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RECOLLECTIONS
OF
NETTLETON,
AND THE
GREAT REVIVAL OF 1820.

BY REV. R. SMITH.



ALBANY:
PUBLISHED BY E. H. PEASE & CO.
1848.

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Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1848,
BY E. H. PEASE & CO.,
In the Clerk's Office for the Northern District of New York.

J. MUNSELI, PRINTER,
ALBANY.

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RECOLLECTIONS.



CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

It was the opinion of a great man, who had much to do with Revivals of Religion in this country, that the last great series commenced about the beginning of the present century. "They have never for a moment since ceased," said he, and it was his expectation that they were to continue, until the opening of the millennial state of the world.

Whether these bright anticipations of *Dr. Griffin* are to be realized

or not, all will agree, it is believed, in the desirableness of such a dispensation; and must allow, that in many of these movements, some of the greatest and most happy displays of the Divine benevolence, have been witnessed. At present, the special and simultaneous effusions of the Spirit seem measurably suspended, and it is the opinion of many, that, among other sins which have brought this dearth upon the churches, is to be reckoned the abuse of these special mercies.

In these circumstances it seems desirable that there should be authentic collections of the most remarkable phenomena connected with those Revivals, while some remain who were privileged to witness them, but when the principal actors are passed away.

Of the former class is the writer of these Recollections; and while he has not quite reached that period of life, when we are apt to suppose that "the former age" must necessarily be "better than the present," (*laudator temporis acti*,) he is strongly and abidingly impressed with the belief, nevertheless, that for power and purity, we have had no *such* Revivals since, as those now contemplated. Perhaps it is not to be expected that we should. That would be a narrow view of Providence, which should confine it to one mode of operation, even in so great a blessing as that of the gift of the Holy Spirit. But one mode surely may be less mixed with human imperfection than another, and hence the benefit of *comparison*. We are to "try the spirits," even in this

matter; and we feel, therefore, that we may be doing some service to the coming generation, as well as recording due acknowledgements to the goodness of God, by preserving these memorials while we can. We have witnessed and participated in other Revivals since: we hope yet to see many more; but for those of purity, power and permanency, we can never cease to look to the past, and with something like longing misgivings. While we would not undervalue any of God's acknowledged servants, living or dead, we are often ready to say of those who have passed away from the scenes now to be reviewed,

“Those suns are set! O, rise
Some other such, or all to come is empty boast
Of old achievement, and despair of new.”

CHAPTER II.

THE FIELD.

The *locality* which we propose to contemplate in these Recollections, is that of *Saratoga County* and its vicinity, in the State of New York. The principal actor in these scenes had indeed been already engaged in similar labors for some eight years in Connecticut; great and happy results had followed his labors there, of which detailed accounts are given in his interesting *Memoir*. That *Memoir* has also glanced at the movement in *Saratoga County*. It was felt by the writer himself, however, to be but a meagre sketch

which was given ; and to more than one individual has it appeared, that something further extended, as well as more in detail, is due to this part of the wondrous work of God.

To the writer of these notices — whose residence was then in the county, and has been with a brief exception, for the twenty-seven years that have since passed — this locality has seemed to have been the *focus* of that great cloud of mercy ; and he loves to contemplate the shower at first heard in the distance — then nearing us ; here gathering its most copious and benignant outpourings, and then passing off to water other fields, until only the bright and beautiful *rainbow* appeared, to tell where the blessing had been.

This region comprises most of

the towns in the southern part of *Saratoga county*: *Schaghticoke*, *Pittstown*, and *Nassau*, in *Rensselaer county*, together with *Schenectady*, *Princeton*, *Amsterdam*, and some minor places on the *Mohawk river*. Most of these places, particularly those in *Saratoga county*, were settled by an intelligent, and to a considerable extent, a *New England* population. They were principally *Presbyterians* or *Congregationalists*; but many, particularly those on the *Mohawk river*, were of *Dutch* origin; and all, in general, attached to the order, and other benefits of religious institutions. As long since, as before the revolutionary war, a *Presbyterian* congregation had been gathered at *Ballston*, which took its name from their first pastor. A *Congregational* church emigrated to *Stillwater*, from

some part of Connecticut, bringing the materials of their meeting house with them. A flourishing college had already existed for some thirty years at Schenectady, and which, it will be seen, shared largely in this religious movement. Many excellent men had lived and died, supplying these churches; and some of them were no strangers to Revivals of Religion. Some of the pulpits were now vacant; one congregation (afterwards greatly favored,) had been organized recently; and in another place, great desolations had supervened a former church organization. Thus, while a good degree of religious order existed, it was, in general, what might be called a low and barren state in the churches of this region.

It was in this locality then, and

in such a state of things, that the visitation of mercy, of which we are to speak, reached us. It was, indeed, a timely visitation. Long did we rejoice in it; and "if a drought has since succeeded," or other characteristics have attached to some partial movements which have been experienced, we will still rejoice in whatever good any of them have yielded, and labor in our measure to promote a return of these heavenly blessings.

It is proper to add here, that as most of these churches were ecclesiastically connected with the Presbytery of Albany, that body published an official *narrative* of the work, to which we shall frequently have occasion to refer in these chapters. But that narrative was necessarily brief, and often formal and statisti-

cal. Our object is something more than this. It is to give facts indeed, and such as are reliable; but we aim to awaken popular interest also. We shall therefore give incidents and their aspects, principles and inferences from them, specimens and examples, and sometimes also our own passing impressions; and we have ventured to hope from all this, such a retrospect of God's ways, as may be profitable to read, as it certainly has been to the writer to record.

CHAPTER III.

THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE WORK.

The commencement of the Revival we are noticing, may be said to have been in the latter part of the summer of 1819. But even here we speak of development, rather than of origin. Believing as we do, that here, as in the Spirit's work of Regeneration, the beginning of a true Revival is secret, or but seldom traced. Indeed, it will be found characteristic of *this* Revival, and one of its best marks, that when God's servants were awakened to the use of special means for pro-

moting it, they often found that the Spirit had already "gone out before them."

This seems to have been the case, in the earliest encouragements which were noticed in *Pittstown*, on the eastern side of the Hudson river. A beloved brother, then stationed at Stillwater, had his attention directed to this place, as early as *August*, 1819, and bestowed his labors of love there, with much success. Crowded assemblies were every where seen, whether in school rooms or in the sanctuary, at week services, or on the Sabbath. It was evident the Spirit of the Lord was already "poured out." "Many pricked in their hearts," says the Presbyterian narrative, "were enquiring what they must do to be saved? and fleeing to the only hope

of the wretched, were finding in Him, everlasting security, joy and peace.”

These results greatly quickened the spirit of this faithful brother, enlarged his efforts, and ultimately led to the commencement of the still greater work among his own people. In a review of this part of the field, it is the opinion of this brother, that “four hundred conversions took place in the circle of Stillwater, Schaghticoke, Saratoga, Easton, and Pittstown.” Churches were formed, and several ministers settled as the sequel of that work. “When these things were noised abroad,” and reported at ecclesiastical meetings, they were as life to the dead, in many minds, and the brethren returned from these convocations, to make like efforts, and

find to their surprise, the work *already begun* among their own people.

We have deemed it important to dwell thus distinctly upon this first stage of the Revival, for reasons already mentioned. The work was *found*, not *produced* by man's efforts. The *cloud* was first seen hanging over these places, and thence extended itself in the use of appropriate means, as we shall see, to many others.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PRINCIPAL INSTRUMENT.

But before proceeding farther in the history of these movements, it seems proper to give some account of the *Principal Instrument*. And here, no one conversant with this Revival, will hesitate to name the *Rev. Asahel Nettleton*, of Connecticut, whose Memoir, by Dr. Tyler, is now before the public. Most of the other actors in these scenes, were young and inexperienced men. That individual is now dead, and cannot be affected by any opinions which may be formed concerning him, favorable or unfavorable. We are

free to say, therefore, that we look upon Mr. Nettleton as specially raised up by Providence, for conducting a great and pure Revival of Religion, and that taking him altogether, he was at the time we speak of, the best qualified of any man we have known, for such a service. His theological education had not been extensive, but his theology, formed as it was on his own attentive study of the Bible, and his *special observation of the work of the Spirit*, was as safe, perhaps, as any which could now be found.

His system was that which has technically been called old fashioned New England orthodoxy, to which, in all its relations, he strenuously adhered through life.

