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TESTIMONIALS.

THE late Hon. Theodore Frelinghuysen, President of the American Bible Society, and Chancellor of the University of New York, in a letter to the author of "The Inner Life, or the Joys of my Father's House," says:—

"I duly received the manuscript of your work on the Inner Life, and have given it as much attention as other pressing duties allowed me. And having found it pure and Scriptural in its moral and religious contents, I cheerfully recommend it as a work calculated, through the blessing of God, to do much good. The selections of Scripture, in my judgment, are judiciously made; and the appropriate application of them in your work, with its excellent spirit, cannot be otherwise than useful. Your volume will be a valuable help to all who seek the wisdom of which the Bible is the sure revelation.

"THEO. FRELINGHUYSEN.

"NEW BRUNSWICK, Dec. 5, 1860."

Mr. Frelinghuysen was one of the most deeply pious members of the Presbyterian Church in America. No man was more highly esteemed by the religious world in general. His memory will ever be cherished by all evangelical Christians.

The Rev. Bishop M. Simpson, D.D., of the Methodist Episcopal Church, says:—

"I have perused with some care the proof sheets of 'The Inner Life; or, the Joys of my Father's House,' and cordially

commend it to the religious public. I am much pleased with its pure, evangelical sentiment, its copious illustrations, and its easy style. It is calculated to aid the thoughtful reader in his efforts to attain a higher life; and I have no doubt its general circulation will do much good.

“M. SIMPSON.”

“PHILADELPHIA, July 25, 1864.”

The Rev. P. S. Henson, Pastor of the Broad Street Baptist Church, says:—

“I have read with no little interest and profit the proof-sheets of ‘The Inner Life, or the Joys of my Father’s House.’ It is eminently evangelical in its tone, and catholic in its spirit. Its materials seem to be drawn from the treasury of a ripe and varied Christian experience. Believing as I do that a perusal of the book will be calculated to quicken the pulses of that Inner life of which it treats, I sincerely hope it may find its way to many homes and hearts.

“P. S. HENSON.”

“PHILADELPHIA, Oct. 1, 1864.”

The Rev. Charles P. Krauth, D.D., Professor of Systematic Theology in the Theological Seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, at Philadelphia, and Editor of “The Lutheran and Missionary,” says:—

“The ‘Inner Life’ strikes us as the work of a thoughtful Christian, thoroughly read in the Bible and largely familiar with the best practical and devotional literature. It is evangelical to the core, earnest in its spirit, and well adapted to promote the growth of the Christian life. It presents the heart of religion as distinct from the technicalities of abstract theology, and will profit and interest every reader. It is specially rich in the treasures of Christian experience and of sacred song.

“CHARLES P. KRAUTH.”

“PHILADELPHIA, May 11, 1865.”

The Rev. Kingston Goddard, D. D., Pastor of St. Paul's Protestant Episcopal Church, speaking of "The Inner Life, or the Joys of my Father's House," says:—

"The value of such works of practical experience as the 'Inner Life' is that they present to the Christian the inward influences of 'the Truth' in the heart. Mere acquaintance with Bible truth may be acquired and yet none of its power felt. To possess it is only like standing in the broad and bright sunshine of mid-day. But when that Truth is presented as it is in this earnest and loving work, it is as if we walked amidst all the rich scenery of earth beside its streams and rivers, that the sun had warmed into existence and decked with brilliancy and beauty. Most earnestly do we recommend this book to the perusal of the devout Christian; and heartily we hail it as a valuable addition to our sacred literature.

" KINGSTON GODDARD,

"St. Paul's Ch. (P. E. C.)

"Philadelphia"

Another eminent minister of Christ, the Rev. J. H. A. Bomberger, D.D., Pastor of First German Reformed Church, Race Street, says:—

"No better testimony can be borne to the real worth of a book, than that its perusal has been found truly instructive and edifying, and that the reading of several chapters of it causes regret that there is neither time nor opportunity, at present, for going through the whole of it. This testimony I can sincerely offer in favor of the 'Inner Life.' It is a good book in the highest sense of the term, and cannot fail to prove welcome and profitable to all who read it with sober and devout minds.

" J. H. A. BOMBERGER,

" PHILADELPHIA, May 12, 1865."

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THE INNER LIFE;

OR,

THE JOYS OF MY FATHER'S HOUSE.

DESIGNED TO

ASSIST THE SEEKER, STRENGTHEN THE WAVERING,
AND COMFORT THE AFFLICTED AND
THE BEREAVED.

BY

✓
A WAYFARING MAN.

Clinton G. Gilroy

“After a short pause, he began with a voice that would have allayed the anguish of death, and charmed the wildest discord into calm attention: every accent breathed celestial love and harmony, while he described the joys of his ‘Father’s house.’ Every word was penetrating. In his descriptions, I saw the glories, I felt the joys, of heaven.”

PHILADELPHIA:
PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR
BY SHERMAN & CO.

1865.

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1865, by
WM. H. STARR,
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the District of
Connecticut.

INTRODUCTION.

THERE is not enough of anything good in the world, which depends on man, not enough even of those good things of which it is asserted most frequently, that there is too much. Books are plenty, good books are few, and among the classes of the few good books none are more rare than those which are thoroughly adapted to the experimental life of the Christian. Religious books, written in the course of professional life, and printed simply because they have been written,—books prepared for the benefit of the author, or of the publisher, not for the benefit of the reader,—are common enough. Smooth and graceful in style and rich in thought such works may be, but as they do not come from the heart they do not go to the heart, they simply swell the number of books already too large, books wrought out in no genuine experience, and addressed to no specific want, and incapable of moving the affections of men, a result without which their judgments are enlightened in vain.

The volume which now lies before the reader claims a moment from him, on the ground that it is no bookseller's nor book-writer's manufacture, but a true growth, an humble but genuine growth out of a life kindled by the Saviour and hidden with him in God. It is offered to God and to His Children, as the witness of a heart which was led through sore conflicts to precious experiences, out of the darkness not alone of nature, but of a seductive and delusive system of theology, to a knowledge of the truth of God in his Word, and of the God of truth in his only-begotten Son, through the Holy Ghost, the illuminer and Comforter. Its author asks a hearing, not because of the earthly wisdom or human eloquence for which the natural heart seeks, but because he speaks what it is his joy, in common with all that are in Christ Jesus, to know, and testifies, in the fellowship of all who are led by the Spirit of God, what he has seen.

This volume may be made a hand-book for the Pilgrim who turns his face Zionward, not indeed as a substitute for God's own Guide-book, but as a simple Manual, in which is arranged what that great and exhaustless Book furnishes for the way. With this testimony of God's inspired servants is connected, in these pages, the record in which the

saints of many lands, and the "wayfaring man" himself, set their seal to God's ever-abiding truth. The Bible, the life and testimony of Bible Christians, the sweet and heavenly strains of holy men and women who drew their inspiration from the Bible, these will be found grouped together here in all the artless fervor of a soul which desires to know nothing among men, but "Jesus Christ and him crucified." It is a book in which the yearning heart of seeker and saint will find a voice for its longings, in which the mourning and the rejoicing will find words of comfort and of exultation. It has an extraordinary air of reality, as if the invisible were visible, as if the glory to be revealed were a present thing grasped in living faith. The man who has no religion, or who imagines that religion is all summed up in frigid speculation, may not comprehend the fire of devotion which glows in these pages, and yet he must be cold indeed, if he can peruse them without feeling something of their own ardent life and aspiration.

But this little volume is not merely devotional; it is eminently practical. It unfolds duty as well as privilege, duty in the closet, and duty in the family circle. It is especially a book for the family. The Chapters on "Obedience to Parents" are peculiarly comprehensive and forcible. The

family which is so happy as to take its shape under the influence of those Chapters will never cease, no, not to eternity, to thank God that this book was brought within it.

This book is also rich in consolation. The ever-touching theme of "Family Bereavements" is handled with a tenderness which would have been impossible on the part of one who had not tasted very deeply of the bitter cup, and very deeply of the consolations which a Saviour's love mingles with it. As the author approaches the termination of his work, the heavenly home assumes to him an increasing vividness; he rises and carries the reader with him, within the veil. He gathers a cloud of witnesses around the saint's dying hour, and central among them all stands the faithful and true Witness, "The Author and finisher of our faith," the adorable and loving Saviour. To that Saviour this book is an offering of love and gratitude; and all who love him, and all who wish to love him, will find pure delight and an abiding blessing in an earnest, repeated, and prayerful perusal of it.

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THE INNER LIFE.

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ADVENT OF THE ONE ALTOGETHER LOVELY.

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O THE depth of the love which brought the Lord Jesus from the bosom of his Father, in the “heaven of heavens,” to the manger in Bethlehem, to the cross on Calvary, to the depths of the grave in Joseph’s sepulchre, which induced him to wash men from their sins in his own blood. Isaiah liii. 3-12; Matt. xxvi. 26-28; 1 John iii. 16; Rev. i. 5, 6; vii. 13, 14. We

were prisoners at the bar, condemned to die; but he left his "Father's house," and came down to earth, and stood at our side, saying, I will die for them, that they may live forever! He took our nature upon him, and was born as a man! He entered the world with all the circumstances of poverty! He had a star to illustrate his birth; but a stable for his bed-chamber, and a manger for his cradle! The angels sang hymns when he was born; but he was poor, despised, and afflicted: God being more careful to establish in him the covenant of sufferings, than to refresh his sorrows. Isaiah liii. 3-12; Heb. v. 8, 9. Presently, after the angels had finished their hallelujahs, he was forced to fly to save his life, and the air became full of the shrieks of the desolate mothers of Bethlehem for their dying babes. Matt. ii. 18; Jer. xxxi. 15. The Father had no sooner made him illustrious with a voice from heaven, and the descent of the Holy Ghost upon him in the waters of baptism, than he was delivered over to be tempted and assaulted of the devil in the wilderness!

His transfiguration was a bright ray of glory; but he also entered a cloud, and was told a sad story of what he was to suffer in Jerusalem. So that upon Palm Sunday, when he rode triumphantly into that rebellious city, although hailed with the acclamations of a king, he wet the palms with his tears, sweeter than the drops of manna, or the little pearls of heaven that descended upon Mount Hermon, weeping in the midst of this triumph over an obstinate, perishing, and malicious

people! "And when he was come nigh, even at the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen, saying, Blessed be the king that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. And the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out. And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes." Luke xix. 37-47; Prov. i. 24-28; Jer. viii. 20. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold your house is left unto you desolate." Matt. xxiii. 37, 38; John vii. 34, 35; Acts xiii. 45, 46. "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin; but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause."

Look at him at the grave of Lazarus! The sufferings of the two sisters touch his loving heart; and there he—"the Lord of glory," and "the Creator of all things,"

stands forever sanctioning sorrow, and even exalting it into a manly, most noble thing. His eyes swim in tears, groans rend his bosom ; he is deeply, so uncontrollably, so visibly affected, that the spectators exclaim, " Behold, how he loved him ! " These were precious tears. The passing air kissed them from his cheek, or they were drunk up of the earth, or they glistened but for a little, like dew-drops on some lonely flower ; yet assuring us of his sympathy in our hours of sorrow, their memory has been healing balm to many a bleeding heart. This " man of sorrows," so gentle, so tender, so easily moved that he often wept, endued with a sensibility so delicate, that the strings of his heart vibrated to the slightest touch, has, by a word, rent the tomb.

Why flow the blessed Saviour's tears ?
Is it because the cross he fears —
Because he knows he soon shall die,
And shall within the cold grave lie.

He weeps to see the sister weep
Of Lazarus, who lies asleep ;
So tender is his heart, so kind,
That all from him may pity find.

Mary called her babe her Saviour. Luke i. 46, 47 ; Isaiah ix. 6 ; Micah v. 2, 3. Mary was once poor, but now she had what all the riches in the world could not purchase. Jer. ix. 23, 24 ; 1 Cor. iii. 21–23 ; 2 Cor. vi. 10 ; Colos. ii. 3. Ah, happy Mary ! happy Mary ! And yet—wonderful to relate, this amazing treasure of the now happy Mary, was once sold for thirty pieces of silver !

Zech. xi. 12, 13; Matt. xxvii. 3, 4. The first star that ever shone, nay, the first angel that ever sang, are but things of yesterday beside this manger, where couched in straw and wrapped in swaddling clothes, a new-born babe is sleeping. "Before Abraham was," or these were, "I am," says Jesus. His mother's maker, and his mother's child, he formed the living womb that gave him birth, and ages before that, the rock that gave him burial. A child, yet Almighty God; a Son, yet The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace! Isaiah ix. 6; John xiv. 8, 9. See him in that hall—a spectacle of woe; an old purple robe on his bleeding back; in his hand a reed; and on his head a wreath—not of laurel, but of thorns, while the blood, trickling down from many wounds over his lovely face, falls on a breast heaving with a sea of sorrows!

Oh, my Saviour! what a theme for mortal tongue!
 For never yet hath burning spirit flung
 O'er thrilling chord his rapture-making hands,
 To theme so great, 'mid heaven's seraphic bands.
 Through the long silence of eternal night,
 Thou wast, enthroned in uncreated light;
 Thyself a universe—thyself thine all!
 And when, of thy mere goodness, thou didst call
 Angelic worlds around thee, sweetly rolled
 Their strains o'er harps of pure, ethereal gold.
 They sung thee God—creation's fount and end,
 Their Sovereign Benefactor, Lord and Friend.
 Their "Holy, Holy, Holy," pealed around,
 Deep echoing through immensities profound;
 Yet none, amidst their shining hosts of light,
 E'er hailed thee, "Saviour!" that supreme delight
 Reserved for guilty man—for guilty me!—
 To sing through time, and through eternity.

Yes, He who had been waited on by angels, becomes the servant of servants, takes a towel, and girds himself, and washes his disciples' feet! John xiii. 4, 5; Matt. xxvi. 27, 28. He who was honored with the hallelujahs of ages is now mocked, spit upon, and scourged! Oh, for words to picture his humiliation! Dan. vii. 13, 14; Psalm xxii. 16, 18; lxix. 20, 21; Matt. xxvii. 29-35. The stupendous fabric of creation, yonder starry vault, this magnificent world, were the work of the hands by which, in love to poor sinful man, he "the Lord of glory," hung a mangled form, on the Cross of Calvary! Deserted by the world, "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," dependent on a few humble followers for the most common necessaries of life, within a few hours of an ignominious death, his foot already on the verge of the grave, he rises to the loftiness of Godhead; and turning an eye that was to be soon darkened on earth, he claims a community of property with God. "All things," he says, "that the Father hath are mine."

Though He was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might become rich! 2 Cor. viii. 9; Matt. viii. 20; Luke ix. 58. He took upon him the form of a man, and ended a life of sorrow by a death of pain, that he might reconcile a fallen world to an offended God! Eph. ii. 15, 16; Rom. iii. 24, 25. His mental suffering was ineffable, inconceivable; the temptations to which he was exposed were all that Satanic ingenuity could devise, to harass and shock his holy mind. Never was sorrow like his sorrow. All human

suffering compared with his, scarcely deserves the name. The deeps environed him; the waters came into his soul: all God's waves and billows passed over him. He was given up to the assaults of the infernal hosts. Oh, how they tormented his holy soul! — Oh, what nameless terrors! He was indeed the man who saw affliction by the rod of God's wrath. What an idea do these words give of the intensity of his agony, "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? — my soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. This cup which Thou givest me to drink, shall I not drink it?" "And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."

So deep were his sorrows, so fervent his prayers,
That down o'er his bosom roll'd great bloody tears;
I wept to behold him; I asked him his name —
He answer'd, 'Tis Jesus! from heaven I came.

I am thy Redeemer! for thee I must die;
The cup is most bitter, but cannot pass by.
Thy sins, like a mountain, are laid upon me;
And all this deep anguish I suffer for thee.

I heard with deep sorrow the tale of his woe,
While tears like a fountain of waters did flow;
The cause of his sorrows to hear him repeat,
Affected my heart, and I fell at his feet.

I trembled with sorrow, and loudly did cry,
Lord! save a poor sinner, O save, or I die!
He smiled when he saw me, and said to me, "Live;
Thy sins, which are many, I freely forgive!"

How sweet was that moment he bade me rejoice!
 His smile, O how pleasant! how cheering his voice!
 I flew from the garden to spread it abroad —
 I shouted, Salvation! and Glory to God!

View that crucifixion! Look at that thorny crown on his ensanguined temples! See that ragged purple robe, but ill concealing his lacerated and bleeding form! Look at that mocking sceptre of a reed; but the same meek, heavenly, and uncomplaining tenderness! Oh, how mournful the expression of his lovely features! His parted lips, already livid with approaching death, are uttering his dying prayer for his murderers, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." But — wonderful to relate, "they laughed him to scorn: they shot out the lip, they shook the head," saying, "He trusted in God: let him deliver him now, for he said, I am the Son of God." "They gave him gall for his meat, and in his thirst they gave him vinegar to drink." Ah, flow, ye tears, flow down these cheeks of mine.

Yes, he is surely dead,
 The cruel soldier said;
 Then pierced the Saviour's side.
 Behold, a mingled tide
 Of blood and water flowing from the wound,
 Covered with crimson stains Golgotha's ground.

The loving John was near;
 He saw the soldier's spear
 Bring forth that wondrous flood
 Of water and of blood;
 And well remembered how his Master said,
 He came for sinful man his blood to shed.

The blood that flowed that day
Long since has passed away ;
But still there flows a stream—
Though by all unseen—
For those that trust the blood on Calvary spilt ;
And in that stream their souls are washed from guilt.

Oh, what a death for the Father's "well-beloved Son!" No one wiped the perspiration from his brow. No one cheered him with words of comfort. Whoever left the world more forsaken and involved in deeper shades than he? Yet do not mistake him. It was not a conflict in which we see him engaged, but a sacrificial act. He did not yield to death like us, but devoted himself to it. The payment of the wages of sin is due only from sinners. The Holy One of Israel had nothing in common with death. What was it then we witness on Calvary? Look up! After having uttered the great and triumphant shout, "It is finished!" he again moves his lips to speak. What will follow, signs of weakness and a mournful farewell? O not so! Listen! With a loud voice, and the strength and emphasis of one who does not die from weakness, nor dying pays a forced tribute to a mournful necessity; but as one who is Lord over death, and voluntarily yields himself up to it, he exclaims—and noise of rending rocks, falling mountains, and bursting sepulchres accompany his cry, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit!" and after these words, like one whose labor is finished, he bows, self-acting, his bleeding head upon his breast, and resigns his Spirit, or, as John expresses it, "gives up the ghost."

Yes, glory be to God, the Holy and Just submits himself, representatively, to the fate of the guilty, while the latter are forever liberated, and inherit the indescribably happy lot of the Son of God. Rev. xxi. 7; 1 Cor. iii. 21-23. O wonderful and incomparably blessed truth! "God made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him!" 2 Cor. v. 21; Jer. xxiii. 6; Rom. x. 4. "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Hark! the voice of love and mercy
 Sounds aloud from Calvary;
 See! it rends the rocks asunder,
 Shakes the earth and veils the sky;
 "It is finished!"—
 Hear the dying Saviour cry.
 It is finished! O what pleasure
 Do these precious words afford!
 Heavenly blessings without measure,
 Flow to us from Christ the Lord,
 "It is finished!"—
 Saints, the dying words record.
 Tune your harps anew, ye seraphs;
 Join to sing the pleasing theme;
 All on earth, and all in heaven,
 Join to praise Immanuel's name;
 "It is finished!"—
 Glory to the bleeding Lamb.

O ye blessed, who belong to Christ, who can describe the glory of your state! 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10; iii. 21-23; 2 Cor. vi. 9, 10; Rev. xxi. 7. No longer dream of imaginary burdens, but know and never forget that your suit is gained to all eternity. Behold the Son of God yonder.

bears your fetters ; and nothing more is required of you than to love him with all your heart, and embrace him more and more closely who took your anathema upon himself, that you might exclaim, "The Lord our Righteousness."

O Love divine, how sweet thou art!
 When shall I find my willing heart
 All taken up by thee?
 I thirst, I faint, I die to prove
 The greatness of redeeming love,—
 The love of Christ to me.

Stronger his love than death or hell ;
 Its riches are unsearchable ;
 The first-born sons of light
 Desire in vain its depths to see ;
 They cannot reach the mystery,
 The length, the breadth, the height.

Dear reader, do you feel His love in your heart? Are you in the path that leads to Heaven? If not, do you ask, "What must I do to be saved?" The answer is, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." But it is requisite to feel your need of him, and to believe that he is able and willing to save you, and to save you now. Satan may have been trying to persuade you that Christ is not able to save so great a sinner as you are. It is false, for All power is given unto Christ in heaven and in earth. Matt. xxviii. 18. "Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him." Heb. vii. 25. Say not, then, "Alas! alas! it is too late!" or, "I have warred too long against the

Holy Spirit to hope for mercy ; I feel that my sins are too great to be forgiven ; I am a lost man !” Not so, not so ; for if you truly feel in your heart that you are “ a lost man,” and feel deeply penitent—“ broken in heart,” on account of your sins, you are a saved man ; for Jesus came to save “ lost ” men. Luke xix. 10 ; Matt. ix. 12, 13 ; John vi. 37. His word is, “ Thou hast destroyed thyself, but in Me is thine help.” Hosea xiii. 9 ; Rom. x. 4–12 ; Colos. ii. 14. He desires to exhibit you in the sight of heaven, earth, and hell, as proof of what the blood of the Cross is able to accomplish. When he was upon earth, he never spurned the guiltiest away. He pitied whom others loathed, and interceded for them “ with strong crying and tears.”

St. Paul, speaking of the Corinthians, says they were “ fornicators, effeminate, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners.” “ Such,” he says, “ were some of you.” Yet even them the Spirit of God made alive. “ Ye are washed,” he writes, “ ye are sanctified, ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.” 1 Cor. vi. 9–11. There was nothing in the Colossians that the Spirit of God should visit their hearts. St. Paul tells us that “ they walked in fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affections, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.” Yet them also the Spirit of God quickened. He made them “ put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him.” Col. iii. 5–10. There was

nothing in Mary Magdalene that the Spirit of God should make her soul alive. (See Mark xvi. 9; Luke xi. 21, 22; and Psalm lxxviii. 18.) Yet even her, the Spirit of God made a new creature, separated her from her sins, brought her to Christ, made her last at the cross, and first at the tomb.

Tell me who is standing there
 With weeping eyes and flowing hair,
 And box of ointment sweet,
 Now on the ground she's bending low;
 Her tears yet fast and faster flow;
 They fall on Jesus' feet.

To her dear Lord much love she bears,
 His feet she washes with her tears,
 And wipes them with her hair;
 And then with pious tenderness,
 Fond kisses ceases not to press,
 And pours the ointment rare.

Ah, she whose love is now so strong,
 Has wandered far, has wandered long,
 And from her God has gone;
 But now with willing feet returns,
 And now with deepest sorrow mourns
 The deeds that she has done.

And will the Lord in pity look,
 And blot her crimes from out his book,
 And words of comfort say?
 Ah, yes; e'en now he pardon gives,
 E'en now the weeping sinner lives,
 And wipes her tears away.

Sinners of every name and nation, — sinners of every sort and description, have knocked at the door of the fold, and none — who came with “a broken heart and a

contrite spirit" — have ever been refused admission. John vi. 37; Acts x. 34, 35. It was his glory while on earth, and it is his glory still, to be reproached as the "friend of sinners;" a friend continually to teach them "the Way" to heaven. His word is, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Rev. ii. 10. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and he shall be my son." Rev. xxi. 7. "Therefore let no man glory in men: for all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." 1 Cor. iii. 21-23; Jer. ix. 23, 24. Yes, you poor broken-hearted ones, whom this world's pettiest monarch would sweep from his path, nor deem you worthy the slightest notice, Jesus, "the Prince of Light," bending from his throne, invites to share his glory, and become with him, "Kings and priests unto God!" He does not say, "half my kingdom." No; he offers nothing by halves. His promise, unlike that of an earthly monarch, is illimitable. He says, "all Mine are thine;" confining his generosity neither to kingdoms, nor continents, nor worlds, nor heaven itself. He lays the whole universe at the feet of "the broken in heart," or truly penitent.

The poorest man on earth, who feels the love of Christ in his heart, is infinitely more important and honorable in the sight of God, than an unconverted king. The one may glitter like a butterfly in the sun for a little season, and be admired by an ignorant world, but his latter end

is darkness and misery forever. The other may crawl through the world like a crushed worm, and be despised by every one who sees him; but his latter end is a glorious resurrection and a blessed eternity. Of him the Lord says, "I know thy poverty, but thou art rich." Rev. ii. 9; 1 Cor. iii. 21-23; 2 Cor. vi. 9, 10; Jer. ix. 23, 24.

In every case of true repentance, Satan suffers a defeat, and Christ gains a victory. When the tide of battle thus runs in favor of the Cross, and when the standard of the Gospel is unfurled, and spread over the citadel of another conquered heart, Angels rejoice, and watch the issue of the conflict that is going on betwixt the followers of the Lamb and the slaves of Satan. The language which Jesus utters, when he tells us that there is an interest felt in heaven over the repentance of every sinner, at the very moment it is taking place upon earth, reminds us that there is a communication, such as Christians too seldom realize, betwixt the inhabitants of earth and those above. Such a declaration proves, that, however we may dream about the "far-off" kingdom, nevertheless the earth is such a near door-neighbor to heaven, that what is taking place upon its surface is not only known, but felt, in the world of peace; showing that the mode of communication is quick and accurate between the two worlds. Besides, we must not forget the amazing fact, that time has no duration in the reckoning of God. "One day is, with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." Space, upon the same principle, has no extension in the measurement

of God. There is no such thing as distance, considered in its relations to Him. Quickness of transition, to some extent, also annihilates space. The speed of Angels may be so great in their transitions from heaven to earth, and from earth back again to heaven, that, far as the regions may be asunder, they may make the passage quick as a gleam of lightning, or rapid as the twinkling of an eye. Even our thoughts almost annihilate space as they roam to and fro through the great creation, and up and down through the heavens, and round about the throne of God. Angels and glorified spirits may move through space much quicker than our thoughts do, and therefore quicker than the beams of light move away from the sun into the regions around. (See Isaiah xxv. 7; Dan. ix. 21-23; and Luke ii. 13.)

The great universe is the house of God,—which he more than fills; for he made it, and the Creator must be greater than the creature,—in which he walks in his majesty to and fro, and in every part of which he manifests, by the works of his hands and the evolutions of his providence, his awful presence. “Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off. Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord.” Jer. xxiii. 23, 24; 1 Chron. xxviii. 9; 2 Chron. xvi. 9. “Behold the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold He taketh up the isles as a very little thing. All nations before Him are as nothing, and vanity. To whom then

will ye liken God? or to what likeness will ye compare him? Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundation of the earth? It is He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain to dwell in. Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: He calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth."

The moral government of God is still more wonderful. The Scriptures very plainly teach the special presence of God in all places where his people meet to pray and praise. The Psalms are full of allusions to it; and so are most of the books of the New Testament. "Where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there I am in the midst of them." Matt. xviii. 20. "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." Matt. vi. 6. "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the son of man which is in heaven." John iii.

13; Deut. iv. 15. From these passages of Scripture, we learn that Christ is present with every Christian in his private devotions, and in every assembly which may be convened at the same time throughout the world; that he is at the same time in heaven and upon earth.

When I survey the wondrous cross
 On which the Prince of glory died,
 My richest gain I count but loss,
 And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
 Save in the death of Christ, my God:
 All the vain things that charm me most,
 I sacrifice them to his blood.

See, from his head, his hands, his feet,
 Sorrow and love flow mingled down;
 Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
 Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
 That were a present far too small;
 Love so amazing, so divine,
 Demands my soul, my life, my all.

Yes, the faithful soldier of Christ is ever ready to say, with St. Paul, "Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God through faith." Phil. iii. 8, 9; 1 Cor. ii. 2; Isaiah lxiv. 6; Jer. xxiii. 6; Acts iv. 12.

CHAPTER II.

THE LOVE THAT PASSETH KNOWLEDGE.

The love unspeakable and full of glory—What St. John heard—Effect of a mother's prayers, and of preaching Christ and him crucified—Amazing effects of pardon—Why these raptures are allowed new converts—The proofs of true conversion—Who are true Christians, and who mere professors or "reprobates"—Heart-cheering experiences—The beacon-light of their Father's house in full view—Sounds like "foolishness" to men of the world—"Divers operations, but the same God"—Love and sorrow—Christ always uppermost in the thoughts of his people—They cling to the Cross like the ivy to the tree.

WHEN a man loves God, with all his heart, and his neighbor as himself, all nature appears to sympathize with him; he goes forth with joy, and is led forth with peace; "the mountains and the hills break forth before him into singing, and all the trees of the field clap their hands." The fields, the rivers, the sky, the air, the sun, the stars, the cattle, the birds, the fish—yea, the very stones seem sharers of his joy. They are the choir and he the leader of a band, who, at the lifting of his hand, pours forth whole floods of harmony. The sweet singer of Israel felt this love in his heart when he exclaimed, "Praise ye Him, sun and moon: praise him all ye stars of light. Praise Him, ye heaven of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens. Let them

praise the name of the Lord: for he commanded and they were created. He hath also established them forever and ever: he hath made a decree which shall not pass. Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps: fire, and hail; snow, and vapor; stormy wind fulfilling his word: mountains, and hills, fruitful trees, and all cedars: beasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and flying fowl: kings of the earth: both young men, and maidens; old men, and children: let them praise the name of the Lord: for his name alone is excellent; his glory is above the earth and heaven." Psalm cxlviii. 3-13; Luke xix. 40. "And every creature which is in heaven and on earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever and ever."

Praise ye the Lord, ye immortal choirs
That fill the worlds above;
Praise him who form'd you of his fires,
And feeds you with his love.

Thou restless globe of golden light,
Whose beams create our days,
Join with the silver queen of night,
To own your borrow'd rays.

Thunder and hail, and fire and storms,
The troops of his command,
Appear in all your dreadful forms,
And speak his awful hand.

Shout to the Lord, ye surging seas,
 In your eternal roar ;
 Let wave to wave resound his praise,
 And shore reply to shore.

