborers into his harvest." If the fact remains, the command remains. And the fact does indeed remain, and we have no excuse in not knowing it.

THE HARVEST—ITS OVERSEER.

Whether an English or American Sun-

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day-school, or an Indian city, if the Master himself sends his servant or his handmaid into it, it is because he himself will come thither, blessing his reapers and receiving his sheaves. What an honor to be one of the "few" forerunners of the King, the herald of a silent yet real and mighty advent of the Very God of Very God!

TALKING—ITS RANGE.

What a power in the world *talking* is! Words dropped, caught up, repeated, then ventilated, combined, developed, set brains and pens to work; these again set tongues to work; the talking spreads, becomes general; public opinion is formed and influenced, and the results are engraven in the world's history. And we, who have been translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, we have tongues too, and what have we been talking about? How have we used this same far-spreading power? Only suppose that for every time each English-speaking Christian had talked about the day's news of the kingdoms of this world, he had spent the same breath in telling the last news of

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the kingdom of Jesus Christ to his friends and casual acquaintances! Why, how it would have outrun all the reports and magazines, and saved the expense of deputations, and set people wondering and inquiring, and stopped the prate of ignorant reviewers who "never heard of any converts in India," and gagged the mouths of the adversaries with hard facts, and removed missionary results and successes from the list of "things not generally known!"

TALKING—ITS SUBJECT.

Some very intelligent and well-educated "sons of men" do not seem to know that there is such a thing as "his kingdom" at all, and whose fault is that? They do not and will not read about it, but they could not help the "true report" of it reaching their ears if every one of us simply obeyed orders and *talked*, right and left, "of the glory of thy kingdom," instead of using our tongues to tell what we have just seen in the newspapers.

We often quote, "All thy works shall

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praise thee, O Lord, and thy saints shall bless thee." That sounds tolerably easy, but what next? "They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power." Is this among the things that we ought to have done and have left undone? Are we not verily guilty as to this command? "Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep *this* law!"

TALKING FROM THE HEART.

When our Lord said, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh," he knew what was in man better than we know ourselves. We don't give ourselves the trouble to fill our hearts so that they cannot help overflowing.

TALKING CONCERNING THE KINGDOM.

When we have just read of a remarkable political event or military victory, don't we forthwith *talk* about it? And if the next person we meet has not heard of it, do we hesitate to tell him all we know about it on the spot? It does not look as if we cared

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very much about our glorious Captain when we are not sufficiently interested in his latest victories in the mission field even to talk about them, especially to those who know nothing about them at all.

PRAYING FOR MISSIONS—THE DUTY.

Most likely we never went to a missionary meeting in our lives but that we were told to pray for the work. We are quite used to it; we take it as a matter of course, and as the right and proper thing to be said. Nobody disputes for an instant that it is a Christian duty, but—*are we doing it?*

PRAYING FOR MISSIONS—THE FREQUENCY.

Yes, *are we doing it?*—Did you pray this morning what he bade you pray? Did you yesterday, or last week? Surely it is no light thing to go on from day to day leaving undone a thing which we ought to have done, and about which his own lips gave the most explicit direction!

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PRAYING FOR MISSIONS—THE CERTAINTY OF THE ANSWER.

If we know that he hears us in whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him. See what a splendid conclusion we reach! Oh, "pray ye therefore!" And if we thus pray, like little children, exactly what Jesus bids us pray, see if we do not find a real and probably conscious and immediate blessing in the very act,—the floodgates opened, the spirit of grace and of supplication poured out, and the parched tongue filled with prayer and praise!

PRAYING FOR JESUS.

"Prayer also shall be made for him continually" (Ps. lxxii. 15). To many it may be a new thought, to some a very startling one, that we are not only to pray to our King, but *for* our King. Yet words cannot be plainer, and we lose untold sweetness by gratuitously altering them. Yes, we may pour out our hearts in prayer for our King, besides spending our lives in working for him.

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PRAYING FOR JESUS BECAUSE WE LOVE
HIM.

Let Love arise and come to the aid of Faith, and her quick eye shall pierce the shadow and trace new splendor through it. The more fervently we love any one, the more we want to pray for them. The very thought of the loved one is changed into prayer when it glows under the pressure of spirit.

BELIEVERS FILLED BEFORE THEY CAN
OVERFLOW.

There seems a sevenfold sequence in his filling the lips of his messengers. First, they must be purified. The live coal from off the altar must be laid upon them, and he must say, "Lo, this hath touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin is purged." Then he will create the fruit of them, and this seems to be the great message of peace, "Peace to *him that is far off*, and to *him that is near*, saith the Lord; and I will heal him" (see Isa. lvii. 19). Then comes the prayer, "O Lord, open thou my lips," and its

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sure fulfilment. For then come in the promises, "Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth," and, "They shall withal be fitted in thy lips." Then, of course, "The lips of the righteous feed many," for the food is the Lord's own giving. Everything leads up to praise, and so we come next to "My mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips, when I remember thee." And lest we should fancy that "*when*" rather implies that it is not, or cannot be, exactly *always*, we find that the mediation of Jesus throws this added light upon it, "By *him*, therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God *continually*, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to" (margin, "confessing") "his name."

Once I heard a beautiful prayer, which I can never forget; it was this: "Lord, take my lips, and speak through them; take my mind, and think through it; take my heart, and set it on fire." And this is the way the Master keeps the lips of his servants, by so filling their hearts with his love that the outflow cannot be unloving, by so filling their thoughts that the utterance cannot be un-Christ-like. There

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must be filling before there *can* be pouring out; and if there is filling, there *must* be pouring out, for he hath said, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

SOURCE OF UNFAILING FRESHNESS—
JESUS.

There is only one unfailing source of unfailing freshness,—Christ himself. "Thou hast the dew of thy youth"—the only dew that never dries up through any heat or dust. "Christ in you, the hope of glory." His word is, "For her." Your word should be, "Thou, O Lord, art my glory."

SOURCE OF UNFAILING FRESHNESS—
WANT OF JESUS IS WANT OF FRESH-
NESS.

Jesus Christ is always fresh.

Don't we know it? Do we not always find him so, when we are in direct personal communication with him, with "nothing between?" Are we not conscious that when we lament over want of freshness, it really means want of Jesus?

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We go and bemoan about it to a friend, perhaps, and ask what to do; and all the while, down at the bottom, we are secretly aware that they can do nothing more or better than advise us to "go and tell Jesus"—to get into direct personal contact with him, alone with him again.

SOURCE OF UNFAILING FRESHNESS—HIS GRACE IS EVER FRESH.

All that we receive from Jesus is always fresh. How fresh his most familiar words come, when he gives them to us by his Spirit! What is ever fresher than the old, old story, when any part of it is heard with the ear of faith, and our response is, "Jesus died for me?" What is ever fresher than the remembrance of the exceeding great love of our Master and only Saviour, with its appropriating echo, "Jesus loves me!" The water that we draw out of these wells of salvation is always fresh indeed. And so is the manna on which he would have us feed continually. And so is the oil with which he anoints us.

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**SOURCE OF UNFAILING FRESHNESS—HIS
GLORY IS EVER FRESH.**

It is Jesus our Saviour who is the ever-fresh glory within us. It is the Holy Spirit, our Comforter, who shall pour his fresh oil upon us. With such resources, ought we not to refresh those around us? Ought they not to take knowledge of us that we have such a well of water within us, springing up into everlasting life? Ought there not to be a dewy fragrance in our lives, in our words and ways, that may silently witness to the reality of the source of our freshness? It is one of our special privileges to do this.

**SOURCE OF UNFAILING FRESHNESS—OUR
GLORY IS NEVER FRESH.**

If our glory is to be fresh in us, it all depends upon what the glory in us is. If it is any sort of our own,—anything connected with that which decayeth and waxeth old in us or passeth away around us,—of course it cannot be always fresh, any more than the freshness of dawn or of springtime can last. Neither material nor

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mental states can retain their exquisite and subtle charm, and spiritual states are no better off; "frames and feelings" have an inherent tendency to subside into flatness, dulness, staleness, or whatever else expresses the want of freshness.

SUFFERINGS OF JESUS—HOW MANIFOLD!

How much suffering is dimly hinted in the one intimation that he bare our sicknesses! How much may be hidden under the supposition of the Jews that he was nearly fifty years of age, when so little beyond thirty! How sharp must have been the experiences which graved such lines upon the visage so marred more than any man! Think of all that must have gone on under the surface of his home-life, where neither did his brethren believe in him! Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself! Think what temptation must have been to the Holy One, and what the concentration of malice and great rage when the Prince of Darkness went forth to do his worst against the lonely Son of Man, whom he

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knew to be the Son of God! Think of Jesus *alone* with Satan! Oh, what things he suffered *before* he came to the agony and bloody sweat, the cross and passion, which filled up the cup which his Father gave him to drink for us men and for our salvation!

SUFFERINGS OF JESUS—HOW LITTLE WE
ARE MOVED BY THEM!

The bitterness of death to him is the very fountain of the sweetness of life to us. Do the words, "The things which he suffered" (Heb. v. 8), after all seem to fall without power or reality on your heart? Is it nothing, or very little more than nothing, to you? Not that you do not know it is all true, but your heart seems cold, and your apprehension mechanical, and your faith paralyzed—does this describe you? Thank God that feelings do not alter facts! He suffered for this sinful coldness as well as for all other sins. He suffered, the Just for the unjust, and are we not emphatically unjust when we requite his tremendous love this way? Still

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you don't feel it, though you own it. You see it all, but it is through a transparent wall of ice. What is to be done? Ask, and ask at once, for the Holy Spirit, that he may melt the ice and take of these things of Christ, showing them to you, not in the light of natural understanding and mere mental reception of undeniable facts, but revealing them with his own divine power and bowing your whole soul under the weight of the exceeding great love of our Master and only Saviour Jesus Christ, as manifested in "the things which he suffered." "For every one that asketh receiveth."