But it is not so much as a theologian we wish now to speak of Mr.

Nettleton, as of his practical piety, and as an eminent promoter of Revivals of Religion. For this last he was evidently raised up and qualified. His mind was discriminating and wonderfully self-possessed. Nothing uncentered him: he seemed never taken by surprise; but to perceive and to do just what you afterwards saw to be required, was as it were, intuitive, or rather "given him in that hour."

An example may be given. Mr. Nettleton, while faithful and zealous for the doctrines of grace, and preaching them plainly on proper occasions, was opposed to being drawn into public controversy. It was sometimes attempted to do this, and it happened on one occasion, that two individuals came to his meeting expressly to entrap him.

So they introduced themselves to him after service, as anxious inquirers. They said they had heard him that evening with much interest, and must acknowledge the subject he had recommended to them, to be important, very important; indeed they felt anxious to know more about it. But there were *certain difficulties of doctrine*, which yet embarrassed their minds, and they trusted that he, as a religious teacher could enlighten them. They hoped he would pardon the intrusion; but they were truly anxious to know his views of—of—; in short the great subject of inquiry was the doctrine of *predestination and election!* From their peculiar manner, Mr. Nettleton had long since perceived that their object was to get some remarks from him, which they could

report, in their own way to others, while being alone, it would be impracticable to correct their statements. But he was not to be thus entangled; so he answered, calmly, as they drew along into the vestibule, "It is true, gentlemen, religion is an important subject, and particularly so to you. If, as you say, you are anxious, it is a critical and infinitely important time in your lives. The subject of the doctrines on which you enquire, is also serious—very serious; and if you are to study it, it is highly important that you should study by the use of the best helps. Permit me, gentlemen, to recommend for this purpose, a certain book. It is a book I have read some, and I have great confidence in its views of these subjects. It is a very good book—very able

and entirely to be relied on, in my view; I advise you to get it, perhaps it may relieve your minds. Gentlemen," said he, drawing near to them, in an emphatic whisper, "that book is *the Bible!* that book is *the Bible!* Good night, gentlemen!" It is believed they never troubled him again.

Mr. Nettleton, at the time of visiting us, might be about thirty-five years of age. He was in poor health, and not of prepossessing personal appearance or manners. Though courteous, he was reserved, and so entirely controlled by judgment rather than emotion, that some would have pronounced him austere. Yet he had evidently much natural emotion, and when it was awakened by appropriate and worthy occasions it could almost carry him away.

We remember hearing an instance, when reading in his room, there was reported to him the joyful conversion of a man on whom he had much set his affections. Mr. Nettleton rose from his chair, and hurled his book across the room in unutterable intensity of feeling.

His talent, as a preacher, being rather of the reasoning and discriminating character, the almost uniform first report was, that *he was not eloquent*. So in the usual acceptation of the word, perhaps he was not. But if eloquence consists in the power of holding attention, and deeply impressing human minds, then was Mr. Nettleton eloquent, and at times, beyond almost any man we have ever known. His slowness, his repetitions, and his careful discrimination, all had re-

ference to an *object*, and that he seldom failed to reach, sometimes in irresistible and overwhelming results.

The great secret of the power in this extraordinary man, has seemed to us to have consisted in these following things. *His own deep religious experience*: his *clear conceptions of divine truth*, as taught by the Bible, and his own observation of the Spirit's work: *his knowledge of human nature*: *his self-command*, and *quick perception of right expedients*, according to the occasion.

So manifest was his holy sincerity at the time we knew this man, as to impress the beholder at first with a sort of awe. His prayers, for the same reason, were short and hesitating, as if afraid of saying too much before God; and so humble

was his hope, that we have heard it related, as among his last sayings, that he considered it barely possible that such as he should be saved.

Mr. Nettleton's views of divine truth, and its applications, were, as we have said, very clear. Yet did they not resolve themselves into abstract or exclusive propositions. No man was further from what has been called the *one idea* propensity. We remember a young clergyman once to have asked instructions of him, as to the best manner of visiting and conversing with sinners? "The greatest difficulty is," said he, "*in feeling right yourself*;" and he had no *rule* to give him. Similar to this was the result of an interview that a company of us contrived to have with him one afternoon, the great object of which was

to get the results of his own experience on these subjects. He came indeed, but we could get him to say but very little. "Few general propositions," he said, "could be laid down on such a subject. *Principles* were indeed of importance, and *facts* were to be observed, but these every one must study and attend to for himself."

When he did speak or advise, however, it was always in wisdom; it was open and honest, and no uninspired man, it is believed, has made fewer mistakes. Let this be judged of by a few examples. Mr. Nettleton considered it not profitable *to have many preachers* in a Revival. If he were not well acquainted, or had not entire confidence in the fitness of a man, he would suffer himself to appear al-

most rude, rather than invite him to preach. "Now," said he, in the presence of a good father who had been introduced to him one evening just before going to the church; "here is another good brother, and I suppose he thinks I must invite him to preach." So anxious was he to have the most entire *stillness* in an audience, that we have known him to spend a full half hour in getting them seated, and then, in some cases, to request them not to attempt to rise during the offering up of prayer. He was so far from relying on *mere sympathy* in religious awakening, that he seemed rather to be afraid of it, and he once separated two bosom friends who had taken their room together under convictions, lest they should too much operate upon each other.

He watched his opportunities, and seldom attempted to speak to a person on the subject of personal religion, when surrounded with noise, or distracted with the cares of a family; but meeting a poor woman of these circumstances one day *on the road*, he said a few solemn words to her, pointed to a grove she was about to enter, and went on. She took the hint, and there alone, and in solemn prayer, committed her soul to God, and found a hope of salvation.

One of the peculiarities of Mr. Nettleton's dealings with sinners, was in his almost uniformly aiming to *destroy false confidence*, to pluck away their *props*, as he would call it, and bring them to *immediate submission*. A woman in an anxious meeting, was in a great conflict.

and such was her distress, that she actually sunk upon the floor. “Madam,” said Mr. Nettleton, “it is evident the spirit is striving with you, and you *must submit.*” “O, I cannot—I dare not,” and she uttered a shriek that brought into the room another clergyman, to whom she made the same application. “O, Mr. G——,” said the poor creature, “what shall I do? *Must I submit?*” Mr. G—— had been instructed in the same school; he saw instantly how the case stood, and answered tenderly, but firmly and solemnly, “*Yes, madam, you must.*” She was utterly overcome, fell into spasms, was carried by her female friends into another room, and laid upon a bed. In a few minutes she was rejoicing, and the first exhortation she gave was, as she flung her-

self upon the neck of her husband—an unconverted man—“O, my dear husband, you *must submit*, you must submit.” Can there be any doubt that in this case *submission* was the proper direction, and that to have given any other would perhaps have been fatal.

Mr. Nettleton seemed to rely entirely on the work of the Spirit. So jealous, so fearful was he when he discovered that a people or individual were trusting to human instruments, that we would seem at times to be actually rude in disappointing them. He tore himself away from a place on one occasion, when there were more than a hundred supposed to be under convictions. A distressed woman who heard of his departure, exclaimed that “he was as bad as Satan, for he had

come there only to torment them, and then left them to do as they could." Poor woman; she soon learned to her joy, to resort to a better helper. For similar reasons he would never *urge* an attendance on the *anxious* meetings, (as they were called,) but if any were found to be truly serious, and manifested a desire for such a privilege, it was managed in an unostentatious manner to have them invited.

His manner of conducting these meetings, was to go round and speak to each individual present, in a tone so low as not to be heard by others, to give a word of pointed exhortation, and close all by solemn prayer. There was seldom *singing* in these meetings, all was solemn, still, and reflective, and if an improper person was found to have in-

truded himself, Mr. Nettleton knew how to dispose of him.

A young man of infidel principles had crept into one of these meetings, avowdly for the purpose of making diversion, or to see what he could find to report. Mr. Nettleton had the good fortune to be informed of this, but took no notice of it, until having opened the meeting with prayer; he proceeded in the usual manner, till he came to this young man, when the following or a similar conversation ensued.

“Well, my young friend, do *you* feel as if you wanted religion?”

“No, sir; *I* did not come here to be catechized, sir!”

“Well, you don’t want religion you say, but you believe you have a soul, do you not?”

“I don’t know how that may

be. Yes! Every body believes as much as that, I suppose; but I say, sir, I didn't come here to be catechized."