A young man who had long been the subject of a pious mother's prayers, speaking of his early Christian experience, says, "After listening to a powerful sermon on the sufferings and death of Christ, I went home much oppressed. I spoke to no one, and did not dare to lift my eyes from my feet, as I expected the earth to open and swallow me. The commotion of my soul was altogether such as language cannot describe. I crept, as it were, to my room, locked my door, and fell upon my knees ; but no words came. I could not pray. The perspiration was oozing from every pore. How long I remained on my knees I know not ; happily, this fearful agony of mind did not last long, or I should have died. Some hours elapsed—hours like ages, in which I felt myself before the throne of righteous judgment. While the process was going on I was dumb. Had the salvation of my soul depended on a word, I could not have uttered it. But He who had smitten graciously healed. As if they had been slowly unfolded before me, there appeared these never to be forgotten words, 'The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.' 1 John i. 7 ; Rom. iii. 25, 26 ; x. 4-12 ; Col. ii. 14 ; Heb. viii. 12. I had read these wonderful words often, but now they appeared new to me. I gazed, believed, loved, and embraced them. The crisis was

past. A flood of tears rushed from my eyes; my tongue was set at liberty, and I shouted, Glory to God!

“For three days after this I was filled with indescribable joy. I thought I saw heaven, with its blessed inhabitants, and its glorious King. I thought He was looking at me with unutterable compassion, and that I recognized Him as Jesus, my Saviour, who had laid me under eternal obligations. The world and all its riches appeared utterly worthless. The conduct of ungodly men filled me with grief and pity. I saw everything in an entirely new light. A strong desire to fly to heathen lands, that I might preach the news to idolaters, filled my heart, and I felt assured that I had but to open my lips to convince every one of the infinite grace of Christ and the infinite value of Salvation.”

These raptures are sometimes allowed to new converts as foretastes of heavenly bliss, and to convince their minds that the religion of the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ is what it is represented to be. But new converts are yet too carnal to be capable of their constant enjoyment. The principal concern and business of the new convert is to seek growth in grace, rather than flights of ecstasy; to struggle against the motions of fallen nature, and the suggestions of fallen spirits; and if the new convert does this with faithful perseverance, he will give true proof of that Christian fortitude which will be distinguished by the crown of victory. 1 Cor. ix. 27; Eph. iv. 17-25; v. 10-16; Rev. xxi. 7. The edu-

education and discipline must be more or less severe, according to the necessities of each individual case, in order to wear out vicious habits; to recover strength of self-government, which worldly indulgence must have weakened; to repair, as well as to raise into a habit, the moral principle, in order to their arriving at a secure state of virtuous happiness.

The body enslaves the soul by nature, but by grace the spirit learns to master the material. The Christian is fleshly, earthly, and sensual, in so far as the material predominates over the spiritual; and he is spiritual in so far as his spirit subdues the power of bodily influences. Clearness of vision, and firmness of foot, and beauty of prospect, come only to those who have struggled up to the heights—to the “heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” Conversion may be the work of a moment; but a saint is not made in an hour. Character—Christian character—is not an act; but a process; not a sudden creation, but a development. It grows and bears fruit like a tree; and, like a tree, it requires patient care and unwearied cultivation.

Take another case, “My heart was flooded with delight; it was a wedding-day to my soul, and I wore robes fairer than ever graced a bridal. My eyes were windows lighted up with happiness; my feet were young roes bounding with pleasure, my lips were fountains gushing with song, and my ears were the seats of minstrels. It was hard to contain my rapture within the narrow bounds of prudence. Like the insects leaping in the sunshine, or the fish sporting in the stream, I

could have danced to and fro in the convulsions of my delight. Was I sick, my pleasure drowned my pain; was I feeble, my bliss renewed my strength. Each broken bone praised God; each strained sinew blessed him. I knew no thought beyond, no hope above, the perfect satisfaction of that hour; for Christ and his salvation had filled my soul with unutterable joy and peace.

“As the portals of earth were opening for the coming of the summer, so was I preparing for glorious days of happiness and fruitfulness. Everything in creation was in keeping with my condition, as if nature was but a dress made by a skilful hand, fitting my new-born soul in every part. I was supremely blest. My heart was like a bell dancing at bridal joys, and the world was full of bells chiming with it. I was glad, and nature cried, ‘Child, lend me thine hand, and we will dance together, for I too am at ease since my great Lord hath loosed me from my wintry fetters; come on, happy soul, and wander where thou wilt, for,

“The softening air is balm;
Echo the mountains round; the forest smiles;
And every sense and every heart is joy.”

Come on, then, and sport with me on this our mutual feast, for lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds has come and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land: the fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and

the vines with the tender grapes give a good smell.
Arise, come away.

“Come away to the skies, my beloved, arise,
And rejoice in the day thou wast born;
On this festival day, come exulting away,
And with singing to Zion return.”

We do not expect to behold the Holy Ghost with our bodily eyes, or to touch Him with our hands; but we need no angel to come down to show us where he dwells. We need no vision from heaven to tell us where we may find Him. Only show us a man in whom the fruits of the Spirit of God are to be seen, and we see one who has the Spirit. We will not doubt the inward presence of the Almighty cause when we see the outward fact of an evident effect. “What! know ye not,” says St. Paul, “that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own. For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.” 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20; 2 Pet. i. 19; Psalm xxv. 14. “The world seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him, but ye know Him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.” John xiv. 7; Col. i. 27; 1 John iii. 24. “Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates.”

O Saviour, welcome to my heart;
Possess thy humble throne;
Bid every rival, Lord, depart,
And reign, O Christ, alone.

The world and Satan I forsake;
 To thee I all resign;
 My longing heart, O Saviour, take,
 And fill with love divine.

O may I never turn aside,
 Nor from thy bosom flee;
 Let nothing here my heart divide
 I give it all to thee.

Can we see the wind on a stormy day? We can not, but we can see the effects of its force and power. When we see the clouds driven before it, and the trees bending under it—when we hear it whistling through doors and windows, or howling round the chimney-tops, we do not for a moment doubt its existence: we say “there is a wind.” Just so is it with the presence of the Spirit of God in the soul. “The wind bloweth,” says Jesus, “where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit.” John iii. 8; 1 John iv. 4. Can we see the magnetic fluid in the compass-needle? We can not. It acts in a mysterious way. But when we see that little piece of iron always turning to the north, we know at once it is under the secret influence of magnetic power. Just so it is with the work of the Spirit of God in the soul.

Ah! whence that soothing sound that came
 So soft, yet burthening the wind?
 It kindles, like some latent flame,
 The ardent longings of my mind.

It is the Spirit's voice,
 Still as the evening breeze,
 Just sighing through the trees,
 Breathing celestial joys:
 It fills me with unwonted fire,
 With tender, strong, yet pure desire.

But, say, my restless, beating heart,
 What object draws thy soaring thought,
 That thou with worlds would'st freely part,
 And deem thy purchase cheaply bought?
 Jesus, my Saviour, God!
 Him my touched soul desires,
 His are these bosom fires,
 Panting to sound abroad
 The name He bears—the love He shows—
 The grace that from His bounty flows.

William Cowper, the Christian poet, at one period of his history, was driven by a consciousness of guilt to the verge of despair. At length he opened the Bible and read, "Christ Jesus God hath set forth to be a propitiation for sin, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." Rom. iii. 25; x. 4-12. "Immediately," he says, "I received strength to believe, and the full beams of the Sun of Righteousness shone upon me. I saw that Christ having suffered for my sake, and in my stead, it enabled Almighty God, consistently with his justice and holiness, to exercise his mercy in my behalf. Unless the Almighty Arm had been under me, I think I should have been overwhelmed with gratitude and joy. My eyes filled with tears, and my voice choked with transport; I could only

look to heaven in silent fear, overwhelmed with love and wonder. I lost no opportunity of repairing to the throne of grace, but flew to it with an earnestness irresistible and never to be satisfied. The Lord had enlarged my heart, and I could now cheerfully run in the ways of his commandments." It was in such a state of mind that he composed the sweet hymn, commencing with the words, "There is a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Immanuel's veins."

The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day;
And there may I, though vile as he,
Wash all my sins away.

Take yet another case, "The very fowls of the barn-yard flocked around me, tuning their shrill voices, as I then thought, joined with all creation to praise the Lord for what he had done for my poor soul. I cried out, Can this be the same field that I used to travel?—is this the same farm,—are these the same buildings? They must be the same, but they are changed. 'Ah! no! no!' was the answer, 'the change is in yourself.' I also visited those lonely spots, where in the days of my mourning, far from human eye, I used to vent my sighs, and make my complaints; and it appeared as if all these shone with lustre unbounded. I leaped—I walked—I rejoiced that my sorrows were turned into joy."

The Spirit of God can take a tinker without learning, patronage, or money,—a man at one time notorious for

nothing so much as blasphemy and swearing, and make that man write a religious book which shall stand unrivalled and unequalled in its way by any since the time of the Apostles. He did this with John Bunyan, the author of *Pilgrim's Progress*. The Spirit of God can take a sailor, drenched in worldliness and sin,—a profligate captain of a slave-ship, and make that man a most successful minister of the Gospel,—a writer of letters, which are a storehouse of experimental religion, and of hymns which are known and sung wherever the English language is spoken. He did this with John Newton. When the Spirit of God enters the Sailors' prayer-meeting, "the poor children of the sea" stand up and bear testimony to the infinite love and mercy of their glorious Captain, in these words :

"Shipmates, I am just eight months old to-night in my Christian life. I was born again on the sea. O how happy I have been these eight months of my Christian life! Before that I was a slave to Satan. Oh! what a miserable drudge I was in his cruel service. Some of you here to-night know what I was—how miserable, on shipboard or shore, always miserable in my sinful ways and sinful pursuits. But when the Holy Spirit convinced me of my guilt and danger, and prepared my heart to attend to the call of the glorious Gospel of Christ, and led me to the foot of the cross, and as a poor despairing sinner, to beg for mercy, and God forgave me all for Jesus' sake, I cannot tell you what happiness I felt. Shipmates, it was then the

great Captain said to me, Now stand by Me, and I will stand by you, in calm or storm all the same, and will never leave or forsake you. And, glory be to his Name, I have found his promise true You all know how it is with me now. I am not now the slave I once was to Satan. Every day I find the service of my new Master more delightful than ever. O I am so happy! Glory be to God! Oh! shipmates, come along with me. The great Captain is on board. The articles are open. Come and sign them — glorious Commander — beautiful Ship — delightful Company,”—John xiv. 21–23; Rev. iii. 20; Cant. iv. 16; v. 1, 2,—“splendid voyage — bound to a glorious port — princely wages — Oh, shipmates, come along! come along!”

Another sailor said, “Shipmates, I shall never forget the time nor the place when and where God, for Christ’s sake, spoke peace to my soul. It was on board a man-of-war, at the foot of the main-mast, on a dark and stormy night, away in mid-ocean, that I first heard the accents of forgiveness. I had been a hardened wretch—quite as bad as any on board a man-of-war, yet I was smitten with conviction of sin, which appalled me. Oh! what a vile sinner I felt myself to be! My whole soul was filled with a sense of sin, and I was bowed under the grievous load. But I called on God, at the foot of the main-mast, and he pardoned all my sins, for Jesus’ sake! Oh! shipmates, what mercy! Oh! what an hour was that to my poor soul! Six years ago it

was, and what happy years have those six years been to me.

“Hard was my toil to reach the shore,
 Long tossed upon the ocean;
 Above me was the thunder’s roar,
 Beneath the waves commotion:
 Darkly the pall of night was thrown
 Around me, faint with terror:
 In that dark hour how did my groan
 Ascend for years of error!

“Sinking and panting as for breath,
 I knew not help was near me;
 And cried, ‘Oh! save me, Lord, from death;
 Immortal Jesus, hear me;’
 Then quick as thought I felt him mine,
 My Saviour stood before me;
 I saw his brightness round me shine,
 And shouted, Glory! Glory!”

A small sailor-boy now arose and said, “I have been four years at sea. I have neither father or mother, brother or sister. I found out that I was a wicked boy, and not too little to go to hell. If I have got nothing else, I have got a ‘Friend’—I have got Jesus to comfort and cheer my heart with his wonderful love; and I love him too. Shipmates, I feel very happy to-night.” The sailor-boy’s words were not lost. There sat a little boy before him overwhelmed with tears. That little boy said to his father, on leaving the church: “Oh, father, I am so glad you took me to the poor sailors’ prayer-meeting to-night. I shall never forget it. Oh, my dear father, I want to be a Christian.”

The Spirit of God can take a prize-fighter, and trainer of pugilists, and make him pour out his soul in the house of God, in the following manner:—"I feel it my duty to tell you what the Lord has done for my soul. I hope you will hear all I have to say. There are many here who have known me for years,—who have known me when I was fearfully wicked. I was on a visit to my brother in the country. When I went there I had as much idea of getting religion as many of you have now—that is none at all. I went to church to oblige the people with whom I was staying, that's all. The Saviour was there. The Spirit of God was powerfully displayed, and went from heart to heart all through the congregation. It worked upon me three or four nights. The pastor of the church came to me and asked me if I would not like to get religion, and serve God. I answered, 'No, I didn't care about it just then,' and told him a lie, for I did; I felt as though I needed religion. I got very uneasy, and made up my mind I had better leave that part of the country, as it was getting too warm for me. I told my brother I was going home in the morning. He said, 'Wait another day;' and I made up my mind I would stay and attend another night. Some remarks were made to backsliders the next night, many of whom I knew. They sat there unmoved. The minister, and my religious friends, had been trying to get me to be a Christian, but the devil said, 'Don't be taken in by those fellows.' After church that night, we were going home,—the minister lived up our way, —I made some remarks

about those backsliders, saying to him that, if I were in their place I would come out like a man and seek religion over again.

“The minister told me that he thought I was a very great sinner; that I stood in a critical condition, and was more likely to be lost than any of them. I said to my brother, if that was the way the minister was going to talk, I would go. I got my carpet-bag ready next day and started; I opened the door; I wanted to go and I didn’t want to go; and I hoped my brother would again urge me to stay; he did so, and I stayed. That was on Saturday. After I had my dinner I resolved that I would seek the Lord that night. I made a strong resolution; I felt where I stood, and that perhaps it was the last time the Spirit of God would strive with me. Saturday night the invitation was given to come forward to the Altar, and I got up, went forward, and fell on my knees by the altar. I tried as hard as ever man did, but I got no religion,—no peace. Sunday night I attended with a like result. That night I could not sleep, my sins looked so frightful; they came up on every hand and stared at me; all the sins of my life crowded upon me, many I should not have thought of, had not the Spirit of God brought them before me. My heart was overwhelmed with grief; I could not sleep. Monday morning I got up and prayed; I did the best I could; I asked the Lord to take away the weight that bore me down so. A friend came to me that day and said he was going to take a ride and would like to have my company. Know-

ing him to be a good man, I consented, thinking he might do me good. There was little said as we rode along, but my friend told me to keep looking for the Saviour; that I was trying to get religion, and had let everybody know it; the Lord was willing to bless me at any time or anywhere. I was riding along, singing a hymn, and in an instant I felt as though I was blessed. I am sure I gave up my soul and body. The first thing I knew, God spoke peace to my soul. It came like a shot,—it came like lightning, when I was not anticipating it, and the first thing I said was, ‘Glory to God! Glory to God!’ My friend said he knew God had blessed me, for he felt the shock too. The change was surprising; everything appeared to have been blessed; even the horse and wagon. I felt strong. I could almost fly.

‘O, sacred hour! O, hallowed spot!
 Where love divine first found me:
 Wherever falls my distant lot,
 My heart shall linger round thee;
 And when from earth I rise to soar
 Up to my home in heaven,
 Down will I cast my eyes once more
 Where I was first forgiven.’

“Glory be to God, this religion is good! My faith in the Lord Jesus grows stronger every day. I would face all the men that ever lived, and tell them I am bound for heaven.”

All this sounds like “foolishness” to those who know not God; but tens of thousands of living men could

stand up this day and testify that it is true. They could tell you that they know it all by experience, and that they do indeed feel themselves new men. They love the things that once they hated, and hate the things that once they loved. They have new habits, new ways, new tastes, new joys, new sorrows, new feelings, new opinions, new anxieties, new pleasures, new hopes and new fears. In short the whole bias and current of their being is changed. Once they cared only for this world, its pleasures, its business, its occupations, its rewards. Now they look upon it as an empty unsatisfying place, — an inn, — a lodging, — a training-school for the life to come. Their treasure is in heaven; their home beyond the grave. They see the beacon-light of their “Father’s house,” that so cheeringly speaks of a home brighter and better than the happiest of earthly ones, cheering their hearts, and leading them to forget the intervening billows, or to think of them only as wafting them nearer to their desired haven.

Let none doubt their calling because it came not with the sound of a trumpet; let them not measure their own feelings by those of other men, and because they are not precisely the same, at once conclude they are no children of the Kingdom. No two leaves upon a tree are precisely alike, — variety is the rule of nature; the line of beauty runs not in an undeviating course; and in grace the same rule holds good. “There are,” says St. Paul, “divers operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.”

Adore the power which is not bound down to unity of method, but which can open the eyes by the clay and spittle, or by the simple touch of the finger. Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, "Lazarus, come forth!" but the restoration was as speedily effected when he gently said, "Maid, arise." Zaccheus was called from the tree with a voice that the crowd could hear; but it was a still voice which in the garden said, "Mary." Oh, the emotions of Mary's heart in that dark hour, when she stood in the midst of the congregated and insulting crowd, and beheld her dear Lord and Saviour suffering for those who were turning his sufferings into mockery! She saw that brow, which is now encircled with a diadem of glory, covered with sweat and blood, lacerated and torn with the cruel crown of thorns! Her eyes were red with weeping, and dim with sorrow. The hands that now hold the sceptre of universal dominion, so often stretched forth when upon earth to relieve the needy, or lifted up in prayer, were then stretched and nailed to the bloody beam! Oh, what horror rushed through Mary's soul when she heard the voice of agony exclaiming, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!" Oh the joy of her soul when she heard His well-known voice again saying to her, "Mary." Ah, weeper! happy weeper!—

To thee how bright a morn was given,
 After thy long vigil of despair;
 When that high voice which burial rocks had riven,
 Thrilled with immortal tones the silent air.

Never did clarion royal blast declare
 Such tale of victory to a breathless crowd,
 As the deep sweetness of one word could bear
 Into thy heart of hearts. O woman! bowed
 By strong affection's anguish—one low word,
 "Mary," and all the triumph wrung from death
 Was thus revealed! and thou that had'st so erred,
 So wept, and been forgiven, in trembling faith
 Did'st cast thee down before th' all-conquering Son,
 Awed by the mighty gift thy tears and love had won.

Much love and much sorrow must go together in this vale of tears. Matt. xxvi. 37-39; John xi. 33-36; xvi. 20-33; Rom. ix. 1, 2; xii. 15, 16; 2 Cor. ii. 4; vi. 9, 10; Heb. v. 7, 8. But let the Christian soldier "be of good cheer," for "the morning cometh"—that bright morning when the dew-drops collected during earth's night of weeping shall sparkle in eternal sunbeams; when in one blessed moment a life-long experience of trial will be effaced and forgotten. In that day, the Lord "will rejoice over his people with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over them with singing."

Mary knew no anchor of hope, no ground of consolation, no way to heaven, except through the mediation of her blessed Lord, and were she to imagine existence without him, she could only think of herself as in the jaws of despair, and irrecoverably lost. He was her last resource, but at the same time all-sufficient for her eternal salvation. Hence she clung to him with all her soul, and nothing was able to separate her from him. He was always in her thoughts, her soul's delight, and the supreme object of her affections—all which she expressed

in the act of anointing in Simon's house. She did not pour out a few drops only of the precious ointment, but the whole—as an emblem of her profound devotion to “the Lord of Glory.” With the utmost reverence she approached her Divine friend, broke behind him the well-closed vessel, shed the spikenard upon his lovely head and feet, then humbly bent herself down and wiped the latter with her loosened tresses. In this affectionate and symbolical act, a degree of devotedness was manifested such as is rarely, if ever, exhibited among Christians in our day. Mary desired to belong to Christ for time and eternity; to cleave to him by faith, like the ivy to the tree. She wished to live in his light, like a dark planet in the beams of the sun, which lends it its radiance. Mary soon followed the dear “Friend” of her once unhappy soul to glory, where she is now singing the song of redeeming love.

“Oh, I want to put on my attire,
Washed white in the blood of the Lamb;
I want to be one of your choir,
And tune my sweet harp to his name!
I want—oh, I want to be there,
Where sorrow and sin bid adieu,
Your joy and your friendship to share,
To wander and worship with you.”

CHAPTER III.

THE WARFARE.

• What God does to the true members of his Church—The true nature of the Christian warfare—The devices of Satan—His onsets constant—Leave no unguarded place—What the Christian must expect and do—No cross no crown—The hidden designs of God—The rod—Words of cheer for sinking hearts—The morning without clouds—The everlasting hills of glory appear—The spirit of God sounds a string here and there—Conflicts and trials—The way God teaches and trains his children—Fearful consequences of counteracting His afflictive dispensations—Frightful sufferings and deaths of the most precious and lovely of God's children—Dreadful end of the wicked—Steadfastness of the saints of old—Why the Christian's course is not strewed with flowers and sunbeams.

THE true members of Christ's Church are chosen in the furnace of affliction, Isaiah xlviii. 10; Rev. vii. 14; and when they are tried they come forth as gold. Job xxiii. 10; 2 Tim. iv. 6-8. The heat of the furnace burns out the dross and leaves the pure metal behind. It is in the furnace that the flesh is destroyed and the old man gets his death-blow. It is in the furnace that self-confidence is upton, unbelief broken, and faith strengthened, and purified. The Holy Spirit and man's sin cannot live together peaceably; they may be both in the same heart, but they cannot both reign there, nor can they both be quiet there; for "the Spirit lusteth

against the flesh, and the flesh lusteth against the Spirit ;” they cannot rest, but there will be a perpetual warring in the soul, so that the Christian will have to cry out, “ Oh, wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me from the body of this death.” In another place, it is said of this inward warfare, “ For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for his sake, having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me.” Phil. i. 29, 30 ; 1 Thess. iii. 5, 6 ; Heb. x. 32-39 ; 2 Peter ii. 20-22. But let the troubled Christian “ be of good cheer,” for in due time the Spirit of God will drive out the “ strong man armed,” and “ take from him all his armor wherein he trusted,” and will “ lead captivity captive,” and present the faithful soldier of the Cross blameless before the throne of His Majesty with exceeding joy. Luke xi. 21, 22 ; Psalm lxxviii. 18. “ Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory ! O death where is thy sting ? O grave, where is thy victory ? The sting of death is sin ; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

The best soldiers of Jesus Christ are always called to drink deepest of his cup, and carry the heaviest burdens. He who lays down his armor when the battle is ever raging, will be in as great danger as though he had no weapon at command. The onsets of Satan are constant, and the soul that hopes to glide gently and unappre-

hendingly along the way to heaven will at length discover the fatal mistake. The real life of every man is the inner life of conflict, of temptation, of hope, fear, remorse, despair. Never did battle at Pharsalia or Waterloo rage like the battle which often desolates the soul of man. Bunyan has endeavored to depict this strife, in the fierce conflict with Apollyon. But the reality will defy the descriptive power of any human pen. There is nothing on this side of eternity more sublime and full of awe than this soul-warfare, as some experience it.

Satan usually finds a season of affliction favorable to his work of temptation, and he never fails to avail himself of it. When Pharaoh was informed that the children of Israel were entangled in the wilderness, he resolved to pursue them, and mustered his forces for the purpose, in the anticipation of an easy and decisive victory. Thus when Satan sees the Christian soldier entangled with perplexity and distress, he comes in upon him like a flood, that, if possible, he may utterly overwhelm him. In this manner he assailed the Son of God himself. It was when approaching the awful consummation of his woes, and when his soul was "exceeding sorrowful, even unto death," that Satan and his hosts exerted their utmost malice against him, and turned the hour of his deepest anguish into the hour and power of darkness. Thus it was with Job. It was when he was suffering from the irritating influence of his complicated woes, that he tempted him to "curse

God and die." Some of his temptations are of a nature not to be misunderstood; their design is self-evident — to excite a murmuring and rebellious disposition, by representing God as a hard task-master; as severe and vindictive in his dispositions — unjust and unreasonable in his requirements; thus he seeks to inflame the passions, to pervert the judgment, and to excite bitterness, opposition, and presumption. Or he approaches in a more covert and subtle manner, and by reasoning, not against God, but for him, although in a manner equally false and deceptive, he endeavors to cast the soul into despondency, and to prevent it from obtaining help or comfort. Great is the distress which, in consequence, is sometimes experienced.

My soul, be on thy guard;
 Ten thousand foes arise;
 The hosts of sin are pressing hard
 To draw thee from the skies.

O watch, and fight, and pray;
 The battle ne'er give o'er;
 Renew it boldly every day,
 And help divine implore.

Ne'er think the vict'ry won,
 Nor lay thine armor down;
 The work of faith will not be done,
 Till thou obtain the crown.

Then persevere till death
 Shall bring thee to thy God;
 He'll take thee, at thy parting breath,
 To his divine abode.

The way to the crown is by the cross. If justified by faith, we must suffer tribulations also. Go round to every saint in glory; every one has a different story, yet each has a tale of suffering. One was persecuted by his "friends." Psalm xli. 5-8; 2 Tim. iii. 11, 12; Zech xiii. 6. Another fell into the hands of "false brethren," who, "through covetousness," made merchandise of him, "speaking great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage." 2 Peter ii. 3; Jude xvi. Another lost all his property, houses, lands, money, and friends. Phil. iii. 8; Heb. x. 34; 2 Cor. viii. 9. Another was bereaved of his children, and visited by sore diseases. Job ii. 9, 10; Psalms xxxviii. and lxxxviii.; Lam. iii. 1-21. Another had lived among depraved men and women, with fearfully wicked children, who vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their filthy conversation and unlawful deeds. 2 Peter ii. 4-8; Ezek. xvi. 49, 50; 1 Sam. iii. 13. Another had all these afflictions and troubles in one,— "deep called unto deep," but mark, all are brought out of them. It was a dark cloud, but — glory be to God — it passed away; the water was deep, but they reached their "Father's house." Rev. vii. 9-14; Isaiah xlvi. 17; John xiii. 7. Not one of them blames God for the road he led them; their only cry is, "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen "

Were it not for the furnace of affliction, what would become of the Christian's dross and alloy? And when the silver is in the crucible the Refiner himself comes near. "Thus saith the Lord, behold I will melt them and try them, for how shall I do for the daughter of my people." Jer. ix. 7. "I will turn My hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin." Isaiah i. 25; Dan. xii. 10; Matt. xiii. 43. Does the craftsman throw the precious metals into the fire and forget them? No; they are too costly. He is anxious and careful respecting them. He sits patiently at the door of the furnace intently watchful. As soon as he sees his own face reflected from the molten metal within, he knows that the process has been successful, and he abates the fury of the flames. So does Jesus watch the furnace of affliction in which his people are being purified, not allowing them to suffer injury and loss, but only waiting to see his own image reflected in their hearts.

Sanctified afflictions are spiritual promotion. Suffering has kept tens of thousands of the children of God from sinning. "How kindly has God," says the lamented Rev. Robert M. M'Cheyne, of Dundee, Scotland, "thwarted me in every instance where I sought to enslave myself. I will learn at last to glory in disappointments." "Blessed," says the Psalmist, "is the man whom Thou chasteneth, and teachest him out of thy law. It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn Thy statutes. Before I was afflicted

I went astray, but now I have kept Thy word." Psalm exix. 67-75; Deut. viii. 5, 6. "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."

Disciples of a suffering Saviour, count on suffering; reckon it not as a strange thing that you should be attacked by Satan and his emissaries — Belial and his sons. John viii. 44; Eph. ii. 2. You shall be more than conquerors through Him that loved you. 1 Cor. xv. 57; 2 Cor. ii. 14; 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. The Lord knows the sorrows of his people. Exod. iii. 7; Judges x. 16. He weeps with them. In all their afflictions he is afflicted. He is touched with the feelings of their griefs as well as of their infirmities. How often does he come to us as he did to the disciples in that midnight hour when all seemed lost — "in the fourth watch of the night," when we least looked for him; or when like the shipwrecked Apostle, "for days together neither sun nor stars appeared and no small tempest lay on us; when all hope that we should be saved seemed to be taken away," how often just at that moment has his sweet voice been heard floating over the billows, saying, "Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid." John vi. 20; Isaiah lii. 6. It is the same brief utterance with which he calmed the storm-tossed children of God in every age. "If the Lord," says the Psalmist, "had not stood by me, the deep waters would have gone over my soul." The Lord never forsakes those who love him, "with the whole

heart," and do that which is right in his sight. Heb. xiii. 5; Isaiah xliii. 1, 2. "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee."

Every human tie may perish;
 Friend to friend unfaithful prove;
 Mothers cease their own to cherish;
 Heaven and earth at last remove;
 But no changes
 Can attend Jehovah's love.

In the furnace God may prove thee,
 Thence to bring thee forth more bright,
 But can never cease to love thee;
 Thou art precious in his sight:
 God is with thee —
 God, thine everlasting Light.

The Lord often brings those who come to him into untried places, that they may seek out the guiding pillar, and prize its radiance. He puts them on the darkening waves, that they may follow the guiding light hung out astern from the only Bark that was ever proof against the storm. How does he quiet their fears and misgivings? As they stand panting on the bleak mountain side, he points his crook to the shining gates of glory, and says, "Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." What gentle words! what a blessed consummation! And when they stand on the verge of the grave, He says, "Fear not," for "My presence shall go with thee."

“When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee; for I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour.”

The life of the Christian is a life of faith His spirit is brought, by faith, into communion with the life of heaven; a life which only he who feels it knows. Eph. iii. 18, 19; 1 John iv. 4. This communion is shadowed forth in Scripture in such passages as these: “The Secret of the Lord is with them that fear him.” Psalm xxv. 14; John xiv. 21–23. “In Thy Light shall we see light.” Psalm xxxvi. 9. “But we have this Treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.” 2 Cor. iv. 7. “We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a Light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts.” 2 Peter i. 19. “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.” “Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any

man have a quarrel against any : even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also ye are called in one body ; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom ; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."