FORGIVENESS—IMMEDIATE.

Don't fear to take forgiveness at once. God does not want long processes—he looks into the heart. If while sitting here any want to turn from sin and be forgiven, that is repenting; if any are saying, "Yes, I know it is all true of me," that is confession; and "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." Now take forgiveness, for "you, being

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dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses" (Col. ii. 13). "When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee."

FORGIVENESS—SIN FORGOTTEN.

Shall sins come up again? In the new covenant God declares, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

FORGIVENESS—SIN BLOTTED OUT.

There was once a deaf mute named John. Though he never heard any other voice, he heard the voice of Jesus, knew it, loved it, and followed it. One day he told the lady who had taught him, partly on his fingers and partly by signs, that he had had a wonderful dream. God had shown him a great black book and all his sins written in it, so many, so black! And God had shown him hell, all open and fiery, waiting for him because of all these

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sins. But Jesus Christ had come and put his *red hand*, red with the blood of his cross, all over the page, and the *dear* red hand had blotted all John's sins out; and when God held up the book to the light he could not see one left!

GOD'S LOVE—IS IT WRITTEN ON OUR HEARTS?

“I have loved you, saith the Lord”
(Mal. i. 2).

This is only the old, old story, but it is written with the finger of God; graven with the diamond pen of his unchangeable truth on the rock of his everlasting purpose; traced in golden letters on records of the universe; printed in characters of living, shining, glowing light on hearts of believers; written by the Spirit of the living God, not with ink but blood, precious blood of Christ, blood shed on the cruel cross for us. Query: Is it written on our hearts? If not, O blessed Saviour, write it *now*.

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JESUS' LOVE—DO WE LOVE HIM?

“Love thee.” Do *we*? How worthy Jesus is of our love, of our desire to love him! If we can't yet say, “Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee” (John xxi. 17), can we say, “the desire of our soul is to thy name,” and “to the remembrance of thee” (Isa. xxvi. 8)? If so, be encouraged, for “He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him” (Ps. cxlv. 19). The promise is to them that *fear*, not even love.

JESUS' LOVE—ARE WE DRAWN BY HIM?

“Draw me.” The more we find our utter helplessness, the more we find his strength and sufficiency. His “drawing” always comes before our “coming;” our cry to him only the echo of his still, small voice (John vi. 44). It is a great mistake to think this great truth a reason for despair—it is reason for hope and confidence. If we have any desire, he gave it, and that is his *drawing*. Now, don't check and stifle his drawing—yield; run.

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JESUS' LOVE—IF SO, IT IS THE TOKEN OF HIS LOVE.

“Drawing” is the token of everlasting love” (Jer. xxxi. 3). We desire because he *draws*; he draws because he *loves*. But let us “run,” “press,” “strive.” No sauntering (I Cor. ix. 24). “We *will* run:” resolution, will, energy. Perhaps we feel we have no will, no energy; see how we need *all* from him. If we have it, he gave it; if we have it not, we can only get it from himself. Sweet paradox, in such *running* there is *rest*.

JESUS' LOVE—IF SO, WE MUST FOLLOW.

“Draw *me*, we will run.” We should not come alone, but when “drawn” seek to win others. “After thee.” The secret of true running the heavenly race after Jesus is following close in heart, keeping near, abiding in him, and also following his steps (I Pet. ii. 21).

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JESUS'S LOVE—IF SO, WE REACH THE
“SECRET OF HIS PRESENCE.”

We could not explain it to another *what* it is to feel Jesus near, to feel that we are brought into his chambers; but it is real, and unutterably sweet. It is such shelter in trouble, and such added sweetness in joy! What treasures of happiness are ready for us if we will but come to Jesus!

This is no dream, but a reality. There is a “secret of his presence” into which he brings his children, not at first, but by degrees. “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.”

PEACE OF CHRIST.

“Peace I leave with you,” is much; “my peace I give unto you,” is more. The added word tells the fathomless marvel of the gift—“My peace.” Not merely “peace with God;” Christ has made that by the blood of his cross, and, being justified by faith, we have it through him. But after we are thus reconciled, the enmity and the separation being ended, Jesus has a gift for us from his own treasures, and

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this is its special and wonderful value, that it is his very own.

How we value a gift which was the giver's own! What a special token of intimate friendship we feel it to be! To others we give what we have made or purchased; it is only to very near and dear ones that we give what has been our own personal enjoyment or use. And so Jesus gives not only peace made and peace purchased, but a share in his very own peace—divine, eternal, incomprehensible peace—which dwells in his own heart as God, and which shines in splendor of calmness through his life as man. No wonder that it passeth all understanding.

THE BELIEVER'S MOTIVE.

Not for "me" at all, but "for Jesus;" not for my safety, but for his glory; not for my comfort, but for his joy; not that I may find rest, but that he may see the travail of his soul and be satisfied! Yes, for him I want to be kept. Kept for his sake; kept for his use; kept to be his witness; kept for his joy! Kept for him, that in

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me he may show forth some tiny sparkle of his light and beauty; kept to do his will and his work in his own way; kept, it may be, to suffer for his sake; kept for him, that he may do just what seemeth him good with me; kept, so that no other lord shall have any more dominion over me, but that Jesus shall have all there is to have—little enough, indeed, but not divided or diminished by any other claim.

STRICKEN AND SMITTEN.

Not the hand of an impotent foe, but the sharp sword of the omnipotent Lord of hosts, was lifted to smite his Shepherd—our Shepherd-king (Zech. xiii. 7)—The Great (Heb. xiii. 20), The Chief (I Pet. v. 4), The Good (John x. 11), (and The Beautiful, as the original implies). Think of the words, “stricken, smitten of God” (Isa. liii. 4), with their unknown depths of agony, and then of Jesus, him whom we love (I Pet. i. 8), fathoming those black depths of agony *alone!* “*Jesus, smitten of God!*” (Is. lxiii. 3): can we even *say* the words, and not feel moved as no other

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grief could move us? Do not let us shrink from dwelling upon it; let us rather ask the Holy Spirit, even now, to show us a little of what this awful smiting really was—to show us our dear Lord Jesus Christ, in this tremendous proving of his own and his Father's love—to whisper in our hearts as we gaze upon the Crucified One, "Behold *your* King!" (John xix. 11).

SHARING OUR SAVIOUR'S SORROW.

"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows" (Isa. lxiii. 4). The sorrows of the past, the very sorrow that may be pressing heavily at this moment; all yours, all mine; all the sorrows of all his children all through the groaning generations; all that were "too heavy" (Ps. xxxviii. 4) for them—Jesus bore them all. "Is it nothing to you?" (Lam. i. 12). It is when the Lord says, "Now will I gather them" (the rebels and wanderers), that he adds, "And they shall sorrow a little for the burden of the King of princes" (Hos. viii. 10). Have we this proof that he has indeed gathered us? For "*all* the

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people," except the rebels, "passed over with the king" (2 Sam. xv. 23). Do we know anything of this passage over Cedron, the brook of sadness, with him? Possibly it seems presumptuous to think of sharing "the fellowship of his sufferings," that mysterious privilege! But mark, it was not only the mighty Ittai and "all his men," the nobles and the veterans, that passed over, but "all the little ones that were with him" too. And so "the little ones, the weak ones," the least member of his body, may thus "continue with" Jesus; and nothing brings one closer to another than a shared sorrow.

JESUS SAVES TO THE UTTERMOST.

Suppose I were drowning, and you drew me out of the deepest water, just in time to save my life, but then left me wet and shivering and exhausted on the bank, to run the more than risk of wretched after-effects of cold and rheumatism, from which I might never entirely recover! That would not be saving "to the uttermost" in this sense of the word. But if you did the

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thing completely—carrying me home, and doing everything necessary to restore me, and avert ill effects, and that effectually; never relaxing in care and effort, nor letting me go, till you had me safe and well, however long and difficult it might be, then you would have saved me “to the uttermost,” in the true meaning of it.

THE PROOF OF CHRIST'S ABILITY TO SAVE.

What is the proof that the Lord Jesus Christ is able to save you thus, to the uttermost? It is that he ever liveth to make intercession. For whom? For them “that come unto God by him.” Or, as he himself said, in that wonderful prayer when he lifted the veil from his own divine communing with the Father, and let us hear his mighty intercession: “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word” (John xvii. 20)—thus again identifying “coming” with believing. Then, if you come, the perpetual intercession of our ascended High Priest will

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be for you, always for you. Only think that this is what Jesus is now living for—"liveth to make intercession" for you! Should we ever have dared to imagine such grace and love? Should we ever have conceived that such a privilege could be ours?

SALVATION.

David begins a Psalm by saying, "Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from him cometh my salvation" (Ps. lxii. 1); but he quickly raises the key, and sings, "he *only* is my salvation" (Ps. lxii. 2). Perhaps we have long been quite clear that he *only* is our salvation from "everlasting destruction" (2 Thess. i. 9); but are we equally clear that he *only* is (not will be, but *is*) our present salvation from everything from which we want to be saved—from every danger, from every snare (Ps. xci. 3), from every temptation (2 Pet. ii. 9), from "the hand of *all* our enemies" (2 Sam. iii. 18), from our sins (Titus ii. 14)? In death we would cling to the words, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Why not in life equally cling to, and

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equally make real use of, the promise, "he shall save his people from their sins" (1 Tim. i. 15)—not merely from sin in general, but definitely "from *their* sins," personal and plural sins? "Is my hand shortened at all that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver?" (Isa. l. 2.)

"COME."

Every "Come!" in the Bible is the call of the Spirit. For "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God" (2 Tim. iii. 16), and the "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pet. i. 21). And every time that a still small voice in your heart says "Come," it is the call of the Spirit. Every time the remembrance of the Saviour's sweetest spoken word floats across your mind it is the Holy Spirit's fulfilment of our Lord's promise that "he shall bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." Last time those words, "Come unto me," came into your mind, whether in some wakeful night hour, or suddenly and unaccountably amid the stir

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of the day, did you think that it was the very voice of the Holy Spirit speaking in your heart? Or did you let other voices drown it, not knowing that the goodness of God was leading you by it?