"Well, you have a soul then, and you sin sometimes, I suppose. There is such a thing as sinning, is there not?"

"I don't know how that is; but, I say, sir —"

Mr. N. interrupting him. "Don't know whether there is any such thing as sin, or not! You believe there is a God?"

"Yes, I suppose so; any body may admit that; but I tell you what it is, sir, I didn't come here to be questioned in this way. I—I— (and he began to look as if he would gladly have been any where else,) I expect to be treated — like — a gentleman!" But even this could not save him.

“ You say then you believe there is a God, and He rules the world I suppose, and is just and good, and yet there is suffering in the world; and you don't know whether there is any such thing as sin or not! Young man!” said Mr. N. turning terribly upon him, and laying a heavy hand upon his knee, “ young man, I understand you perfectly, and I knew your business here from the beginning. *You are an infidel!* And now I tell you what you have before you to do. You have to prove that Jesus Christ was an imposter, or you will be damned! Jesus says, ‘ He that believeth not, shall be damned.’ You do not believe, and you must prove that Jesus Christ was an imposter, or you will be damned.” The young gentleman took his hat and left; and Mr.

Nettleton had only to calm the agitated meeting, by remarking, "You see how weak poor infidelity is."

We will exhibit a few more items of Mr. Nettleton's views on particular subjects.

He did not approve of much or promiscuous speaking in religious meetings. Although glad to avail himself of approved gifts in others, he did not encourage much speaking by young converts, unless it was to relate their experience, and that after a previous interview with them.

He was very careful *to guard against contradictory instructions to anxious sinners*, by those who undertook to direct them. "Suppose a parent should be correcting a child, and exhorting it to submit, but the other parent should come into the

room and seem to take the child's part, how fatal would such a course be to the object had in view in correcting him."

He did not encourage very frequent meetings. Generally he preached twice or thrice on the Sabbath, and once more in the course of the week. The remainder was devoted to the inquiry meeting, and visiting from house to house. More private prayer-meetings were also encouraged; the aid of females in this way, was highly valued by him.

Mr. Nettleton *never countenanced the early admission of young converts to church membership*, but thought much of training them and watching over them for a season, as candidates for this privilege.

Mr. Nettleton, *never interfered with, but always encouraged and strengthened*

the bonds of the regular pastors of the churches. We believe it may be said safely, that of the many whom he visited and labored for in this region, *not one lost influence, or was dismissed in consequence of such visit.* We may add, that we cannot remember a single instance where *a division* was left in the churches.

He never approved of special efforts, to *produce a religious excitement*; on the contrary, he aimed only to *follow* where the Lord led the way, enjoining of course, the discharge of duty at all times. So jealous was he in this respect, that he would not visit a place where he feared they were relying upon him. Indeed we have heard him say, that *he* could not labor where there was not already some religious feeling. Yet he did, on urgent solicitation,

sometimes visit a place on a sort of trial. We remember one such, where he preached, and preached earnestly, for a few times. They *heard* him, but that was all, and he left them saying, it was of no use to stay, since it was evident that Christians there could not be brought up to their duty.

It only remains that we add a few things of Mr. Nettleton, *as a preacher*, and here we shall gladly avail ourselves of what is so well said in his *Memoir*, as to leave but little for enlargement or alteration.

“He was not what is usually called a popular speaker. There was nothing particularly captivating in his voice, his style, or his delivery—nothing to make you admire the man or his writing, or in any way to divert your attention

from the truths which he uttered." Never indeed has it been our privilege to hear the truth, *the truth itself*, without any reference to a thought of the man, to commend itself, as at his hand. And this was evidently his great aim. With him apparently Christ was every thing, and himself nothing. You almost forgot that there was any such being as man in the pulpit, while naked truth in all its unadorned majesty and sweetness came flowing down from the place.

"When he began to speak, there was a benignant solemnity in his countenance, which awed the most thoughtless, while at the same time it excited an unwonted desire to hear what he had to say. He always commenced on a low key, enunciating every word and sylla-

ble distinctly, and frequently repeating a leading sentence to make it better remembered. So simple were his sentences, so plain and unadorned his style, and so calm his delivery, that for a few moments you might have thought him dull, and sometimes common place. As he advanced, and his heart grew warm, and his conceptions vivid, his voice caught the inspiration, his face shone, his whole physical frame seemed to dilate," and there were times when he was awfully overwhelming. Men held their breath, and the audience moved slowly away, not to talk of the preacher, but to meditate, to read, and to pray. His sermon on the *Flight of Lot out of Sodom*, has probably seldom been excelled for solemn impressiveness and lasting effect.

He preached the whole truth, yet not the whole on any one occasion, or without regard to times and seasons. On the great subjects of *Man's duty and God's sovereignty*, for instance, he was wont to exhibit the first, very strongly in his early addresses to sinners, "and now," said he, "if they become awakened, I can tell them their dependence, and hold them up to the doctrine of God's sovereignty, as long as I please."

So of choosing his other subjects. He frequently selected precisely those that were *the opposite of what he supposed would be expected*; and this for the purpose undoubtedly of making a more profitable impression. In fine, Mr. Nettleton was evidently a peculiar man, a wise master-builder, and unusually fur-

nished to that post of his Lord's service, to which he was called. He was deeply pious; he loved the truth; he loved the souls of men; he prayed, read his Bible, and reflected much on what he saw, and he was divinely directed, beyond all doubt, to his great and eminent success. We are by no means disposed to claim for him an exemption from human imperfection; he was as far as any one from claiming this for himself. But taking him all in all, and for the times in which he lived, we do believe that no light has since arisen, of equal splendor, and that no principles or measures essentially differing from his, can be expected to succeed as well.

Such as he was, approved or disapproved, we have now exhibited him, and as far as possible from his own sayings and acts.

Other leaders, and other eminent helpers there were in the same great work. Some of them are still living, but it is believed they will be disposed to regard themselves as disciples, at that time; and however, they may have been prospered since — agree in regarding our deceased evangelist, as *the great instrument of the Revival of 1819-20.*

CHAPTER V.

THE PROGRESS OF THE WORK.

We propose now to follow the progress of this great movement, and its order of advancement, so far as it can be traced from place to place, and

AT SARATOGA SPRINGS. Mr. Nettleton came to this place for his health, in July or August of 1819, evidently intending to remain in obscurity, as he was much worn down by his recent labors in Connecticut. He was induced, however, to visit Malta, eight miles to

the south, where it would seem that some tokens of the Spirit's presence had been manifested already, and here, at a private house, were his first labors, in a town so greatly favored afterwards, as we shall see.

From thence he returned to the Springs, but all was apparently yet dead or dying in the spiritualities of this place. "Those who are acquainted with the character of this village, as a watering place," says an esteemed correspondent, to whom we are indebted for much of this account, "are not prepared to expect any seriousness here during the gay and fashionable season. The Presbyterian church here, had commenced with nine members, only two years before, and was now under the care of the late Rev. D. O. Griswold. In 1819 it had in-

creased to twenty-two members; most of this number, however, had been received by letter, and no special out-pouring of the Holy Spirit had thus far been experienced. In the midst of this coldness and gaiety, Mr. Nettleton came amongst us like any other stranger, though in a very unobtrusive manner. He commenced preaching in a school-house, in the latter part of August, and did not officiate in the church until some weeks afterwards. I well recollect the impression which this produced on me at the time. I had not then heard or seen him. But understanding that a stranger had selected a *school-house* instead of the church, for evening lectures, I inferred that he considered himself too inferior in talents to be placed in contact with several

popular preachers who were then in the village. Still I had been urged by a pious old lady to hear him, in company with her son, who was my personal friend. This we resisted for a time, but at length, to gratify her, more than for any thing else, we attended an evening lecture. I was surprised to find the house so much crowded, but there was nothing in the appearance or manner of the preacher, which was calculated at first to arrest my attention. His text was at *Heb.*, xi, 16 — “or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat, sold his birth-right.” His method of introducing it, was somewhat startling. But I sunk down into a state of indifference, for the time being. I thought the preacher had too many repetitions — that his

language was not of that high order which I had oftentimes heard and admired, and that he was far from being an eloquent man. Soon, however, I lost sight of all this, and found *that he was depicting my own case!* and that, like Esau, *I had sold my birth-right!* I felt the full force of his reasoning, and for the first time in some years, was greatly alarmed.