Ye faithful souls, who Jesus know,
 If risen indeed with him ye are,
 Superior to the joys below,
 His resurrection's power declare.

Your faith by holy tempers prove :
 By actions show your sins forgiven :
 And seek the glorious things above,
 And follow Christ your head to heaven.

There your exalted Saviour see,
 Seated at God's right hand again,
 In all his Father's majesty,
 In everlasting pomp to reign.

For who by faith your Lord receive,
 Ye nothing seek or want beside ;
 Dead to the world and sin ye live ;
 Your creature love is crucified.

Your real life with Christ conceal'd
 Deep in the Father's bosom lies ;
 And glorious as your Head reveal'd,
 Ye soon shall meet him in the skies.

The Lord loves his people too well to make the world tearless and sorrowless. Be assured there is a disguised love in all he does. He knows us infinitely better than we know ourselves, and often puts a "thorn" in our nest to drive our affections from things of earth. The Lord chastens his own; for the children of wrath is reserved retribution in another state of being. Job xxvii. 8-22; Psalms xlix. and lxxiii. Oh take courage; the "rough dealings" of to-day are an earnest of loving dealings by-and-by. It is in this manner the sheep is brought into the fold by the barking of the dog; and in this fashion the ship is compelled by the storm to make for the nearest haven. "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." John xiii. 7; Isaiah xlvi. 17. The darkness which you now experience may be for the purpose of extinguishing in you those false lights of human reasoning, which oppose the bidden designs of God; he wishes that you should allow yourself to be conducted, as one blind, by the hand of his good pleasure. "For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste and howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye." Deut. xxxii. 9, 10. Abandon yourself then, with the generosity of a noble heart, to his guidance. You can not have your own pleasure in this world, and afterward reign with Christ. If God sends you great sufferings, it is a sign that he is preparing you for that delightful country,

Where all his beauties you behold,
And sing his name on harps of gold.

The critical events and great disappointments of the Christian's life, that so stagger and amaze him, are not so wonderful or mysterious as in his own bewildering grief he is apt to think them. The great events of his life strike him with surprise, because he fails to perceive that God is administering all things with reference to a spiritual commonwealth. We are seldom at agreement with his providence; or with the spiritual economy of this world; or with the interests of our being in its highest developments. Yet we are vain, proud, headstrong, impetuous, irascible, impatient under restraint, and rebellious under discipline. Is it strange, then, that at every step of our Christian career we are met by opposing forces? Amos iii. 3-6; Levit. xxvi. 18-30. Is not every wise household a microcosmic moral government where the parents both please and pain their children, repeating in a minor sphere, the very administrative acts of overruling, denying, compelling, paining, and punishing for their good, their own children, as in the greater sphere God thwarts and disciplines them? This is clearly stated in Deut. viii. 5: "Thou shalt consider in thine heart that as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee. Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him." The same thing is said in Heb. xii. 5-8: "And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not

thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons."

Why should we doubt a Father's love,
 So constant and so kind?
 To his unerring, gracious will
 Be every wish resigned.

Good, when he gives—supremely good,
 Nor less when he denies;
 E'en crosses, from his sovereign hand,
 Are blessings in disguise.

We are commanded to hear "the voice of the rod, and who hath appointed it." But man is stupid and insensible with respect to divine things, and divine teaching. God speaks plainly, but he will not hear. God manifested his presence sufficiently to the children of Israel in the wilderness, but they were slow in learning that he was ever with them, to instruct and to bless them, and that what they suffered or enjoyed proceeded from himself. How little do professors of religion in general, look at the design of God in their trials! They have no solemn recognition of His all-disposing government and superintendence; no thought of the course of events, but as regulated by something which they call "general laws," and then blended with

“chance;” or the afflictions by which they are exercised, but as the exclusive results of what is merely subordinate agency. Like the Philistines in the days of Eli, they do not see the hand of God in anything. 1 Sam. vi. 9; Amos iii. 6; Jer. v. 3–31; Hosea vii. 2. But not so with the experienced soldier of Christ; he sees the hand of God in everything. He knows that in whatever way an affliction may be intended to operate, its object is the promotion of his welfare. Job v. 6, 7; Heb. xii. 4–13; Rev. iii. 19; Deut. viii. 5. Is his body afflicted, he is thankful that his mind continues vigorous and entire. Is he poor and despised, he feels in his heart that he has the favor and enjoyment of God; and can he be despicable who is favored with the special friendship of the sovereign Majesty of the Universe? Isaiah lxvi. 2; Jer. ix. 23, 24; Rev. ii. 9, 10. Can he be miserable who has “the Lord of glory” for his portion, who enjoys the fountain of all happiness, and who has the light of God’s countenance to cheer him, and the consolations of the Divine Spirit to comfort and refresh his soul?

Intimately acquainted with all the circumstances of his people, their age, situation, dispositions, advantages, and temptations, the Lord sees the particular kind of affliction which is needed for the promotion of their welfare. He places some of his saints in the vale of poverty, because he knows they could not resist the snares of affluence;—others he deprives of bodily health; some he dooms to months and years of great adversity; others he bereaves of family and friends, and leaves them, as

forlorn pilgrims, to grope their way to the new Jerusalem. But, in all these methods of his providence, he is guided by that infinite wisdom which prompts him to study the different characters of his children, and to apportion that discipline to each of them which will best secure the end of all the divine dispensations—the salvation of their souls. The Saviour himself was made perfect through sufferings; and the character of the Christian is more formed and improved by his afflictions than by his enjoyments. Psalm cxix. 67, 71, 75; 1 Pet. v. 8–10. Afflictions are heavenly agents, and work out for the Christian “a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” When the afflictions are for righteousness’ sake, for keeping a good conscience, for adhering to the truth as it is in Jesus, and for attachment to his cause, they lose their name, and become an honor—a filling up of the measure of the Saviour’s sufferings, and the Christian “glorifies in this behalf;” for he knows that affliction has not merely a blessing in it, but it is, in itself, a blessing.

As in a time of rain and cloud, the distant hills look nearer, so do the everlasting hills of Glory appear in the cloudy and dark day, nearer, brighter, more glorious.—sparkling with ten thousand rills of love and covenant faithfulness, unseen and unobserved before.

Lord of our souls, thou Saviour ever dear,
 Be still our rainbow in the clouds of life;
 In thy pure sunlight meet each rising tear,—
 Our Arc of Triumph in the scenes of strife.

Radiant with mercy calm the sinking heart,
 And beam thro' sorrow's night, and suff'ring's gloom,
 A deathless Iris that will not depart,
 But shine with hues unfading o'er the tomb.

There would be no Bow in the material heavens but for the cloud. Lovelier, indeed, to the eye, is the azure blue—the fleecy summer vapors, or the gold and vermilion of western sunsets. But what would become of the earth if no dark clouds from time to time hung over it; distilling their treasures—reviving and refreshing its drooping vegetable tribes? Is it otherwise with the soul? Nay. The cloud of sorrow is needed; its every rain-drop has an inner meaning of love. 1 Cor. x. 1-4; Rom. xi. 25-33. Here we are often baffled at the Lord's dispensations; we cannot fathom his ways;—like the well of Sychar, they are deep, and we have nothing to draw with. But—glory be to God—soon the mystery will be finished; the enigmatical seals, with all their inner meanings, opened. When that “morning without clouds” shall break, each soul will be like the angel standing in the sun,—there will be no shadow; all will be perfect day! Blessed indeed shall the righteous be in that day! They shall shine like stars, no longer obscured with clouds. Isaiah xxv. 7, 8; Dan. xii. 2, 3; Mal. iii. 16, 17; Matt. xiii. 43. They shall be beautiful as the lily, no longer “choked with thorns.”

That joy—that joy, is it promised to me?
 O, had I the wings of a dove, I would flee,
 And ne'er would I slacken or fold my wing,
 Till I reached that joy's everlasting Spring.

Stay, foolish heart, thy impatience awhile ;
The work of faith with hope's visions beguile :
He who would enter the joy of his Lord,
First serves—then, through grace, expects the reward.

Yes, wait a little ; scorn and contempt will soon be over. Laughter and ridicule shall soon have an end. Slander and misrepresentation will soon cease. Jesus shall come and plead your cause, and then as Moses said to Korah, “the Lord will show who are his.” St. Paul longed to be with Christ, and yet with quiet resignation to his heavenly Father's will, he waited patiently until his change came. His constant prayer was, that Christ might be honored in him, whether it be by life or by death. When he wrote to the Church at Philippi from his prison at Rome, he said, “To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labor ;” (*i. e.*, I know that if I continue here, I shall gain more souls for Christ,) “but what I shall choose I know not, for I am in a strait between two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ ; which is far better. Nevertheless, to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.” Phil. i. 20–24. This language beautifully exemplifies the character of a faithful soldier of Christ.

My soul, never forget in the dark night of sorrow, desertion, sickness, and pain, that all things are working together for thy good, even when thou art suffering most. Be not afraid of suffering, “It is enough for the disciple that he be as his Master, and the servant as his Lord.” In the world, from the world, all true disciples

of Jesus must have tribulation. "We glory," says St. Paul, "in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience: experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Says another apostle, "Beloved, think it not strange, concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you; but rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you. On their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified."

It is not so much by the symmetry of what the Christian attains in this life that he is to be made happy, as by the enlivening hope of what he shall reach in the world to come. While a man is stringing a harp, he tries the strings, not for music, but for construction. When it is finished it shall be played for melodies. God is fashioning the heart of every true Soldier of the Cross for future joy. He only sounds a string here and there to see how far His work has progressed. "Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty: for he maketh sore and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hands make whole. He shall deliver thee in six troubles: yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee." Job

v. 17-19; Psalm xxxiv. 7-19. "Though He cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies; for he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men." Lam. iii. 32, 33; Psalm cvii. 17. "Though He slay me," says Job, "yet will I trust in him."

The Christian must be perfected through conflicts and trials. St. Paul, speaking of his conflicts and trials, warns the brethren to hold fast their faith, and not to be moved by them, saying, "For yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto. For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know. For this cause when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labor be in vain. But when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you: therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our afflictions and distress by your faith: for now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord. For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before God; night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?"

It is no triumph of faith to trust God for those good things which he gives in hand—this is rather to walk by sense than by faith; but to rely on him in the greatest

destitution, "and against hope to believe in hope," this is the faith of a true child of Abraham, and will be "imputed" to us—as to him—"for righteousness." Rom. iv. 22; Heb. xi. 8–19. "It is," says Bunyan, "as ordinary as for the light to shine, for God to make black and dismal dispensations to usher in bright and pleasing ones; yea, and the more frightful that is which goes before, the more comfortable is that which follows after. 'Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.'" Those whom God adopts, he teaches and trains. He leads them to Sinai, and shows them the Law, that their hearts may be broken. He leads them to Calvary and shows them the Cross, that their hearts may be cleansed, bound up, and healed. Isaiah i. 5, 6; Ezek. xvi. 4–9; Rev. iii. 18, 19. He leads them to Pisgah, and gives them distant views of the promised land, that their hearts may be cheered. He takes them into the wilderness, that they may see their own emptiness. He carries them to Tabor, and gives them glimpses of the glory to come.

Oft I walk beneath the cloud,
 Dark as midnight's gloomy shroud;
 But when fear is at the height,
 Jesus comes, and all is light:
 Blessed Jesus, bid me show
 Doubting saints how much I owe.

God by chastisement, lays his finger upon the conscience and forthwith it starts into new life. "If they be in fetters, and be holden in cords of affliction, then

He showeth them their work, and their transgressions that they have exceeded. He openeth also their ear to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity." Job xxxvi. 8-10. The desert-trials of the Israelites put them to the proof; and when proved, what iniquity was found in them! what sin came out that had lain hidden and unknown before! Then the heart's deep fountains were broken up, and streams of pollution came rushing out, black as "the Pit" itself. Rebellion, unbelief, fretfulness, murmurings, atheism, idolatry, self-will, self-confidence, self-pleasing,—all burst out when the blast of the desert met them in the face. They had not yet learned the blessedness of faith in God. The Psalmist, speaking of their provocations, says, "Our fathers understood not Thy wonders in Egypt; they remembered not the multitude of thy mercies; but provoked Him at the sea, even at the Red Sea. Nevertheless he saved them for his name's sake, that he might make his mighty power to be known. He rebuked the Red Sea also, and it was dried up; so he led them through the depths, as through the wilderness. And he saved them from the hand of them that hated them, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy. And the waters covered their enemies: there was not one of them left. Then believed they His words; they sung his praise. They soon forgot his works, they waited not for his counsel: but lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert. And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul."

There cannot be a more certain presage of future misery than to counteract the afflictive dispensations of God. Then he turns his rod into a scorpion, and fulfils the threatenings, "If ye will not be reformed by Me, then will I walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins." The first blow is gentle, it affects the man's property only; if he remain unimpressed and unhumbled, God then enters his house and bereaves him of a darling child—perhaps a second—a third; he next smites his wife, and she is made to waste away before him by slow and consuming disease; he then visits him with some severe bodily affliction: he is laid upon a bed of pain and languishing; he is made to feel in solitude the extent of his bereavements, and time is given him for reflection; after this He stripes his conscience,—his heart is filled with bitterness; he has a wounded spirit that he cannot bear; his life becomes burdensome; he is afraid to die, and sickens at the thought of existence. If in all this he turns not unto God, with weeping and mourning, but sins yet more and more, then he casts him into hell. Prov. xxix. 1; Psalm ix. 17; xi. 6; lxxiii. 5–20. "Thou hast forsaken me, saith the Lord, thou art gone backward: therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee, and destroy thee; I am weary with repenting."

It is said of Jehoram, king of Israel, that the Lord smote his people, his children, his wives, and his goods. "And after all this the Lord smote him in his bowels with an incurable disease. And it came to pass, that in

process of time, after the end of two years, his bowels fell out by reason of his sickness: so he died of sore disease." 2 Kings xxi. 14-19. And all this befell him, because he had, like Ahab, Jezebel, Abaziah, and Athalia, "sold himself to work evil in the sight of the Lord."

Take the disciples of Christ for an example of suffering and patience. "Giving no offence in anything," says St. Paul, "that the ministry be not blamed; but in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distress, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things." 2 Cor. vi. 3-10; Jer. ix. 23, 24; Rev. xxi. 7. "Even to this hour we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place; and labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we entreat: we are made the filth of the world, and are the off-scouring of all things unto this day." 1 Cor. iv. 11-13; John xv. 17-25. "Of the Jews five times I received forty stripes save one;

thrice was I beaten with rods ; once was I stoned ; thrice I suffered shipwreck ; a night and a day have I been in the deep ; in journeyings often ; in perils of waters ; in perils of robbers ; in perils of my own countrymen ; in perils by the heathen ; in perils in the city ; in perils in the wilderness ; in perils in the sea ; in perils among false brethren ; in weariness and painfulness ; in watchings often ; in hunger and thirst, in fastings often ; in cold and nakedness. Besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the Churches." "In Damascus the Governor, under Aretas, the king, kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me : and through a window, in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands."

In another place, he says, "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the Love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Speaking of the sufferings of his brethren in Christ, he says, "Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance ; that they might obtain a better resurrection ; and others had trial of cruel mockings, and scourgings ; yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment : they were sawn asunder, they were stoned, were tempted, were slain with the sword ; they wandered about in sheep-skins, and goat-skins ;

being destitute, afflicted, tormented; of whom the world was not worthy; they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth." Heb. xi. 35-38. "Let me go, for the day breaketh," was the language of their hearts. They shouted the praises of God on the rack, and sung Psalms and Hymns in the flames. The secret kept from "the world" no longer remained a secret to them. Their faith, like that of Stephen, faded into sight, and the bright forms of ministering hosts became visible.

St. Paul himself, as he approached the martyring axe, exclaimed, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight. I have finished my course. I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day."*

Surely if the most precious and lovely of God's children have suffered all this, is not that a sufficient proof

* St. Paul was beheaded by Nero, in his anger at the conversion of his favorite cup-bearer. Peter was crucified by the same tyrant. Andrew was crucified at Achia. James was beheaded by Herod Agrippa. Philip suffered martyrdom in Phrygia. Bartholomew suffered martyrdom in Armenia. Thomas, called Didymus, was put to death by stoning, in India. Matthew suffered martyrdom in Ethiopia. James and Simon Zelots were murdered in Jerusalem. Jude was put to death by the Magi, in Persia. Mark died of his wounds at Alexandria, in Egypt. Luke was hanged on a tree, in Greece. John, after being preserved unhurt, by a miracle, in a caldron of boiling oil, appears to have been the only one of the disciples who died a natural death, at an advanced age.

that this world is not a place of happiness, nor earthly prosperity the reward of virtue. Shall we, after reading these passages of Scripture, complain of our petty trials? Shall we not rather be thankful that our afflictions are so light?

Oh for that flame of living fire,
Which shone so bright in saints of old;
Which bade their souls to heaven aspire,—
Calm in distress, in danger bold.

Where is that Spirit, Lord, which dwelt
In Abraham's breast, and seal'd him thine?
Which made Paul's heart with pleasure melt,
And glow with energy divine?

That Spirit, which from age to age
Proclaim'd thy love, and taught thy ways?
Brighten'd Isaiah's vivid page,
And breathed in David's hallow'd lays?

Is not thy grace as mighty now
As when Elijah felt its power;
When glory beamed from Moses' brow,
Or Job endured the trying hour?

Were the Christian's earthly course strewed with flowers, and sunbeams ever played around his dwelling, it would lead him to forget his wandering life,—that he is but a sojourner here. The tent must at times be struck, pin by pin of the movable tabernacle taken down, to enable him to say and feel in the spirit of a pilgrim, "I desire a better country." In that "country" the redeemed sons and daughters of God will praise him for ever for their sorrows: so blessed shall they appear to them, that they shall wonder how they could ever weep and sigh.

CHAPTER IV.

BATTLES FOUGHT AND VICTORIES WON.

The aged Soldier of the Cross—The smile upon his wasted cheek—His prospects of eternal happiness clear and glorious—The wilderness passed—His Father's house in full view—Happy deaths—The glories of Immanuel's land—Unspeakable happiness of the children of God—Transporting views of the heavenly world—The ministry of Angels—Delightful death-bed scenes—Happy death of a Sunday-school scholar—His last words to his parents and sister—His "farewell" to each—Sees his Saviour—Angels around his bed—Hears delightful music—Longs to die—Looks up to Heaven, smiles, and expires in his father's arms.

BLESSED is the man whose love to Jesus hath become confirmed with his years, so that his "heart is fixed," and fired, and flaming. He with his grey hairs and venerable countenance commands the attention of all men when he speaks of Him whom he hath tried and proved through more than half a century of tribulation mingled with rejoicing. His piety renders him a most delightful companion; his familiar acquaintance with the Word of God has furnished his mind with the most sublime sentiments, such as Socrates would have listened to with silent admiration, and Plato have heard with rapturous joy. He sees the shadows of the evening drawing on with "hopes full of immortality;" and his silver locks remind him to pass his remaining days as a pilgrim with

his staff in his hand, ready to depart. "For these many years," to use his own language, "I have not promised myself a to-morrow." He does not fear death, because he knows his Saviour has taken away its sting. 1 Cor. xv. 55-57; 2 Cor. v. 1-9; Hosea xiii. 14. And oh what happiness beyond! Isaiah lxiv. 4; 1 Cor. ii. 9; x. 3, 21-23; Rev. xxi. 4-7.

Mark but that radiance of his eye,
That smile upon his wasted cheek;
They tell us of his glory nigh,
In language that no tongue can speak.

We cannot look upon such a man without feeling the exceeding beauty of the expression of Solomon about the hoary head found in the way of righteousness, being a "crown of glory." His prospects are clear and glorious beyond conception. The dawn of heaven is in his heart. The wearisome, dull, "Enchanted Ground" of the earthly pilgrimage is now passed. The darkness and fear of death are left behind. "Despair and Doubt" are not so much as seen from this happy region. Shining ones, unseen by all except the dying saint, are hovering around. He has reached the last stage of a journey which tends to his "Father's house." He has passed the wilderness, and now stands on Jordan's bank, ready to enter the promised land when the waters of the cold stream shall be divided. Through the crevices which time and affliction have made in his earthly tabernacle, the soul looks out upon its eternal mansions, and exclaims,

There is my house and portion fair;
My treasure and my heart are there.

Such a man could say with Hugh Mackail, when on the scaffold at Edinburgh, in 1666, "Farewell, father and mother, friends and relations; farewell, sun, moon and stars. Welcome, God and Father; welcome, sweet Lord Jesus; welcome, blessed Spirit of grace and God of all consolation; welcome, glory; welcome, eternal life; welcome death. O Lord, into thy hands I commit my spirit, for thou hast redeemed my soul, O Lord, God of truth." He could say with Baxter, "I bless God I have a well-grounded assurance of eternal happiness, and great peace within." He could say with John Janeway, "O, my dear friends, that I could let you know what happiness I enjoy! O that I could express the thousandth part of that sweetness that I now find in Jesus!" He could say with Samuel Rutherford, "O that my brethren did know what peace I have this day! I shall sleep in Christ, and when I awake, I shall be satisfied with his likeness. Oh! for arms to embrace Him! Oh! for a well-tuned harp!" He could say with John Wesley, "The best of all is, God is with us."

Samuel Rutherford was a Scotch divine, who suffered during the religious persecution in Scotland, but maintained his strong integrity of character and deep-toned piety to the last, and died full of love to God and his people. His last words were, "Glory, glory dwelleth in Immanuel's land." The following lines are made up mostly of expressions of his own:—

The sands of time are sinking,
 The dawn of heaven breaks,
 The summer morn I've sighed for —
 The fair, sweet morn—awakes.
 Dark, dark hath been the midnight,
 But dayspring is at hand;
 And glory, glory dwelleth
 In Immanuel's land.

Oh! well it is for ever —
 Oh! well for evermore:
 My nest hung in no forest
 Of all this death-doomed shore;
 Yea, let this vain world vanish,
 As from the ship the strand,
 While glory, glory dwelleth
 In Immanuel's land.

There the red rose of Sharon
 Unfolds its heartmost bloom,
 And fills the air of heaven
 With ravishing perfume:
 Oh! to behold it blossom,
 While by its fragrance fanned,
 Where glory, glory dwelleth
 In Immanuel's land.

The King there in his beauty,
 Without a vail is seen;
 "It were a well-spent journey,
 Though seven deaths lay between."
 The lamb with his fair army
 Doth on Mount Zion stand,
 And glory, glory dwelleth
 In Immanuel's land!

Oh, Christ—he is the fountain,
 The deep, sweet well of love!
 The streams on earth I've tasted,
 More deep I'll drink above;

There to an ocean fulness
 His mercy doth expand,
 And glory, glory dwelleth
 In Immanuel's land.

Oft in yon sea-beat prison,*
 My Lord and I held tryst;
 For Anworth† was not heaven,
 And preaching was not Christ.
 And aye my murkiest storm-cloud
 Was by a rainbow spanned,
 Caught from the glory dwelling
 In Immanuel's land.

But that he built a heaven
 Of his surpassing love—
 A little New Jerusalem,
 Like to the one above—
 "Lord, take me o'er the water,"
 Had been my loud demand;
 "Take me to love's own country,
 Unto Immanuel's land!"

But flowers need night's cool darkness,
 The moonlight and the dew;
 So Christ, from one who loved it,
 His shining oft withdrew.
 And then for cause of absence
 My troubled soul I scanned;
 But glory shadeless shineth
 In Immanuel's land.

The little birds of Anworth—
 I used to count them blest;
 Now beside happier altars
 I go to build my nest:
 O'er these there broods no silence;
 No graves around them stand;
 For glory deathless dwelleth
 In Immanuel's land.

* At St. Andrew's.

† His parish.

BATTLES FOUGHT

Fair Anworth by the Solway,
To me thou still art dear:
E'en from the verge of heaven
I drop for thee a tear.
Oh! if one soul from Anworth
Meet me at God's right hand,
My heaven will be two heavens,
In Immanuel's land.

I've wrestled on toward heaven,
'Gainst storm, and wind, and tide;
Now, like a weary traveller,
That leaneth on his Guide,
Amid the shades of evening,
While sinks life's lingering sands,
I hail the glory dawning
In Immanuel's land.

Deep waters crossed life's pathway,
The hedge of thorns was sharp;
Now these lie all behind me:
"Oh! for a well-tuned harp!"
Oh! to join Hallelujah
With yon triumphant band,
Who sing where glory dwelleth,
In Immanuel's land.

With mercy and with judgment
My web of time he wove,
And aye the dews of sorrow
Were lusted in his love.
I'll bless the hand that guided,
I'll bless the heart that planned,
When throned where glory dwelleth,
In Immanuel's land.

Soon shall the cup of glory
Wash down earth's bitterest woes;
Soon shall the desert brier
Break into Eden's rose;

The curse shall change to blessing,
 The name on earth that's banned
 Be graven on the White stone,
 In Immanuel's land.

Oh! I am my Beloved's,
 And my Beloved is mine!
 He brings a poor, vile sinner
 Into his house of wine.*
 I stand upon his merit;
 I know no safer stand,
 Not even where glory dwelleth,
 In Immanuel's land.

I shall sleep sound in Jesus,
 Filled with his likeness rise,
 To love and to adore him,
 To see him with these eyes;
 'Tween me and resurrection
 But Paradise doth stand,
 Then—then for glory, dwelling
 In Immanuel's land.

The bride eyes not her garment,
 But her dear Bridegroom's face:
 I will not gaze at glory,
 But at my King of grace;
 Not at the crown he giveth,
 But on his pierced hands;
 The Lamb is all the glory
 Of Immanuel's land.

I have borne scorn and hatred,
 I have borne wrong and shame,
 Earth's proud ones have reproached me
 For Christ's thrice blessed name.
 Where God's seals set fairest,
 They've stamped their foulest brand;
 But judgment shines like noon-day
 In Immanuel's land.

* See Cant. ii. 1-4; v. 1, 2; Matt. xxvi. 26-28; Eph. iii. 13-19; and Rev. iii. 20:
 xxi. 4.

They've summoned me before them,
 But there I may not come ;
 My Lord says, " Come up hither ;"
 My Lord says, " Welcome home ;"
 My kingly King at his white throne
 My presence doth command,
 Where glory, glory dwelleth
 In Immanuel's land.

O what happiness to be a child of God! He has meat and drink which the world knoweth not of. Weep not for those who have departed to be with Christ. It is with them " far better." They sleep in Jesus. Isaiah lvii. 1, 2 ; Rev. xiv. 13. Seek not " the living among the dead." Think rather that the last sigh was scarcely over on earth, when the song of triumph was begun in heaven. 1 Thes. iv. 15 ; John v. 25. O hear that sweet voice, coming down in heaven's delightful music, saying, " If ye loved Me ye would rejoice because I said, I go unto the Father."

The martyrs rejoiced in their last moments. Heaven seemed to be opened to them, and such was their view of the heavenly world, that they even triumphed amid the agonies of death. They suffered everything that human malice could inflict, but they suffered patiently, and died triumphantly. They shouted the praises of God in their last moments; they were happy in the flames. This has encouraged and animated the saints of God in every age of the world, many of whom have been permitted to behold their heavenly inheritance, even before the spirit had left the body. James Bainham, when his arms and legs were half consumed, ex-

claimed: "Ye look for miracles! Here now, ye may see one. This fire is a bed of roses to me!" James Hawkes, another Christian martyr, was entreated by his friends to give them some token that the fire was not so intolerable but that a Christian might keep his mind quiet and patient—he assented; and, if so, he promised he would lift his hands above his head before he died. An eyewitness states that "at the stake he mildly addressed himself to the flames, and when his speech was taken away, and his fingers consumed, so that all thought him dead, he, in remembrance of his promise, suddenly lifted up his burning hands and clapped them together three times, as if in great joy!"

The venerable Samuel Walker, when near death, uttered the following rapturous expressions: "I have been upon the wings of the Cherubim; heaven has, in a manner, been opened to me; I shall soon be there, and am only sorry that I cannot take you with me. O, my friends, had I strength, I would tell you such news as would rejoice your souls; I have such views of heaven!" Augustus M. Toplady exclaimed, in his last moments, "O how this soul of mine longs to be gone; like a bird imprisoned in a cage, longs to take its flight! O what a day of sunshine this has been to me! I have not words to express it; it is unutterable!" Dr. Doddridge, when near death, said: "Such delightful and transporting views of the heavenly world as my Father is now indulging me with, no words can express." Dr. Bateman, a Christian Physician, said a little before he died: "I

can hardly distinguish whether this is langour or drowsiness which has come over me ; but it is a very agreeable feeling ;” and, dying, he exclaimed, “ What glory ! the angels are waiting for me ! Lord Jesus, receive my soul !—farewell !”

The ministry of angels is not a dream of the imagination. (See Heb. i. 14 ; and 1 Cor. iv. 9.) No, it unfolds itself in beautiful reality, in scenes acted, throughout the Sacred Volume. Look at Elijah, faint and weary in the desert. His prayer is uttered, “ Take now away my life, O Lord ;” and he sinks heavily oppressed with grief, to sleep. Saw you that touch, so light, so gentle, that awoke his slumber ? It was an angel. That angel’s visit gives him strength, and he pursues his journey. Again it is night. The shepherds are in the fields, watching their flocks. The angel of the Lord descends. Yea, a multitude of angels proclaim, in one great shout of praise, the birth of Jesus, “ Fear not ; behold we bring good tidings of great joy to you and to all people ; for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.” Then that mighty chorus, unheard of by men since the fall in Eden, rang through the arches of Heaven, and sounded abroad over the wilderness of Judea, “ Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace ; good-will to men ;” and ever since salvation has been preached through the blood of a crucified Saviour, and ever since wherever and whenever the Gospel has triumphed, there has been “ joy in heaven.”