THE BRIDE SAYS, "COME."

It is not only the Spirit but the Bride who says, "Come." And it is remarkable that the Bride is never found saying "Come" without including herself. "Come with *us*" (Num. x. 29); "Come, and let *us* join ourselves unto the Lord" (Jer. l. 5); "Come, and let *us* return unto the Lord" (Hos. vi. 1); "Let *us* come boldly" (Heb. iv. 16). It is always "us," expressed or implied, though the speaker be patriarch, prophet, or apostle. And you may be very sure that those who venture to say "Come" to you are truly and deeply feeling the need of continual coming for themselves. If the Master's call were not sounding very fresh and sweet in their own hearts, they would not be constrained to sound it out to you (2 Cor. v. 11).

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The call to arise and come away is a proof that he is passing by (Luke xviii. 37). And when Jesus passes by he looks upon you, though you are not yet able to see him. And he says that when he does this it is "the time of love" (Ezek. xvi. 8). And oh, what *that* implies! What will he not do when the bright, warm, powerful rays of the love which passeth knowledge (Eph. iii. 19) are focussed upon you, and he says even to you, "My love!" giving you the glorious right to respond, "My beloved!" (Esth. ii. 12-14).

COME AFTER JESUS.

"Give us grace that we may daily endeavor ourselves to follow the blessed steps of his most holy life" (John xiii. 15). Now, what are those steps? Perhaps you are not even looking to see what they are, let alone following them! Following the *steps* is quite a different thing from thinking to follow one's own idea of the general direction of a course. If you would only take one Gospel, and read it through with the earnest purpose of noting, by the

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Holy Spirit's guidance, what the steps of Jesus are, you would soon see clearly whether you are following or not (Matt. xi. 29) far more clearly than by reading any amount of books about it, or consulting any number of human counsellors. Take for to-day only one indication of what those steps were. "Who went about doing good." Do your steps correspond with that? It is not "went about doing no harm," but actively and positively "doing good."

COME WITH JESUS.

"Ye see your calling" (I Cor. i. 26); it is nothing less than to come *with* Jesus. The enviable privilege of the twelve whom Jesus ordained "that they should be with him" (Mark iii. 14) is freely offered to you. Will you avail yourself of it? Will you come with Jesus, walking with him (Rev. iii. 4, 21) from this day every step of the way? Will you accept him as the guide with whom you will go, the friend with whom you will commune by the way? It will be no

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dreamy or nominal coming with him, if only you are willing to come. You will find it very real in all respects.

CONTINUAL COMING.

“To whom *coming*.” Here is the secret of advance in the narrow way, after we have entered by the strait gate (Matt. vii. 14). It is not the having come once and to begin with, but the coming continually to Jesus. When we have once really come to him, it is not only our privilege, but our constant joy, to come to him about everything—to go on drinking at the fountain. It is a beautiful paradox which is realized and reconciled in the experience of those who come, that we may be continually coming afresh without ever going away—always *at* the fountain-head, and yet always *coming* to it.

THE SPIRIT WILL NOT ALWAYS STRIVE.

But it is no light thing to put away a holy desire, however feeble; because it sprang not from your own heart, but is the voice of the Spirit saying, Come! It will

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not always speak, if not obeyed. Turn back from Revelation to Genesis, and you find the shadow of the bright light of the winning call in the unchanged warning note: "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." Not *always*, dear, unknown friend, whom I would fain win for my Lord—not *always*! But he is striving now, he is calling now, "To-day, if ye will hear his voice." Listen, yield, come!

DISAPPOINTING THE LOVE OF JESUS.

I do not think we consider enough how we disappoint the love of Jesus when we refuse to come with him (Luke xiii. 34). For he does truly and literally desire us to be with him (Cant. v. 2). Would he have made it the very climax of his great Prayer, representing it as the very culmination of his own rest and glory, that his people should be *with him* (John xvii. 24), if he did not so very much care about it, and was only seeking and saving us out of bare pity? No, it was in his *love* as well as in his pity that he redeemed us! (Is. lxiii. 9). And love craves nearness. This is the

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very thing that differences love from the lesser glow of mere pity, or kindness, whatever their degrees or combinations. The Lord Jesus would not say, "Come *with* me," if he did not feel towards us something far beyond any degree of pity and kindness. It is the royal invitation of his kingly love.

MOMENTS.

We do not realize the importance of moments. Only let us consider those two sayings of God about them, "In a moment shall they die," and, "We shall all be changed in a moment," and we shall think less lightly of them. Eternal issues may hang upon any one of them, but it has come and gone before we can even think about it. Nothing seems less within the possibility of our own keeping, yet nothing is more inclusive of all other keeping. Therefore, let us ask him to keep them for us.

GOD—OUR HELP IN ALL THINGS.

He "performeth all things for me." Does he mean as much as this? Well, he

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has caused it to be written for us, "that we might have hope;" and what more do we want? Then *let* him do it. *Let* him perform all things for us.

Not some things, but *all* things; or the very things which we think there is no particular need for him to perform will be all failures—wood, hay, and stubble to be burnt up. One by one let us claim this wonderful word; "the thing of a day in his day," "as the matter shall require," being always brought to him with the God-given petition, "Do thou for me."

GOD—OUR HELP AT ALL TIMES.

The times of marvellous help are times of danger. "When thou hast eaten and art full, . . . and all that thou hast is multiplied," "beware lest" "then thy heart be lifted up" (Deut. viii. 11-14). "When he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction" (2 Chron. xxvi. 16). Unclasp the ivy from the elm, and it is prostrate at once. Thank God, if he keeps us realizing, amidst the busiest work and the pleasantest success, that we have no power

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at all of ourselves to help ourselves! Then there will be nothing to hinder his "continual help." As long as we say quite unreservedly "My help cometh from the Lord" (Ps. cxxi. 2), the help will come. As long as we are saying, "Thou art my help," "He *is* our help," "a very present help." Then we shall not "be holpen with a *little* help," which is too often all we really expect from our omnipotent Helper, just because we do not feel that we have "*no* might." Peter was a good swimmer, but he did not say "Lord, help me to swim!" He said, "Lord, *save* me!" (Matt. xiv. 30, 31) and so the Master's help was instant and complete. "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

SPEAKING EVIL.

"Let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbor." And the characteristic of that charity, without which we are only "sounding brass" and "nothing," is, that it "*thinketh* no evil" (I Cor.

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xiii. 1, 2, 5). Is not this the root from which the far-poisoning fruit springs? We have first disobeyed another order: "Whatsoever things are of good report; . . . think on *these* things." Instead of that, we "think" about the bad reports that we may have heard; we develop the unkind hint into suspicion, and perhaps into accusation, by *thinking* about it, instead of thinking on and thinking out the probable "other side" of the case. Let us guard against the negative form of evil speaking, generally the most dangerous and cruel, even when the most thoughtless. Absalom was extremely clever in this. Who could quote any actual evil speaking against his royal father? Who could charge him with speaking evil of dignities? And yet, by insinuation, by his way of putting things, by his very manner, he wrought a thousandfold more cruel harm than any amount of speaking out could possibly have done. Oh, to be watchful as to such omissions to speak well as amount to speaking evil! watchful as to the eloquence of even a hesitation, watchful as to the forcible language of feature and eye!

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RULES FOR SPEAKING AGAINST WRONG-DOING.

But what about cases in which wrongdoing must be spoken of for the sake of truth and justice? Clear as crystal are our instructions here: 1. We are to speak "the truth." *The* truth; not such part of it as will best prove our case, and nothing else! Not what we *suppose* to be the truth. 2. "In love." Does all our testimony stand *this* test? 3. "In the name of the Lord Jesus." Would not this check many a word against another? 4. "To the glory of God." Failure in any one of these four rules brings us in guilty of sin. Oh, may he give us grace to keep our heart with all diligence (Prov. iv. 23), and himself set a watch this day before our mouth, and keep the door of our lips! (Ps. cxli. 3.) May we cease to reason with unprofitable talk, or with speeches wherewith we can do no good (Job xv. 4).

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

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OUR INDWELLING KING.

Our King comes not to pass but to “*dwell* in the midst of thee” (Zech. ii. 10); not only in his church collectively, but in each believer individually (2 Cor. vi. 16). We pray, “Abide with us” (Luke xxiv. 29), and he answers in the sublime plural of Godhead, “We will come unto him, and make our abode with him” (John xiv. 23).

There should be three practical results of this belief: 1. *Holiness*. We must see to it that we resolutely “put away” (Eph. iv. 31) all that ought not to be in his royal abode. “Having, therefore, these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from *all* filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (2 Cor. vii. 1). 2. *Confidence*. What does the citadel fear when an invincible general is within it? “The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save” (Zeph. iii. 17). He is “a wall of fire round about,” and “the glory in the midst of her” (Zech. ii. 5); and “he that toucheth you toucheth the apple

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of his eye." 3. *Joy.* Yes! "Be glad and rejoice with all the heart," "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord."

JESUS HIMSELF OUR KING.

How glad we are that he himself is our King! For we are so sure that he is able even to subdue all things unto himself in this inner kingdom, which we cannot govern at all. We are so glad to take him at his word, and give up the government into his hands, asking him to be our King in very deed, and to set up his throne of peace in the long disturbed and divided citadel, praying that he would bring every thought into captivity to his gentle obedience.

LOYALTY TO OUR KING.

Ask him this morning to make you so loving and loyal to him that, *whatsoever* he does, all day long, may please you, because it has pleased him to do it. I think he loves us so much that he always gives us as much happiness as he can possibly

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trust us with, and does what is pleasantest for his dear children whenever he sees it will not hurt them; so, when he does something which at first does not seem so pleasant, we may still trust our beloved King, and learn by his grace to be pleased with *whatsoever* he does.