At the close of his sermon, and before dismissing his audience, he cited a case which had come under his own observation, where one who had evidently despised her birth-right, by slighting the warnings of the gospel, had suddenly sickened, and died, without hope. The solemn manner in which this was related, produced an overwhelming effect. There was not a dry eye in

the house; and I doubt whether there was one present, not already a believer, who did not resolve from that time to seek an interest in Christ. Certain it is that many dated their first serious impressions from that evening.

My friend and myself walked silently from the place for some distance, before speaking, each being afraid to address the other, (as it was afterwards ascertained,) lest a serious remark should excite ridicule. At length an encouraging word from one, broke the silence of both. We walked, arm in arm, for two hours, and before separating, had solemnly pledged ourselves to each other, that we would, from that moment, earnestly seek an interest in Christ. The next morning I called on Mr. Nettleton, expecting

from him words of comfort, and that direction which I so much needed. But he scarcely replied to me, except to say that I must repent. This, at the time, seemed unkind; but I afterwards learned that it was the course he frequently adopted with the awakened sinner. He took away, if possible, every earthly prop, and merely pointed “*to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world.*”*

From that time forward, all the meetings were crowded and solemn. There was no tumult, no noise. Every thing was still, though every

* Was this a proof of want of emotion, as has been sometimes charged upon Mr. Nettleton? It may be told in answer, that this writer is the individual on hearing of whose conversion, Mr. N. *threw the book across the room!*

mind seemed filled with the magnitude of the work, which was going forward. There were a few opposers; but their opposition seemed rather to increase than diminish the convictions of others.

“*Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth!*” The work thus commencing, continued, and principally under Mr. Nettleton’s preaching, for some months. The whole number who dated their conversion from this Revival, was about eighty. In general they have continued steadfast, intelligent Christians. A large number of Evangelical churches have grown up with the growth of that important place, and all of them, it is believed, more or less, taking character from this early and powerful work of grace.

AT MALTA. Incipient developments had occurred here, as we have seen, on Mr. Nettleton's first visit. Encouraged by these indications, these few faithful brethren had sustained their meetings, and "in October a licentiate from the Presbytery of New York came among them, whose preaching and other labors were greatly blessed. Two students from the Theological Seminary at Princeton, also labored among them, so that on the 26th of October, there was a little church collected, consisting of twenty-four members, most of them recent converts to the faith of Christ." (*See Presbyterial Narrative.*)

From this time Mr. Nettleton labored here statedly for about eight months, with occasional visits to other places, and no where else per-

haps, in this whole field, were more demonstrations given of the mighty power of God. "It was but a little while, until weeping and anxious distress were found in almost every house. The habitations of sin, the haunts of intemperance, the strong holds of error, the retreats of Pharisaic pride, and the entrenchments of self-righteousness, were equally penetrated by the power of the Holy Ghost." "Often and anxiously was the inquiry now made; *what shall we do to be saved?* During three weeks the awakening spread over different parts of the town, and became almost universal. "Every house exhibited the solemnity of a continued Sabbath. So profound was the stillness, that a recent death could have added nothing to it, in many families. Common conver-

sation was rarely engaged in, and every ear was open to hear the gospel." Within the year, about one hundred were added to the Presbyterian church in this place; how many to the other churches, we have not yet the means of knowing; but it was quite considerable. These converts have in general remained steadfast, and grown in grace. The church has since experienced changes, it is true, but it is remarkable that amidst all their trials and mutations, and while individuals have in a few instances "made shipwreck of faith," there has ever appeared something which could not be removed; much of which was evidently acquired during this visitation.

It was also from Malta, more than from any other point, that the tid

ings of this grace were "sounded out" to adjoining places. Christians came to admire and to participate, and then returned to carry back the sacred influence to their homes. The sacred flame thus ran from town to town, and sometimes to distant places. The Revival at Nassau, fourteen miles east of Albany, had a connection of this sort, which was truly remarkable, but which cannot here be related.

It is in remembering this part of the happy work of 1820, that we feel disposed to exclaim often:

"O scenes surpassing fable, and yet true!"

They come before us in the recollection of crowded school-rooms, animated with up-turned human faces, and hushed as the silence of death; in the figure of a grave and humble preacher, exhorting us "to

be as still as possible;" while awful and soul-piercing truths were moving us as the trees of the forest are moved by mighty winds. Here we remember the forest-girdled church also, whose packed and half-finished walls seemed ready to burst from the pressure within; or here, the busy and anxious sleigh loads, hurrying from, far and near; or here, the private prayer-meeting, with anxious souls refusing to be torn away when the exercises were over; or there we follow home the solemn rejoicing group, and witness congratulations, such as may not be described, "such as Heaven looked down to see."

We do not mean to intimate that these scenes were uniform, or altogether unmixed. Trials and difficulties would intervene of course,

and shades come, at times, over our brightest prospects. But we mean to say, that fewer occasions of sorrow and regret occurred in connection with this Revival, than any other we have known; that it was long continued and powerful, and in many of its scenes it was most touching and God-glorifying, like what may be expected in that great day hereafter, when a revolted world shall return with weeping and rejoicing unto the Lord.

We may mention as illustrating the spirit of zeal in this work, that a distinguished fellow laborer, whose other duties confined him during the week at Union College, has been known to gather his sleigh load of pious students, on Sabbath morning, ride eighteen miles, preach three times, and return before he slept.

AT STILLWATER. The commencement of the work here has been intimated already. When the beloved brother told his people of the wonders which he had witnessed at Pittstown, a deep impression was made, and ministers and people gave themselves to prayer, publicly and privately. Nor did they seek the Lord in vain. "A deep solemnity spread over the whole community, (in the words of the Presbyterianial Narrative,) and every where meetings were crowded. Some were deeply impressed with a sense of sin, and fully convinced of their need of an interest in Christ. Sinners from a distance came to hear the gospel; and hung on the lips of the preacher as though they heard for their lives. Such was the state of things down to the beginning of

October, (1819,) when their pastor having attended the annual meeting of the Synod of Albany, which held its session at Cherry Valley, returned home, and with a heart overflowing, recounted to his people the wonders of grace, which God was doing in Cooperstown, New Hartford, Utica, &c., and noticing God's mercy to their neighbors in Malta, warned and admonished them of their danger and their duty. His exhortation was brought home by the Holy Spirit, in demonstration and power. It was sealed upon every heart, it seized upon every conscience.

“The Bible class and the Sunday schools were deeply affected. They felt the first influences of God's spirit. Many of them soon became reconciled unto God; meetings be-

came more frequent, full, crowded! In the course of a few days, the Spirit was poured out on several neighborhoods, on families of every habit. The benign influence spread over into Schaghticoke, where at a single lecture, preached by the pastor of Stillwater, between thirty and forty were awakened! And so did it flourish there, that in a little while almost that whole number were rejoicing in hope.

“In the north part of Stillwater, where the means of grace were seldom enjoyed, the work of the Lord commenced, and became very powerful. Scarcely one family was passed over. In a large district, though harrassed by sectarian contentions, where praying families were very rarely found, there was soon scarcely one house where

prayer was not wont to be made; where sacrifice and a pure offering were not daily offered up to God! Many whole families, young and old, every soul, were hopefully converted to Christ. But, in *the village*, God's power was most conspicuous. Many of the inhabitants were of the most hopeless kind—boatmen, tipplers, tavern-haunters, gamblers, gain-sayers, infidels, and atheists—were mingled and mixed with the unholy multitude. The ways of Zion languished, because few came to her solemn feasts. There were many who lived in the village, who scarcely ever attended in the house of God, or in any other visible way acknowledged his supremacy. They were literally stout-hearted, and far from righteousness, without God and without hope in the world; and

yet (we cannot refrain from ascribing glory to God in the highest,) this multitude, bad and unblessed as it was, felt the power of the Holy Ghost, and yielded to His influence, and received the gospel of His grace gladly, and submitted themselves to Him, whose right it is to reign, and in whom all the families of the earth are blessed. We dare not descend to particulars here. The narrative would fill a volume. Our limits will not suffer us to do more than simply state, that whether the Lord moved among the most pure in morals and manners, or among the most polluted in heart and life; as soon as the eye saw that it *was God*, the heart felt its own pollutions, and abhorred itself in dust and ashes, and trembled at the Lord's word. Fearfulness seized upon the hypo-

critic; the careless, the scoffer, and sceptic alike, were brought down to the lowest dust. You might have heard them inquiring with all the apprehensive anxiety of the jailer, 'men and brethren, what must we do to be saved?' and in all the humility of the publican praying, 'God be merciful to us miserable sinners.'