The pious John Holland, an old Puritan minister,

while listening in his dying hours to the reading of the 8th Chapter of Romans, cried out, "Oh, stay your reading! What brightness is that I see? On being told it was the sunshine, he exclaimed, "Sunshine! Nay, it is my Saviour's shine! Farewell, world! Welcome, heaven! The Day-star from on high hath visited my heart. Oh, speak it when I am gone and preach it at my funeral,—God dealeth familiarly with those who love him. I feel His mercy; I see His majesty; whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell, God knoweth; but I see things that are unutterable." Well might such a man exclaim,

What music! what light!
 What wonders break in on my heart, on my sight!
 I come, blessed spirits! I hear you on high.
 O, frail, faithless nature! can this be to die?
 So near! what, so near to my Saviour and King?
 O, help me, ye angels, his glories to sing.

The much lamented Edward Payson, D.D., died rejoicing in hope. He said, "The battle is fought! and the victory won! I am going to bathe in an ocean of purity and benevolence and happiness, to all eternity! The celestial city is full in view! Its glories beam upon me, its breezes fan me, its odors are wafted to me, its music strikes upon my ear, and its spirit breathes into my heart! Nothing separates me from it but the river of death, which now appears as a narrow rill, which may be crossed at a single step, whenever God shall give permission." When racked with pain, and near death, he exclaimed, "Oh, what a blessed thing it is to lose one's

will! Since I have lost my will I have found true happiness. There can be no such thing as disappointment to me, for I have no desire but that God's will may be accomplished." Again, "When I read Bunyan's description of the land of Beulah, where the sun shines and the birds sing day and night, I used to doubt whether there was such a place; but now my own experience has convinced me of it, and it infinitely transcends all my previous conceptions. I think the happiness I enjoy is similar to that enjoyed by glorified spirits before the resurrection. I can find no words to express my happiness."

John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, left the world exclaiming, "O what happiness! what unspeakable glories do I see! O how I long to die, and be with my Saviour!" The Rev. William Grimshaw had glorious views of heaven just before he departed. He said, "I am as happy as I can be on earth, and as sure of glory as if I was in it. I have nothing to do but to step out of bed into heaven; I have my foot upon the threshold already." Another dying Christian exclaimed, "My soul longs, my spirit pants, to see the God I love. O is it possible that the One I love can come so near, can restore me to himself, and bring back again the blissful days of Eden to my soul? Oh! what glory!—blessed Saviour, I come!"

Coxe, in his life of Fletcher, says, that a few days before his dissolution, he appeared to have reached that desirable point, where the last rapturous discoveries are made to the souls of the dying saints. Roused, as it were, with the shouts of angels, and kindled into rap-

ture with visions of glory, he broke forth into a song of holy triumph, which began and ended with praises of God's unfathomable love. He labored to declare the secret manifestations he enjoyed; but his sensations were too powerful for utterance; and after looking unutterable things, he contented himself with calling upon all around him to celebrate that adorable love which can never be adequately expressed. Jer. xxxi. 3; Isaiah lxiii. 9; Zeph. iii. 17; Eph. iii. 18, 19. This triumphant state of mind was not a transient feeling, but a state that he continued to enjoy, with little or no discernible interruption, to the moment of his departure. While he possessed the power of speech, he spoke as one whose lips had been touched with a live coal from the altar; and, when deprived of that power, his countenance discovered that he was secretly engaged in contemplation of the joys of heaven.

The deeply pious and devoted John Janeway, when near his journey's end, said: "I am, through mercy, quite above the fears of death, and am going unto Him whom I love above life. O that I could let you know what I now feel! O that I could show what I see! O the glory; the unspeakable glory that I now behold! My heart is full, my heart is full, my heart is full; Christ smiles, and I cannot choose but smile. Can you find it in your hearts to stop me, who am now going to the complete and eternal enjoyment of my Redeemer? Would you keep me from my crown? The arms of my blessed Saviour are open to embrace me; the angels

stand ready to carry my soul into his bosom! O did you but see what I see, you would all cry out with me, 'How long, dear Lord? Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!'" Remarkable also was the closing scene and the last words of Mr. Halyburton. After expressing, in the intensity of joyful desire, his willingness to depart, he exclaimed in rapture, "This is a miracle, without pain! And this not the fancy of a man disordered in his brain, but of one lying in full composure! Oh, blessed be God that ever I was born! I have a father, and a mother, and ten brothers and sisters in heaven; and I shall be the eleventh. Oh, blessed be the day that ever I was born!" When he drew still nearer to death, he said to those around him, "When I fall so low that I am not able to speak, I will show you a sign of triumph, when I am near glory, if I am able." This he did, by lifting and clapping his hands in the most triumphant joy, when he was speechless and in the agonies of death! When John Knox, the English Reformer, was asked, after he could speak no more, if he remembered the promises of God, he raised his hand, shouted "Glory to God!" and expired.

These feelings of earnest expectation and ardent desire, are tempered in the believing soul by the most perfect resignation to the divine will: while in the language of one inspired writer he prays that he "may go over to see the good land;" in the words of another he submissively adds, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come." His "heart is fixed;" his

soul is kindled into rapture with love to his Saviour; and in the fulness of his joy — “joy unspeakable and full of glory,” he exclaims, in the words of the Psalmist, “Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever.”

“How is it,” says the Rev. Dr. Berg, “that the wicked man in his death, has no sound of heavenly melody charming his ears, and no sight of holy angels, hovering around his pillow? Why is it, that instead of these, images of terror float before his glaring eyes and fill his soul with horror and dismay? Is it not because when men are dying the curtain of the body is gradually lifted up, and the soul hitherto not cognizant of the presence of attending spirits, looks out into the eternal world, and stamps an impress of its realities upon the fading senses?” (See Eccles. v. 6; x. 20; Isaiah xxv. 7; and 2 Kings vi. 12.) “And when the spirit is poised upon the confines of the two worlds, and its heaven or its hell is already begun, why need we wonder that the righteous man hath hope and glory in his death, whilst the wicked man trembles in overwhelming terror and despair?” Eph. ii. 2; 2 Tim. ii. 26; John viii. 44; Matt. xxv. 41-46; Rev. xxi. 8. Ah, yes; the wicked, alas for him at that awful moment! Oh! my soul, come not thou into the secret of his sorrows!

In that dread moment, how the frantic soul
Raves round the walls of her clay tenement;
Runs to each avenue, and shrieks for help;

But shrieks in vain! How wishfully she looks
 On all she's leaving, now no longer hers!
 A little longer; yet a little longer;
 O! might she stay to wash away her stains;
 And fit her for her passage! Mournful sight!
 Her very eyes weep blood; and ev'ry groan
 She heaves is big with horror. But the foe,
 Like a staunch murd'rer, steady to his purpose,
 Pursues her close, through ev'ry lane of life;
 Nor misses once the track; but presses on,
 Till forced at last to the tremendous verge,
 At once she sinks to everlasting ruin!

We are indebted to an esteemed Christian friend for the following particulars of the death of a Sunday-school scholar, and member of one of the Evangelical Churches of a town in a neighboring State. The youth whose happy death is here referred to, was at the time of his departure for his heavenly home, fourteen years, three months and six days of age:

A more exemplary life or happier experience in death than that of the dear youth so early called to the tomb, has never been met with in one so young. Though but a short time resident among us, his amiable disposition had endeared him to the hearts of many who witnessed the patience and resignation with which he bore his affliction, and who sympathize with the bereaved family whose little circle death has again entered. His disease (consumption, induced by scarlet fever) was lingering, and often accompanied with severe suffering, yet no murmur or complaint ever escaped his lips, and he seemed to be calmly awaiting his summons to the skies. Christian friends who conversed with him invariably

found him in the happiest state of mind ; but it was when he neared the hour of his departure, that he more particularly evinced the delightful influence of piety upon the youthful heart. The evening preceding his death, a most joyous feeling came over his spirit, which was manifested by the dismissal of the natural timidity which usually made him appear quiet and reserved, and he conversed freely with a number of Christian friends ; and so sweetly did he speak of his present happy condition, and the joys of that immortal state he should so soon enter, that those who stood by his dying-bed felt indeed that it was heaven's gate. Later in the night, he called his father to his bedside, and after speaking in regard to the removal of his remains to his favorite place of burial, he said,

“ My dear father, don't shed any more tears for me. Mine is a case that calls for rejoicing. I am going to my beloved Saviour and my dear brothers.” Here his father held up the photographs of his brothers, Alfred and Thomas, before him, and told him he would soon be with them in heaven, to part no more. He seemed pleased, and said, “ My dear father, put my arms around your neck.” * * * * * And then added, “ O God of love, bless my dear father, who has prayed for me, and with me, and given me such good counsel all my life ; forsake him not nor leave him, but stand by him in all his trials, in every affliction, in every temptation.” Here he became exhausted, but soon rallied, and said, “ My dear father, when tempted, pray for more grace ;

and when anything goes wrong, don't fret or scold, but look to Jesus." Here he again kissed his father; and then stretching out his emaciated hands, his countenance beaming with joy, and his eyes fixed on some heavenly scene, he exclaimed, "Glory!—praise Him!" He was unable to say more, but after an interval of a few minutes, added, "I hear heavenly music! O, I see angels!—they are waiting for me! All fear of death has vanished! Mother, did you hear that?—my Saviour called me!—raise me up! raise me up! Keep thy presence, Lord."

Here he called upon his parents and sister, Mary Elizabeth, to look at the beautiful angels around his bed, and to listen to their sweet music. He then affectionately addressed his Mother, and afterward his sister, counseling her to avoid the company of wicked children, and always to be obedient to her parents, and asking to be left alone, (there being several Christian friends in the room,) he offered a most touching and eloquent prayer for her preservation from evil, and that she might become "a bright and shining light in the Church of Christ," and that they might "meet in heaven." Upon being asked if he had any fears of death, he replied, "No; all is peace,—I am prepared to go." Here he began to sink, but prayed for strength to enable him to speak to his parents, sister, and friends, and soon rallied, and said, "O praise the Lord!—O, my Saviour! O, I am so happy!" Here he was exceedingly happy in Christ. Indeed, his heart seemed to be overflowing

with love to God, and to all around him; and in this state of mind he continued to the last moment of his life. At six o'clock on Friday evening, January 6, 1860, (and only a few seconds before his departure for his heavenly home,) he said, "Mother, my dear mo——," and then reclining in his father's arms, and fixing his eyes on the ceiling of the room, his features beaming with happiness, he gently breathed his last, and Clinton's spirit flew to meet his Saviour's embrace, and join his little brothers in the happy land.

A week before Clinton's departure, he requested to be left alone with his sister—then in the twelfth year of her age, when he spoke to her in these words: "My dear sister, the doctor says I cannot live two days, and I wish to say a few words to you before I die. My dear sister, give your heart to God in your early days. Your brother will soon be at home, and you won't have any brother to talk to or play with any more. Now, my dear sister, if you don't give your heart to God you will go to hell, and never see your brothers in heaven. Now mind what I have told you, or you will be sorry for it when you come to die."

The parting scene between Clinton and his parents was exceedingly affecting. To his father, he said, "Kiss me, my dear father, * * * —farewell, my dear father,—don't be discouraged, but be of good cheer;—stand up for Jesus,—fight the good fight, and meet me in heaven. Your three sons will be waiting your arrival on the heavenly shore." To his mother, he said, "Kiss

me, my dear mother. Oh, my Saviour, bless my dear mother! Oh, my dear mother, I must now leave you! * * * —farewell, my dear mother: meet me in heaven.” To his sister he said, “Kiss me, my dear sister Mary Elizabeth, * * * —Oh, my Saviour, bless my dear sister, and keep her from the evil that is in the world. Forsake her not, nor leave her; but grant, O my blessed Lord, that she may meet me in heaven,—farewell, my dear sister,—meet me in heaven.” Here, turning to the wall, he thanked God for having strengthened him in this last farewell scene.

Many deeply interesting articles on religious subjects were found among Clinton’s papers, all written in his own hand. Some of them bore the following titles:—“On Prayer;” “On the Family Altar;” “On Private Prayer;” “On the Presence of God;” “On Obedience to Parents;” “Lines to my Mother,” &c. The lines to his mother he had arranged to suit his own case, from some printed verses in his possession, as follows:—

CLINTON TO HIS MOTHER.

CLINTON.

My mother, my mother! O let me depart!
 Your tears and your pleadings are swords to my heart.
 I hear gentle voices, that chide my delay;
 I see lovely visions, that woo me away.
 My prison is broken, my trials are o’er!
 O mother, my mother, detain me no more.

MOTHER.

And will you then leave us, my brightest, my best,
 And will you run nestling no more to my breast?

The summer is coming to sky and to bower ;
The tree that you planted will soon be in flower ;
You loved the soft season of song and of bloom ;
Oh, shall it return and find you in your tomb ?

CLINTON.

Yes, mother, I loved in the sunshine to play,
And to talk of the birds and the blossoms all day ;
But sweeter the songs of the spirits on high,
And brighter the glories that shine in the sky !
I see them, I hear them, they pull at my heart ;
My mother, my mother, O, let me depart !

MOTHER.

Oh, do not desert us ! Our hearts will be drear,
Our home will be lonely when you are not here.
Your little sister will sigh 'mid her playthings, and say,
I wonder dear Clinton so long can delay.
That foot like the wild wind, that glance like a star,—
Oh, what would this world be when they are afar ?

CLINTON.

This world, dearest mother ! O, live not for this !
No, press on with me to the fulness of bliss !
And, trust me, whatever bright fields I may roam,
My heart will not wander far from you or from home.
Believe me still near you on pinions of love ;
Expect me to hail you when soaring above.

MOTHER.

Well go, my beloved ; the conflict is o'er ;
My pleas are all selfish, I urge them no more.
Why chain your bright spirit down here to the clod,
So thirsting for freedom, so ripe for its God ?
Farewell, then, farewell, till we meet at the throne :
There love fears no parting and tears are unknown.

CLINTON.

O glory! O glory! what music! what light!
 What wonders break in on my heart, on my sight!
 I come, blessed spirits! I hear you from high!
 O frail, faithless nature, can this be to die?
 So near! what, so near to my Saviour and King!
 O, help me, ye angels, His praises to sing.

A few moments before he expired, Edmund Auger said to a friend, "Do you see that assembly who await my arrival? Do you hear that sweet music with which those holy men invite me?"—"Let me go!—I must go!" "How hard it is to die!" remarked a friend to an expiring believer. "O, no, no!" he replied; "easy dying, blessed dying, glorious dying! O, I never thought that such a poor worm as I could come to such a glorious death!" Another dying saint said, "All is well. My sky is clear. I am not afraid to die. Hark!—I hear singing! O how sweet! O how delightful!—Don't you hear it?"

Just as the dying saint had uttered these words, he appeared to be serenaded by invisible musicians with the sweetest strains that ever delighted mortal ears. The harmonious echo seemed to pass from room to room, till it came into his chamber, where, after a short space, it sunk away in a gentle cadence. The dear Christian friends that were around his dying bed felt that his obsequies were now sung.

CHAPTER V.

PRAYER.

Prayer the life-breath of true religion—What God says of prayer—What the saints of old did—The prayers of David and Daniel—What prayer did for Joshua, Elijah, Hezekiah, and other men of God—Amazing power of faithful prayer—Faith: definitions of it—Wrestling with God in prayer—Jacob's prayer—Praying “with strong crying and tears”—A dying father's last prayer for his daughter—Tears—The Lord despises all human strength in prayer—The proud praying lions flung aside to rot—“When I am weak, then am I strong”—Family worship—Dutiful children blessed—A dying father's last gift to his daughter—Its immense value.

PRAYER is the very life-breath of true religion. It is one of the first evidences that a man is born again. “Behold,” said the Lord to Ananias, in the day he sent him to Saul, “Behold, he prayeth.” Acts ix. 11. Prayer was the distinguishing mark of God's people in the day that there began to be a separation between them and the world. “Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord.” Without prayer to God, no soul can be spiritually united to him. Prayer is the power God has placed in our hands to raise our souls to heaven. It is the power we must use in every trouble. Without prayer—fervent, heartfelt prayer, there is no salvation. “Call upon Me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.” Psalm l. 15. “Who-

soever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered." Joel ii. 32. "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles." Psalm xxxiv. 6; Isaiah lxvi. 2. And so it will be with every praying soul. "Surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him; but it shall not be well with the wicked." Eccles. viii. 12, 13. "He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor. He shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper. He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy;" (that is to say, of the poor and needy who pray to him in spirit and in truth, and love him with the whole heart;) "he shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his sight." Psalm lxxii. 14; Prov. xxii. 23. "He that toucheth them toucheth the apple of his eye."

When a true Soldier of the Cross stretches forth his hands to his Father in heaven, in that moment he leaves behind him all terrestrial pursuits, and traverses on the beams of Jesus' love the realms of light. Eph. iii. 18, 19; Psalm xxxvi. 9. He who can pray truly, though languishing in deepest poverty, is immensely rich; (2 Cor. vi. 9, 10; Rev. ii. 9, 10;) while the wretch who never bowed the knee in prayer to God, though proudly seated as monarch of nations, is of all men the most destitute. Jer. ix. 23, 24; Rev. iii. 17, 18. The day is coming when such men will say to the moun-

tains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb." In that fearful day, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." Psalm ix. 17; xi. 6; Thess. i. 7-9. In that day the Lord will place an impassable barrier "between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not."

Those who are saved, are saved by prayer; and those who are damned, are lost because they would not pray. It is useless to say you "have no convenient place to pray in." Any person can find a place private enough, if he is so disposed. The Lord Jesus prayed on a mountain; Peter on the house-top; Isaac in the field; Nathaniel under the fig-tree; Jonah in the whale's belly. Daniel had all the affairs of a kingdom on his hands, and yet he prayed "three times à day." His prayer on behalf of himself and his oppressed and afflicted brethren, the children of Israel, is comprehensive and beautiful.

David was ruler over a mighty nation, and he says, "Evening, morning and at noon will I pray." Psalm lv. 17; cxix. 62-75. "Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, for his wonderful works to the children of men! for he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness. Such as sit in darkness and the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron; because they rebelled against the words of God, and contemned the counsel of the Most High: therefore he brought down their heart with labor; they fell down, and there was none to help. Then they cried unto the

Lord in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distresses; he brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder." Psalm cvii. 8-14. When David himself was in trouble, he prayed as follows:—

“Oh Lord God of my salvation, I have cried day and night before thee; let my prayer come before thee; incline thine ear unto my cry; for my soul is full of troubles: and my life draweth nigh unto the grave. I am counted with them that go down into the pit: I am as a man that hath no strength: free among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave, whom thou rememberest no more: and they are cut off from thy hand. Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit: in darkness: in the deeps. Thy wrath lieth hard upon me, and thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves. Thou hast put away mine acquaintance far from me; thou hast made me an abomination unto them: I am shut up, and I cannot come forth. Mine eye mourneth by reason of affliction: Lord, I have called daily upon thee, I have stretched out my hands unto thee. Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? shall the dead arise and praise thee? Shall thy lovingkindness be declared in the grave? or thy faithfulness in destruction? Shall thy wonders be known in the dark? and thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness? But unto thee have I cried, O Lord; in the morning shall my prayer prevent thee. Lord, why castest thou off my soul? why hidest thou thy face from me? I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up: while I suffer thy terrors I am distracted. Thy fierce wrath goeth over me; thy terrors have cut me off. They came round about me daily like water; they compassed me about together. Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness.” Psalm lxxxviii; Job xix. 6-19; Lam. iii. 1-21.

In another place, speaking of the prosperity of the wicked, his soul is so full of the dying love of his blessed Lord, that he exclaims in rapture, “Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I

desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth ; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever.”

Nothing seems to be too great, or too difficult for prayer to accomplish. It has obtained things that seemed utterly unattainable. It has won victories over fire and water. It has even made the sun and moon stand still until the enemies of God were destroyed. Here is the record :

“ And the men of Gibeon sent unto Joshua to the camp of Gilgal, saying, Slack not thy hand from thy servants ; come up to us quickly, and save us and help us : for all the kings of the Amorites that dwell in the mountains are gathered together against us. So Joshua ascended from Gilgal, he, and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valour. And the Lord said unto Joshua, Fear them not ; for I have delivered them into thine hand ; there shall not a man of them stand before thee. Joshua therefore came unto them suddenly, and went up from Gilgal all night, and the Lord discomfited them before Israel, and slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, and chased them along the way that goeth up to Beth-horon, and smote them to Azekah, and unto Makkedah. And it came to pass as they fled from before Israel, and were in the going down to Beth-horon, that the Lord cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died ; they were more which died with hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword. Then spake Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher ? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day.”

Prayer brought fire from the sky to consume Elijah's sacrifice : “ And it came to pass at the time of the offer-

ing of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near and said, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt-sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench; and when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God. And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there."

"Take God into thy counsel," says Gurnall, "heaven overlooketh hell. God can at any moment see what plots are hatching there against thee." Psalm xli. 11; Prov. xvi. 7. Prayer turned the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness. Prayer overthrew the army of Sennacherib. Hezekiah's prayer on that occasion is brief, but comprehensive:—

"And Hezekiah prayed before the Lord and said, O Lord God of Israel, which dwelleth between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth. Lord, bow down thine ear and hear: open, Lord, thine eyes, and see: and hear the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent him to reproach the living God. Of a truth, Lord, the kings of Assyria have destroyed the nations and their lands, and have cast their gods into the fire: for they

were no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them. Now therefore, O Lord our God, I beseech thee, save thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the Lord God, even thou only."

"Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the Lord of Israel, That which thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib, king of Assyria, I have heard. And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred four score and five thousand men."

Like the leaves of the forest, when summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen;
Like the leaves of the forest, when autumn is flown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strewn.

For the angel of death spread his wings on the blast,—
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed;
And the breath of the sleepers grew deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and forever were still.

Prayer saved Asa and his little army, when Zerah, the Ethiopian, with a million of men, and three hundred chariots, came against them. But Asa's faith in God was unwavering, and he put the army in array:—

"And Asa cried unto the Lord his God, and said, Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O Lord, thou art our God; let no man prevail against thee."

"So the Lord smote the Ethiopians before Asa, and before Judah; and the Ethiopians fled, and Asa and the people that were with him pursued them unto Gerar; and the Ethiopians were overthrown, that they could not

recover themselves ; for they were destroyed before the Lord." On another occasion, Samuel the prophet "cried unto the Lord for Israel, and the Lord heard him," and "thundered that day upon the Philistines."

Prayer healed the sick. We have a remarkable instance of this in the case of Hezekiah, king of Israel. "In those days Hezekiah was sick unto death, and Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, came unto him, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Set thine house in order : for thou shalt die and not live. Then Hezekiah turned toward the wall, and prayed unto the Lord, and said,

"Remember now, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore."

"Then came the word of the Lord to Isaiah, saying, Go and say to Hezekiah, Thus saith the Lord, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears : behold, I will add unto thy days fifteen years. And I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria : and I will defend this city. And this shall be a sign unto thee from the Lord, that the Lord will do this thing that he hath spoken ; Behold I will bring again the shadow of the degrees, which is gone down in the sun-dial of Ahaz ten degrees backward. So the sun returned ten degrees, by which degrees it was gone down."

Prayer raised the dead. We have most heart-cheering evidence of this in the cases of the widow's son and the

Shunammite's child. In the case of the widow's son, we read,

“Elijah cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son? And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, I pray thee let this child's soul come into him again. And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived.”

In the case of the Shunammite's son, it is said that “when the child was grown, it fell on a day, that it went out to his father to the reapers, and he said unto his father, My head, my head. And he said to a lad, Carry him to his mother; and when he had taken him, and brought him to his mother, he sat on her knees until noon, and then died, and she went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, and shut the door upon him, and went out. And she called unto her husband, and said, Send me, I pray thee, one of the young men, and one of the asses, that I may run to the man of God, and come again, and he said, Wherefore wilt thou go to him to-day? it is neither new moon nor Sabbath. And she said, It shall be well.” “And when Elisha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead, and laid upon his bed, he went in therefore, and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the Lord. And he went up, and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and he stretched himself upon the child; and the flesh of the child waxed warm. Then he returned

and walked in the house to and fro; and went up and stretched himself upon him: and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes. And he called Gehazi, and said, Call this Shunammite. So he called her. And when she was come unto him, he said, Take up thy son. Then she went in, and fell at his feet, and bowed herself to the ground, and took up her son, and went out."

And he was then her beautiful—her own;
 Living, and smiling on her, with his arms
 Folded about her neck, and his warm breath
 Breathing upon her lips, and in her ear,
 The music of his gentle voice once more.

Nothing seems impossible when a man has the spirit of adoption. "Let Me alone," is the remarkable saying of the Lord to Moses, when Moses was about to intercede for the children of Israel. The Chaldee version has it, "Leave off praying." Ex. xxxii. 10. So long as Abraham asked mercy for Sodom, the Lord went on giving. He never ceased to give till Abraham ceased to pray.

O wondrous power of faithful prayer,
 What tongue can tell th' Almighty grace?
 God's hands bound or open are,
 As Moses or Elijah prays:
 Let Moses in the Spirit groan,
 And God cries out—"Let me alone!"

Let me alone, that all my wrath
 May rise, the wicked to consume;
 While justice hears thy praying faith,
 It cannot seal the sinner's doom:
 My Son is in my servant's power,
 And Jesus forces me to spare.

“Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” Rom. x. 13. “Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me;” “and I will raise him up at the last day.” Rev. iii. 20; John vi. 40. “If any man lack wisdom,” says St. James, “let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord. Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth for the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again and the heavens gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.” James i. 5-7; v. 17, 18; 1 Kings xviii. 41-46. The church at Jerusalem made prayer without ceasing for Peter in prison; but when the prayer was answered they would hardly believe it. Acts xii. 15; xvi. 25-34.

A certain good man's wife was once taken with a fatal sickness. He was very poor, and her sickness crushed him. He could not pay his rent. His landlord procured a writ, and sent a sheriff to seize his goods. It was a moment of overwhelming sorrow. His dying wife wept bitter tears. His own heart was breaking. What could he do? His landlord professed religion; would he not relax his grasp and let the woman die in peace?

No; his religion was nothing but profession, for he turned the pleading husband from his door with words of stone. What next? Hear the poor husband's story. He says: "I went to my God. I knew he felt for me." (1 Pet. v. 7; Jas. ii. 13.) "I laid the whole affair before him with many a speechless tear." What then? God answered that cry by sending a friend to the pleader, who told him to tell the state of his affairs to a Mr. ——. He did so, and Mr. —— replied: "Do not be troubled about it. I will help you, and pay your rent too." This poor man cried, and the Lord delivered him out of all his trouble. Ps. xxxiv. 6; cxlvii. 3; 1 Cor. iii. 21-23; 2 Cor. v. 9, 10.

Without faith it is impossible to please God. Heb. xi. 6; Deut. xxxii. 20; Habak. ii. 4. "The object," says Baillie, "on which faith fixes its eye, is not the heart's ever-varying frames, but the never-varying Christ." "The soul," says Flavel, "is the life of the body. Faith is the life of the soul. Christ is the life of faith." The Christian's faith, like the world, should hang on nothing but the word of God, and have no other support but that; and he himself, like the stars, should float on the ether of confidence, needing nothing to uphold him but the right hand of the God of Abraham.

Those who wrestle the hardest in supplication will hold the angel the longest. Jacob obtained the blessing, but how? Why, he wrestled till break of day; that is, as the prophet explains it in Hosea xii. 14, "he wept and made supplication unto Him." He was importunate in his request; could take no denial; but offered one plea,

and then another, until he had power with God, and Jesus blessed him there. Gen. xxxii. 24-30. Beautiful in its simplicity and earnestness is Jacob's prayer:

“O God of my father, Abraham, and God of my father, Isaac, the Lord which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee: I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies and of all thy truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant: for with my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands. Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of Esau, for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children. And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.”

Jacob wrestled with the Angel of Jehovah's presence. He agonized with none other than the incarnate God. He laid hold of the strength of the Lord's Anointed, that he might be at peace with him. “And He said, let me go, for the day breaketh.” No—this can never be—to let go now is to lose all. Still, though halting and weary, he clings to his “Friend”—and cries out, “I will not let thee go except thou bless me!” That is the cry of faith, importunate, fervent faith, that will take no denial. This ended the conflict. “And He said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And He said, Thy name shall no more be called Jacob, but Israel; for as a prince hast thou power with God, and hast prevailed. And Jacob asked him and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name? And He said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And He blessed him there. And Jacob called the name of that place Penuel, for I have seen God face to face and my life is preserved.

And as he passed over Penuel, the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh." Gen. xxxii. 14-24. Esau is appeased. Instead of lifting his arm in anger against his brother he "ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him; and they wept."

When a man weeps for sin, it shows that he has strength of mind; nay, more, that he has strength imparted by the Holy Spirit, which enables him to amend his ways and turn to God with full purpose of heart. And there are other tears of might too, the tears of tender sympathy; they are the children of strong affection. St. Paul, in his charge to the elders of the Church of Ephesus, says, "Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." Acts xx. 19-31; 2 Cor. ii. 4. Alas! how unlike is this to many of our supplications! It is written of the Lord Jesus himself, that "in the days of his flesh, he offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears." Heb. v. 7. Look at him at the grave of Lazarus, and at the gate of Nain!

The prayers of David, the sweet singer of Israel, bear unmistakable evidence of having been "offered up with strong crying and tears." Hear him:

"O Lord, rebuke me not in thy wrath, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure. For thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore. There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sins. For mine iniquities have gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me. My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness. I am troubled; I am bound down greatly; I go mourning all the day long. For

my loins are filled with loathsome disease; and there is no soundness in my flesh. I am feeble and sore broken: I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart. Lord, all my desire is before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee. My heart panteth, my strength faileth me: as for the light of mine eyes, it is also gone from me. My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my sore; and my kinsmen stand afar off. They also that seek after my life lay snares for me: and they that seek my hurt speak mischievous things, and imagine deceits all the day long. But I, as a deaf man, heard not; and I was as a dumb man that openeth not his mouth. Thus I was as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs. For in thee, O Lord, do I hope: thou wilt hear, O Lord my God. For I said, Hear me, lest otherwise they should rejoice over me: when my foot slippeth they magnify themselves against me. For I am ready to halt, and my sorrow is constantly before me. For I will declare mine iniquities: I will be sorry for my sins. But mine enemies are lively, and they are strong: and they that hate me wrongfully are multiplied. They also that render evil for good are mine adversaries; because I follow the thing that good is. Forsake me not, O Lord God; O my God, be not far from me. Make haste to help me, O Lord my salvation."