“I hear a sweet voice ringing clear,
‘All is well!’
It is my Father’s voice I hear,
All is well!
Where’er I walk that voice is heard,
It is my God, my Father’s word—
‘Fear not, but trust; I am the Lord,
All is well.’”

SUBJECTS OF THE KING.

Is Jesus in very deed and truth “my King?” Where is the proof of it? Am I living in his kingdom of “righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost” now? (Rom. xiv. 17). Am I speaking the language of that kingdom? Am I following “the customs of the people” (Jer. x. 3) which are not his people? or do I diligently learn the ways of his people (Jer. xii. 16)? Am I practically living

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under the rule of his laws? Have I done heart homage to him? Am I bravely and honestly upholding his cause, because it is his, not merely because those around me do so? Is my allegiance making any practical difference to my life to-day?

SOLDIERS OF THE KING.

The Son of God goes forth to war now-a-days. Do we go with him? His cross is "without the gate." Do we go "forth unto him . . . without the camp, bearing his reproach?" (Heb. xiii. 12, 13). Do we really go with him every day and all day long, following "the Lamb whithersoever he goeth?" (Rev. xiv. 4). What about this week—this day? Have we loyally gone with our King wherever his banner, his footsteps, go before? (1 Pet. ii. 21).

SERVANTS OF THE KING.

If we are really, and always, and equally ready to do *whatsoever* (John ii. 5) the King appoints, all the trials and vexations arising from any change in his appointments, great or small, simply do not exist.

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If he appoints me to work there, shall I lament that I am not to work here? (Josh. i. 16). If he appoints me to wait in-doors to-day, am I to be annoyed because I am not to work out-of-doors? If I meant to *write* his messages this morning, shall I grumble because he sends interrupting visitors, rich or poor, to whom I am to *speak* them, or "show kindness" for his sake, or at least obey his command, "Be courteous?" (1 Pet. iii. 8). If all my "members" (Rom. vi. 13) are really at his disposal, why should I be put out if to-day's appointment is some simple work for my hands or errands for my feet, instead of some seemingly more important doing of head or tongue?

THE WORD OF THE KING.

The *word* of our King is all we have and all we need for deep, utter heart-rest, which no surface waves of this troublesome world can disturb. What gave "rest from thy sorrow and from thy fear" at the very first, when we wanted salvation and peace? It was not some vague, pleasing

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impression, some undefinable hush that came to us (or if it was, the unreality of the rest was soon proved), but some word of our King which we saw to be worthy of all acceptation; we believed it, and by it Jesus gave us rest.

CHRIST FOR US—HIS HANDS.

His hands literally pierced, when the whole weight of his quivering frame hung from their torn muscles and bared nerves; literally uplifted in parting blessing! Consecrated, priestly hands; "filled" hands (Ex. xxviii. 41, xxix. 9, etc., margin)—filled once with his great offering, and now with gifts and blessings "for thee!" Tender hands, touching and healing, lifting and leading with gentlest care. Strong hands, upholding and defending. Open hands, filling with good and satisfying desire (Ps. civ. 28, and cxlv. 16). Faithful hands, restraining and sustaining. "His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me."

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CHRIST FOR US—HIS FEET.

His feet were weary very often, they were wounded and bleeding once. They made clear footprints as he went about doing good, and as he went up to Jerusalem to suffer; and these "blessed steps of his most holy life," both as substitution and example, were "for thee." Our place of waiting and learning, of resting and living, is at his feet, and still those "blessed feet" are and shall be "for thee" until he comes again to receive us unto himself, until, when the word is fulfilled, "they shall walk with me in white."

CHRIST FOR US—HIS VOICE.

His voice the "voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love;" the voice that his sheep "hear" and "know," and that calls out the fervent response, "Master, say on!" This is not all. It was the literal voice of the Lord Jesus which uttered that one echoless cry of desolation on the Cross "for thee," and it will be his own literal voice which will say, "Come, ye blessed!" to thee.

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CHRIST FOR US—HIS LIPS.

When we read through one of his Gospels with this thought, "His lips for me," wondering verse by verse at the grace which was poured into them, and the gracious words which fell from them, wondering more and more at the cumulative force and infinite wealth of tenderness and power and wisdom and love flowing from them, we cannot but desire that our lips and all the fruit of them should be wholly for him. "For thee" they were opened in blessing, "for thee" they were closed when he was led as a lamb to the slaughter. And whether teaching, warning, counsel, comfort, or encouragement, commandments in whose keeping there is a great reward, or promises which exceed all we ask or think—all the precious fruit of his lips is "for thee," really and truly *meant* "for thee."

CHRIST FOR US—HIS WEALTH.

"Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." Yes, "through

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his poverty" the unsearchable riches of Christ are "for thee." Sevenfold riches are mentioned, and these are no unminted treasure or sealed reserve, but all ready coined for our use and stamped with his own image and superscription, and poured freely into the hand of faith. The mere list is wonderful. "Riches of goodness," "riches of forbearance and longsuffering," "riches both of wisdom and knowledge," "riches of mercy," "exceeding riches of grace," and "riches of glory."

**CHRIST FOR US—TREASURES OF WISDOM
AND KNOWLEDGE.**

He says, "All that I have is thine." He holds nothing back, reserves nothing from his dear children, and what we cannot receive now he is keeping for us. He gives us "hidden riches of secret places" now, but by and by he will give us more, and the glorified intellect will be filled continually out of his treasures of wisdom and knowledge. But the sanctified intellect will be, must be, used for him, and only for him, now.

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CHRIST FOR US—HIS WILL.

Creation and Providence are but the whisper of the power of his will, but redemption is its music, and praise is the echo which shall yet fill his temple. The whisper and the music, yes, and "the thunder of his power," are all "for thee." For what is "the good pleasure of his will?" (Eph. i. 5). Oh what a grand list of blessings proposed, provided, purchased, and possessed, all flowing to us out of it, and nothing but blessings, nothing but privileges which we never should have imagined, and which, even when revealed, we are "slow of heart to believe," nothing but what should even now fill us "with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

CHRIST FOR US—HIS HEART.

The very fountain of his divine life, and light, and love, the very centre of his being, is given to his beloved ones, who are not only "set as a seal upon his heart," but taken into his heart, so that our life is hid there, and we dwell there in the very cen-

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tre of all safety, and power, and love, and glory.

CHRIST FOR US—HIS LOVE.

Not a passive, possible love, but outflowing, yes, *outpouring* of the real, glowing, personal love of his mighty and tender heart. Love, not as an attribute, a quality, a latent force, but an acting, moving, reaching, touching, and grasping power. Love, not a cold, beautiful, far-off star, but a sunshine that comes and enfolds us, making us warm and glad, and strong and bright and fruitful.

“Lovest thou me?” He says it, who has loved us with an everlasting love. He says it, who has died for us. He says it, who has washed us from our sins in his own blood. He says it, who has waited for our love, waited patiently all through our coldness.

CHRIST FOR US—HIMSELF.

“Christ also hath loved us, and given himself for us.” “The Son of God . . . loved me, and gave himself for me.” Yes,

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himself! What is the bride's true and central treasure? What calls forth the deepest, brightest, sweetest thrill of love and praise? Not the bridegroom's priceless gifts, not the robe of his resplendent righteousness, not the dowry of unsearchable riches, not the magnificence of the palace home to which he is bringing her, not the glory which she shall share with him, but HIMSELF!

PURPOSE OF HEART.

The Bible never speaks of "good resolutions," but again and again of "purpose" (2 Tim. iii. 10). And this is what we want, that "with purpose of heart" we should "cleave unto the Lord" (Acts xi. 23). Have we this distinct purpose to-day? Do we really *mean*, God helping us, to cleave to our King to-day? Do not let us dare to go forth to the certain conflicts and temptations of the day with this negative but real disloyalty of want of *purpose* in the matter. And "if our heart condemn us" (1 John iii. 20), let us at once turn to him who says: "I have

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caused to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel" (Jer. xiii. 11). His grace shall enable us to cleave unto our King.

WALKING BY FAITH.

Ask God, before you go down-stairs, for faith, "the eye of the soul," so that you may walk all day long "as seeing him who is invisible." When you are tempted to indulge in something wrong—idleness, or carelessness, or selfishness—this will help you to give it up at once, and forsake it; for how can you give way to it when your eye meets his? When something makes you afraid, this will make you brave and peaceful; for how can you fear anything when your God is so near?

JOY OF ANSWERED PRAYER.

An answered prayer makes us glad for its own sake. But there is grace behind the gift, which is better and more gladdening than the gift itself. For which is most valued, the "engaged ring," or the favor of which it is the token? Setting aside judicial answers to unspiritual prayers (Ps.

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cvi. 15), which an honest conscience will have no difficulty in distinguishing, the servants of the King may take it that his answers to their requests are proofs and tokens of his grace and favor (1 John iii. 21): of his real, and present, and personal love to themselves individually.

GUIDED AS YOU GO.

Give up trying to pick your way; even if the "right paths" in which he leads you are paths that you have not known, say, "Even there shall thy hand lead me" (Ps. cxxxix. 10). Let him teach you *his* paths (Ps. xxv. 4), and ask him to make not your way, but "*Thy* way straight before my face" (Ps. v. 8). So shall you find the completeness and the sweetness of his guidance. For "the Lord shall guide thee continually" (Isa. lviii. 11), "by the springs of waters shall he guide" thee (Isa. xlix. 19); he shall be the guide of your youth, and carry you even unto your old age (Jer. iii. 4); he will be your guide even unto death (Ps. xlviii. 12), and beyond: for one strain of the song of the victorious

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ones that stand upon the sea of glass mingled with fire (Rev. xv. 2, 3) shall be: "Thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation" (Ex. xv. 13).