"In the upper congregation, where there had been a great work of grace in 1815, there were little appearances of any awakening, until late in the winter of 1820; but the Lord's mercies were not clean gone, for he appeared there also in His great glory. And so universally did His grace abound, that there remained not one family in all that congregation, where there was not

one or more witnessing souls. The awakening was not confined to any one age or sex, or class of character; it was general! And to the glory of God's grace be it spoken, the most profligate, generally, were the most prompt in their submission to God. The converts were of all ages, from seventy-five years down to twelve years; and in the short space of six months, one hundred and ninety-four were added to the church, of whom *one hundred and three* were added in one day, and there were twenty-three added afterwards, making the whole number two hundred and seventeen. The whole number who cherished hope of forgiven sin, was considerably over three hundred, within the township."

AT BALLSTON. The Revival commenced here in the order of the geographical relation of the place to Malta, where some of our people had attended a communion season, and were much stirred up. It happened also, that on the 12th day of December, four or five church members being together after one of our evening meetings, felt in an unusual degree the necessity of a Revival of Religion, both in their own hearts, and through the congregation; in consequence of this, they solemnly covenanted with each other to observe a special concert of secret prayer for this object, at a particular hour of the day.

This was the first visible movement among Christians; but it ought to be told, for the encouragement of others, that there had existed for

several years in this church, a small female praying society, who had made it one article in their constitution, that they would never cease, while the organization lasted, to pray for a Revival of Religion!

The session of the church were awakened next. On the day appointed for our state thanksgiving, after attending the public services, they held a special conference among themselves. They inquired into each other's official faithfulness—examined their own hearts, and compared views with regard to the state of religion in the church. Much tenderness of feeling was manifested on this occasion, and it was agreed, before they separated, to call a meeting of all the members of the church, for a similar object. This meeting was held on the first

Monday in January, and was indeed a solemn and melting season. After prayer, several exhortations were given, and we then began a free conversation with individual members, on the state of their religious experience, as well as their views and feelings in regard to our spiritual condition as a church. Almost all were either found prayerful and strong in the belief that God was about to pour out his spirit upon us, or they were mourning their coldness, backslidings, and neglect of duty. Some of our most exemplary professors, were almost wholly in darkness, but they were panting for the light of God's countenance, "as the heart panteth after the water-brooks."

The awakening among God's people was now general. Our hopes

in his designs of mercy for others, rose in proportion; nor did we wait long, ere our expectations began to be realized. At a Saturday evening prayer meeting, held the same week, the first decided impressions appeared to be made on the minds of impenitent sinners. Five or six young persons were unusually affected during the meeting, and on conversing with them after its close, discovered a vivid apprehension of their sinfulness and danger, and a strong determination to seek after God. Most of these subjects ultimately gave evidence of having "passed from death to life."

Our first *anxious* meeting was appointed within a few days afterwards, and though it was distinctly made known that none but those under concern were expected at

this meeting, we found, to our surprise, that about sixty were assembled. Here was a scene, novel to most of us, and interesting beyond description. We saw one whole company of sinners bowed down, apparently with the same sentiment of awful condemnation, and some to such a degree as not to be able to rise from their seats, while they bewailed their case with bitter weeping, and besought the prayers and instructions of Christians on their behalf.

After this, new instances of conviction became numerous; we heard of them daily, and in almost every part of the town. The first cases of hopeful conversion, occurred this week also, in two precious youths, who found relief and great joy. Almost every one was now convinced

that a work of divine grace was indeed begun. The church were fired, and the session, dividing themselves two and two, resolved to visit forthwith every family in the congregation. This important work they were enabled to carry into effect, and with great benefit both to themselves and others. The Lord was before us, and it was found that many families and individuals not before known to be affected, and who might have remained so, but for this movement, were already convicted, or *predisposed* to be so upon the first appeals of divine truth!

All the means usually employed to promote Revivals of Religion, were now diligently used. Besides the exercises of the Sabbath, we had weekly lectures by the pastor and others, who came occasionally to

his assistance, in different parts of the town. We had anxious meetings also, and conferences and prayer meetings, and frequently several on the same evening, at different places. The people seemed never weary of attending, and the difficulty was rather to satisfy them without appointing more meetings than we thought to be best. They would flock together during all the inclemencies of the season, and listen, when met, with so deep and profound an attention, that in a room crowded to overflowing, it would almost seem you might hear a pin drop or the beating of a watch. The stillness, at times, seemed to have something like mystery about it; it was sublime, it was awful; you almost seemed to be in eternity. Strangers who have come into these

meetings, have expressed themselves as feeling like Eliphaz the Temanite, when a spirit passed before his face, and the voice of the eternal was heard challenging him, "Shall mortal man be more just than God? Shall a man be more pure than his Maker?" Some of the most signal convictions seem to have been wrought by the Spirit in these circumstances, and apparently in many instances, several at the same moment. These things, notwithstanding it would be a mistake to suppose that there was any thing like enthusiasm manifested in this movement. No dreams, no visions, or supernatural impressions (except in a single instance,) were pretended or relied on. No efforts were made to excite the passions or imagination. Noise

was repressed, and convictions were, in general, rational and deliberative. Plain doctrinal and conscience-exciting truths were principally presented in preaching, and these sermons were those most frequently blessed. Much was urged as to the obstinacy of the sinner's will, his entire responsibility, great guilt and entire dependence on God, to save him from destruction.

These have been the main instrumentalities relied on; but instances of conviction have occurred in modes and circumstances altogether aside from human calculation. More than once indeed have human wisdom and foresight been entirely set aside, and the church has thus been taught to believe that the best way to carry on a work of God in Revivals, *is just to lie in the*

dust of humility, doing duty as it arises, and suffering God to carry on the work himself. The principal duties are those of prayer, patience, Christian intercourse, and continual waiting on the ordinary means of grace.

On the 21st of February, we had our *first* communion season, since the commencement of the work. It was preceded by a day of fasting and prayer, and proved indeed a season of great interest. *Fifty-nine* new communicants then sat down to the table of the Lord, in the presence of an immense assembly of spectators, not less, it was supposed, than two thousand—the whole number of communicants being about five hundred.

The week following, it was found that the Revival had received a new impulse. Here a husband, and there

a wife, who had been separated at the late communion season, was found trembling and seeking the way of salvation. Our evening meetings were still more thronged, and in the coldest evenings of an unusually severe winter, many assembled who were not able to obtain admittance to our school houses, and have been seen to raise the windows and stand without in devout attention to the word of God. Often on these occasions has the scriptural expression occurred to our minds, "These, whence come they? and who are these that fly as clouds and doves to their windows?" The house of God on the sabbath was equally thronged, even the intermission season was usually spent in religious exercises, and we were obliged to enlarge our accommoda-

tions by supplying movable seats. At this time the Revival might be considered at its height, and it was observed that for three or four weeks there was not one day in which we did not hear of one or more persons who were made to rejoice in hope. All our usual means of promoting the work were continued, and at the end of six weeks from our last communion, *fifty-seven* more were added to the church at a season of great solemnity.

Two additional circumstances may be mentioned, as remarked in this Revival. It prevailed to an unusual extent among persons of advanced age, and it was singularly destructive, for the time being, of doctrinal error. Socinianism was not attacked, except as included in teaching the opposite doctrines; and

Universalism was not *attacked* at all. It seemed as if the presence of the Spirit had of itself blighted it. Several persons once professing to believe in this doctrine, were hopefully converted, and few, very few remained, it is believed, who would have been willing then to admit their attachment to such a system.

The particular excitement might be considered as continuing until the *second sabbath of May*, the season of our *third communion*. At this time twenty-six were added to the church, making the whole number received on examination in about three months, *to be one hundred and forty-two*. The opening of the spring brought the busy season of the year; the more unfavorable state of the roads, and the shorter evenings,

made a difference in our outward attention to the means of grace; and yet good influences continued, and other additions to the church were made in consequence of this Revival, throughout the year.