Words, looks, actions, may bear evidence of the feelings, but a tear comes from the heart, and speaks at once the language of truth, nature, and sincerity. Be assured when you see a tear on the cheek of any man that his heart is touched, and do not behold it with coldness or insensibility. Tears are the unequivocal language of the heart; they are the unpassioned eloquence of woe, before which the pomp and gloss of speech fade as the orient pearly dew-drop before the morning sun. It must be a stony heart indeed in which the responsive chord of sympathy does not vibrate with the tears of a fellow-man in distress.

When the believer is weakest, then is he the strongest.

The child that knows most its utter feebleness, intrusts itself most completely into its mother's arms. The young eagle that knows, by many a fall, its own inability to fly, yields itself to be carried on its mother's wings: when it is weak, then it is strong. And just so the believer, when he has found out, by repeated falls, his own utter feebleness, clings with simplest faith to the Saviour,—leans on his Beloved, coming up out of the wilderness, and hears with joy the words, "My grace is sufficient for thee," and he exclaims, "Thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ." 2 Cor. ii. 14; 1 Cor. xv. 67. The Lord despises all human strength, and will not have it. Zech. iv. 6; Jer. xxiii. 29; 1 Cor. viii. 2, 3. Therefore he breaks the bones of the lion and flings him aside into the field to rot, and then, after a little while, meat comes forth from the eater, and sweetness from the strong. Rejoice, therefore, ye "weak" ones! for the Lord says to you, "Take hold of My strength." Isaiah xxvii. 5; Jer. xvi. 19. "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall, but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary, and they shall walk, and not faint." Isaiah xl. 29-31. "When I am weak, then am I strong," says St. Paul; and if there be anything paradoxical to reason, it is this saying. But in the spiritual life of the Christian it has its root struck

through and through, and its most profound and important meaning. While we are strong or self-sufficient in ourselves, there is no help for us. But when the lamentation, "Lord, save or we perish!" bursts out from the distressed and melting heart, then the day begins to dawn.

Prayer—earnest, heart-felt prayer—is the silver trumpet God commands us to sound in every necessity, and it is the cry he has promised always to regard, even as a loving mother the voice of her child. "Though heaven be His throne, and the earth His footstool," and "though the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him," (1 Kings viii. 27,) he looks to, He dwells with the man who is humble, who trembles at His word. "Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirits of the humble, and revive the heart of the contrite ones." Isaiah lvii. 15; Psalm cxlvii. 3-12; John xiv. 21-23; 1 Peter v. 5-10. Not one humble, praying soul ever prayed in vain. No, not one, however guilty and despised in this world, ever went, in the name of Jesus, to the throne of grace, and departed unheard and unblest.

Oh, what an honor for poor mortal men, to be admitted to a direct and immediate intercourse with "the Lord of glory," to open to him our hearts, to unfold to him our wants, and to speak to him as a child does to his father! "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth

them that fear him." Psalm ciii. 13; Deut. viii. 5. "Blessed are they that keep His testimonies, and seek Him with the whole heart." Psalm cxix. 2. Ah, yes; and blessed is that father who can in the day of trouble call his family around him, and lifting his heart to heaven, with humble faith and holy love, say :

"O God, who madest earth and sky,
 The darkness and the day,
 Give ear to this thy family,
 And help us when we pray,—
 For wild the waves of bitterness
 Around our vessel roar,
 And heavy grows the pilot's heart,
 To view the rocky shore.
 The Cross our Master bore for us,
 For Him we fain would bear;
 But mortal strength to weakness turns,
 And courage to despair.
 Have mercy on our failings, Lord;
 Our sinking faith renew;
 And when thy sorrows visit us,
 O send thy patience too."

Prayer is, of all habits, the one which we recollect the longest. Many a grey-headed man could tell you how his father or his mother, or both, used to make him pray in the days of his childhood. Other things have passed from his memory and left no mark behind, but not so with his first prayers. He will often be able to tell you where he knelt, and what he was taught to say, and even how lovingly his parents looked while he raised his infant voice to heaven. It will come up as fresh before his mind's eye as if it were yesterday.

Noble and beautiful indeed is the example of that

youth who truly loves his parents, and manifest that love by promoting their enjoyments and lightening their cares and burdens.

“My dear Mary Elizabeth,” said a dying father to his only child, “read to me once more our Lord’s last prayer for his disciples.” Mary lighted a lamp, and read to him the 17th Chapter of St. John. “Now, raise me a little, my dear child,” said her father, “and bring me the Bible.” Mary put the precious Volume in his hands. “Listen, my dear child,” he said, “to the last prayer I offer for you.” With a trembling voice, and marking the passage in the Bible with his finger as he spoke, he prayed as follows:—

“O, my Lord and Saviour, thou art calling me to leave this world, and I must leave my dear child alone in it. But let her not be alone: be thou with her. May I go to thee, to be with thee where thou art, O my Saviour! and do thou preserve my child. I do not ask thee to take her out of this world till thou seest it best: but, O, I beseech thee, do thou keep her from the evil that is in the world. Sanctify her, I pray thee, by thy truth—thy Word is truth. Thou gavest her, O Lord, to my care in this world, and I have tried as far as I could to devote her to thee. If we must part now, O grant that we may meet—with those ‘gone on before’—at thy throne, to be with thee forever and ever, and to behold thy glory; for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.”

With a throbbing heart and a faltering voice, Mary whispered, “Amen.” “Yes, my dear child,” continued her father, “I trust that we shall meet again where there will be no more grief, no more sorrow, no more painful separations. When your three brothers died, I suffered very deeply. My soul seemed dried up

within me. I was broken up and furrowed, as you have seen the earth in time of drought; yet, after a time, the Lord sent the abundant and refreshing dew of his consolations, and revived my thirsty soul, and I felt the benefit of the afflictions; for, by these and other sore trials, he weaned me more and more from earthly things, and helped me to set my affections on things above."

The "poor" man (Rev. ii. 9; 2 Cor. vi. 9, 10; Jer. ix. 23, 24,) now fell back on his pillow exhausted; he could speak no more for some time, and Mary stood by his side in silence. The Bible was still grasped in his hands. After he had rested a few minutes, he revived a little, and said, "I thank you once more, my darling child, for all your care and kindness to me in my long illness. You have been truly a dutiful child, and God will bless you. I leave you to his care, and to the care of these Christian friends around my dying bed. Trust in Him, my dear child, and he will provide for you, though I have but little to leave you but my blessing and this sacred Book. I know that you will esteem both more than any worldly thing. This Bible only cost a few shillings, and yet it is a richer treasure than gold or silver. It is a better legacy than gold or jewels, for it is the Word of God; and by it we learn to know that heavenly wisdom which is better than rubies. (Prov. iii. 13-18; viii. 4-36; Job xxviii. 12-28; Rom. i. 16, 17.)

‘Thou truest Friend that man e’er knew,
Thy constancy I’ve tried;
Where all were false I’ve found thee true,
My Counselor and Guide!

The mines of earth no treasure give
That could this Volume buy;
In teaching me the way to live,
It taught me how to die.'

Take this precious Book, my beloved child, as your father's last gift. Keep it as a remembrance of me. However busy you may be, do not let any morning or evening pass without reading a small portion of it. Try and fix a verse or two in your memory, to think of and meditate on through the day and evening, when your hands are busy. If you do not understand any passage, pray to God to grant you his Holy Spirit to enlighten you. God himself, and he only, can open your eyes and make you see wonderful things in this glorious Volume. (Psalm cxix. 18-77; Jer. xxxiii. 3.) And if you pray to him he will do this, and will give you day by day more knowledge of himself. Each verse, meditated upon with prayer, will become a fresh treasure of heavenly wisdom. I have learned more from these few words, 'Consider the lilies of the field,' than I learned in my youth from many a volume. These simple words have been the origin of my purest enjoyments; and in many an affliction, when I was ready to faint under the weight of the trial, they have revived my courage, strengthened my faith, and restored peace to my soul."

It is recorded as the character of the wicked, that "they call not upon the Lord." 1 Peter i. 17; 1 Cor. i. 2; Psalm xiv. 4. "They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave. Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us, for we desire not the

knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have, if we pray unto him? Lo, their good is not in their hand: the counsel of the wicked is far from me." Job. xxi. 13-16; xxvii. 8-22. It is said of the backsliding Israelites, "Your words have been stout against me, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee? Ye have said, It is a vain thing to serve God; and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinances, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts? and now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered.

"Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not." Malachi iii. 13-18; Joel ii. 32. "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Matt. xiii. 43; Dan. xii. 3. Their Sun shall no more go down; neither shall their moon withdraw itself: for the Lord shall be their everlasting light, and the days of their mourning shall be ended.

CHAPTER VI.

PRAYER, CONTINUED.

The Bible—Its amazing value—What David and Daniel thought of it—What the veterans of the Cross say—Dr. Arnold's remarks—"Praying with all prayer" hateful to the Devil—His devices—The weapons he uses—What the Christian must do—How to distinguish the true disciples of Christ from mere professors or "reprobates"—Sweet hour of prayer—Prayer within the reach of all—Ignorance or want of education no excuse—What every true soldier of Christ does—What David said of "filthy rags" or self-righteousness—The power of Satan—His depths—His perfidious cruelty—Tries to delude, degrade, and ruin the Christian—His lying and detestable character—His last resource to destroy the Christian—The warnings of the fathers against his deceptions—What provokes Christ most—The recording Angel ever present—Unguarded moments—What the erring Christian must do—What broke Peter's heart—The Lord's last prayer for his disciples, and for all who come to him.

No man can become truly religious without a close study of the Bible. A prayerful contemplation of its glorious pages fills the soul with emotions of love and tenderness, and lifts the heart in anthems of praise to its glorious Author. Daniel was pondering over the writings of Jeremiah when he was stimulated to present that effectual prayer, in answer to which Gabriel was sent a ministering spirit, to assure him of being "greatly beloved," and to give him skill and understanding. The sweet singer of Israel took great delight in the perusal

of God's word, and pronounced it to be more precious "than gold, yea, than much fine gold : sweeter also than honey and the honey-comb." "A man's love of the Bible at the beginning of a religious course," says Dr. Arnold, "is such as makes the praise which older Christians give in its behalf seem exaggerated ; but, after thirty, forty, or fifty years of a religious life, such praise always sounds inadequate : its glories seem so much more full than they did at first." And this experience of the inexhaustibleness of the Bible grows with the perusal. The more we read it, the more we desire to read, and the more we find to read. After all our delving there are profounder depths to be sounded ; after all our soaring, there are still loftier heights to be scaled. Psalm cxix. 18 ; Jer. xxxiii. 3 ; Deut. xvii. 18, 20.

Hail, glorious Gospel ! heavenly light whereby
We live with comfort and with comfort die ;
And view beyond this gloomy scene, the tomb,
A life of endless happiness to come.

It is said by the biographer of the Rev. Joseph Alleine, author of the "Alarm to the Unconverted," that he rose at four o'clock in the morning, and employed the time till eight in meditation and prayer ; and considers that as the principal means of Mr. Alleine's high attainments in the Divine life, and his glowing zeal for God, love to souls, and extensive usefulness as a minister of the Gospel. It is said by the biographer of the Rev. John Fletcher, that "at one period of his life, he was brought into such an intricate situation, that he was wholly at a loss

to discover what God required at his hands. And such was the difficulty before him, that the opinions of his most experienced Christian friends could afford him but little light with respect to it. In this state, for three months successively, he spread the intricacies of his case before God, entreating that he would direct the course of his conduct by the order of his providence and the influence of his Spirit. His request was continued till an answer was obtained. It is written of the Lord Jesus Christ himself, that he often withdrew from Company and prayed alone. "In the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed." Mark i. 35. On another occasion, "He went into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God." He hath thus left us an example that we should follow in his footsteps.

The devil will do all he can to keep us from our closets, embarrass our minds, and hinder us in our approaches to the throne of grace. He knows that "praying with all prayer," is an essential part of the Christian's armor; and that the feeblest soldier of the cross, if he give himself unto prayer, shall more than conquer. Eph. vi. 10-19; Isaiah xl. 29-31. He will, therefore, exercise his craft and exert his power to draw or drive us from the duty; and will avail himself of every circumstance and occurrence favorable to his diabolical purposes; and will adapt his temptations to our natural disposition and temperament, and take advantage of all our weaknesses. Hence the hinderances to prayer

are many and various. If we give place to the devil by fostering pride, discontent, distrust of Divine Providence, self-will, or any other wrong temper toward God, we grieve the Holy Spirit, and become indisposed for secret intercourse with Him who "is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity." Envy, revenge, censoriousness, evil-speaking, or any other temper contrary to the love of "the brethren," will have the same effect.

Unkindness toward those who have a high and holy claim to our sympathy and affection is painfully cruel. We are all creatures of sympathy. We share each other's life, and have the power to render each other happy or unhappy. The wound inflicted by the sword is no more painful than the wound inflicted by a cruel tale-bearing and slanderous tongue. Psalm xli. 6; Prov. xi. 9; Jer. ix. 3-8; xviii. 18; James iii. 6. How careful, then, should we be in all our words, looks, and acts, lest we pain the heart of a fellow-being. In the strength of our selfishness we too often forget the harshness of our words, and the coldness or bitterness of our looks. We care not for the deep and bleeding incisions which they have left behind them. "It was not an enemy," says the Psalmist, "that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him: but it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company." Psalm lv. 12-14; Jer. ix. 4, 5. "These

are the things that ye shall do : Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbor ; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates : and let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbor ; and love no false oath : for all these are things that I hate, saith the Lord."

Unwatchfulness and levity of spirit are also great hinderances to prayer. While we shudder at the idea of committing open sin, we may unawares slide into a careless and trifling spirit, and its natural attendant, trifling conversation ; by which the mind is disqualified for the spiritual exercises of the religion of the glorious Gospel of Christ. Cheerfulness becomes a Christian ; and if tempered with discretion and deep piety, makes religion appear amiable to "the world," and conducive to our own happiness. But trifling and levity are unbecoming the Christian character, and unfit the mind for prayer. St. Paul ranks "foolish talking" and "jesting" with fornication, uncleanness, covetousness, and filthiness. Listen : "But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints ; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient : but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words : for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with

them." Eph. v. 3-7; 2 Peter ii. 3-19. "These are they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit. But ye beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

Sweet hour of prayer! sweet hour of prayer!
 That calls me from a world of care,
 And bids me at my Father's throne
 Make all my wants and wishes known;
 In seasons of distress and grief,
 My soul has often found relief;
 And oft escaped the tempter's snare
 By thy return, sweet hour of prayer.

Sweet hour of prayer! sweet hour of prayer!
 Thy wings shall my petition bear,
 To Him whose truth and faithfulness,
 Engage the waiting soul to bless;
 And since he bids me seek his face,
 Believe his word, and trust his grace,
 I'll cast on him my every care,
 And wait for thee, sweet hour of prayer.

Sweet hour of prayer! sweet hour of prayer!
 May I thy consolation share;
 Till from Mount Pisgah's lofty height,
 I view my home, and take my flight:
 This robe of flesh I'll drop, and rise
 To seize the everlasting prize;
 And shout, while passing through the air,
 Farewell, farewell, sweet hour of prayer.

Prayer is within the reach of all,—the sick, the aged, the infirm, the paralytic, the blind, the poor, the unlearned, all can pray. It avails us nothing to plead want of memory or want of learning, or want of books, or

want of scholarship in this matter. Acts iv. 13; Luke xviii. 13, 14; Rom. viii. 26, 27; Psalm xxv. 14. "Sometimes, perhaps," says Gurnall, "thou hearest another Christian pray with much freedom and fluency, whilst thou canst hardly get out a few broken words. Hence, thou art ready to accuse thyself and to admire him; as if the gilding of the key made it open the door." Gifts have their root in nature, but grace has its roots in Christ. Lip-service amounts to nothing. God looks at the heart, and knows the imaginations of the thoughts. 1 Chron. xxviii. 9; Job xlii. 1; Psalm cxxxix. 4-12; Hosea vii. 2; John i. 48, 49. It was not the eloquent proud-praying Pharisee that "went down to his house justified," but the poor publican who "smote on his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner."

Inward life does not consist in a life of morbid security, arising from the recollection of having once received the forgiveness of sins. Where a real spiritual life exists, there will be unceasing striving against sin, repeated humiliation before God, and renewed experience of his favor. Were it otherwise, why should the Lord put into his children's lips the daily petition, "Forgive us our trespasses." The true Soldier of the Cross does not feel lifted up by the view of what he has already spiritually attained, but humbled, because he is still so far short of what he would like to be. He knows that Christ is "all" in his salvation, and that he is nothing. He knows that his own righteousness is but "filthy rags" before God; that he is nothing, and that he can

do nothing meritorious to procure salvation from God; for whatever he does, and whatever he can give, are already God's property. Luke xvii. 10; Deut viii. 10-19. So that he is still led to look up to God, as David did, when he thus disclaims the possibility of creature merit: "All things come of Thee, and of thine own have we given thee." 1 Chron. xxix. 14-16; Psalm l. 12. We must tear in pieces the dress of our imaginary righteousness, power, and wisdom. Jer. ix. 23, 24; Prov. xxviii. 26. We must not conceal our nakedness, nor seek to hide our shame under the cover of the forgiveness we obtained years ago. We must always come before God as poor sinners and poverty-stricken mendicants, if we wish to recommend ourselves to him. All self-exaltation is an abomination in his sight.

The frequency and earnestness with which holy men of God, who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, warn the Church against the wiles of Satan, prove how absolutely necessary it is, on the part of the Christian soldier, to "watch and pray," to be continually upon his guard. The devil to them was not "the principle of evil," but a terrible malevolent, personal reality — "a roaring lion, going about seeking whom he may devour." 1 Peter iv. 8; Luke xxii. 31. Or disguised as "an angel of light," seeking whom he may deceive. 2 Cor. xi. 14, 15; Rev. ii. 24. "Hell" and the "Devil" were not "figments of the imagination" with them, but horrible, ever-present actualities, that inspired them with unspeakable earnestness in warning saint and sinner not

to listen to the latter, and to hasten to Christ that they might escape the former. This realization of the unseen and eternal, both in their infernal and celestial aspects, was one of the great elements of their power. This is also true of every man who shines or has shone in the pulpit department of ministerial usefulness. Had Luther not thrown the inkstand at the devil, or John Wesley heard of the strange noises and the mysterious movements in the parsonage of Epworth, or John Bunyan been favored with such visions of the invisible world in Bedford jail, or Stoner and Smith, or Payson and M'Cheyne been in such intimate relations with the spiritual, they never could have preached or written with such marvelous, self-forgetful, incisive, penetrating clearness and force as they did.

In intellect, in strength, in powers of perception, in subtlety, in all the faculties which make a malignant foe formidable, Satan towers above the hosts of darkness, who obey and follow him as their leader and prince. The titles ascribed to him in the Scriptures all illustrate his malignity and power. They imply that he is destitute of every good principle—that he falters not in view of any expedient which may help him to consummate his schemes of ruin. He is to be deterred by no suggestions of pity; a stranger alike to truth and love, he lies in wait to deceive, and by all the devices of infernal cunning, he toils, tasking his mighty energies to the utmost, in order to delude, degrade, and ruin the victims of his perfidious cruelty. Gen. iii. 1-4; Isaiah lix. 19;

2 Cor. ii. 11; 1 Tim. iii. 6; 2 Tim. ii. 24-26; 1 Peter v. 8-10; James iv. 7. In the New Testament he is spoken of as "the Devil," or "the Calumninator," because he is "the accuser of the brethren;" as "the Tempter," as "a Liar and a Murderer from the beginning;" as "the Old Serpent, who deceived Eve," and as "the Deceiver." John viii. 44; 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4; Eph. ii. 2; Rev. xii. 9-12. He is represented in Revelations as "the Great Dragon," — as "the Angel of the Bottomless Pit, whose name is, in Hebrew, Abaddon, and in the Greek, Apollyon, the Destroyer." The apostle Paul styles him "the Prince of the power of the air," and "the god of this world." These are the principal titles ascribed to the devil in the Scriptures, and sufficiently indicate his character and power.

The wrath of Satan is directed to the two-fold object of rendering the lives of men miserable upon earth, and of blasting their hope and prospect of eternal life in heaven. He dwells in the wicked, and leads them captive at his will. Eph. ii. 2; 2 Tim. ii. 26. When he cannot lure the Christian from the path of God's testimonies, when despite of all his artifices he holds fast the truths of the Gospel, he stirs up the passions of the wicked in whom he rules, and who hate the oracles of God, because they have pleasure in unrighteousness. In the calamities entailed upon the house of Israel by their repeated backslidings and apostacies from God, we behold the traces of Satan's power and malice as "the Destroyer." He inflames men to the utmost pitch of blasphemy

against God, in the hope that they may be suddenly cut off and driven away in their wickedness. He blinds the minds of men, and hardens their hearts by strong delusions, that they may believe a lie and be damned. 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4; 1 Peter ii. 1-3; Jude 16-19.

Christ is never more wounded in the house of his friends, than when they murmur; nothing seemed so much to overcome his forbearance with the Israelites. Murmuring is a mercy-embittering sin, a mercy-souring sin. As the sweetest things put into a sour vessel sours them, or put into a bitter vessel embitters them, so murmuring puts gall and wormwood into every cup of mercy that God gives into the Christian's hands. It is calculated that not less than one million of the children of Israel died in the wilderness by God's judgments for their murmurings.

Oh, if men would remember that the recording Angel is always near them, how different would their conversation and conduct be. Listen: "Wo unto them that seek to hide deep their counsel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?" Isaiah xxix. 19. "Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the Angel, it was an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands?" "Curse not the king, no, not in thy thought, and curse not the rich in thy bed-chamber; for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and That which hath wings shall tell the matter." Eccles. v. 6; x. 20; 2 Kings vi. 12;

1 Cor. iv. 9. "The Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts." 1 Chron. xxviii. 9; Job xlii. 1. "There is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether." Psalm cxix. 4; Matt. xii. 36; 2 Cor. v. 10; Heb. iv. 13.

Unguarded moments occur, in which the Christian incautiously thinks, speaks, or does that which is improper, and is again guilty of unfaithfulness, although against his will; for only the devil and his seed sin wilfully. The man's "walk" is polluted. What is now to be done? Two paths present themselves, and not unfrequently one of them is taken. The individual either gives himself up to an excessive feeling of his guilt—openly cries out, "Unclean, unclean!" like one who is excluded from the fellowship of the pure,—regards himself as fallen from grace,—considers the bond of union with the Lord as rent asunder, and cries out with Peter, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!" Or else he takes his transgressions too easily,—persuades himself that the faults he has committed are of no importance,—soothes his conscience with the rash and vain idea that the iniquity belongs to the multitude of sins which have been atoned for and annihilated by the blood of Christ, and thus unconcernedly proceeds on his way! In each of these cases there is a deviation, the one to the right, and the other to the left of the line of truth. In the former, the man gives way unnecessarily to an excessive idea of the fault he has committed, and ascribes it to an influence over his entire state of grace,

which according to the Scriptures it does not exercise. The child of the family of God is not suddenly turned out doors, like a servant or a stranger. The seed of the new birth remains in him. "He that is washed," says Jesus, "is clean every whit; and ye are clean but not all." Who does not understand this speech? Its meaning is, he that has truly become a partaker of the blood of sprinkling and of the baptism of the Holy Ghost—that is, of the twofold grace of absolution from the guilt of sin, and of the regeneration to newness of life,—is, as regards the inmost germ of his being, a thoroughly new man, who has eternally renounced sin, and whose inmost love, desire, and intention is direct to God and divine things.

When such a man, from weakness, is "overtaken by a fault," as St. Paul expresses it, he has no need of an entirely new transformation, but only a cleansing. He must let his feet be washed. Let this be duly considered by those who are in a state of grace, and let them "resist the devil," "the accuser of the brethren," lest he gain an advantage over them by his boundless accusations. Hold up the blood of the Lamb as a shield against him, and do not suffer your courage and confidence to be shaken. Rev. xii. 9–11. But you must beware of cloaking or underestimating your unfaithfulness. No fault is too trifling or inconsiderable. You must suffer the Judge in your breast to perform his office without hinderance, and not refuse to listen to his convictions. You must draw near to God as grieved, but not as a despairing

child, and sincerely confess your faults. Let your language be as follows:—

“O Lord, my God, I have sinned against thee afresh, and am grieved at it. I judge and condemn myself; but thy mercy is great, and therein do I trust. Sprinkle my conscience with the blood of atonement, and enable me by faith, to appropriate, for this my fault, the suffering thy dear Son endured for me!”

Let the humble and contrite heart pray thus, and the Lord will graciously incline to it, and impart forgiveness to the soul by his Holy Spirit, and the peace of the soul with the consciousness of adoption will remain undisturbed in the blood of the Lamb. And O, how do we feel ourselves again united to the Lord, and strengthened anew to fight against Satan, the world, and our own flesh and blood; and how does the joyful confidence bloom afresh in our minds, that we really possess “a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother,” after such a renewed experience of His faithfulness! Then we arrive again at Penuel, and exultingly say with Jacob, “I have seen the Lord face to face, and my life is preserved;” and join, with deep emotion, in the words of David, “Return unto thy rest, O my soul! for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee!”

My God is reconciled; his pard'ning voice I hear;
 He owns me for his child; I can no longer fear;
 With confidence I now draw nigh,
 And Father, Abba, Father, cry.

It is said of Peter, that the remembrance of his fall never left him for a moment; and in the degree in which it kept him low, it sharpened his spiritual vision for the

mystery of the cross and of salvation by grace. This is abundantly evident, especially in his first epistle. He there comforts believers with the cheering assurance that they are "Kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation." He calls upon them to "hope to the end for the grace that shall be revealed." He impressively reminds them of the weakness and evanescent nature of everything human. He speaks of "the precious blood of Christ as a Lamb without spot," with a fervor which immediately indicates him as one who had deeply experienced its healing power. It is he who addresses the warning to us, "Be sober, be vigilant, for your adversary the devil goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."

It was not simply the crowing of the cock that raised Peter from his fall. Nor did the turning of the Lord toward him produce the desired effect. A third and more powerful means was added. What was it? A word, a call, an exhortation?—No; a look which the eye of "the Keeper of Israel" cast upon his now unhappy disciple, who was staggering on the brink of destruction. This look did wonders. "The Lord turned, and looked upon Peter." What a look must that have been! What divine sorrow and love must it have expressed! and how accompanied by the effulgence of the Spirit of divine grace! It struck like destroying lightning, and at the same time expanded itself in refreshing dew. The Lord's look did not fail of its effect upon Peter. No sooner did the fallen disciple's eyes meet his, than the magic band which held him is dissolved, the

Satanic intoxication dispelled, his ears opened, and reflection returns—nay, sin is acknowledged—his heart is melted—the snare is broken and the bird has escaped Luke xxii. 61, 62; Psalm cxxiv. 7. The Lord knew that Peter would fall, and his chief care was lest he should despair after his fall; and that, at the proper time, he should take courage to return to him. Hence, he said, with the kindest forethought, “And when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.” Thus hath the faith which the Holy Spirit produces in every true Soldier of the Cross, a pledge of endurance in his Lord’s intercession. It may be assaulted, tried and shaken, but can not be extinguished or annihilated. Peter was given to know this, in order that he might be in possession of a sufficient weapon when assailed. But in case of his succumbing, this consciousness was to serve him as a staff, by means of which he might successfully leap over the abyss of despair. “I have prayed for thee.” says the Lord, “that thy faith fail not.”

O how the Lord loved his “little flock,” when he took their sins with him into judgment, and cast himself into the fire which their transgressions had kindled! How he loved them, when his own blood did not seem to him too dear a price to be paid for them, although it was they who were the transgressors! He loved them to the end; and to this day he loves them that are his in similar manner. Listen: “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word. That they may all be one, as thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee.”

CHAPTER VII.

OBEDIENCE TO PARENTS.

What God said in Abraham's praise—The example of Christ—Warnings to parents—"I won't"—Job and Solomon on Wisdom—The happy child—A man shall be known in his children—The life speaks—Every action has a tongue—Ahaziah and his wicked mother—Their fearful end—What a properly brought up child hates—What wicked children do—What the Scriptures say of them and their wicked parents—The drunkard and profane swearer—Who is responsible—"Am I my brother's keeper?"—God commands a disobedient drunken son to be stoned to death by his parents.

OBEDIENCE to parents has all Scripture on its side. It is said in Abraham's praise, not merely he will train his family, but "he will command his children and his household after him." Gen. xviii. 9 It is said of the Lord Jesus himself, that when he was young he was subject to Mary and Joseph, as a child of their family, until he was thirty years of age; and forgot not when nailed to the cross, and undergoing the most dreadful of deaths, to provide an effectual support and protection for his mother.

See how Isaiah speaks of it as an evil thing when "the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient." Isaiah iii. 5; Levit. xix. 32. Mark how St. Paul names disobedience to parents as one of the bad signs of the latter days: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be

lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce; despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."

"But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." Rom. iii. 1-5; Heb. iv. 12, 13; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3; 1 Kings xiv. 13. Notice how he singles out this grace as one that should adorn a Christian minister, "A bishop must be one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity. For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?" Again, "Let the deacons rule their children and their own house well." And again, "An elder must be one having faithful children, not accused of riot or unruly."

He who resorts to human means, and human wisdom only, in the training of his family, and adopts the world's cold and lifeless morality, instead of the living and powerful word of the glorious Gospel of Christ, is sowing tares instead of wheat; and the crop will be tares, and nothing but tares. Every parent, every person that has a child under his care, ought to feel that such child is

God's, committed to him for the express purpose of being trained up for God, for the service and enjoyment of God, in time and in eternity; and at his hands will that child be required, if through neglect and mismanagement, it should perish eternally. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." Prov. xxii. 6; Deut. viii. 5. Think what it is to have a promise like this. Promises were the only lamp of hope which cheered the hearts of the Patriarchs before the Bible was written. Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph,—all lived on a few promises, and prospered in their souls.