REFLECTED RAYS.

If the Sun of Righteousness, the glorious and lovely Saviour, shines upon you, a little ray of his own brightness and beauty will be seen upon you. Sometimes we can see by the happy light on a face that the Sun is shining there; but if the Sun is really shining, there are sure to be some of the beautiful rays of holiness, love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, making the life even of a little child very lovely.

A PRAYER SURE TO BE ANSWERED.

Many years ago a good clergyman wrote a tiny prayer, so short that no one could help remembering it, if they once heard it. God seemed to set that little prayer "upon wheels," so that it might run everywhere. It was printed on large cards and hung up, and it was printed on small ones and kept

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in Bibles and pocket-books. It was taught to classes, and schools, and whole congregations, and now thousands upon thousands pray it constantly. It is a prayer which must be heard, because it asks for what God has promised to give; and it asks for this through him whom the Father heareth always. It is this: "O God, give me thy Holy Spirit, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen." Will you not pray it too? Begin this morning, and go on; not just *saying* it, but *praying* it, till you get a full answer. For you are quite sure to get it; here is God's own promise, "I *will* put my Spirit within you;" and he has promised it over and over again in other places.

THE MASTER'S VOICE.

He says that he knows "how to speak a word in season to him that is weary." "Will he really speak to me?" says the little heart. Yes, really, if you will only watch to see what he will say to you. For it will be "a still, small voice," and you will not hear it at all if you do not listen for it. "How will he speak to me?" If

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I had something very nice to tell you, and instead of saying it out loud I wrote it down on a piece of paper and gave it you to look at, would not that be exactly the same as if I had told it you with my lips? And you would take the paper eagerly, to see what it was that I had to say to you. So, to-day, when you read your Bible, either alone or at your Bible lesson, watch to see what Jesus will say to you in it. You will never really watch in vain. You will see some word that seems to come home to you, and that you never noticed so much before. Oh, listen lovingly to it, for *that* is what he says to you! Or if you are really watching and wishing for a word from him, some sweet text will come into your mind, and you wonder what made you think of it! That is the voice of Jesus speaking to your heart. Listen to it, and treasure it up, and follow it; and then watch to see what else he will say to you. Say to him, "Master, say on!"

GOD'S CARE.

Every day, every moment, he careth,

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goes on caring, for you. Not only thinking of you and watching you, but working for you; making things come right, so that everything should be just the best that could happen to you. Not managing the great things, and leaving the little things to arrange themselves, but giving loving care to the least, the very least things that concern you. Even in some tiny little trouble which no one else seems to care about "he careth;" or when every one else is too much taken up with other things to attend to you "He careth for you."

You can never get beyond God's care, for it always reaches you; you can never be outside of it, for it is always enfolding you.

JESUS ALWAYS NEAR.

How long will he be with you? Always, "all the days!" He hath said: "I will never leave thee." "Never" means really *never*, not for one moment. You cannot get beyond "never." It goes on all through your life, and all through God's great "forever." And "always" means really *always*, every single moment of all

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your life ; so that you need never ask again, "Is Jesus with me now?" Of course he is ! The answer will always be "yes," because he hath said, "I am with you always." How safe, how sweet, how blessed !

DOING FOR JESUS.

Our Lord Jesus Christ has given us opportunities of showing whether we love him or not. He tells us that what we try to do for any one who is poor, or hungry, or sick, or a lonely stranger, is just the same as doing it to him.

It seems to me so very kind of the Lord Jesus to have told us this. For he knew that those who really love him would *want* to do something for him, and what could we do for the King of glory in his glorious heaven ! So it was wonderfully thoughtful of him to give us his poor people to care for, and to say, if we have only been kind to a sick old woman or hungry little child, "Ye have done it unto me !"

CHRIST AND SONG.

He consecrated song for us, and made

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it a sweet and sacred thing forever, when he himself "sang an hymn" the very last thing before he went forth to consecrate suffering for us. That was not his last song. "The Lord thy God will joy over thee with singing." And the time is coming when he will not only sing "for thee" or "over thee," but with thee. He says he will! "In the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." Now what a magnificent glimpse of joy this is! Jesus himself leading the praises of his brethren,* and we ourselves singing not merely in such a chorus, but with such a leader! If "singing for Jesus" is such delight here, what will this "singing *with* Jesus" be? Surely, song may well be a holy thing to us henceforth.

FEAR NOT.

There is a "Fear not" for every possible case and kind of fear; so that we have never any answer to give when he asks, "*Why* are ye fearful?" (Matt. viii. 26),

* See A. Newton, on the Epistle to the Hebrews, chap. ii. 12.

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but we are "without excuse" (Rom. i. 20). It is part of his "holy covenant" that we should "serve him without fear" (Luke i. 74). It is one of his "precious promises" that "thou shalt be stedfast, and shalt not fear" (Job xi. 15). It is one of the blessed results of his reign that his flock "shall fear no more" (Jer. xxiii. 4). It is no impossible thing, but the simple and natural consequence of really seeking and really trusting the Lord, that he will deliver us not from some, but from "*all*" our fears (Ps. xxxiv. 4). He did this for David; will he be less kind to you and me?

TRUE LIBERTY.

"And it shall come to pass in the day that the Lord shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve, that thou shalt . . . say, How hath the oppressor ceased!" (Isa. xiv. 3, 4). "In that day . . . his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder." But "that day" may be *this* day! Why not? "For *now* will I break his yoke from off

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thee" (Nah. i. 13). "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Cor. iii. 17); and he hath said: "Ask, and ye *shall* receive" (Matt. vii. 7). Recognize the anointing by faith, and then "stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ *hath* made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (Gal. v. 1); for "this is his commandment." Then you shall "walk at liberty" (Ps. cxix. 45), and give him the glad "offering of a free heart," rejoicing in his easy yoke (Matt. xi. 29), and (shall we not add?) "proclaiming liberty every man to his neighbor."

"Upon thy promises I stand,
Trusting in thee: thine own right hand
Doth keep and comfort me!
My soul doth triumph in thy word;
Thine, thine, be all the praise, dear Lord,
As thine the victory.

"Love perfecteth what it begins;
Thy power doth save me from my sins;
Thy grace upholdeth me.
This life of trust, how glad! how sweet!
My need and thy great fulness meet,
And I have all in thee.
"JEAN S. PIGOTT."

FROM A BELIEVER'S GARDEN.

NO BONDAGE IN CONSECRATION.

There is no bondage in consecration. The two things are opposites, and cannot co-exist, much less mingle. We should suspect our consecration, and come afresh to our great Counsellor about it, directly we have any sense of bondage. As long as we have an unacknowledged feeling of fidget about our account book, and a smothered wondering what and how much we "*ought*" to give, and a hushed-up wishing the thing had not been put quite so strongly before us, depend upon it we have not said unreservedly, "Take my silver and my gold." And how can the Lord keep what he has not been sincerely asked to take?

If we had stood at the foot of the cross, and watched the tremendous payment of our redemption with the precious blood of Christ,—if we had seen that awful price told out, drop by drop, from his own dear patient brow and torn hands and feet, till it was ALL paid, and the central word of eternity was uttered, "*It is finished!*"

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should we not have been ready to say,
“*Not a mite will I withhold!*”

GIFTS OR GRACE.

Which is greatest, gifts or grace? *Gifts* are given “to every man according to his several ability.” That is, we have just as much given as God knows we are able to use, and what he knows we can best use for him. “But unto every one of us is given *grace* according to the measure of the gift of Christ.” Claiming and using that royal measure of grace, you may, and can, and will do more for God than the mightiest intellect in the world without it. For which, in the clear light of his Word, is likely to be most effectual, the natural ability which at its best and fullest, without Christ, “can do *nothing*” (observe and believe that word!), or the grace of our Almighty God and the power of the Holy Ghost, which is as free to you as it ever was to any one?

TRAINING OUR GIFTS FOR JESUS.

He who made every power can use

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every power—memory, judgment, imagination, quickness of apprehension or insight; specialties of musical, poetical, oratorical, or artistic faculty; special tastes for reasoning, philosophy, history, natural science, or natural history,—all these may be dedicated to him, sanctified by him, and used by him. Whatever he has given, he will use, if we will let him.

Don't you really believe that the Holy Spirit is just as able to draw a soul to Jesus, if he will, by your whisper of the one word "*Come*," as by an eloquent sermon an hour long? *I* do! At the same time, as it is evidently God's way to work through these intellects of ours, we have no more right to expect him to use a mind which we are wilfully neglecting, and taking no pains whatever to fit for his use, than I should have to expect you to write a beautiful inscription with my pen, if I would not take the trouble to wipe it and mend it.

A DIAMOND HERE—A STAR YONDER.

It is wonderfully nice to light upon

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something that we really never thought of as a possible gift to our Lord, and just to give it, straight away, to him. I do not press the matter, but I do ask my lady friends to give it fair and candid and prayerful consideration. Which do you really care most about—a diamond on your finger, or a star in the Redeemer's kingdom, shining forever and ever? That is what it comes to, and there I leave it.

FAITHFUL IN THE LEAST.

It is very possible to be fairly faithful in much, and yet unfaithful in that which is least. We may have thought about our gold and silver, and yet have been altogether thoughtless about our rubbish! Some have a habit of hoarding away old garments, "pieces," remnants, and odds and ends generally, under the idea that they "will come in useful some day;" very likely setting it up as a kind of mild virtue, backed by that noxious old saying, "Keep it by you seven years, and you'll find a use for it." And so the shabby things get shabbier, and moth and dust

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doth corrupt, and the drawers and places get choked and crowded; and meanwhile all this that is sheer rubbish to you, might be made useful at once, to a degree beyond what you would guess, to some poor person.