On the whole, no church or people, perhaps, in all this wonderful movement, had greater occasion for gratitude to Almighty God, or were laid under higher obligation to exhibit its lasting memorials, than those of Ballston. And for a long and happy season, these memorials remained. The church was greatly enlarged; our bounds extended; our strength increased; and the moral and intellectual state of our whole population evidently improved. The generation of the young were specially favored. They now loved the things that were "lovely and of

good report;" and it would not have been easy at that time, to find an intemperate or licentious person among them, or to get up and sustain any merely wordly amusement.

Mr. *Nettleton* was amongst us only on two occasions during this winter; but our people saw a good deal of him in other places, and we were favored besides with the occasional visits of other eminent helpers. The good *Dr. Yates* of Union College, (of whom it was said, *he was always in a Revival spirit,*) was several times with us, as was also another zealous and gifted professor in that institution, then just commencing his ministerial career. An excellent *Brother Williams*, since dead, also visited us, and with an anecdote connected with his name, and one other calculated to show the simple

power of God's instrumentalities in converting souls, we will bring this narrative to a close. Mr. Williams had preached an excellent sermon at one of our school house meetings, on the *Parable of the Sower*. In specifying with great fidelity the different classes of hearers of the word, one would have supposed him sufficiently particular, and that it was not easy to escape an individual self-application. "But," said an ingenuous young female, who gave this account of her conversion afterwards, "I heard Mr. Williams, but that did not touch me. After sermon our pastor addressed us, and made the subject still more particular. Still I remained uninterested, for I never thought it could mean *me*. Then we were dismissed, and as we were getting out of the room,

the singers began one of their hymns, ‘*Stop* poor sinners, stop and think before you further go.’ This was, indeed, very solemn, somehow. I felt strongly, though I did not yet think any thing in particular of *myself*; but when our minister came right up to me in that awful crowd, and said, ‘Well, *Eliza*, what do *you* think of these things? Has not the *Sower* sowed any thing for you this evening? Don’t *you* need religion? O, *Eliza*, you know you do.’ Then to be sure, I thought it did mean *me*, and I couldn’t stand it any longer.”

On another occasion the pastor was to be absent for the sabbath, on an exchange with a brother minister of Albany. On his way downward, he called to see a young female of his flock, who was un-

derstood to be under conviction. He found her exceedingly distressed, so much so indeed, that her otherwise beautiful features had become dark with anguish, and truly dreadful to look upon. He understood that at a female prayer meeting held the day before, she had been entirely overcome, and carried out of the room. The pastor felt distressed to leave her in such circumstances; but he instructed and prayed with her as well as he could, and her case was not much out of his mind during his absence. On Monday, as he returned, he called on her again, and the first thing he observed on her entering the room, was the entire change in her countenance. "Well, Jane," said he, "I need not ask you, you feel better, I see it in your looks." "O,

yes, O, yes, tongue can't express it, how happy I am." "But what did it, Jane? how came you to feel so differently?" "O, sir, He said, '*Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters.*'" Dear child! she referred to the preacher whom she heard the day before quote this passage. But it was not his text; he only referred to it in a very usual way; but God was working with his word, and Jane *believed* to the rejoicing of her soul.

The writer of these Recollections will be pardoned for the length of the narrative of *Ballston*, and these details of incidents, if they have not much intrinsic value. He was the pastor of this people at that time: in the strange providence of God he is now, after an absence of twenty-two years, their pastor again. It is na-

tural he should feel an interest for this people. He has hoped to do them good by these reminiscences; he is sure the giving of them has afforded him pleasure, for if there has been any thing useful in his now somewhat protracted life, aught which was pleasant in passing, or the fruits of which he hopes to meet in Heaven, it was connected with the Great Revival of 1820.

AT CHARLTON. Here, too, a refreshing from the Lord was experienced during this remarkable season. Charlton was one of the oldest Presbyterian congregations in Saratoga county. Among an intelligent, orderly, and well indoctrinated people, the work did not commence suddenly, or progress rapidly, but it finally assumed the form "of

a slow and progressive opening of the heart to receive Divine truth." Added to the stated means of grace, the usual means of promoting Revivals at that time, were used. Conferences, prayer meetings, meetings for inquiries, and special visitations of families, were put in operation; God's people were earnest in prayer, and the results which followed in other places, were to a good degree attained here. There were eighty-four members added to communion in the course of the year.

AT EAST GALWAY. This place seems to have been next visited, and in a way to show another variety in the sovereign dispensations of grace. They were at the time without a pastor, although a faith-

ful licentiate preacher had been with them the preceding autumn, who after the Revival, became their minister. In the Presbyterial Narrative, the church is described as "greatly diminished in numbers, cold, stupid, and discouraged." Symptoms of a Revival first began to appear among them about the end of February. Its principal care and labors devolved, for a considerable time, upon the eldership.— There appeared first, an unusual seriousness in one of the district schools. On the first sabbath in March, the president of Union College visited them, for the administration of the Lord's supper. *Seven* were added to the church on that occasion; the ordinances were very impressive, and several, it was believed, were then awakened.

The week following, the solemnity was evidently increased, and on Tuesday evening, at a conference, some twenty to thirty persons were so deeply impressed, as to be either unable, or entirely unwilling to leave their seats after the services were closed. Some stout-hearted young men were found wringing their hands in great agony, and asking, "What must we do to be saved?" School rooms became too small for these conferences; the church was resorted to, and soon filled to overflowing. The faithful eldership redoubled their exertions. They visited all the families by districts, conversed with individuals, and attended numerous religious meetings. They also succeeded in securing the stated services, for a season, of the preacher before men-

tioned; and it is remembered, and will long be remembered by this people, with what disinterested and affectionate zeal, he devoted himself to this work. For not less than seven or eight sabbaths in succession, was he with them, proclaiming the gospel of reconciliation, faithfully, plainly, and with great apparent effect.

Many whole families were hopefully converted to God, and in the course of a few weeks, more than two hundred and fifty, of every age, were rejoicing in hope. *One hundred and sixty* were added to the Presbyterian church; the Baptist and Methodist churches were also enlarged. The special means were continued by the eldership for some time longer. They were then relieved, in some measure, by the set-

tlement of a pastor. Bible classes, sabbath schools, and catechetical instructions, were for a long time well sustained; and this congregation was distinguished for its liberality in the support of benevolent institutions.

IN WEST GALWAY, the Revival commenced about the same time, and apparently with great promise; but as the excellent brother laboring there was in a feeble state of health, and soon afterwards entered into his rest—little is known of the particular progress of the work. About one hundred, however, are said to have been added to the church, in consequence of this movement, and a good degree of its influence still remains among that people.

AMSTERDAM, Montgomery county, is contiguous to the last named place; and here the work assumed a decided and most interesting character about the 1st of March. "Several neighborhoods in the township were awakened at once." Cries for help came from every quarter; and minister and session soon found themselves in the very midst of God's wonderful workings. Their meetings of every name were full—were crowded. The whole of any day in the week, and as much of the sabbath as remained after the public services in God's house were over, was employed in visiting from house to house. The evenings were spent in conference, or prayer, or anxious meetings. And although many who attended these meetings, were often heard, when at home in

their families, in their fields, and in their secret retirements, to groan out in agony, or to cry aloud in anguish of heart; yet in these meetings there was no noise, no confusion, no disorder. Sometimes indeed the prayer for mercy was forced from the broken heart in a heavy whisper, or in a stifled groan. Sometimes too the dreadful struggle within was rendered visible in the palsied frame or writhing hands, or other symptoms of spiritual distress, deeply affecting all around; but nothing like rant or confusion, or enthusiasm! Instead of this, an awe, a stillness, an oppressive silence, which cannot be described, pervaded the whole, and often rendered it difficult to breathe. It was the sinking of the wounded heart, the fainting which precedes the last

agony of life. The hearts of rebellion had received their mortal wound, and were yielding beneath the power of God. Many who visited these meetings from motives of curiosity, totally careless! beholding the mighty power of God, were terrified at their own hard and impenitent hearts, convicted of sin, awakened to a sense of the misery of their state, and forced to enquire also, 'What they must do to be saved?' On one evening, set apart for a lecture and personal conversation, fifteen were powerfully awakened.

There was no difficulty in assembling the people, but often very great difficulty in separating and getting them to return home. Sometimes sleigh loads of these, after leaving the meeting, and riding half a mile

or a mile homewards, would turn back again to the place of prayer, to hear still more about the salvation of Jesus. And they often did this, through lanes and ways and snows, that would have been deemed impossible by persons of any other state of mind.