Happy the child who finds the grace,
The blessing of God's chosen race,
The wisdom coming from above,
The faith that sweetly works by love.

By the time a child is two years of age, he ought to be in the habit of cheerful submission to whatever he knows to be the will of his parents. Be assured if your child says to any of your requirements, "I won't," or sets up resistance in the way of crying and pouting, there is a radical error in your management, that threatens shipwreck to the whole business of education. Besides, a ready, cheerful obedience from the early dawn of reason, while it greatly facilitates every part of after-education, is of essential use to counteract the self-will, the obstinacy, and bad temper of a child, before they are confirmed and strengthened by indulgence. The parent should plant himself on this ground: "My child's *will*

must yield to mine; not simply to gratify me, but from principle, because God requires it; and also for his own sake, it being impossible on any other condition that he can be prosperous and happy." Let the child render implicit obedience to this great statute of heaven.

Every parent ought to be fully aware, that it is in the early part of childhood, more especially, that a corrective can be applied to those evil passions whose dominion in manhood will be certain ruin. "He that spareth his rod hateth his son; but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes." Prov. xiii. 24. "Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying." Prov. ix. 18. "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it from him." Prov. xxii. 15. "Withhold not correction from the child, for if thou beatest him with the rod he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod and deliver his soul from hell." Prov. xxiii. 13, 14. "The rod and reproof give wisdom; but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame. Correct thy son and he shall give thee rest, yea, he shall give delight to thy soul."

After the establishment of authority over the infant mind, must commence the effort of storing it with knowledge. "Wisdom," says Solomon, "is the principal thing; therefore, get wisdom." It is, indeed, the principal thing; as, without it, nothing valuable can be acquired. Job, speaking of its value, says, "It cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof. It cannot be valued with the gold of

Ophir, with the precious onyx or the sapphire. The gold and crystal cannot equal it: and the exchange of it shall not be for jewels of fine gold. No mention shall be made of coral, or of pearls: for the price of wisdom is above rubies. The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with pure gold." Job xxviii. 15-19; Prov. xv. 33; xxiv. 7; Coloss. ii. 3. "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding: for the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her. Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are paths of peace. She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her. The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens. By his knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew. My son, let them not depart from thine eyes: keep sound wisdom and discretion: so shall they be life unto thy soul, and grace to thy neck. Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble. When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid; yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet."

It is remarkable that all the promises of God to his people are formally and avowedly extended to their children as well as to themselves. This was a funda-

mental idea in his covenant with Abraham: "I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee and thy seed after thee the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God. This is my covenant between me and you, and thy seed after thee: Every man-child among you shall be circumcised." A foresight of Abraham's faithfulness and success in training up his children religiously was the ground of God's especial confidence in him: "Shall I hide from Abraham the thing which I do?—For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do judgment and justice." Let the impression dwell upon your heart, and stimulate your every-day's effort, that in proportion that you make your child wise, wise in the possession of every useful kind of knowledge, but especially the knowledge of "the living and true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent," you bring within his reach the means of every kind of usefulness and comfort, here and hereafter; while, without it, there can be nothing but degradation and wretchedness in time, and, through eternity, everlasting perdition, from that God who hath pronounced on the people of "no understanding," "that the God who made them will not have mercy on them; he that formed them will show them no favor."

The most unwearied diligence is to be used in communicating this instruction, especially as it regards religious knowledge. As God himself has commanded, "Ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up; and thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thine house, and upon thy gates." Deut. xi. 19, 20; 1 Sam. iii. 13. Let those who have failed in training up their children to wisdom and piety, inquire whether their diligence has been, from the early dawn of reason, anything like what is here required. It is said of Eli, that he honored his sons above God; and what was the end of Eli and his depraved sons? He lived to hear of the death of both his sons, and his grey hairs were brought down with sorrow to the grave. 1 Sam. ii. 29; iv. 18. In addition to this, the Lord pronounced the following sentence against his house:—

"And the Lord called Samuel again the third time; and he arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And Eli perceived that the Lord had called the child. Therefore, Eli said unto Samuel, Go, lie down: and it shall be, if He call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth. So Samuel went and lay down in his place. And the Lord came and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth. And the Lord said to Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle. In that day will I perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin I will also make an end. For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and

he restrained them not. And therefore I have sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering for ever."

Virtuous youth gradually brings forward accomplished and flourishing manhood; and such manhood passes of itself, without uneasiness, into respectable and tranquil old age. But when nature is turned out of its regular course, disorder takes place in the moral just as in the vegetable world. As, in the succession of the seasons, each, by the invariable laws of Nature, affects the productions of what is next in course; so, in human life, every period of our age, according as it is well or ill spent, influences the happiness of that which is to follow. If the spring put forth no blossoms, in summer there will be no beauty, and in autumn no fruit. So, if youth be trifled away without improvement, manhood will be contemptible, and old age miserable. If the beginnings of life have been "vanity," its latter end can be no other than "vexation of spirit."

By cool Siloam's shady rill
 How sweet the lily grows!
 How sweet the breath, beneath the hill,
 Of Sharon's dewy rose!
 Lo! such the child whose early feet
 The paths of peace have trod—
 Whose secret heart, with influence sweet,
 Is upward drawn to God.
 By cool Siloam's shady rill
 The lily must decay;
 The rose that blooms beneath the hill
 Must shortly fade away.

A man shall be known in his children. Ecclesiasticus

xi. 28; Jer. xxxv. 18, 19; Ezek. xvi. 44; Hosea iv. 9. Children, in the first instance, learn almost everything by imitation. It seems to be a law of their nature to do what they see others do. Hence the fact so universally observed, that the children grow up to be like those with whom they are reared. Just in proportion to the depravity of the society among whom they dwell, is the difficulty and danger in training up a family for God. Regard it, then, as essential to your success, that you should be before your children, what you would have them to be. Teach them to be wise, by acting wisely in their presence. Teach them love, and faith, and humility, and godly fear, and other Christian graces, by habitually acting those graces before their eyes. Keeping your children much with yourself, taking them daily to the throne of grace, and exemplifying in simplicity and godly sincerity, the true Christian character before them, it will be marvellous indeed, if, in due time, you have not the unspeakable happiness of seeing "some good thing toward the Lord" in them. Example is a living lesson. The life speaks. Every action has a tongue.

Happy the child who wisdom gains;
Thrice happy who his Guest retains
He owns, and shall forever own,
Wisdom, and Christ, and heaven are one.

Nothing can be more certain than that impious or profane thoughts, uttered by a parent, makes an impression on the young heart which nothing can efface. Such a parent may be a member of church, or even a preacher

of the Gospel, and pray and sing, night and morning, but this will only add to his guilt, "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness." "If God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell," and spared not the old world, and destroyed the people of Sodom and Gomorrha, on account of their "filthy conversation and unlawful deeds," will he spare parents whose filthy conversation and unlawful deeds lead their children to hell? No; he will not spare them, for he declares that he will tear them in pieces. Psalm l. 22; Rev. xxi. 27. There is none upon earth more desperately wicked than the parent who neglects, or refuses, to train up his children for usefulness and heaven. Indeed he is infinitely more guilty than a common murderer, inasmuch as he destroys the souls of his own children; and through their vile example, the souls of other children.

It is said of Ahaziah, king of Israel, that he walked in the ways of the house of Ahab, for Athaliah, "his mother, was his counsellor to do wickedly;" and that this led "to his destruction." It is written of the sons of this wicked woman, that they "had broken up the house of God; and also all the dedicated things of the house of the Lord did they bestow upon Baalim." But a dreadful doom overtook them and their wicked mother. (See the 22d and 23d, and 24th Chapters of 2 Chronicles.)

The parent is the natural guardian of the intellect and heart of his child, and God will hold him responsible

who deutes his duties to another. The father represents the divine Lawgiver, whose vicegerent he is for carrying out the gracious designs of an infinite benevolence, in the establishment of upright principles, and the formation of a pure, virtuous character. Almost everything depends on preoccupying the soul with right habits, of which none is so intimately connected with favorable religious developments, as the habit of obedience to legitimate authority. This is a strictly fundamental principle in the Christian religion, and should be the first object in family government. Every parent who fails in establishing this unquestioned dominion over his child, does in the same degree entail upon him a curse of fearful omen. It may be laid down as a Christian axiom, that the rebellious spirit which refuses obedience to parents, will be the last to render it to God.

Dr. Johnson gave this advice to parents: "Accustom your children to a strict attention to truth, even in the most minute particulars. If a thing happen at one window, and they when relating it say that it happened at another, do not let it pass, but instantly check them; you do not know where deviation from truth will end. It is more from carelessness about truth than from intentional lying that there is so much falsehood in the world." The evil and injustice of lying appear, 1. From its being a breach of the natural and universal right of mankind to truth in the intercourse of speech. 2. From its being a violation of God's sacred law. Phil. iv. 8; Levit. xix. 11; Col. iii. 9. 3. The faculty of speech was

bestowed as an instrument of knowledge, not of deceit; to communicate our thoughts, not to hide them. 4. It is esteemed a reproach of so heinous and hateful a nature for a man to be called a liar, that sometimes the life and blood of the slanderer have paid for it. 5. It has a tendency to dissolve all society, and to indispose the mind to religious impressions. 6. The punishment of it is, the loss of credit, the hatred of those whom we have deceived, and an eternal separation from God. Rev. xxi. 8; xxii. 15; Psalm ci. 7; Jer. ix. 3; Amos ii. 4; Zech. viii. 16, 17.

A properly brought up child is always obedient to his parents, and hates idleness and lying, because he knows that while the one "shall clothe a man with rags," the other will bring him to shame, and sink his soul in eternal ruin. Prov. xxiii. 21; Rev. xxi. 8. He never takes the name of God in vain, or utters any oath or degrading expression, because he knows that all blasphemers, swearers, liars, and filthy talkers are children of the devil, and will be with him, in his "own place," when they die. Levit. xxiv. 10-16; Zech. v. 3, 4; John viii. 44; Eph. ii. 2; 2 Peter ii. 4-8; Rev. xxi. 8; xxii. 11, 15. He never throws stones at other children, or at animals, or birds, because he knows that none but the most depraved children are ever guilty of such ungodly and unneighborly conduct. He is cleanly and neat in person, and mannerly, and learns his lessons cheerfully, because he loves God, and his parents, and hopes to become a useful and respected member of Christian society. He

not only renders cheerful obedience to his parents, but makes them repositories of all his secrets. There is nothing clandestine in his movements. He takes no step without consulting them. He tells them all his plans and all his troubles, and seeks their advice in everything. He is not smitten or carried away with the attention of strangers, for he knows "not the voice of strangers." He allows no human being to alienate his interest from his parents; nor does he set up a separate interest under the idea of personal independence. He goes with his parents to the Sanctuary, unites his religious sympathies with theirs, and listens to the truth as it is in Jesus,—as it is in the Evangelical or New Testament churches. Principle, not fashion or caprice, governs his movements in these respects. His likes and dislikes are all sacrificed on the altar of filial affection. He knows if he is led hither and thither as fashion or caprice or self-indulgence may prompt, he will find ere many years are passed over his head, that his course, like that of Esau, may bring upon him consequences which he will have reason to deplore whilst yet there is left no space for repentance. Heb. xii. 16, 17; Prov. i. 24-28; Levit. xix. 3; Deut. v. 16.

Thrice happy is the youth,
Who, morning, noon, and night,
Reads the blest page of sacred truth,
And makes it his delight; —

He loves the hour of prayer,
And takes delight in praise:
The Lord to bless him will be near
With sanctifying grace.

Undutiful or vile children, fill the minds of all good men with loathing and horror; and they are objects of still more abhorrence to God than men. Deut. xxi. 18–21; 1 Sam. iii. 10–14; 2 Kings ii. 23, 24. It is written of the parents of such children, as well as the children themselves, that “The shew of their countenance doth witness against them; and they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not.” Isaiah iii. 9; Ezek. xvi. 19; 2 Peter ii. 7, 8. When wicked behaviour, or irreligious practices, have gained such headway as to destroy the beauty of the countenance, what must be the condition of the soul of such a person? But, thanks be to God, the religion of the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ is able to change the boldness of the most repulsive face, and make it shine with beams of heavenly beauty. Eccles. viii. 1: Prov. xx. 11; Matt. vii. 16. By these never-failing indications we are able to distinguish the children of Light from the children of darkness. The parents of the latter “hate him that rebuketh in the gate, and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly.” Like the children of Belial in the days of Jeremiah the prophet, they say, “Come, let us smite him with the tongue, and not give heed to any of his words.” The Psalmist, speaking of this class of men, says, “Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked; from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity: who whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words: that they may shoot in secret at the perfect: suddenly do they shoot at him, and fear not. They encourage

themselves in an evil matter: they commune of laying snares privily; they say, Who shall see them?" A dreadful doom awaits such men. Deut. xxxii. 35; Job xxi. 30, 31; Psalm xi. 6; Matt. xxv. 41-46; 2 Peter ii. 4-12; Jude 5-8; Rev. xxi. 8.

There is one clear and distinct ground upon which we may limit the application of a precept that is couched in absolute language—the unlawfulness, in any given conjecture, of obeying it. "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man." 1 Peter ii. 13. This, literally, is an unconditional command. But if we were to obey it unconditionally, we should sometimes comply with human, in opposition to Divine laws. In such cases, then, the obligation is clearly suspended; and this distinction the teachers of Christianity recognized in their practice. When "an ordinance of man" required them to forbear the promulgation of the doctrines of the New Testament, they refused obedience; and urged the befitting expostulation—"Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye." Acts iv. 19. They accordingly "entered into the temple early in the morning and taught;" and when, subsequently, they were again brought before the council and interrogated, they replied, "We ought to obey God rather than men;" and notwithstanding the renewed command of the council, "daily in the temple and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." Acts v. 29, 42. So, too, with the filial relationship: "Children, obey your parents in all things." Col. iii. 20. But a pa-

rent may require his child to go to the rum-shop for liquor; to lie, steal, or go with him to an infidel meeting, the theatre, dance-house, or some other place of debauchery, and therefore when a parent requires obedience in such things his authority ceases, and the obligation to obedience is taken away by the moral law itself. The precept is virtually this: Obey your parents in all things, unless disobedience is required by the will of God; and that is so clearly set forth in the Bible, that "wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." All human authority ceases at the point where obedience becomes criminal. We have clear illustrations of this in the following passages of Scripture:—

"If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own soul, entice thee, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which thou hast not known, thou, nor thy fathers; namely, of the gods of the people which are round about you, nigh unto thee, or far from thee, from the one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth; thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him; neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him: but thou shalt surely kill him; thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people. And thou shalt stone him with stones, that he die; because he hath sought to thrust thee away from the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. And all Israel shall hear, and fear, and shall do no more any such wickedness as this among you." (Deut. xiii. 6-11; Jer. xvii. 5.) Again, "He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after Me is not worthy of me."

God manifests his abhorrence of wicked children in these words: "If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that, when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them, then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place; and they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton, and a drunkard. And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones that he die: so shall thou put evil away from among you; all Israel shall hear, and fear." Deut. xxi. 18-21; Prov. xxii. 6; Eccles. iv. 13.

The Scriptures declare that no drunkard or profane swearer shall inherit the kingdom of God. There is no limitation to this edict, — it is absolutely positive. How then shall we estimate the nature of those vices, which doom their perpetrators to hell? The man who takes my little son, whom I love as I love myself, and strikes into his throbbing heart an assassin's knife, and draws it forth reeking with his innocent blood, and hurls in my face the murdered child and the fatal weapon with which the murderous blow was inflicted, commits a deed which causes every impulse and sensibility of my nature to recoil in agony far too intense for language to describe. The eye turns instinctively from it as something too horrible to be seen, and it is enough to madden any fond parent's brain. But the man who seduces this same

child into the haunts of vice — who leads him into the path of moral obliquity from God — who puts to his lips the poisoned chalice, drugged with spiritual death, and constrains or induces him to drink it — that man perpetrates a deed, in the sight of God, far more hideous in its nature than the other — far more revolting to the pious parent's heart — far more ruinous in its consequences. He is a murderer of deeper dye, for he is a murderer of the soul. Far better that my dear child had perished by the vile assassin's hand — far better that I had felt the delirium of agony over his mangled, bleeding remains, and enjoyed the conviction that his spirit had gone, redeemed by Christ, to his heavenly Father, than that I should be compelled to witness him a moral suicide, "without God and without hope in the world."

The late celebrated Benjamin Rush, M. D., of Philadelphia, speaking of the effects of ardent spirits upon the human body and mind, said, "This odious disease of drunkenness — for by that name it should be called — appears with more or less of the following symptoms, and most commonly in the order in which I shall enumerate them :

1. Unusual garrulity.
2. Unusual silence.
3. Captiousness, or a disposition to find fault and quarrel.
4. Uncommon good-humor, and an insipid simpering or laugh.
5. Profane swearing and cursing.

6. A disclosure of their own and other people's secrets.
7. A rude disposition to tell those persons in company whom they know, their faults.
8. Certain immodest actions.
9. Clipping of words.
10. Fighting; a black eye, or a swelled nose.
11. Certain extravagant acts which indicate a temporary fit of madness. These are singing vile ballads or songs, hallooing, roaring, imitating the noises of four-legged brutes, jumping, tearing off clothes, dancing naked, breaking glasses and china, and dashing other articles of household furniture upon the ground or floor. After a while the paroxysm of drunkenness is completely formed. The face now becomes flushed, the eyes project, and are somewhat watery, winking is less frequent than is natural; the under lip is protruded or stuck out—the head inclines a little to one shoulder—the jaw falls—belching and hiccough take place—the limbs totter—the whole body staggers, and the wretched man soon falls on his seat. He now looks around him with a vacant countenance, mutters inarticulate sounds to himself, and attempts to rise and walk, but falls upon his side, from which he gradually turns upon his back. He now closes his eyes and falls into a profound sleep, frequently attended with loud snoring, and profuse sweats. In this condition he often lies one, two, three, four, and five days, an object of pity and disgust to his injured family and friends. His recovery from this fit of intoxication is marked with several peculiar appearances. He opens

his eyes and closes them again—he gapes and stretches his limbs—he rises with difficulty, and staggers to a chair—his eyes resemble balls of fire—his hands tremble—he loathes the sight of food—he calls for a glass of whiskey and a red herring to ‘compose’ his stomach!—now and then he emits a deep-fetched sigh, or groan, from a transient twinge of conscience; but he more frequently scolds, and curses his wife and children, and everything around him. In this stage of languor and stupidity he remains for two or three days, before he is able to resume his work.”

Thomas Sewall, M. D., Professor of Anatomy and Physiology in the Columbian College, Washington City, D. C., speaking of the effects of ardent spirits upon the human body and mind, said, “On examining the lungs of the drunkard after death, they are frequently found adhering to the walls of the chest; hepatized, or affected with tubercles. The drunkard dies easily, and from slight causes. A sudden cold, a pleurisy, a fever, a fractured limb, or a slight wound of the skin is often more than his shattered powers can endure. Even a little excess of exertion, an exposure to heat or cold, a hearty repast, or a glass of cold water, not unfrequently extinguishes the small remains of the vital principle. Many of those deaths which came under my notice seemed almost spontaneous, and some of them took place in less than one hour from the first symptoms of indisposition.” “But time would fail me were I to attempt an account of half the pathology of drunkenness.

And who is the responsible author of all this? I appeal to any fellow-citizen. Are not we the authors? The power emanates from us; we delegate it to the constituted authorities, and we say to them, 'Go on; cast fire-brands, arrows, and death; and let the blood of those that perish be on us and on our children.' Every member of society is morally and politically constituted, by the relations he sustains, his 'brother's keeper.' To deny this position is to assume grounds with Cain, the first murderer."

No human being suffers alone. He is a member of a body politic, and as such, contributes his pains to others, according to the more or less intimate relationship existing between them. If he has submitted himself to be victimized by a ruinous appetite or passion, and falls into sin, he draws others with him to participate in the woes consequent upon his transgressions, though they may not be involved in his personal guilt. Considering the frightful crimes which the sale of intoxicating drinks is the direct or incidental cause, there is not an intelligent man who will not declare it the most immoral and demoralizing business that is pursued on earth. The injury it inflicts on the buyer, the seller, and society, is, in fact immeasurable and incalculable. It is wide-spread, overwhelming, appalling. Terms are too weak to express it: the reality far exceeds any epithets which can be employed to describe it. The earth groans under it. Man cries to man and to heaven for deliverance from it.

The bodies of some drunkards have been so thoroughly

steeped in spirit as literally to take fire and consume to ashes. There is doubtless far more danger than has been imagined, in a drunkard's bringing his mouth or nose near a lighted taper. The wonder is that instances of combustion are not of daily occurrence. Medical writers cite numerous cases. Ploquet mentions twenty-eight.

The family circle are most interested in the reformation of that individual of their number who has become addicted to vice of any description, because they are most directly involved in the evils which such vice produces; and next to the family circle, the community in which the criminal has his residence are implicated most in the consequences of his crimes, and have the greatest amount of interest in his recovery from his destructive habits. But this is not all. Power to reform is proportionate to the interest involved. The mutual influence, either for good or evil, inherent in the family constitution, is almost omnipotent. If this influence be exerted aright, and perseveringly exerted, for the reformation of the inebriate, it can seldom fail of success. But if the members of the family circle neglect, or refuse, to exercise the reforming power with which they have been endowed, then are they responsible for the whole amount of such neglect, or refusal. The same remarks, substantially, are appropriate to the community. It is their duty, as well as their interest, that every member should regard the public laws, and lead a virtuous life.

A fearful doom awaits the drunkard and the profane swearer. They are classed with the abominable, with

thieves, murderers, whoremongers, and liars. What end does the profane swearer propose to himself? Does he suppose his neighbor will believe him any sooner, because he affirms his word by an oath? Mistaken man! He who has so little reverence for God, as to take his name in vain, will not think it dishonorable to lie, if he think it will answer his selfish purposes. Does he think it becoming a gentleman to trifle thus with the tremendous name of God? Alas! how degraded must be the state of society if profane swearing will add to the dignity of a man's character! Thank God, it is believed that the generality of men have more exalted ideas of the proper dignity of man, than to suppose that such conduct will elevate him in the estimation of his fellow-citizens. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." Exod. xx. 7. "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Bring forth him that cursed without the camp; and let all that heard him lay their hands upon his head, and let all the congregation stone him." Levit. xxiv. 13, 14. "Because of swearing the land mourneth." Jer. xxiii. 10; Hosea iv. 23. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn from your evil ways; for why will ye die?" Ezek. xxxiii. 11; Isaiah i. 18; Prov. i. 24-28; Luke xv. 10. The thoughts of such goodness abused, and such amazing clemency affronted, seem to the awakened sinner almost as insupportable as those of God's wrath and severity; and

he exclaims, in the anguish of his soul, "Oh, whither shall I turn? I dare not look upward: the sun and stars upbraid me there. If I look downward, the fields and fountains take their Creator's part, and heaven and earth conspire to aggravate my sins. Those common blessings tell me how much I am indebted to thy bounty. Oh, in what delirium has my life been passed! what have I been doing!

"When I look back on my former days,
The only comfort the review affords
Is, that they're past.
For through their course I cannot recollect
One free from sorrow, guilt, or disappointment:
Yet heedless still through the same paths I stray,
And rashly venture on the dangerous road;
With open eyes, like one asleep I walk,
And drink the cup, although I know 'tis poison'd.
Why am I led thus captive by my will,
While Reason, faithful guide, forever warns
My drowsy soul to shun impending danger?
This night may be my last; I ne'er again
May see the dawning of another morn:
Shall I forego the joys of heaven, to soothe
A wayward fancy or destructive passion?
Ah, no!"

"And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants."
(See Luke xv. 17-24.)

CHAPTER VIII.

OBEDIENCE TO PARENTS, CONTINUED.

Susceptibility of the young mind to evil impressions—The Christian family—A dying mother's last words to her son—The remembrance of her great love for him brings tears in his eyes—The boy who is "too big" to obey his mother—What Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords did—The Bible knows no to-morrow—"Thinking about it"—A limit to provocation.

THE second generation of "badly brought up children" will be invariably worse than the first, for parents who were not, themselves, obedient and properly trained in childhood, however much they may wish to perform their duty toward their own children, will be impotent to secure obedience, for there is no law more immutable than this, that persons can not govern who have not, themselves, been governed. It is no exaggeration to say, that the developments of right moral and religious character is wholly the work of education and religious nurture: meaning, by these terms, not the training of the parent and teacher only, but also the agency of circumstances,—whilst the force of example and association alone, independent of all direct inculcation, is sufficient to impress upon the child's plastic nature, any form of vice and ungodliness. Let him grow up among idolaters, and that circumstance ensures his being a devotee to

false gods, and the deadly foe of all true piety and virtue. Life among the Fejees would infallibly convert the child of Christian parents into a cannibal. Give your babe to be nursed and trained in an infidel family, and he will, without some strong remedial or preventing influence from better sources, grow up to be an enemy and a contemner of Christ. Nurtured in a den of thieves, or smugglers, or robbers, he will feel neither horror nor disapprobation of the atrocious crimes with which he is constantly familiar; and to become the most daring and expert of the gang will, in all probability, be the highest aspiration ever felt by his blighted spirit. Without going beyond the limits of our own neighborhood, or perhaps twenty yards from the door of the church where we pay our adoration to God, we may find scores of vile, hardened boys and girls, with whom we could not allow our child to play in the streets, without feeling a certainty that he would become, like them, a reckless vagrant.

Such is the susceptibility of the young mind to evil impressions: and it inculcates a Christian lesson upon all parents who have hearts, to care for the immortal destinies of their children, more influential than ten thousand arguments.

A family where all the members of it live in love and peace, is like a little heaven below. Love and kindness are the tempers which Jesus delights to see us cultivate; and these are the tempers, too, which the Holy Spirit produces in all who truly love God and keep his commandments. "Heaven, I know," said a dying Christian

mother to her only son, "will bless so good a son as you have been to me. You will have that consolation, my son, which visits but few—you will be able to look back upon your past conduct to me, not without pain only, but with a holy joy. * * * Do not be so afflicted, my son, at the loss of me. We are not to part for ever." Poor boy! In after years, speaking of his infant recollections, he says:

"The mere thought,
Of her great love for me has often brought
Tears in my eyes. Though far away,
It seems as it were yesterday.
And just as when I looked on high
Through the blue silence of the sky,
Fresh stars shine out, and more and more
Where I could see so few before;
So the more steadily I gaze
Upon those far-off misty days,
Fresh words, fresh tones, fresh mem'ries start,
Before my eyes and in my heart."

Ah, yes, the remembrance of the scenes of his youth now appear to him like far visions of happiness. His dear, dear mother died whilst he was yet young. He now looks upon the time, as upon a vision of devotion commingled with love, when he saw her oft upon her knees, in secret prayer. He heard her pray, not for herself alone, but for him, and sent up his name in earnest supplication to her heavenly Father. She asked—with tears streaming down her cheeks—the God of salvation to bless him, her then hope and delight, whilst he wondered to whom his mother was addressing herself, for he

saw no one in the room besides himself, and she was not speaking to him, but about him. He now remembers the impressive sight he witnessed, as he entered her death-chamber, — her pale and haggard countenance; her sickly, failing eye, with which she looked out upon him from her dying pillow, as if from the very confines of the eternal world. He remembers how thin and how pale the hand was with which she pressed his, when she bade him a sorrowful adieu; and how agonizingly anxious that look was with which she gazed into his face, and charged him, in the name of her blessed Lord and Saviour, to wrestle with God day and night for the salvation of his soul, and to seek through the blood of Jesus for the pardon of his sins. He remembers that he saw his dear mother die, and go the way of all the earth, and that he attended, with others, her funeral. He saw the newly opened grave, and the coffin, the lid of which hid from his view the changed countenance of his best earthly friend, and he weeps tears of bitter anguish. He remembers also seeing the grave filled up, and the tears of sympathizing friends, who, with him, encircled the grave, and then left his dear, dear mother there in the narrow bed of death. Poor boy! poor boy! how we feel for you in your sore bereavement.

The boy who is “too big” to obey his mother is in a most dangerous state of mind. Think of Christ, the “King of kings and Lord of lords.” When he sat with the learned doctors in the temple at Jerusalem, he was not too old and too wise to obey his mother. Badly

brought up children may be known by their rude unmannerly behaviour to each other, to their neighbors, and to strangers. On the other hand, Christian children are not only civil and mannerly to all, but love God, and their parents. All such children know that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;" and that wisdom is more precious than "jewels of fine gold," (Job xxviii. 17, 28; Prov. iii. 13-24; Jer. ix. 23, 24; Colos. ii. 3; Eph. iii. 18, 19;) because it confers happiness that all the jewels and gold in the world could not confer: a happiness "which passeth knowledge,"—a happiness "unspeakable and full of glory."

The mouth of the wicked "is full of cursing and deceit and fraud; under his tongue is mischief and vanity. He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten: he hideth his face; he will never see it." Psalm x. 4, 7, 11; Eccles. xii. 14. Ah, there is no escape from His all-seeing eye. Psalm cxxxix. 4-12; Luke xii. 2, 3. "Understand, ye brutish among the people; and ye fools, when will ye be wise? He that planteth the ear, shall he not hear? He that formed the eye, shall he not see?" Psalm xciv. 89; 1 Sam. ix. 15-27; x. 2-16; 1 Chron. xxviii. 9; 2 Kings vi. 12; Eccles. v. 6; x. 20. "O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising; thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compasseth my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether." Psalm cxxxix. 1-4;

Job xlii. 1; 2 Chron. xvi. 9; John i. 48, 49; Hebrews iv 13.

Father of Spirits, nature's God,
Our thoughts are known to thee;
Thou, Lord, canst hear each idle word,
And every action see.

Could we on morning's swiftest wings,
Fly through the trackless air,
Or dive beneath deep ocean's springs,
Thy presence would be there.

In vain may guilt attempt to fly,
Conceal'd by darkest night;
One glance from thy all-piercing eye
Can bring it all to light.