My sister trimmed seventy or eighty hats every spring for several years with the contents of friends' rubbish drawers, thus relieving dozens of poor mothers who liked their children to "go tidy on Sunday," and also keeping down finery in her Sunday-school. Those who literally fulfilled her request for "rubbish," used to marvel at the results.

The Spirit of God must have taught Bezaleel's hands as well as his head, for he was filled with it not only that he might devise cunning works, but also in cutting of stones and carving of timber. And when all the women that were wise-hearted did spin with their hands, the hands must have been made skilful as well as the hearts made wise to prepare the beautiful garments and curtains.

Why not ask him to make these hands of ours more handy for his service, more skilful in what is indicated as the "next

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thynges" they are to do? The "kept" hands need not be clumsy hands. If the Lord taught David's hands to war and his fingers to fight, will he not teach our hands, and fingers too, to do what he would have them do?

FINISHED.

When a thing is finished, how much is there left to do? The question sounds too absurd with respect to ordinary things. We hardly take the trouble to answer, "Why, nothing, of course!" When Jesus has finished the work, how much is there left for you to do? Do you not see? *Nothing*, of course! You have only to accept that work as really finished, and accept his dying declaration that it is so (2 Tim. ii. 13). What further assurance would you have? Is not this enough? Does your heart say, Yes, or No?

USE OF MONEY IN SHOPPING.

"The silver and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of Hosts." Yes, every coin we have is literally our "Lord's money." Simple belief of this fact is the stepping-

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stone to full consecration of what he has given us, whether much or little.

When we have asked him to take, and continually trust him to keep our money, "shopping" becomes a different thing. We look up to our Lord for guidance to lay out his money prudently and rightly, and as he would have us lay it out. The gift or garment is selected consciously under his eye, and with conscious reference to him as our own dear Master, for whose sake we shall give it, or in whose service we shall wear it, and whose own silver or gold we shall pay for it, and then it is all right.

SYSTEMATIC GIVING.

"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him." Do not say you are "afraid you could not keep to it." What has a consecrated life to do with being "afraid?"

It is important to remember that there is no much or little in God's sight, except as relatively to our means and willingness. "For if there be first a willing mind, it is

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accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." He knows what we have *not*, as well as what we have. He knows all about the low wages in one sphere, and the small allowance, or the fixed income with rising prices in another.

Our wills belong either to self or to God. It may seem a small and rather excusable sin in man's sight to be self-willed, but see in what a category of iniquity God puts it! (2 Pet. ii. 10.)

COMPLETE IN HIM.

An offered gift must be either accepted or refused. Can he have refused it when he has said, "Him that cometh to me I will in nowise cast out?" If not, then it must have been accepted. It is just the same process as when we came to him first of all, with the intolerable burden of our sins. There was no help for it but to come with them to him, and take his word for it that he would not and did not cast us out. And so coming, so believing, we found rest to our souls: we found that

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his word was true, and that his taking away our sins was a reality. We are not to look to him only to be the Author and Finisher of our faith, but we are to look to him for all the intermediate fulfilment of the work of faith (2 Thess. i. 11); we must ask him to go on fulfilling it in us, committing even this to his power.

For we both may and must
Commit our very faith to him,
Entrust to him our trust.

WASTED POWER.

We have not a notion what an amount of waste of power there has been in our lives; we never measured out the odd corners and the undrained bits, and it never occurred to us what good fruit might be grown in our straggling hedgerows, nor how the shade of our trees has been keeping the sun from the scanty crops. And so, season by season, we shall be sometimes not a little startled, yet always very glad, as we find that bit by bit the Master shows how much more may be made of our ground, how much more he is able to

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make of it than we did ; and we shall be willing to work under him and do exactly what he points out, even if it comes to cutting down a shade tree or clearing out a ditch full of pretty weeds and wildflowers.

LOOK AT YOUR HAND.

It may seem an odd idea, but a simple glance at one's hand, with the recollection, "This hand is not mine ; it has been given to Jesus, and it must be kept for Jesus," may sometimes turn the scale in a doubtful matter, and be a safeguard from certain temptations. Can you deliberately hold in it books of a kind which you know perfectly well, by sadly repeated experience, lead you farther from instead of nearer to him ? books which must and do fill your mind with those "other things" which, entering in, choke the word ? books which you would not care to read at all, if your heart were burning within you at the coming of his feet to bless you ? Next time any temptation of this sort approaches, just *look at your hand !*

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SLEEPLESS NIGHTS.

If we could always say, night after night, "I will both lay me down in peace and sleep," receiving in full measure the Lord's quiet gift to his beloved, we should not learn the disguised sweetness of this special word for the wakeful ones. When the wearisome nights come, it is hushing to know that they are appointed. But this is something nearer and closer-bringing, something individual and personal; not only an appointment, but an act of our Father: "Thou *holdest* mine eyes waking." It is *not* that he is merely not giving us sleep; it is not a denial, but a different dealing. Every moment that the tired eyes are sleepless, it is because our Father is holding them waking. It seems so natural to say, "How I wish I could go to sleep!" Yet can we say, "With my soul have I desired thee in the night?" and, "By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth?" Then he will fulfil that desire; the very wakefulness should be recognized as his direct dealing, and we may say, "Thou hast visited me in

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the night." It is not an angel that comes to you as to Elijah, and arouses you from slumber, but the Lord of angels. He watches while you sleep, and when you are awake you are still with him who died for you, that whether you wake or sleep, both literally and figuratively, you should live together with him.

PRAYER FOR OTHERS.

We must not yield to the idea that, because we are feeble members, doing no great work, our prayers "won't make much difference." It may be that this is the very reason why the Lord keeps us in the shade, because he hath need of us (though we feel no better than an "ass's colt") for the work of intercession. Many of us only learn to realize the privilege of being called to this by being called apart from all other work. When this is the case, let us simply and faithfully do it, "lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting," blessing his name who provides this holy and beautiful service for those who "*by night* stand in the house

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of the Lord. See how wonderfully St. Paul valued the prayers of others. He distinctly expresses this to every church but one to whom he wrote. Would he have asked their prayers so fervently if he thought it would not make much difference?"

Let us intercede "while we have time." "The night cometh, when no man can work." Those for whom we might be praying to-day may be beyond the reach of prayer to-morrow. Or our own day of prayer may have passed; for the only intercession that we have ever heard from the other side was in vain—never granted.

JESUS OUR GREAT INTERCESSOR.

He ever liveth to make intercession for us, and so while you have been silent to him, he has been praying for you. If his hand has been upon you so that you could not pray, why need you be mourning over this, when your merciful and faithful High Priest has been offering up the pure and sweet and costly incense of his own intercession? But if your heart condemns

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you, and you know you gave way to indolent coldness when you might have roused yourself to more prayer, will it not touch you to recollect that, in his wonderful long-suffering, Jesus has been praying instead!

JESUS THE WAY.

There is only one way of coming near or being made near, but that way is open for you. Not into the outer court of religious profession, but "into the holiest," into the reality of most sacred nearness to your Lord, you may enter "by the blood of Jesus." The moment you claim by faith the power of that precious blood,—the moment you let your great High Priest put it upon you, that moment "ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." Then, having this High Priest, and having this one blessed and unfailing means of access, "let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith."

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JESUS THE TRUTH.

“The words which I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life”—quickening and continually life-giving words. We want to be permeated with them; we want them to dwell in us richly, to be the inspiration of our whole lives, the very music of our spirits, whose melodious overflow may be glory to God and goodwill to man. Jesus himself has given us this quick and powerful word of God, and our responsibility is tremendous. He has told us distinctly what to do as to it; he has said, “Search!” Now, are we substituting a word of our own, and merely *reading* them? He did not say, “Read them,” but “*Search!*” and it is a most serious thought for many a comfortable daily *reader* of the Bible, that if they are *only* reading and not searching, they are distinctly living in disobedience to one of his plainest commands. What wonder if they do not “grow thereby!”

EARNESTS OF BLESSING.

God keeps writing a commentary on

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his word in the volume of our own experience. That is, in so far as we put that volume into his hands, and do not think to fill it with our own scribble. We are not to undervalue or neglect this commentary, but to use it as John Newton did, when he wrote—

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

The keywords of what the Spirit writes in it are, “He hath,” and therefore “He will.” Every record of love bears the great signatures, “I am the Lord, I change not,” “Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, *and to-day, and forever.*” Every hitherto of grace and help is a henceforth of more grace and more help. Every experience of the realities of faith widens the horizon of the possibilities of faith. Every realized promise is the stepping-stone to one yet unrealized.

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NO MISUNDERSTANDING GOD'S PROMISES.

He who knows our little faith never gives an isolated promise. He leaves us no chance of overlooking or misunderstanding any one, except by wilful neglect, because it is always confirmed in other parts of his word. So he has given the same strong consolation in other terms. "The Lord shall preserve thee from *all* evil" (do you believe *that?*). "There shall *no* evil happen to the just." "In seven (troubles) there shall no evil touch thee." Then see how he individualized it to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, even *in* the burning fiery furnace, "They have no hurt;" to Daniel among the lions, "They have not hurt me;" to St. Paul among turbulent men with a care-nought governor, "No man shall set on thee to hurt thee." We are not likely to be more exposed to "hurt" than these, and we have the same God, "who keepeth his promise forever." He is the "wall of fire round about" us; and what fortification so impenetrable—nay, so unapproachable! And "he that toucheth you

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toucheth the apple of his eye"—the very least touch is felt by the Lord, who loves us and is mighty to save! Well may he say, "And who is he that will harm you?"

NO PLACE FOR REASONING ABOUT GOD'S PROMISES.

As long as we are reasoning about a promise, we never know its reality. It is not God's way. It is the humble who hear thereof and are glad. Have we not found it so? Did we *ever* receive the powerful fulfilment of *any* promise so long as we argued and reasoned, whether with our own hearts or with others, and said, "How can these things be?" Has it not always been, that we had to lay down our arms and accept God's thought and God's way instead of our own ideas, and be willing that he should "speak the word only," and believe it as little children believe our promises? Then, *never* till then, the promise and the privilege became ours not only in potentiality but in actuality. Now, how is it that we do not *yet* understand, and apply the same princi-

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ple to every promise or privilege which as yet we see only afar off? It is the old way and the only way: "Who through faith . . . obtained promises."