The awakening in Amsterdam had one prominent feature somewhat peculiar. Sinners were generally very suddenly and alarmingly aroused; their convictions rapidly arose to the highest pitch, were extremely painful in their operations, and yet protracted beyond any thing witnessed in other places. The truths which bore most heavily on the minds of sinners in this awakening, were the awful depravity of the heart, so manifest in its unreasonable and continued rebellion

against God. Their own personal guilt and pollution; their evident danger of eternal death. Every one thought his own heart the worst, and his own case peculiarly aggravated.

Generally the first dawning of comfort in the soul, has been through the application of precious truth, while reading the Bible, or hearing it explained; or while in the act of secret prayer. The reality of the change which so many professed, became every day more visible by the love and unity, and growing holiness, and increasing light and gospel knowledge of those who named the name of Christ.” (*Presbyterial Narrative, pp. 25–27.*)

The immediate result of this work at Amsterdam, was the addition of one hundred and sixty-two mem-

bers to the church; but this is far from expressing the whole of the benefit. The place has been distinguished since as before, by a succession of good and faithful pastors, and several pure Revivals of Religion. The providence of God has remarkably taught them indeed, that his servants "do not continue by reason of death." But one has been removed only to be supplied by another of a similar spirit, and we cannot deny ourselves the mournful pleasure of recording here the name of a brother, whose first and final excellence on earth shone forth in this Revival. *Rev. Halsey A. Wood*, was at the time pastor of this people, and recently entered upon the field of his public ministry. Amiable and unpretending, but a man of great clearness of

mind, warm piety, sound judgment, and great firmness of purpose and pursuit. With what devotedness, with what zeal and real love for the work did he now lay himself out for early usefulness! By night and by day, in his own congregation and in others, in the ecclesiastical meetings, and in all appointments of the church, whoever else might be, we were sure this brother would not be wanting. *Nunquam non paratus!*

A lovely friend, an able helper, a successful laborer. Having a fine constitution, enjoying almost uninterrupted health, and so well acknowledged by the master, we fondly trusted he was to last long, and with still increasing acceptance. But God's ways are not as our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts!

Brother *Wood* was suddenly cut off by a fever, in the autumn of 1825, and his dust has since been occupying a rural burying ground, overlooking the village, which he loved, and where his first and early labors were bestowed.

Why the church must lose such men, and why the feeble often survive to record their memories, are questions not for us to answer. It is a consolation to know, however, that such characters do not cease to be useful when they die. The Revival of 1820, will always be identified by the church of Amsterdam, with the memory of this beloved pastor.

SCHENECTADY AND UNION COLLEGE.
In the third week of January, 1820,
there was a very sudden death in

one of the students of Union College. The alarm was great, and the professors and pious students availed themselves of the opportunity to make a suitable impression of the dispensation. A prayer meeting was held in the room where the corpse had been laid out, and many resorted to it, either from sympathy, or for those higher ends which the occasion seemed to demand. Solemn exhortations were given, and many fervent prayers were there offered, for two succeeding days. The effect was soon visible, and many of the Lord's servants believed that a work of special grace was already begun. The praying was now increased in fervency and in frequency. Inquiry meetings were held, where the sinner's obligation to immediate sub-

mission was much urged, and some at length began to rejoice in hope. That which was at first regarded by many, as only *a nine days' wonder*, and was opposed by some, eventually become a general concernment, and continued for about three months, with great power and interest.

By the 1st of April between thirty and forty of these students were found rejoicing in hope, most of whom connected with Evangelical churches, and several afterwards devoted themselves to the gospel ministry. What a mercy! not only for individual salvation, but for Zion and the world! "From the college the awakening spread down into the city, (of Schenectady,) and in February became very interesting there.

Its first appearance was among the few praying people, the females especially, who met weekly to pray. Their hearts were drawn out to God, most entirely and ardently. A few lectures at private houses were blessed greatly. Many date their convictions from these meetings. The numbers began rapidly to increase. A private house would not hold the people. The academy room sufficed only for a few weeks, and before it was yet believed that the Spirit of the Lord was moving on the hearts of sinners, *the Presbyterian church* was scarcely large enough to accommodate the Wednesday evening lecture!

The church was destitute of a stated pastor, and help was obtained as it was found most practicable. The Lord was their great help. Lec-

tures were very much crowded; conference meetings, meetings for prayer, and meetings for anxious sinners were full and solemn, and greatly blessed. Young and old, moral and profane, felt the benign influence. It was not confined to any one denomination; and be it remembered, to the glory of God's grace, that *a great unity* of action and of feeling, pervaded the whole. There was scarcely any sectarian or divided views manifested until the close of the whole work. It was a very silent, solemn, heartfelt operation; slow in progress, but blessed in result. Nearly three hundred, we trust, were converted to God."

Mr. Nettleton was a good deal in this place. The other labors, so far as preaching was concerned, de-

volved principally on the clerical members of the college faculty. But the Lord showed here, as in other places, that he has many other helpers, besides his official servants.

From Schenectady the work spread, and with happy effect, into the immediate vicinity, generally by the instrumentality of pious students from the college, and such occasional labors as the professors were able to bestow. The churches of *Princeton*, *Duanesburgh*, and *Carlisle*, were also visited at this time; but the strength of the mercy shower seemed evidently abated with the opening of spring, or rather was passing eastward, and was at length gone. Still we *heard* of its wonders, in *Greenbush* and *Nassau*, and thence in Massachusetts and Connecticut, and more or less in

connection with the labors of that remarkable man, who was so greatly useful amongst us.

But here we follow it not. Our object has been, thus far, to trace the work in a particular district, to gather its incidents, and to mark its instrumentalities, as calculated to instruct us, and illustrate the mighty and more indispensable power of God.

We have been aware of performing a difficult task. In a narrative of a Revival of Religion, embracing so large a field, and implicating so many individuals, it were probably impossible to do entire justice, and we should not be surprised (should this publication be noticed at all,) if places and persons should deem themselves neglected, or unfairly represented.

For the correctness of the statements, as far as they go, we think we can vouch; but a more correct or fuller account, we shall be quite willing to see. In the opinions or deductions which we have to offer, we of course are alone responsible.

CHAPTER VI.

RESULTS, AND A COMPARATIVE VIEW OF THE WHOLE WORK.

This part of the subject demands our candid and most conscientious regards. For the great end of these reminiscences would be lost, and our agency in giving them, be unworthy, if not criminal, did we not make such deductions as the facts shall be found to warrant, and which shall prove to be for the benefit of those who will read and observe them.

We *first* remark, therefore, that if by *results*, is to be understood here the *immediate* effects of this Revival,

the facts now exhibited leave us no room for disquisition. In the number of souls hopefully converted; in the enlargement of the churches; strengthening of believers and building up the various institutions of benevolence and religion, and in further favoring the cause of order, morals and truth in every department, it was universally acknowledged, that the Revival had been a blessing, distinct and manifest.

The deportment and spirit of the subjects also, was such as to bear the best tests of examination on this subject. Reviewing the ground after more than one year had elapsed, the testimony of the Albany Presbytery, is as follows: The converts "have been uncommonly united together in Christian

love, and out of a number not less than two thousand, who have been hopefully converted, and of whom fourteen hundred have united themselves to the Presbyterian church not more than four or five are known to have shown signs of apostacy.” (*Presbyterial Narrative.*)

Still our conclusions cannot be final, until we have examined *the degree of permanency of these results, and something of the general state of these churches in after years.* And here it cannot be denied, that while many of these *churches have continued to advance, and never abandoned the high ground then taken, either as to doctrine, spirit, or practice, there has been declension among others, and in some few cases an actual diminution in numbers and graces at least for a season.*

Truth compels us to state, that ministerial changes have been frequent in one or two of these congregations, and divisions and unhappy differences on points of church order; but in no instance, we believe, could these evils be traced to the Revival, nor have they amounted to essential heresies, or been of long duration.

The result of a trial of more than twenty years, therefore, is thus far this; that while there have been delinquencies and declensions in some of the churches which are now reviewed, there has *not* been a falling off, as a whole; but on the contrary, an increase in numbers, strength and efficiency, as compared with their preceding state.

For the evils which have now been referred to, we believe that

adequate causes may be assigned, and as it is our duty to deal fairly with this whole subject, some of these *causes* must now be assigned.