In the concerns of the soul the Bible knows of no to-morrow. God's calls are meant at once to be answered. Men are ready every moment of their lives for heaven or hell, and should death overtake them while they are parleying, a fearful doom awaits them. There is no guarantee in the Scriptures, that the invitation will ever be repeated, and eternal ruin will be the just punishment of a single rejection. You put off this most solemn duty, and then protest against and flatter yourself that the excuse is sufficient. But this will not answer. You are bound to resolve this question as soon as it is presented for your consideration. Everything else should be postponed until it is settled. But perhaps you reply that you "have thought it over, but cannot come to any conclusion." You are deceived; you are tampering with the salvation of your soul. It is not because you cannot, but because you will not. "Thinking about it,"

without acting, is easy, for it involves the performance of no duty. Reason and conscience both tell you what you ought to do—but that is unpalatable, and you fail in coming to a conclusion, because you have no real inclination to attain any, and hence upon a false basis over your inability to reach any fixed and definite purpose! Rest assured that all the “thinking” in the world will accomplish nothing. Nothing but the stern resolve to give up all and follow Christ, can avail you. Indecision only begets indecision. The more you “think it over,” the more irresolute you are. Serious impressions become fainter and fainter as you thus trifle, and you are at last so familiarized with them, that they lose their force, and are the more easily dismissed as unwelcome visitors that disturb your “peace.” Isaiah lvii. 21 ; Prov. i. 24–28.

There is a limit to provocation, beyond which the mercy of God does not extend. That limit, once reached, the Lord declares the sinner’s doom, in these words, “Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out My hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at naught all My counsel, and would none of My reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon Me, but I will not answer; they shall seek Me early, but they shall not find me: for they that hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord: they would none of My

counsel: they despised all My reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices."

We see, then, that there is a Voice pleading against sin in every soul, till it is silenced by persistent disregard and determined transgression. Beside the innate corruption of a wicked heart, there is a malignant power, a seducing and deluding Devil. The existence of the devil is as distinctly affirmed in the Scriptures as the existence of God, and his influences in life are as evident. His name, his nature, his personality, his power, are as positively revealed as the name and personality and power of the Almighty. With an eye that never sleeps, with a foot that never wearies, with a breath that never fails, hungering for the souls of men, he hunts them steadily—a true slow-hound that never bays, but runs silently on the trail with superhuman sagacity. But the devil is not the only foe. This great hunter of souls has innumerable packs of human hounds. Bad men and bad women, "evil men and seducers," as St. Paul calls them. They swarm everywhere in all the nations of the world; and, having given up their own souls to the Devil, they delight to help him to secure others. So completely are such people blinded by their infernal master, that they mistake his operations for the spontaneous movements of their own will! They walk according to "the Prince of the power of the air," and they are not conscious of the fact,—their work is so entirely according to the desire of their own hearts. Eph. ii. 2, 3; John viii. 42-44.

The people of the antediluvian world, and of Sodom and Gomorrah, worshipped at Satan's shrine, until the outraged patience of heaven would no longer bear their provocations. Gen. vii. 21-23; xix. 24-28; Ezek. xvi. 49, 50; 2 Peter ii. 4-10.

The place where the wicked shall be punished, is represented in the Scriptures under a variety of figures, expressive of its awfulness. It is called "the bottomless pit," Rev. iii. 20; "a furnace of fire," Matt. xiii. 42, 50; "a lake of fire and brimstone," Rev. xxi. 8; "hell," Matt. xxiii. 33; Mark ix. 47, 48; "outer darkness," Matt. viii. 12; Psalm xlix. 19; Jer. xiii. 14-16; "eternal fire," Jude vii. The misery of the wicked in this place, is described in the strongest terms, and by the most dreadful figures. The nature of hell's torments is represented not only by the worm that never dieth, but also by the fire that "shall never be quenched." In another place, it is declared, not only that the punishment shall be forever, but "forever and ever." Rev. xiv. 11; xx. 10. The expression "forever and ever," must certainly mean an infinite duration of time; for the Bible contains no higher expression to signify the eternity of God himself, than that of his being "forever and ever." Rev. iv. 9.

Oh, the anguish of the wicked when the Lord Jesus shall pronounce the fearful sentence, "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels!" Oh, what wailing! what fearful cries! Lost! lost! forever and ever! No more Bibles! no more Tracts! no more Sabbaths! no more Sunday-

schools! no more invitations to come to Christ! no more strivings of the Spirit of God! no more hopes of heaven! Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." Jer. viii. 20; Prov. i. 24-28; 2 Thess. i. 7-9. In that day, the righteous Judge of all the earth "shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."

Oh, what agonies shall it not cause when parents meet the children on whose souls they had no pity, the children whom they never brought to the Saviour, the children unprayed for, untaught to pray for themselves! Who shall describe the meeting of such parents and their children in an eternal hell, with "the devil and his angels," and all the damned since the death of Cain—the first murderer, to that day? Oh, how they will wish they had never been born! How they will wish to tear out their memories! They will seek death, but it will flee from them. Oh, how it will pierce their souls to have their children challenge them in that day, and say, to them, one by one:

"Had you been as careful to teach me the knowledge of the Lord as I was capable of learning: had you been as forward to instruct me in my duties as I was ready to have hearkened, it had not been with me as it is this day.

If you had by your own good example, and the use of the rod, restrained me in my wickedness, instead of encouraging me therein, by your filthy conversation, profanity, and unlawful deeds, I had not now stood trembling here in fearful expectation of the eternal doom which is just ready to be passed upon me. It is to you that I must in a great measure owe my everlasting ruin. Unnatural wretch! that has thus destroyed those whose happiness by so many bonds of duty and affection you were commanded by the Word of God to promote. Behold! the books are now open, and there is not one prayer—one heartfelt prayer—upon record that you ever put up for me! There is no memorial; no, not so much as one hour that ever was seriously spent to train me up to a sense of God, and to a knowledge of my duty to God; but, on the contrary, it appears that you have in many ways contrived my misery, and contributed to my ruin, and helped forward my damnation.

“ Good men often spoke to you about my vile behavior and profanity, and with tears in their eyes implored you to restrain me in my wicked practices, but in vain! You abused and slandered them, because they told you the truth, and the ruin you were bringing upon your children, by your unchristian conduct. You lied, jested and ridiculed sacred things, and so did I. You took the name of God in vain, and so did I. You profaned the Sabbath, and annoyed your Christian neighbors with swearing and cursing, and so did I. You spent your evenings in prowling about the streets, and making a

noise like a dog, and so did I. You rejected the Bible, and spent your time and money in the perusal of infidel books and pamphlets, and other lying and filthy publications, and so did I. You vilified Christ and his ministers and people, and so did I. You patronized the theatre, the rum-shop, the dance-house, and other places of debauchery, and so did I. Oh, how could you be so cruel,—how could you thus hate your own flesh, and hate your own soul? Oh, how much better had it been for me, and how much better for you, that we had never been born! I was ignorant, and you instructed me not; I made myself vile, and you restrained me not! Why did you not teach me at home, and bring me to the public ordinances and worship of God, and train me up to the exercise of true piety and devotion? But you not only neglected and refused to give me good instruction, but you gave me bad example: and lo! I have followed you to hell, to be an addition to your torments for ever and ever.

“My day’s forever gone, my sun is set
 In final darkness, ne’er to rise again;
 My summer’s spent, eternal winter’s come;
 The season’s past.
 On me no ray of mercy e’er will shine,
 No smiling hope will ever rise;
 Justice divine, and self-condemning guilt,
 Consign me to eternal wo.”

CHAPTER IX.

FAMILY BEREAVEMENTS.

The grave—The Christian family never grows less—Anxiety of the blest for the safety of their relations and friends—The Indian mother—The withered blossoms will bloom again—The cloud of witnesses—The loved ones of my childhood's days—The true Soldier of the Cross no believer in second causes—Extravagant desires—Conflicts and trials—Impatience and murmuring—The changed Cross—The bodies of the saints—Abel and his harp—Sings the song of redeeming love—The faith of the saints of old—The music of Heaven—Unspeakable happiness of the redeemed—"I long to be there"—The Angels: their power and glory—The "house" of "many mansions" in full view—Home at last—The meeting of death-divided friends—The Saviour's amazing love.

THE grave becomes another and a holier thing to the Christian family, after it has received its first inmate. There is a kind relationship instituted, which tends to remove the repulsion and estrangement which existed before. Heaven has a new attraction to the Christian wife, when it has become the home of her husband or child. Eternity seems a warmer and more cheerful object of thought, when it has been made a part of home by the removal of part of the family to it. The thought of regaining the companionship of those whom we loved on earth, attaches time to eternity, and this life becomes what it really is, a beginning, and part of another. Dear friends are removed from sight, but they still live and love.

In the view of faith a Christian family never grows less; nor is its golden chain, though part of it lie under the shadow, ever broken. The departure of those whom we loved on earth, does for us what the departure of the strangers from heaven did to the disciples on the mount of transfiguration,—it leaves us alone with “Jesus only.” It turns into deep experience that longing for home contained in the Apostle’s words, “having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.” Why then should Christian parents repine that Jesus takes their “little ones” from their unsafe guardianship, and folds them in the “everlasting Arms” forever? But it is hard to get any father or mother to subscribe to this Bible doctrine; they will not believe that a little one of theirs has aught but a bright life before him. Children are often the hands by which the parents take hold of heaven. By these tendrils they grasp it and climb thitherward. And why do they think they are separated from them? Ah, they never half knew them. “If the rich man,” says an able Christian writer, “in the regions of the lost, asked that a messenger might be sent to his ‘five brethren,’ to warn them not to come to that place, may we not with greater reason, believe that the blest in Christ are equally anxious for the safe arrival there of those that they have left behind? Yes, they plead in the silent eloquence of their love and loveliness.”

Mr. Kirk, in his “Mother of the Wesleys,” says, “Mrs. Wesley’s affection for her father was intense and constant. She cherished his memory and meditated upon his saintly

character to her latest hour. Sometimes she felt a peculiar nearness to him, as though she held converse with his ascended spirit. Her son John heard her say that she was frequently as fully persuaded that her father was with her as if she had seen him with her bodily eyes. She left her statement without any explanation; but her real views may be elicited from her writings. When speaking of the mysterious noises at Epworth parsonage, she observes, "I am rather inclined to think there would be frequent intercourse between good spirits and us, did not our deep lapse into sensuality prevent it." (See Rom. viii. 7-13; 1 Cor. ix. 24-27; 1 Pet. ii. 11; and 1 John ii. 15, 16.) The following remarkable passage in her beautiful and masterly exposition of the Apostles' Creed still more fully explains her meaning:—"What knowledge the saints in heaven have of things or persons in this world we cannot determine; nor after what manner we hold communion with them, it is not, at present, easy to conceive. That we are all members of the same mystical body, Christ, we are very sure; and do all partake of the same vital influence from the same Head; and so we are united together. And, though we are not actually possessed of the same happiness which they enjoy, yet we have the same Holy Spirit given unto us as an earnest of our eternal felicity with them hereafter. And though their faith is consummated by vision, and their hope by present possession, yet the bond of Christian charity still remains. And as we have great joy and complacency in their society, so, no doubt, they desire and pray for us."

Though not prepared to explain the manner in which

the intercourse is carried on, Mrs. Wesley clearly held the doctrine of spiritual communion with departed saints. This theory, so enchanting and soothing to those whose friends have departed hence in the Lord, has been received by many devout and able divines. There are also unmistakable indications that it was regarded with favor by Mrs. Wesley's gifted sons. After Charles has sung his noble hymns of triumph over the exodus of some of his saintly friends, he is not slow to tell us that, in his public and private meditations, he felt communion with them.

It was John Wesley's constant custom to preach on All Saints' Day—one of his favorite Church festivals—on communion with the heavenly multitude. He declares also that he many times realized such a sudden and lively apprehension of deceased friends that he turned round to look if they were not actually and visibly present at his side, and "an uncommon affection for them" sprung up in his heart. In his dreams of the night he sometimes held "conversations with them," and doubted not that "they were very near." There is a striking illustration of one of the "conversations" in the following passage from the Life of Mrs. Fletcher:—"Last night I had a powerful sense, in my sleep, of the presence of my dear husband. I felt such sweet communion with his spirit as gave me much peaceful feeling. I had for some days thought that I was called to resist more than I did that strong and lively remembrance of the various scenes, both of his last sickness and many other circumstances which frequently occurred, with much pain. This thought being present to my mind, I looked on

him. He said, with a sweet smile, 'It is better to forget.' 'What,' said I, 'my dear love, to forget one another?' He replied, with inexpressible sweetness, 'It is better to forget. It will not be long. We shall not be parted long. We shall soon meet again.' He then signified, though not in words, that all weights should be laid aside."

The Apostle Paul tells us that "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man." (1 Cor. ii. 14, 15.) In another place, alluding to the glories of heaven, he says, "It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, whether in the body I cannot tell, or whether out of the body I cannot tell; God knoweth: such a one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell; God knoweth: how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Of such a one will I glory; yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities. For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me."

A certain dear soldier of the cross, speaking of his conflicts with Satan and his emissaries, says, "I was once so severely tempted and tried, that I determined to give up

the struggle and go back to the world. After the first emotions of my grief were over, I fell asleep, and thought I heard a voice, saying, 'Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.' These words seemed to encourage and strengthen me. I then fancied I heard sweet melodious sounds, rising by degrees, until the region round was filled with transporting harmony. In the height of these agreeable agitations, as the rosy morning breaks from a cloud, a most lovely Being stood before me. There was something in his aspect so serene and beneficent, such a heavenly sweetness and affability that banished every thought of fear from my heart, and filled my breast with divine tranquillity, and my soul with joy unspeakable and full of glory. After a short pause, he began, with a voice that would have allayed the anguish of death, and charmed the wildest discord into calm attention; every accent breathed celestial love and harmony, while he described the joys of his 'Father's house.' But it is impossible to paint the beautiful ideas, or imitate the emphasis of his language. All the powers of eloquence sat on his tongue, and commanded all the motions of my soul, which at that blissful period seemed enlarged in its superior faculties. Every word was penetrating and significant, his manner perfectly graceful and transporting. In his descriptions I saw the glories, I felt the joys, of heaven. In an instant the earth was lost to my view, the sun diminished to a star; innumerable worlds were passed with a speed swifter than a morning ray; the pearly gates of heaven now appeared, and at my Guide's command rolled back

on their golden hinges. Oh, what glories were disclosed! No language on earth can describe them. The very foundation-walls of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones! Even the streets were pure gold!

“Passing from one scene of wonder to another, ardent to pay my homage to my heavenly Father, I pressed forward to the sacred throne. Oh, what amazing wonders! The Supreme Benignity at once beamed forth on me! Oh, what joy unspeakable filled my soul! Lost in ecstacy, I fell prostrate before my Sovereign; when, with accents that breathed immortal joy and harmony, He bade me rise to perfect purity and bliss! A starry crown was placed on my head, and a golden harp in my hand. I then mingled with the grand assembly, ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands—ransomed from all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues; and with them joined my grateful tribute of praise to Him whose sufferings and death had given me acceptance, victory, and life. Here, with sweet melody, the delightful scene vanished. I awoke at the imaginary music, and found it had left me in a most heavenly state of mind.”

I would not live alway; I ask not to stay
Where storm after storm rises dark o'er the way.
The few lurid mornings that dawn on us here
Are enough for life's joys, full enough for its cheer.

I would not live alway,—no: welcome the tomb!
Since Jesus hath lain there, I dread not its gloom:
There sweet be my rest till he bid me arise
To hail him in triumph descending the skies.

Who, who would live away, away from his God,—
 Away from yon heaven, that blissful abode,
 Where rivers of pleasure flow bright o'er the plains,
 And the noontide of glory eternally reigns?

There saints of all ages in harmony meet,
 Their Saviour and brethren transported to greet;
 While anthems of rapture unceasingly roll
 And the smile of the Lord is the feast of the soul.

Oh, what happiness, what glories, await the faithful soldier of Christ! Oh, how various, how boundless, how transporting will the prospect be! (See 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10; Isaiah lxiv. 4; and Rev. xxi. 7.) He does not fear death, for his blessed Lord and Master has promised to go with him through the dark valley. (Psalm xxiii. 4; Isaiah xliii. 2; Hosea xiii. 14; 1 Cor. xv. 55.) He knows that he shall soon be with the dear Christian friends who have "gone on before," and sing songs of eternal praise unto Him that loved him and washed him from his sins in His own blood." (Rev. i. 5, 6; vii. 14; Matt. xxvi. 26-28.)

They only are rightly affected by the sufferings and death of Christ who continue to be rightly affected by it. (Gal. vi. 9; Heb. x. 35-39; Rev. ii. 10.) The thought of his Saviour's crucifixion recurs to the faithful soldier of the cross in all the various periods of his life; and more particularly in every hour of trial, in every season of temptation, of provocation, of hardship, and of disgrace. (Isaiah l. 6; 1 Cor. ii. 2; Heb. xii. 1-4.) Is he sorrowful and forsaken of all his friends? he thinks of the sorrows of his Saviour. (Isaiah liii. 3-12; Matt. xxvi. 38, 39, 56.) Is

he in pain, contradicted, reviled, and despised? he beholds his Saviour wearing a crown of thorns, dressed in an old purple robe, mocked, insulted, struck in the face, spit upon, and then crucified between two thieves, having Barabbas, a murderer, preferred before him! (Matt. xxvi. 67, 68; xxvii. 20, 35; Psalm xxii. 16-18.) Does he meet with shameful treatment in return for all his kindness and benevolence to others? does nobody thank him, though he lays out his whole life in trying to serve them? he is cheered and kept from sinking when he beholds his Saviour dying for his enemies.

Yes, the Redeemer left his throne,
 His radiant throne on high,—
 Surprising mercy! love unknown!—
 To suffer, bleed, and die.

He took the dying traitor's place,
 And suffered in his stead;
 For sinful man,—oh, wondrous grace!—
 For sinful man he bled.

Oh, for this love let rocks and hills
 Their lasting silence break;
 And all harmonious human tongues
 The Saviour's praises speak.

Angels assist our mighty joys;
 Strike all your harps of gold;
 But when you raise your highest notes,
 His love can n'er be told.

The anxiety on the part of the blest for the safety of their relations and friends still on earth, is beautifully illustrated by the case of a dying Indian mother, who,

when her physician sought to restore her to the hope and love of life, exclaimed: "No! no! my children recall me. I see them by the side of the Great Spirit. They stretch out their arms to me, and are astonished that I do not join them!

"Hark! heard ye not a sound
Sweeter than wild-bird's note, or minstrel's lay?
I know that music well, for night and day
I hear it echoing round.

"It is the tuneful chime
Of spirit voices!—'tis my infant band
Calling the mourner from this darkened land
To Joy's unclouded clime.

"My beautiful, my blest!
I see them there, by the Great Spirit's throne;
With winning words, and fond, beseeching tone
They woo me to my rest."

The Rev. Dr. Chalmers writes beautifully on this subject; and though the style is somewhat peculiar, the Christian reader will not fail to understand it: "This affords, we think, something more than a dubious glimpse into the question that is often put by a distracted mother when her babe is taken away from her,—when all the converse it ever had with the world amounted to the gaze upon it of a few months, or a few opening smiles, which marked the dawn of felt enjoyment; and ere it reached, perhaps, the lips of infancy, it, all unconscious of death, had to wrestle through a period of sickness with its power, and at length to be overcome by it. O! it little knew what an interest it had created in that home

where it was so passing a visitant,—nor, when carried to its early grave, what a tide of emotion it would raise among the few acquaintances it had left behind it! And should any parent who hears us, feel softened by the touching remembrance of a light that twinkled a few short days or months under his roof, and at the end of its little period expired, we cannot think that we venture too far when we say, that he has only to persevere in the faith and in following the Gospel, and that very light will again shine upon him in heaven. The blossom which withered here upon its stalk, has been transplanted there to a place of endurance; and there it will then gladden that eye which now weeps out the agony of an affection that has been sorely wounded; and in the name of Him who, if on earth, would have wept along with them, do we bid all believing parents to ‘sorrow not even as others which have no hope,’” (1 Thes. iv. 13; Prov. xiv. 32,) “but take comfort in the thought of that ‘country’ where there is no sorrow and no separation.”

The belief that we are to recognize our friends in heaven, and associate with them for ever there, with the full remembrance of the past, throws the sublimity of eternity over our Christian efforts to establish each other in the faith and in the divine life. Every song which the redeemed in glory sing, commemorating in the praises of eternity the finished work of Jesus and the efficacy of his shed blood, shows that they have a remembrance of the past, that they are in full possession of the faculty

of memory. Hence those ascriptions of praise to Jesus which they raise before the throne: "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue, and people and nation." "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." Can the glorified forget what they read in their Bibles about the shedding of Christ's blood upon earth, as they stand with Jesus in white upon the hill of the heavenly Zion? Do those who stood with the Apostle John upon the hill of Calvary, and who saw the blood of Immanuel crimsoning the cross, now forget what they beheld there? Do all in heaven forget the means which the God of their salvation used through the agency of the Holy Spirit to apply to their consciences and hearts the blood of atonement?

The Rev. Dr. Berg, speaking of the recognition of our Christian friends in heaven, says, "Go where we will we find the sentiment, that friendship is perpetuated beyond the grave. It is enshrined in the heart of our common humanity. The pure unsophisticated belief of the vast majority of mankind is in union with the yearnings of natural affection, which follows its object through the portals of the grave into the eternal world. What but this causes the Christian parent, in the dying hour, to charge his children to prepare for a reunion before the throne of the Lamb? He desires to meet them there, and to rejoice with them in the victory over sin and death. Tell me, ye Christian parents, who have seen the open tomb receive into its bosom the sacred trust

committed to its keeping, in hope of the first resurrection, was not that consolation the strongest which assured you that the departed one, whom God has put from you into darkness, will run to meet you, when you cross the threshold of immortality. We have lost them for a time, but they have not lost us. As they have gone higher, they have capacities and privileges which we, who are still beneath them, have not; and this may extend to a constant oversight and interest in us. The Old Testament saints are represented as "a cloud of witnesses" around us, like the crowd which bent down from all sides upon the race-ground in the Olympic games. According to this allusion of the Apostle, they are around us, not merely as examples, but interested spectators. In like manner, we have reason, and also intimations of Scripture, to confirm us in the belief that our sainted friends are bending an interesting eye of love over us in all our earthly pilgrimage. Angels are the constant companions of the blest in heaven; and they are also upon earth, "ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation."

Oh, ye departed spirits of my sires,
And ye, the loved ones of my childhood's days,
While now I look on yonder heavenly fires,
Methinks I hear you tune your seraph lyres,
Methinks I see you bend your pitying gaze
On him who still must tread alone earth's gloomy maze!

Thou angel spirit, who so oft didst sing
My infant cares to sleep upon thy breast,
Let me but hear the rustling of thy wing.
Around thy child its guardian influence fling!

Oh, come thou from the island of the blest,
And bear my weary soul up to thy sainted rest!

Can we forget departed friends? Ah, no!

Within our hearts their memory buried lies;
The thought that where they are, we too shall go,
Will cast a light o'er darkest scenes of wo;
For to their own blest dwellings in the skies,
The souls whom Christ sets free exultingly shall rise.

As God is to be regarded both as an affectionate father and righteous judge, so affliction is presented in Scripture in two lights, in each of which it is compatible with the most perfect benevolence in the divine mind. It is there represented as being partly penal, and partly corrective; while in both it is declared to be the effect of sin. In neither case is it the spontaneous infliction of One who delights in suffering for its own sake; but the result of principles from which no wise father, or judge, will ever depart. A good father cannot apply the rod to his children for his own pleasure, but only for their profit. Can God then intend the infliction for evil? Can He who sent his beloved Son to die for us take pleasure in our misery? Far be the thought from our minds. Are you a father, and do you feel the tender yearnings of paternal affection? O say, then, did you ever take the rod into your hand from a pleasure you felt in tormenting your children? Did the smart it produced ever yield you gratification? Nay, did you not feel more pain than you inflicted? Yet you felt it to be imperative not to spare the rod. The infliction was not the result of arbitrary power, or of a deficiency of kindness, but the evi-

dence, the expression of love. It was dictated by affection and a concern for the welfare of your children. You discovered in them evils which required to be corrected, and to have neglected the proper exercise of discipline would have been as ruinous to their interests, as dishonorable to your own character. Chastisement is not less the effect of God's parental love; and the conclusion is so much the more decisive, inasmuch as the fathers of our flesh are sinful, whereas God is absolutely and infinitely perfect. He knows the exact measure of discipline of which the Christian soldier stands in need, and the proper time of applying it.

It is shocking to a true Christian soldier, to hear those who profess to love God, aggravate their trials, and debase their profession, by looking back to this and that and the other circumstance and dwelling upon *that* as what gave rise to the whole train of misfortunes and afflictions. And yet all the while these murmurers say they believe in God's purposes and decrees, and that he worketh all things after the counsel of his will! How far is this beneath the Christian! Have a care of your thoughts, of your words; insubordination slips in at the door before one is aware. "It is well," is the only soul-quickenning response to God's voice of affliction. There is wisdom seen in making contraries work together for good. That which is now your burden might have been your ruin.

We may puzzle ourselves about instruments and second causes, but no rest can we have, till we are led to the First. "He performeth the thing appointed for me."

That settles the soul, but nothing else will do it. Job was well convinced of this truth when he said, "Afflictions cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground." Job v. 6; Amos iii. 6. "Be still, and know that I am God." Psalm xlvi. 10; Prov. xx. 24; Jer. x. 23, 24. There is nothing in which Christians show a more unchristian spirit, and yet few sins beset them more easily, than an anxious concern and fretful care about some outward things which have in themselves no power to do good or evil, otherwise than as instruments in God's hand to attain his appointed end. Shall we quarrel with the sword because it suffered itself to be drawn. Isaiah x. 15. There is no such thing as "chance," as it regards God; for not even a sparrow falls to the ground without his will. Luke xii. 6; Matt. x. 29. "The lot is thrown into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." Prov. xvi. 33. Let the chain of second causes be ever so long, the first link is always in God's hand. "Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go."

The following lines will help young soldiers of the cross to a more perfect understanding of these passages of Scripture:—

THE CHANGED CROSS.

It was a time of sadness, and my heart,
 Although it knew and loved the better part,
 Felt wearied with the conflict and the strife,
 And all the needed discipline of life.

And while I thought on these, as given to me,
My trial tests of faith and love to be,
It seemed as if I never could be sure
That faithful to the end I should endure.

And thus, no longer trusting to his might
Who says, "We walk by faith and not by sight,"
Doubting, and almost yielding to despair,
The thought arose—My cross I cannot bear!

Far heavier its weight must surely be
Than those of others which I daily see;
Oh, if I might another burden choose,
Methinks I should not fear my crown to lose.

A solemn silence reigned on all around,
E'en nature's voices uttered not a sound,
The evening shadows seemed of peace to tell,
And sleep upon my weary spirit fell.

A moment's pause—and then a heavenly light
Beamed full upon my wondering, raptured sight,
Angels on silvery wings seemed everywhere,
And angels' music thrill'd the balmy air.

Then One more fair than all the rest to see,
One to whom all the others bow'd the knee,
Came gently to me as I trembling lay,
And—"Follow Me," he said, "I am the Way."

Then speaking thus, He led me far above,
And there beneath a canopy of love,
Crosses of divers shape and size were seen,
Larger and smaller than mine own had been.

And one there was most beauteous to behold,
A little one, a little one with jewels set in gold—
Ah, this, methought, I can with comfort wear,
For it will be an easy one to bear.

And so the little cross I quickly took,
But all at once my frame beneath it shook;
The sparkling jewels, fair were they to see,
But far too heavy was their weight to me.

This may not be, I cried—and looked again
To see if any there could ease my pain;
But one by one I passed them slowly by,
Till on a lovely one I cast my eye.

Fair flowers around its sculptur'd form entwin'd,
And grace and beauty seem'd in it combin'd;
Wondering, I gazed, and still I wonder'd more
To think so many should have pass'd it o'er.

But oh, that form so beautiful to see,
Soon made its hidden sorrows known to me:—
Thorns lay beneath those flowers and colors fair;
Sorrowing I said,—This cross I may not bear.

And so it was with each and all around,
Not one to suit my need could there be found;
Weeping, I laid each heavy burden down,
As my guide gently said, “No cross, no crown.”

At length to Him I raised my saddened heart;
He knew its sorrows, bid its doubts depart:
“Be not afraid,” He said, “but trust in me,
My perfect love shall now be shown to thee.”

And then, with lighten'd eyes and willing feet,
Again I turn'd my earthly cross to meet,
With forward footsteps turning not aside,
For fear some hidden evil might betide.

And there, in the prepar'd, appointed way,
Listening to hear and ready to obey,
A cross I quickly found of plainest form,
With only words of love inscribed thereon.

With thankfulness I raised it from the rest
And joyfully acknowledged it the best,
The only one of all the many there,
That I could feel was good for me to bear.

And while I thus my chosen one confess'd,
I saw a heavenly brightness on it rest,
And as I bent my burden to sustain,
I recognized my own old cross again!

But oh, how different did it seem to be,
Now I had learned its preciousness to see.
No longer could I unbelieving say—
Perhaps another is a better way.

Ah, no! henceforth my one desire shall be,
That He who knows me best shall choose for me;
And so, whate'er his love sees good to send,
I'll trust it's best—because he knows the end.

Alas! how unworthily we bear the name of Christians, when that which carried the forefathers of our faith through their fiery trials can not support us under the disappointment of any extravagant desire! They had such a "respect to the recompense of the reward" as made them cheerfully expose their fame to ignominy, their goods to rapine, their bodies to exquisite tortures, and their lives to death. Heb. xi. 4-38; x. 34; 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10; Isaiah lxiv. 4. Yet the same hope cannot work us to any tolerable degree of patience, when we suffer but the smallest diminution of any of these! What shall we say? Is heaven grown less valuable, or earth more than it was then? Ah, no; but we are more infatuated in our estimates. Like Jonah, we sit down sullenly upon the withering of a gourd, never considering that God has provided a better shelter, "a building of God eternal in the heavens." 2 Cor. v. 1; John xiv. 2, 3. Indeed, there can be no affliction or temporal destitution so great which such an expectation can not make supportable. "Beloved," says the Apostle Peter, "think it not strange, concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto

you : but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings ; that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye ; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you. On their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified." Again, " For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently ? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called : because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow in his steps : who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth : who, when he was reviled, reviled not again ; when he suffered, he threatened not ; but committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously : who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness : by whose stripes ye were healed." 1 Peter ii. 20-24 ; Isaiah liii. 3-12. " Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse, deceiving, and being deceived."