GOD'S WILL IS LOVE.

Now we not only see his justice and mercy flowing in an undivided stream from the cross of Christ, but we see that they never were divided, though the strange distortions of the dark, false gloss of sin made them appear so, but that both are but emanations of God's holy love. Then having known and believed God's holy love, we see further that his will is not a separate thing, but only love in action; love being the primary essence of his being, and all the other attributes, manifestations and combinations of that ineffable essence, for God *is* love. Then this will of God which has seemed in old far-off days a stern and fateful power, is seen to be only love energized; love saying, "I will." And when once we really grasp this (hardly so much by faith as by love itself), the will of God cannot be other-

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wise than acceptable, for it is no longer a question of trusting that somehow or other there is a hidden element of love in it, but of understanding that it *is* love; no more to be dissociated from it than the power of the sun's rays can be dissociated from their light and warmth.

A FIXED HEART.

“His heart is fixed.” Whose heart? An angel? A saint in glory? No! Simply the heart of the man that feareth the Lord, and delighteth greatly in his commandments. Therefore yours and mine, as God would have them be; just the normal idea of a God-fearing heart, nothing extremely and hopelessly beyond attainment.

“Fixed, trusting in the Lord.” Here is the means of the fixing-trust. He works the trust in us by sending the Holy Spirit to reveal God in Christ to us as absolutely, infinitely worthy of our trust. When we “see Jesus” by spirit-wrought faith, we cannot but trust him; we distrust our hearts more truly than ever before, but

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we trust our Lord entirely, because we trust him *only*. For, entrusting our trust to him, we know that he is able to keep that which we commit (*i. e.* entrust) to him. It is his own way of winning and fixing our hearts for himself. Is it not a beautiful one?

LEAVING ALL WITH GOD.

“Do thou for me.” The Psalmist does not say what he wanted God to do for him. He leaves it open. So this most restful prayer is left open for all perplexed hearts to appropriate “according to their several necessities.” And so we leave it open for God to fill up in his own way.

Only a trusting heart can pray this prayer at all: the very utterance of it is an act of faith. We could not ask any one whom we did not know intimately and trust implicitly to “do” for us, without even suggesting what.

Only a self-emptied heart can pray it. It is when we have come to the end of our own resources, or, rather, come to see that we never had any at all, that we are will-

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ing to accept the fact that we can "do nothing," and to let God do everything for us.

Only a loving heart can pray it. For nobody likes another to take him and his affairs in hand, and "do" for him, unless that other is cordially loved. We might submit to it, but we should not like it, and certainly should not seek it.

GOD UNDERSTANDS US.

Even if others "daily mistake" your words, he understands your thought, and is not this infinitely better? He himself, your ever-loving, ever-present Father, understands. He understands perfectly just what and just when others do not. Not your actions merely, but your thought—the central self which no words can reveal to others. "All my desire is before thee." He understands how you desired to do the right thing when others thought you did the wrong thing. He understands how his poor weak child wants to please him, and secretly mourns over grieving him. "Thou understandest" seems to go

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even a step further than the great comfort of "Thou knowest." "His understanding is infinite."

FULNESS OF JOY.

Wine is the symbol of earthly joy; and who that has had but one sip of the love of Christ does not know this "royal wine," this true "wine of the kingdom," to be better than the best joy that the world can give! How much more, then, when deeper and fuller draughts are the daily portion, as we "follow on to know" the love "which passeth knowledge." It is the privilege not of a favored few, but of "*all* saints," to comprehend something of what is incomprehensible.

In his love and in his pity he redeemed us; in the same love he bears us and carries us all the day long. He "loveth at *all* times," and that includes this present moment; now, while your eye is on this page, his eye of love is looking on you, and the folds of his banner of love are overshadowing you.

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ABIDING JOY.

Who that has known anything of joy in the Lord but has asked, "But will it last?" And why has the question been so often the very beginning of its not lasting? Because we have either asked it of ourselves or of others, and not of the Lord only. His own answers to this continually recurring question are so different from the cautions, chilling, saddening ones which his children so often give. They are absolute, full, reiterated. We little realize how unscriptural we are when we meet his good gift of joy to ourselves or to others with a doubtful, and therefore faithless, "*If* it lasts!"

"To the law and to the testimony," O happy Christian! there you shall find true and abundant answer to your only shadow on the brightness of the joy. So long as you believe your Lord's word about it, so long it *will* last.

JESUS OUR SURETY.

Jesus Christ is surety for us. He, our Elder Brother, undertakes to bring us

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safely to the house of his Father and our Father. He undertakes to present us before the presence of his glory. We are in his hand, and from his hand God will require us and receive us. And God, who so loves his children, has trusted the Lord Jesus to do this. He has given us to him, and he has accepted Jesus Christ as our surety.

Now, if God has trusted him, will not you trust him too? What! hesitate about trusting Jesus? Who else could you trust? Who else could undertake to bring you safe to heaven? Benjamin might possibly have found his way by himself from Egypt to Canaan; but never, never could you find the way by yourself from earth to heaven; and never, never could any one but the Lord Jesus bring you there.

JESUS OUR FORERUNNER.

This is what the Lord Jesus Christ has done for us. He has gone before, in front of, the great army of the living God who have crossed or have yet to cross the river of

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death. His blessed feet have passed that river, and made the crossing easy for us, so that the dark waters shall never overflow one of us, not even a little child.

He has gone before us into the beautiful land to prepare the many mansions for us. He is there, waiting for us, ready to give us his own most sweet and gracious welcome to his own fair country, as soon as our feet have crossed the river.

RULES FOR DOING THE KING'S BUSINESS.

We find four rules for doing the King's business, in his word. We are to do it,—first, “Heartily;” second, “Diligently;” third, “Faithfully;” fourth, “*Speedily.*” Let us ask him to give us the grace of energy to apply them this day to whatever he indicates as our part of his business, remembering that *he* said, “I *must* be about my Father's business.”

Especially in that part of it which is between himself and ourselves alone, let us never delay. Oh, the incalculable blessings that we have already lost by putting off our own dealings with our King! Ab,

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igail first "made haste" to meet David for mere safety; soon afterwards, she again "hasted and arose and went after the messengers of David, and became his wife."

OUR NEED OF A KING.

I will be thy King. He knows our need of a king. He knows the hopeless anarchy, not only of a world, but of a heart, "without a king." Is there a more desolate cry than "We have no king?"—none to reverence and love, none to obey, none to guide and protect us and rule over us, none to keep us in that truest freedom of whole-hearted loyalty. Have we not felt that we really want a strong hand over our hearts? that having our own way is not so good as another's way, if only that other is one to whom our hearty and entire confidence and allegiance can be and are given? Has there not been an echo in our souls of the old cry, "Give me a king?"—a cry that nothing can still but this Divine promise, "I will be thy King!"

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What shall I render to my glorious King?
I have but that which I receive from thee,
And what I give thou givest back to me,
Transmuted by thy touch; each worthless thing
Changed to the preciousness of gem or gold,
And by thy blessing multiplied a thousandfold.

THE POWER OF THE WORD.

By the word we shall "grow in grace." The beginning of grace in our souls was by the same; for it is written, "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth;" "Being born again, . . . by the word of God." At every step it is the same word which develops the spiritual life. The young man shall "cleanse his way" by it. The entrance of it giveth light and understanding. The result of hiding it in our hearts is, that we "might not sin against thee;" and how often by his word has he "withheld thee from sinning against me!" Again and again we have said, "Thy word hath quickened me." For it comes to us "not in word only, but in power and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." It is "able to make thee wise unto salvation," and its intended effects of reproof, correction, in-

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struction in righteousness, rise to what would seem a climax of growth, "that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto *all* good works." And yet there is a still more glorious result of this "word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that *believe*;" for by "his divine power" "are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that *by these* ye might be partakers of the divine nature." This is indeed the climax, for what can rise beyond this most marvellous effect of this blessed means of growth in grace!

BEARING CHRIST'S BANNER.

Then what is your banner, and what are you doing with it? For if you are among "them that fear" God, he has given you a banner "that it may be displayed." Is yours furled up and put away in a corner, so that nobody sees it or knows of it? Or are you trying to be a brave little standard-bearer of Jesus Christ, carrying his flag, so that the sweet breezes of his Spirit may lift its bright folds, and show its golden

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motto? That motto, I think, is "Love." For we are told that his banner over us is love. Are you displaying it, showing your love to him by your love to others? showing the power of his love over you by your sweet, happy temper, and by trying to please him always? The little hand that carries Christ's banner through his war will carry it also in his triumph; the little hand that tries to unfurl it bravely now will wave it when his glorious reign begins and his blessed kingdom is come. Then, "in the name of our God we will set up our banners" *now!*

I AM THINE.

"I am thine" means, "Truly I am thy servant." I am one of thy "dear children." I am thy chosen soldier. I am thy ransomed one. I am thy "own sheep." I am thy witness. I am thy friend. And all these are but amens to his own condescending declarations. He says we are all these, and we have only to say, "Yes, Lord, so I am." Why should we ever contradict him? "I am thine, save me!"

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And "he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love."

"Not your own!" but his ye are,
Who hath paid a price untold
For your life, exceeding far
All earth's store of gems and gold.
With the precious blood of Christ,
Ransom-treasure all unpriced,
Full redemption is procured,
Full salvation is assured.

"Not your own!" but his by right,
His peculiar treasure now,
Fair and precious in his sight,
Purchased jewels for his brow.
He will keep what thus he sought,
Safely guard the dearly bought,
Cherish that which he did choose,
Always love and never lose.