St. Paul, speaking of certain " visions and revelations of the Lord," says : " Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecution, in distresses for Christ's sake : for when I am weak, then am I strong." 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10 ; 1 Cor. ix. 26, 27 ; Isaiah xl.

29-31. "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake; having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me." Phil. i. 29, 30; Eph. vi. 12; 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8; Rev. xxi. 7.

With regard to the nature of that change which the bodies of the saints shall experience at the resurrection, the apostle Paul informs us that they shall be raised, incorruptible, glorious, powerful, and spiritual. 1 Cor. xv. 42-58. They shall be raised in glory. It is sown in dishonor, it shall be raised in glory, and be fashioned like unto the glorious body of the Redeemer. Phil. iii. 21. The glorified body of Christ will be the model after which the bodies of the saints will be fashioned; and we know that when Christ appeared to the apostles, on the mount of transfiguration, in his glorified body, "his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment became white and glistening." The bodies of the saints, freed from every deformity and decrepitude to which they were subject in this present sinful state, will then appear arrayed in all the vigor and bloom of perpetual youth, a sweet and heavenly lustre will beam from their countenances; and a glory inexpressible, and suited to their high and exalted condition, will surround them.

Abel was the first human being whose body found a grave on earth,—the first whose spirit found a home in heaven. He was there alone; yet not lonely, for though of men, he was not without society. Those "sons of God," who "shouted for joy" when earth's foundations

were laid, and when man was created in the Divine image to be its occupant, exulted with a new delight on receiving amongst them the first fruits of the scheme of redeeming mercy.

Alone he seems, and chants apart,
 In unexpected notes,
 A music, where the grateful heart
 In strains of feeling floats:
 A beauteous soul! whose seraph brow
 Is bright with glory's hue,—
 Lo! angels pause to hear him now
 Their harping praise outdo.

* * * * *

With such a burst of whelming love
 As earth's first martyr sang,—
 When, glory to the Lord above!
 The voice of Abel rang.

Angelic harps their key-note found
 In God as great and good,
 But Abel's heart did beat and bound
 As only sinner's could.

“Worthy the Lamb who *shall* be slain;”
 Redemption crowns my song;
 Ye seraphim, your notes retain,
 But these to me belong!”

* It was Christ who appeared to Abraham. It was Christ who wrestled with Jacob. It was Christ who led Israel out of Egypt, and by the hands of Moses and Aaron, conducted the people to the promised land. It was Christ, who, before he came in the flesh, appeared in these early ages to the Church as her guardian and her God. St. Paul distinctly charges the host in the desert with having tempted Christ. “Neither,” says he, “let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.” The benefits of Christ's death were enjoyed before he died; the legacies of the Will were paid before the demise of the Testator; for the saints, who lived in the days that preceded his advent, were received to glory, if we may so speak, upon his bond, his promise to pay.

Thus might the primal soul who came
Forth from its bleeding clay,
Kindle the heavens with His bright name
Who is our Truth and Way.

And with that song of glory blent
An humbling depth of tone,
Which to the ransom'd harper lent
A music all its own.

Angels for bliss and being sang
Their ecstacies on high;
But how the heavens with wonder rang
When man awoke the sky!

But even as a human spirit, Abel was not long alone; millions of the redeemed sons and daughters of earth are with him now; and the company is every day increasing. There are the patriarchs and prophets. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are there; and David, "the sweet singer of Israel" is among them. O how sweet their songs! how bright their crowns! Dan. xii. 3; Mal. iii. 17; Matt. xiii. 43. O what inexpressible rapture there must be in that music where the instruments are of the manufacture of "the Lord of glory" himself! and where every voice is a million times richer and sweeter than that of the sweetest and most skilful singer of earth! "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man," the happiness and glory of that company. 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10; Isaiah lxiv. 4. Sickness, sorrow, and death never enter there; cares, fears, and anxieties are never felt there; poverty, privation, and disappointment are never known there. There no idol temples pollute the groves and mountain-tops. There no spirit of

horror broods over ancient battle-fields. There no frightful Golgothas, or places of skulls, waken up remembrances of associations of guilt and death. There no dark spirits rule the air, or dwell amid desolations and tombs. There no ground which once drank the blood of martyrs, or of God's own Son. There no serpents hiss under the tree of life, or bruise the heel of those white-robed ones that stray by the fountains of living water. There no foul worms creep forth from the heart of ripening fruit, and no poisonous, softly stealing death revels on the cheek of beauty. Bright, pure, and blessed "country."

O blissful scene!—where sever'd hearts
 Renew the ties most cherish'd,—
 Where nought the mourn'd and mourner parts,—
 Where grief with life is perish'd.
 Oh, nought do I desire so well
 As here to die, and there to dwell!

No cloud ever darkens the sky of that blessed world; no tempest disturbs the air. Here, the flowers fade with a touch; but there, beneath a brighter Sun and in a nobler soil, the trees flourish in perpetual verdure, the leaves never wither, the flowers never fade, and every month produces its perfect fruit. And, what is still better, there shall be no more sin. (Rev. xxi. 27; xxii. 15.) "And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away." (Rev. xxi. 4.) "And there shall be no

night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign for ever and ever."

"O happy country! where
 There entereth not a sin;
 And Death, who keeps its portals fair,
 May never once come in.
 No grief can change their day to night;
 The darkness of that land is light:
 Sorrow and sighing God has sent
 Far thence to endless banishment.
 And never more may one dark tear
 Bedim their burning skies;
 For every one they shed while here,
 In fearful agonies,
 Glitters a bright and dazzling gem
 In their immortal diadem."

O, what a revelation!—The map of time disclosed, and every little rill of sorrow, every river of trouble will be seen to have been flowing heavenward,—every "rough blast" to have been sending the bark nearer the heavenly shore. (Isaiah xlvi. 17; John xiii. 7.) O, what a meeting there of Christian parents and their Christian children, of Christian brothers and sisters, and death-divided Christian friends! what mutual gratulations! what happiness! and, O, what joy unspeakable to see Jesus, and get their warmest welcome from the lips of Him who redeemed them with his own blood! and in the agonies of

His cross, suffered for them more than a mother's pangs,—
 “the travail of His soul!”

Stupendous love!

Can man for this ungrateful prove,
 Jesus, the Saviour! what rebellious knee
 Would not a ready homage pay to Thee?
 The martyrs' glorious train,
 Thy noble votaries of old,
 In records of immortal fame enroll'd,
 Wore on their breasts inscribed Thy mighty name.
 By this with sacred fortitude inspired,
 With heavenly zeal and transport fired,
 They ran upon the pointed spear
 And leap'd into the flame;
 Nor death could in a shape appear
 But what with open arms they met,
 Despising all that rage could do, or proudest tyrant's threats.
 Not hell itself their constancy could shake;
 Its deepest stratagems they brake,
 Its wildest fury trampled down,
 And seized with conqu'ring hands the everlasting crown.
 “Jesus!” the signal for the fight they chose,
 And gave a glorious onset to their foes.
 In vain the powers of earth and hell oppose.
 “Jesus! our conqu'ring chief!” they cried;
 “Jesus!” aloud the surrounding skies replied.

Exalted Name:

From Thee the burning seraphs catch their flame.
 Jesus the God! 'tis they alone can tell
 What treasures in that title dwell.

You happy spirits, that feel its emphasis,
 By this you stand confirmed in bliss,
 And know what boundless joys are stored
 In this important word.
 The glorious subject only suits
 The high-toned notes of your immortal lutes.

Then join the choir,
 You bright musicians of the skies,
 And, with a well-proportion'd fire,
 Instruct us how to rise.
 Let your bless'd harps the imperfect lay prolong,
 Complete the bold design, and close th' advent'rous song.

The world has nothing to entertain the faithful soldier of Christ. (1 John ii. 15, 16; Philipp. iii. 7, 8; Psalm lxxiii. 25, 26.) Death has no terrors for him. (1 Cor. xv. 56, 57; Rev. xiv. 13; Job xix. 25-27; Psalm xxiii. 4; Isaiah ii. 10; lvii. 1, 2.) The language of his heart is, "O Thou whom unseen I love, by what powerful influence dost Thou attract my soul? Thou dwellest in the heights of glory to which no human voice can soar, and yet Thou art more near and dear to me than any of the objects of sense." (John xiv. 21-23; 1 Cor. vi. 19; 2 Cor. vi. 16; xiii. 5; Rev. iii. 20; Cant. v. 1, 2.) "Oh, where could I be happy remote from Thee? I love the brethren,—I love my Christian friends; but I love Thee more than all. 'I will arise now, and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek Him whom my soul loveth. I sought Him; but I found Him not. The watchmen that

go about the city found me: to whom I said, Saw ye Him whom my soul loveth? It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found Him whom my soul loveth: I held Him, and would not let Him go, until I had brought Him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me.' 'I sat down under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste.' O my Beloved! 'sweet is Thy voice, and Thy countenance is comely.' 'My Beloved is mine! and I am His!' 'I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my Beloved that knocketh.' Adieu to all human things! Welcome unutterable delight! All hail! ye joys unspeakable and full of glory! Compared to you, what are worldly pleasures? what is all that men of the world call happiness? Vanish, ye terrestrial scenes! fly away, ye vain objects of sense! O break my fetters, for I must be gone!"

Hold on faith: it is but a little while, and your work will be at an end; but a few more hours, days, or years, and your sighs and tears shall be converted into everlasting hallelujahs; but a few more steps, and the journey of life will be finished. In that happy "moment," the faithful soldier of the cross shall be freed from temptation, sin, and sorrow. He "shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." (Isaiah xxxv. 10.) His sun shall no more go down; neither shall his moon withdraw itself: for the Lord shall be his everlasting light, and the days of his mourning shall be ended. (Isaiah lx. 20.) In that happy day, the redeemed might well exclaim,—

“Glory to God, all our dangers are o’er;
We stand secure on the glorified shore;
Glory to God, we will shout evermore.
We’re home at last, home at last.”

The faithful soldier of the cross does not fear the grave; because his Saviour has promised He will never leave nor forsake him. (Heb. xiii. 5; Psalm xxiii. 4.) He takes hold of His strength. (Isaiah xxvii. 5; xl. 29-31.) The breakers will perhaps run mountains high as he goes over the bar; but he does not fear, because Jesus is at the helm. The next wave will float him far beyond the trials and conflicts of earth. In that blessed “moment” all his labors and sufferings shall close in the everlasting enjoyment of the wealth, the glories, and the joys of his “Father’s house.” He shall then “see the King in His beauty; he shall behold the land that is very far off.” (Isaiah xxxiii. 17.) In that day the Lord will rejoice over him with joy; He will rest in his love; He will joy over him with singing, and wipe away all tears from his eyes. (Zeph. iii. 17; Rev. xxi. 4.) In that blessed land, “the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick” (Isaiah xxxiii. 24; Rev. xxi. 4); there the eye of the patriarch shall never grow dim again; there Jacob shall no longer halt, and Lazarus retain no traces of his maladies. No mortal ever conceived of a form so beautiful and glorious as shall then belong to the saint whose body was the most unlovely and misshapen here; for it will “be fashioned like unto His glorious body,”—“not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.” O how

dazzling! how divinely fair! what inexpressible pleasure in every smile!

There the blood-washed millions shall join with cherubim and seraphim, angels and archangels, thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, to sweep the loud-strung lyre, and roll the melodious anthem along the tide of everlasting ages. Whatever can give delight, whatever can satisfy the soul in all the boundless capacities of joy, will be there. Never did the eyelids of the morning open on such perfection; never did the sun, since first it journeyed through the skies, behold such beauty; nor can human fancy, in its most inspired flights, conceive such glories. Christianity describes them by pronouncing them indescribable. She declares that "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

The biographer of Dr. Gordon, speaking of his near approach to death, says, "On awaking after a long sleep, he took the writer's hand, and, grasping it tenderly, said, 'I feel I am hastening away very rapidly to-day. O that blessed Saviour! How I love Him! Preach Him frequently, Newman! Speak of that blessed Book. I must have more of it—read more chapters in John.'" To another friend, who expressed surprise at witnessing such composure, he replied, "Confidence in Christ conveys vigor to my heart. Without Him I should be weak indeed. Attribute nothing of it to me. The man who hopes to be saved by his own works, will have no peace of mind. He must think of himself as nothing." (1 Cor. viii. 2, 3;

Luke xvii. 10.) To the Agent and Secretary of the Temperance Society, who told him how deeply he would be regretted in the town, he replied, "I wish to live in the affectionate remembrance of my friends; but I wish them to have the same enjoyment, and they can only have it by seeking Christ." In conversation with his family, he said, "How can I help loving Him? I seem to see Him with His heavenly countenance smiling on me now. He has pardoned me, washed me, clothed me. I feel I could not rebel against Him. What are men about when, with such a theme, they can preach such sermons as many of them deliver! There are not only joys to come, but joys in this world. Having Him so near as a companion," (John xiv. 21-23; 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20; 2 Cor. xiii. 5; Colos. i. 27; 1 John iv. 4; Rev. iii. 20; Cant. v. 1, 2,) "it takes from us evil thoughts, ambition, and avarice. He says, 'If ye love Me, keep my commandments.' And what are His commandments? Not grievous. There was He seeking me out first, and not I seeking Him! And whence came this? By grace we are saved through faith; and not of ourselves: it is the gift of God. (Eph. ii. 8.) Oh, think of Christ. How can any one think of himself?"

Another friend remarked, "I remember once thinking it folly to talk of being born again. I knew not what it meant." To this remark Dr. Gordon replied, "But we know now. It is the strong conviction of the truth of Christianity which gives me peace and blessedness. It has changed my whole nature." The same friend continued, "John Newton, when entangled by skepticism,

resolved to test the truth of Christianity by seeking the Divine influence promised in answer to prayer, arguing that, if religion were true, the result of such seeking would be the evidence of it." "That is the argument," said Dr. Gordon, "which weighs with me. No mere reason of man could have written the Bible. Reason may find fault with it, but could not have made it. O, it is a Book! Read every word of it, and believe it just as it is." By his own request, the Lord's Supper was administered in his room. The beautiful hymn of Dr. Watts was sung:

"There is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign;
Infinite day excludes the night,
And pleasures banish pain."

"He then took a most tender farewell of his afflicted wife. To his daughter, who bent over him in great distress, he said, with inexpressible tenderness, 'Bless thee, my child!' 'You love me still, father?' 'Yes, dearly!' He then opened his hand, which had now almost lost its power of motion, for the purpose of receiving hers, which he tenderly pressed, together with that of the writer. This was the last act. After a pause, he said suddenly, but not without considerable effort, 'Bring them all in,—everybody!' Increased difficulty of breathing was the only distressing symptom. He appeared no longer conscious of what took place around him. He gazed upward, as in rapt vision. No film overspread his eyes. They beamed with an unwonted lustre, and the whole countenance,

losing the aspect of disease and pain, with which we had been so long familiar, glowed with an expression of indescribable rapture. As we watched in silent wonder and praise, his features, which had become motionless, suddenly yielded for a few seconds to a smile of ecstacy, which no pencil could ever depict, and which none who witnessed it can ever forget. And when it passed away, still the whole countenance continued to beam and brighten, as if reflecting the glory upon which he was gazing." (See Exodus xxxiv. 29, 30; Psalm xxxvi. 9; Isaiah l. 10, and Acts vi. 15.)

"We saw," continues his biographer, "as much as mortal eye could see of the entrance of a soul into glory. Nothing more could have been given us, but the actual vision of the separate spirit and its angelic convoy. This glorious spectacle lasted for about a quarter of an hour,—increasing in interest to the last,—during which the soul seemed to be pouring itself forth from the frail tenement which had imprisoned it, into the embrace of its blessed Lord. The breathing now became shorter and shorter; then, after a long pause, one last, gentle heaving of the chest, and without a struggle the soul had fled. Was this dying? All present felt that their departed friend had never been more emphatically alive. * * * * *

There was grief, but no gloom, in that chamber. The glory of heaven seemed to illuminate it."

His biographer further observes, "I never saw a more decided instance of a person casting away his own righteousness, and trampling it under foot. Christ was every

thing to him; while the breathings of his soul after holiness and sanctification of the Holy Spirit were intense and fervent. To his entire dependence upon his Saviour's merits may be attributed, under God, his uninterrupted enjoyment of spiritual consolation all through his illness. His experience stood out to view as a living elucidation of that beautiful passage of Scripture—'Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee.'

Equally happy was the death-bed scene of the Rev. Dr. Payson, referred to in Chapter 4, p. 91. The following additional particulars are gleaned from his biography:—To the question, "Do you feel yourself reconciled?" he replied, "O, that is too cold. I rejoice, I triumph; and this happiness will endure as long as God Himself: for it consists in admiring and adoring Him. I can find no words to express my happiness. I seem to be swimming in a river of pleasure which is carrying me on to the great fountain-head!" * * * "And God is in this room. I see Him; and, oh, how unspeakably lovely and glorious does He appear—worthy of ten thousand thousand hearts, if we had them. He is here, and hears me pleading with the creatures that He has made. And, oh, how terrible does it appear to me to sin against Him; to set up our own wills in opposition to His!" After a short pause, he continued, "It makes my blood run cold to think how inexpressibly miserable I should now be without religion." * * * "I find no satisfaction in looking at any thing I have done; I want to leave all this behind—it is nothing

—and to fly to Christ to be clothed in His righteousness.”
* * * “I have done nothing myself; I have not fought, but Christ has fought for me; I have not run, but Christ has carried me: Christ has done all.” * * *
“O the loving-kindness of God—His loving-kindness. This afternoon, while I was meditating on it, He seemed to pass by, and proclaim Himself, ‘The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious.’ O how gracious!” * * *
“It seemed, this afternoon, as if Christ said to me, ‘You have often wondered and been impatient at the way by which I have led you; but what do you think of it now?’ and I was cut to the heart, when I looked and saw the wisdom and goodness by which I had been guided, that I could ever for a moment distrust His love.” (See Isaiah xlvi. 17; John xiii. 7; Deut. viii. 2-5; Psalm cvi. 7-15, and Jer. xxxi. 3.) To his sister he said, “O, my sister, my sister, could you but know what awaits the Christian; could you only know so much as I know, you could not refrain from rejoicing and even leaping for joy. Labors, trials, troubles, would be nothing; you would rejoice in afflictions and glory in tribulations, and, like Paul and Silas, sing God’s praises in the darkest night and in the deepest dungeon. You have known a little of my trials and conflicts, and know that they have been neither few nor small; and I hope this glorious termination of them will serve to strengthen your faith.”

His bodily sufferings were exceedingly severe. His right arm and left side lost all power of motion, and the flesh became insensible to external applications, while in-

ternally he experienced a sensation of burning, which he compared to a stream of liquid fire pouring through his bones. Speaking of his trials, he said, "God has been depriving me of one blessing after another; but, as every one was removed, He has come in and filled up the place; and now, when I am a cripple and not able to move, I am happier than I ever was in my life before or ever expected to be; and if I had believed this twenty years ago, I might have been spared much anxiety." On Sunday, October 21, 1827, his last agony commenced. Even now he greeted those who approached him with a smile. A little while before he died, he exclaimed, "Peace! peace! victory! victory!"

What are the laurels and trophies of conquerors, compared to a triumph like that? Equally cheering to all who truly love God is the dying testimony of the Rev. William Romaine. About an hour before his departure, a friend said, "I hope, my dear brother, you now find the salvation of Jesus Christ precious to your soul?" He replied, "He is a precious Saviour to me now. O, how animating is the view I have of death and the hope laid up for me in heaven!" The last words of the Rev. Dr. Doddridge were, "My soul is vigorous and healthy, notwithstanding the decay of this frail and tottering body." On another occasion he said, "The most distressing nights to this frail body have been as the beginning of heaven to my soul. God hath, as it were, let heaven down upon me in those nights of weakness and waking. Blessed be His name." The Rev. William Hervey exclaimed, in his dying hour,

“O, welcome death! welcome death! thou mayst well be reckoned among the treasures of the Christian! To live is Christ, but to die is gain.” A little before his departure, a friend said to the Rev. Charles Simeon, “How gracious it is that you should feel so little suffering!” “Whether I have a little more or a little less,” said the dying man, “it matters not. All is right and well, and just as it should be. I am in a dear Father’s hands: all is serene. When I look at Him,” (here he spoke with peculiar solemnity,) “I see nothing but faithfulness, and immortality, and truth; and I have not a doubt or a fear, but the sweetest peace. But if I look another way,—to the poor creature, to self,—oh, there is nothing—nothing—nothing—(pausing) but what is abhorred and mourned over. Yes; I say that—and it is true.”

A few hours before his death, the deeply pious and learned Dr. Bedell said, “Hear me. I acknowledge myself to have been a most unprofitable servant,—unprofitable, but not a hypocrite. I find myself to have been full of sin, ignorance, weakness, unfaithfulness, and guilt; but Jesus is my hope: washed in His blood, justified by His righteousness, sanctified by His grace, I have peace with God. Jesus is very precious to my soul,—my all in all; and I expect to be saved by free grace through His atoning blood.” Another dying soldier of the cross said, “In body, full of pain; but in mind, full of happiness and heaven. O the boundless love of God! Volumes could not express what I feel of His love. O that precious blood! Let no one slight it. O tell everybody to love Jesus!—

to love the Bible. O tell everybody to love God and keep His commandments, and He will be with them in death."

The last words uttered by Luther were, "O my heavenly Father, thou hast revealed to me thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. I have preached Him, I have confessed Him, I love Him, and I worship Him as my dearest 'Friend' and Redeemer. Into Thy hands I commit my spirit; for Thou hast redeemed my soul, O Lord God of truth." Another faithful soldier of the cross exclaimed, "O what prospects are before me in the blessed world to which I am going! Will you not share my joy, and help me to praise Him that I shall soon leave this body of sin and death behind, and enter on the perfection of my spiritual nature? Sweet affliction! now it worketh glory, glory!" The last words uttered by Mr. Toplady were, "I cannot find words to express the comforts I feel in my soul: they are past expression. The consolations of God are so abundant that He leaves me nothing to pray for. My prayers are all converted into praise. I enjoy a heaven already in my soul." Another dying saint exclaimed, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." (Acts xvii. 56.)

No less cheering to the Christian heart is the dying testimony of the Rev. Mr. Hewiston. After drinking a tumbler of cold water, he said, "What a beautiful emblem of the pure river of life!" "When you reach that river," said a friend, "there will be an end of all your weariness and languor." "And, what is far better," rejoined Mr.

Hewiston, "an end of all possibility of sinning." On another occasion he said, "The righteousness of Christ is my stay. That sustained me in Madeira, in the midst of persecution and difficulties; it has sustained me all through my ministry; and it sustains me now."—"It is a great privilege," remarked his friend, "to be enabled to bear the testimony you now do." "And an humbling thing," replied Mr. Hewiston: "the more grace, the more self-emptying." One night, about two o'clock, he said, "Oh, was not that a most wonderful thing, the agony which Jesus suffered in his body for our sins! And that fearful agony was only an index of what he suffered in his soul." Mr. Hewiston's last words were, "Oh, my people!"

President Edwards observes, in his life of the Rev. Mr. Brainerd, that his history shows the right way to success in the work of the ministry. "He sought it as a resolute soldier seeks a victory in a siege or battle, or as a man that runs a race for a great prize." God help every soldier of the cross on earth to pursue the same course. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood; but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

"Brethren," said another dying soldier of the cross, "I see, methinks, celestial Light ahead!—the shadows are flying! O, hallelujah! hallelujah! O, glory to the bleeding Lamb! In a few moments I shall see Him as He is." After a brief pause, he added, "I am rather falling into a gentle sleep than dying. I feel but little pain, and all within is peaceful and calm." And then, closing his eyes,

with a heavenly smile overspreading his countenance, he repeated these words, and with them resigned his breath :

“The angels call, they call me from above,
And bid me hasten to the realms of love.
My soul with transport hears the happy doom;
I come, ye gentle messengers, I come :
Earth flies, with all the charms it has in store,
Its snares and gay temptations are no more ;
While heaven appears, and the propitious skies
Unveil their inmost glories to my eyes.
To mortals and their hopes I bid adieu,
And ask no more the rising sun to view ;
For, oh, the Light himself, with rays divine,
Breaks in, and God’s eternal day is mine.”

Lady Huntingdon, when asked by Lady Anne Erskine how she felt, replied, “I am well ; all is well, well forever. I see, wherever I turn my eyes, whether I live or die, nothing but victory.” On another occasion she said, “I am cradled in the arms of love and mercy. My work is done ; I have nothing to do but to go to my Father.” (See Isaiah lxvi. 13 ; Jer. xxxi. 3, and John xvii. 24.) When near her last struggle, she whispered, joyfully, “I shall go to my Father to-night ;” and she did. Hannah More bore this testimony to the love of Christ to her soul :—“What can I do ? What can I not do, with Christ helping me ? I know that my Redeemer liveth. Happy, happy are those that are expecting to be together in a better world. The thought of that world lifts the mind above itself.” When one talked to her of her good deeds, she said, “Talk not so vainly ; I utterly cast them from me, and fall low at

the foot of the cross." As the moment of her departure drew near, she smiled, and endeavored to raise herself a little from her pillow; she reached out her arms as if in the act of praise to God, and, while making this effort, she once called, "Patty!" (the name of her last and dearest sister,) very plainly, and exclaimed, "Joy!" In this state of quietness and peace she remained for an hour, and then fell asleep in the arms of her Redeemer, to die no more.

"The cross of Christ," said the dying Mrs. Sherman, "is all my support and hope. O that I had a tongue to urge all to seek refuge there! Is it not a comfort to feel the sting of death removed?" On another occasion, when she heard the voice of her youngest child, she called her, and had her placed for a moment on her knees. Looking at her with inexpressible tenderness, she said, "Mamma is going to heaven. Will my precious child meet me there?" The dear little creature replied, with energy, "Yes, mamma." The answer awoke strong emotion, and prevented her saying more. Recovering herself, she said, "Read to me about Abraham and his seed, that I may feel encouraged about my precious children." "Yes, there is my hope. 'I will be a God to thee and to thy children after thee.' Surely He has been a God to me. Who but He could have borne with me and helped me till now?" As she said this, her countenance was lighted with a sweet smile. Taking her husband's hand, she said, "Forgive a wife if with her dying breath she say, Preach Christ and His salvation more fully, more conspicuously, more feelingly, than ever. It has been your aim, I know, to exalt

Him all your life ; but let your remaining efforts in the pulpit extol Him and make Him very high." * * * *

"Do not weep; cheer up; Christ your Master will give you strength and grace; we shall meet, after a few short years, to part no more."

The last words of Mrs. Sarah Moore were, "Blessed Jesus." The day but one before her departure, she awoke suddenly out of a tranquil sleep, crying out, in rapture, "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto the Lamb,—Hallelujah!" In the evening of the same day, though scarcely able to utter a word, she said to those around her, "Talk of the cross—the blood-stained cross—of the King of love."

The Rev. Dr. Berg, speaking of the scenes of his early childhood, says, "I remember well when a child, separated by the wide ocean, from my parents, among my schoolmates was a little boy, whose father was engaged with mine in preaching the Gospel to the poor Negroes in the West Indies. My heart yearned over him; he was so modest and guileless; so amiable and full of artless affection, and withal so small and delicate, and we were both so far from home that there was to me an unusual attraction about him; and I never shall forget how he pined away like a blighted flower, and was taken to 'the sick-room?' The sickness was unto death—and as he lay, propped with pillows, on his bed, his pale and wasted face—his panting breath—his eyes sparkled with that unearthly light, that gleams through the windows of the soul, like rays from a brighter world, all told

plainly that he was 'going home.' There was a sudden flush upon his features. He raised his little hand and whispered, 'Oh, listen! What sweet music!' Then starting up, his face shining with rapture, he followed with his hands the objects which were before his vision, repeating, 'See! see those beautiful angels! Let me go—dress me, Oh, let me go with them!' And he did go with them. Is it not of such, that Jesus says, 'Their angels do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven?' Among the sweetest thoughts of death, which ever filled my heart, from childhood until now, are those which come whispering from the grave of my little friend."

I have seen

A curious child, that dwelt upon a tract
 Of inland ground, applying to his ear
 The convolutions of a smooth-lipped shell,
 To which, in silence hushed, his very soul
 Listened intently; and his countenance soon
 Brightened with joy; for, murmuring from within
 Were heard, sonorous cadences! whereby
 To his belief the Monitor expressed
 Mysterious union with its native sea—
 E'en such a shell the universe itself
 Is to the ear of faith.

O blessed eternity!—with what cheerful splendor dost thou dawn on every departed faithful soldier of Christ! With thee come liberty, and peace, and love, and endless felicity!—pain and sorrow, tumult and death and darkness, vanish before thee. "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in

the Lord from henceforth : Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors ; and their works do follow them.”

“O Death, where is thy boasted conquest now ?
Where are the frowns and terrors of thy brow ?
Thou hast an angel’s heavenly form and air :
Pleasures and graces in thy train appear.”

“Harp ! lift up thy voice on high—shout, angels, shout !
And loudest, ye redeemed ! glory to God,
And to the Lamb, who bought us with His blood,
From every kindred, nation, people, tongue,
And washed, and sanctified, and saved our souls,
And gave us robes of linen pure, and crowns
Of life, and made us kings and priests to God.
Thousands of thousands—thousands infinite—
With voice of boundless love, answered, Amen.
And God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—
The One Eternal ! smiled superior bliss.
And every eye and every face in heaven,
Reflecting and reflected, beamed with love.”

“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be his glorious name forever ; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen, and Amen.”





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