COME AND SEE.

When Jesus had found Philip, Philip *knew* that he had found him. And the next thing to knowing that "we have found him" is to find some one else, and say, "Come and see!" I say it now to you, dear friend, known or unknown.

But what is it we are so burningly eager for you to see? Very likely you suppose

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it is just that we have a certain set of views that we have taken up, and we want you to hold the same. You think it is merely that we want to bring you over to our opinions, and that we want to have the satisfaction of getting you to agree with us! Oh, how wide of the mark! It is no such thing. We are not speaking of what we think, but "we speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen." We have seen by faith the only sight that is worth gazing upon, the sight that satisfies the angels, the sight that is enough for the joy and satisfaction of immortal vision throughout eternity. One thing we know, that, whereas we were blind, now we see.

We see Jesus, as our Lord and our God.

We see him as the very Saviour we need, and the very Friend we craved.

We see him as "the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

We see him wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; our Substitute and our Sin-bearer.

We see him, too, crowned with glory and honor, and we rejoice in his glory and beauty: we make our boast of him.

FROM A BELIEVER'S GARDEN.

If you say to us, "What is thy Beloved more than another beloved?" we reply, "My Beloved is the chiefest among ten thousand. Yea, he is altogether lovely."

ESCAPE FOR THY LIFE.

"Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain." It is the old story of

"If you tarry till you're better,
You will never come at all."

I do not know any one promise in all the Bible for the lingerers. And if you put yourself out of the sphere of God's promises, what have you to found any hope at all upon?

"Tarry not!" Oh, if I could but reach you and rouse you!

"And if I care
For one unknown, oh how much more doth he!"

For one who perishes through straightforward refusal, there are probably thousands who perish through *putting off*.

BLOSSOMS

“How shall we escape if we” *refuse*—no,
if we merely “*neglect*—so great salva-
tion?”

Yet there is room! The Lamb's bright hall of
With its fair glory,^{song,} beckons thee along.

Yet there is room! Still open stands the gate,
The gate of love; it is not yet too late.

Pass in, pass in! That banquet is for thee;
That cup of everlasting love is free.

Ere night that gate may close, and seal thy doom;
Then the last, low, long cry,—“No room, no
room!” H. BONAR.

YOU CANNOT DO WITHOUT HIM.

You cannot do without him!
There is no other name
By which you ever *can* be saved,—
No way, no hope, no claim!
Without him—everlasting loss
Of love, and life, and light!
Without him—everlasting woe,
And everlasting night.

But with him—oh! *with Jesus!*—
Are any words so blest?
With Jesus—everlasting joy
And everlasting rest!

FROM A BELIEVER'S GARDEN.

With Jesus—all the empty heart
Filled with his perfect love !
With Jesus—perfect peace below,
And perfect bliss above !

Why should you do without him?—
It is not yet too late ;
He has not closed the day of grace,
He has not shut the gate.
He calls you!—hush! he calls you!—
He would not have you go
Another step without him,
Because he loves you so.

WHAT DOES “COME” MEAN?

If you could see the Lord Jesus standing there, right before you, and you heard him say, “Come!” would you say, “What does ‘come’ mean?” And if the room were dark, so that you could only hear and not see, would it make any difference? Would you not turn instantly towards the “Glorious Voice?” Would you not, in heart, and will, and intention, instantaneously obey it?—that is, if you *believed* it to be himself. For “he that cometh to God must believe that he is.”

Will you not come to him for life?
Why will ye die, oh why?

BLOSSOMS

He gave his life for you, for you !
The gift is free, the word is true !
Will you not come? oh, why will you die?

Will you not come to him for peace—
Peace through his cross alone?
He shed his precious blood for you ;
The gift is free, the word is true !
He is our Peace! oh, is he your own?

Will you not come to him for all?
Will you not "taste and see?"
He wants to give it all to you ;
The gifts are free, the words are true !
Jesus is calling, "Come unto me!"

TO HIM THAT HATH SHALL BE GIVEN.

He that spared not his own Son,—
there is the entirely incontrovertible fact
of what he hath done: "shall he not with
him also freely give us all things,"—there
is the inspired conclusion of what he will
do. "Having loved his own which were
in the world, he loved them unto the end."
"He which *hath* begun a good work in
you *will* perform it until the day of Jesus
Christ." For how true is the type, both

FROM A BELIEVER'S GARDEN.

as to each individual temple of the Holy Ghost, and "all the building that groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:"—"The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house, his hands shall also finish it,"—"His own house, whose house are we." Our Lord Jesus Christ indorses it in the very amen of his great prayer: "I *have* declared unto them thy name, and *will* declare it." Only let us simply receive and believe what he shows us and tells us, and then to every Nathanael who comes to him, he will say, "Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these." Then we shall have, personally and indeed, "showers of blessing."

Unto him that hath thou givest
Ever more abundantly;
Lord, I live because thou livest,
Therefore give more life to me,
Therefore speed me in the race,
Therefore let me grow in grace.

BLOSSOMS

DELIGHT IN THE LORD.

“Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thy heart.”—Ps. xxxvii. 4.

One often hears this promise quoted without its conditional precept; but we have no right to put asunder anything that God has joined together. Every heart has desires, but not even every Christian heart delights itself in the Lord. This is the reason of the great wail of unfulfilled desire—the very howl, one might say, which makes a howling wilderness of this fair world.

It stands to reason; if our delight is absolutely and entirely in the Lord, all our desires will be not only “before him,” but the whole “desire of our soul” will be concentrated upon him, radiating from that centre along the bright rays of his “good and perfect and acceptable will.”

Oh, blessed life!—the heart at rest
When all without tumultuous seems—
That trusts a higher will, and deems
That higher will, not mine, the best.

Oh, blessed life!—heart, mind, and soul,
From self-born aims and wishes free,

FROM A BELIEVER'S GARDEN.

In all at one with Deity,
And loyal to the Lord's control.

W. T. MATSON.

Blessed *is* the man *that* feareth the LORD,
that delighteth greatly in his command-
ments.—*Ps.* cxii. 1.

THE LORD'S GARDEN.

‘What is man, that thou shouldest set
thine heart upon him?’ Think of that
ceaseless setting of his heart upon us, care-
less and forgetful children as we have
been! And then think of those other
words, none the less literally true because
given under a figure: ‘I, the Lord, do
keep it; *I will water it every moment.*’



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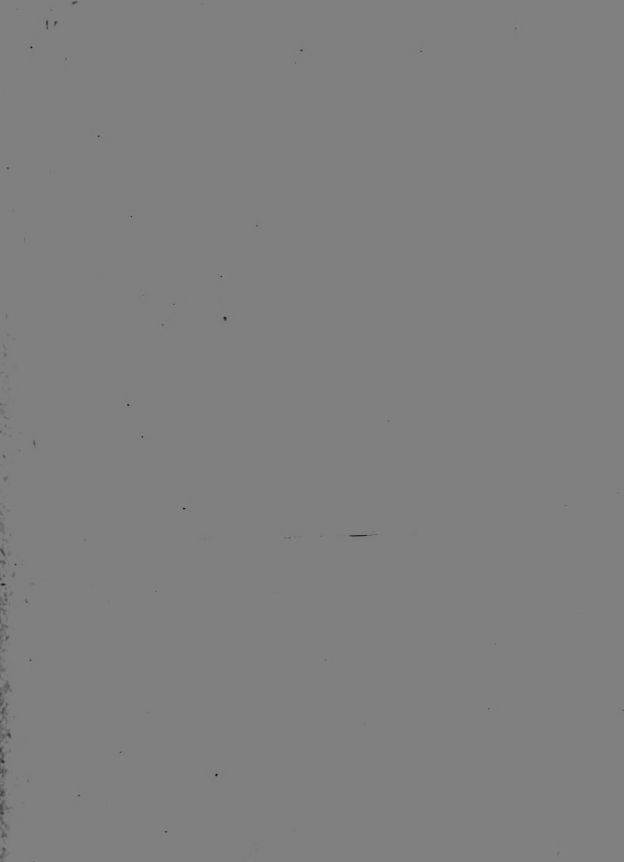
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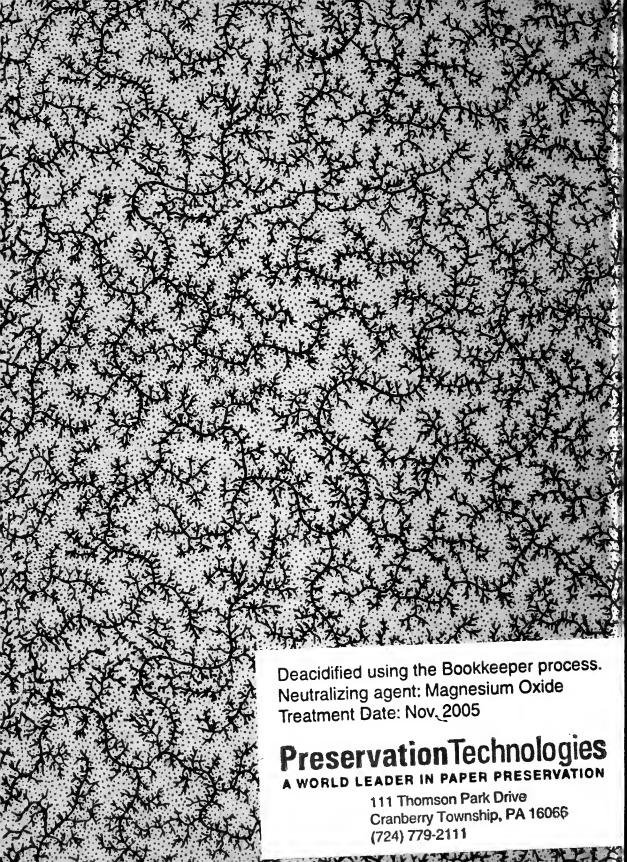
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