One of these causes undoubtedly was (for we have known no Revival in which it did not obtain to some extent,) *the too hasty admission of candidates to the communion of the church.* The hearts of sessions and all others, at such seasons, are open to hope and charity. Young converts, sincere and warm, but with little experience, desire the privileges of full communion. We do not pretend to know the heart; we follow our most favorable feelings, and the candidates are admitted, even in doubtful cases, and without further trial. Sometimes these wear well, but in other instances (and they are *very many* in more modern

Revivals,) you have every reason to fear, afterwards, that they had no true religious experience. No doubt that some such cases occurred in the work which we have reviewed, and these, so far as they extended, have been among the causes of trial and evil.

Another cause is to be assigned probably, in *the want of proper religious instruction of young converts, after the Revival was past.* Decided attention indeed was paid to this subject in many places, and with the happiest results. But others either had no pastors to take hold of this particular duty, or it came to be felt unhappily that didactic and doctrinal preaching was scarcely required or agreeable, after so much of higher emotions; and more loose views of truth have in conse-

quence obtained. We do by no means believe this error has been as common here, as in some other Revivals; but wherever it has obtained, declensions and divisions, and the other evils mentioned have been more apparent. But on the other hand, in proportion as sound and stated preaching, Bible class, catechetical and sabbath school instruction have been enjoyed—these evils have been avoided, and young professors, as well as others, have appeared *to grow in grace*.

But finally, it is well known, and may not be omitted to be *mentioned here*, that a class of Revivals, in many respects different from those we have reviewed, have since been experienced by the churches, and we do not think a just appreciation of the whole

present state of things can be made, without adverting to these, and making a fair comparison.

It is well known that about the year 1824 or '25, what have usually been styled NEW MEASURES, began to be adopted for promoting Revivals, such as *protracted meetings*, the *anxious seat*, the more *vehement excitement of natural sympathies*, and corresponding instructions, as to *human ability* and the *ease of obtaining Religion*.

It is known that Mr. Nettleton never approved of these measures, or the doctrinal views with which they were connected. He prophesied that "they would *run out* true Revivals," and finding he could not resist them successfully, retired from that time into comparative obscurity.

Now it is a fact, that these Revivals have not, in general, borne substantial fruits. They have been of short duration, and followed in many instances, (we might say in most instances,) with more or less of evil to the churches, even where stated exertions have afterwards been made to give them a right direction. They have often been connected with divisions, strifes, unsettling of ministers, heresies, and a multitude of developments of spurious experiences in professors, such as give infinite trouble to churches, and for which no remedy seems to exist.

We do by no means affirm or believe, that these have been the only fruits of these more modern Revivals; but that they exist, and to a far greater extent, than was common in older movements of this sort,

is what all observe, and few we think will be disposed to deny.

These Revivals have *followed*, at least, upon those former Revivals, and were in some sense connected with them; and now *what is the conclusion*, to which an enlightened friend of true religion would feel compelled to come in relation to this whole subject? Will he conclude that the whole doctrine of special influences of the Spirit, is a delusion, and belongs practically only to the religion of fanatics? Certainly he cannot, if a believer in the Bible—for numerous Scriptures, as well as observed cases in church history, are clearly against this decision; or will he come to think, as some at present seem inclined, that the influences, though real and most desirable, are so

varied in their forms as not to be expected again to be seen in our churches; but that the same blessings are to be enjoyed if enjoyed at all, only in the more ordinary movements of stated ordinances. To this, we answer, that if it shall so appear in the result, and without involving the guilt of neglect on our part, and conversions and sanctification and church life, can truly be secured in the wisdom of God to the extent needed, without *special and observable movements*, we shall not only be reconciled to it, but consider it on some accounts, as a more desirable dispensation. But as this has not yet been, at least, in our country, and until it is so, we have many reasons for expecting and still laboring for what are called Revivals of Religion. That they

should be special, is no more to be wondered at, than that regeneration is so—while the very *diversity* that is now contended for, leaves room to expect it, as one of the modes of the Spirit's operations.

Nor does the tendency to degeneration of Revivals at all prove the falsity of the doctrine of Revivals; every good thing tends to degeneracy in human hands. Thus was the Great Revival of New England followed by the aberrations of *Davenport*, and other and purer Revivals must succeed, before this injurious influence could be wholly removed. True Revivals are of God; then they have been of signal service to the church; and if in any instances they have been followed by those less pure, and evils have ensued, the fault has been in their management, not in the thing itself.

Nor are we yet warranted to doubt that Revivals may be again enjoyed. We should labor and pray for their return, for we do not see how the churches in this country can, at present, dispense with their influence, and hope to live.

Now our believing all this, has been one reason for giving this history, and we shall conclude therefore, by presenting in summary, *those principal things in which the Great Revival of Saratoga county* SEEMS TO HAVE DIFFERED FROM MOST OF THOSE WHICH HAVE RECENTLY FOLLOWED.

1. And one great difference undoubtedly was, *in the peculiar qualifications of the principal actor*. Taking him all in all, we believe, and we think it will appear from these pages that Mr. Nettleton was peculiarly adapted to this vocation, and that

none like him, in this respect, have since been raised up. God indeed is not confined to one class of agencies, and we are quite willing he should send by whom he will send; but still, if among his instruments one is clearly less wise, less holy, or less self-governed than another, we should expect it would appear in the greater imperfection of their work.

2. *A second* and important difference in favor of our older Revivals has been, as we believe, that *more of doctrinal truth was then preached and insisted on as entering into religious experience.* The subjects of entire *moral and original depravity, human dependence and God's sovereignty, as well as atonement, regeneration, and the whole work of the Spirit,* were more frequently insisted

on, and it was not sought so much to *explain* them on principles of human philosophy, as to urge them on the authority of God's word. There was more of "thus saith the Lord!" and leaving it there for the sinner to dispose of as he might.

3. Moreover, *the effort was almost never made then, to convince the sinner how able he was to repent*, (though his *excuses* were taken away of course, by showing that his inability *was moral*,) but far more was it insisted that it was *not* so easy and *sure* a thing to obtain religion in the manner usually attempted; and when the awakened were found, as they always are found at first, to rely on self-sustained efforts; the object then, always was to *take away* their expectations! "Knock out their

props," said Mr. Nettleton, "and let them fall."

4. One of the most marked of all the differences was, *that in the measures which were then used to promote Revivals, men did not seem to go before the Spirit, but always rather to follow it.* This appears most clearly in what has now been recorded, both of Mr. Nettleton's efforts and those made by the churches. A protracted meeting got up in a cold and unprepared state of things; the getting Christians to rise and pledge themselves, without any evidence of the Spirit leading them thereunto, or urging a sinner to the anxious seat against his will, and with almost physical violence, were things unheard of, and would have been wholly disapproved: yet *very great exertions* were used where the

Spirit prepared the way; and "Up, for the Lord *has* gone out before thee," was often found an appropriate exhortation.

5. *There was less noise and less "observation,"* as well as *less attempt to move upon curiosity and other human sympathies,* than has usually been in more modern Revivals.

6. There was more care given to *secure correct advice and instruction for sinners under conviction.* Great pains were taken to have no *contradictory* instructions. Sinners were advised to be a good deal alone, to attend to their Bibles, pray much, and rightly, and *submit* at once to the teachings of the Holy Spirit.

7. *It was attempted to have, as far as possible, only discreet and judicious persons to exhort in religious meetings.* Not many were called on even to

pray, and *females* never, in promiscuous assemblies, although in prayer-meetings by themselves, and in other appropriate departments they were always encouraged, and were found to be among our most efficient helpers.

8. *Mr. Nettleton never encouraged speedy admission to church communion.* Great pains were taken by sessions, that as far as possible thorough examinations should be had, especially with the young. And yet they probably proceeded too fastly in some instances, as has been already suggested.

Finally, more pains than are now common, seem then to have been taken for the instruction and establishment in the truth of young church members. This practice was somewhat varied of course, under different pastors;

but it was constantly recommended, and more or less aimed at by all. For this purpose, *Bible classes* and *other associations* were formed. *Sermons and series of sermons were preached to the young, and books of a didactic character were prepared*, all having in view a more doctrinal education of those who had thus happily come into the church in early life.

In short it was never permitted to these young disciples to suppose that their work was done, or that the care of others for them had ceased when they had become professors of religion; and this we cannot but regard as one of the reasons of the greater general steadfastness in this class of church members, as then witnessed, beyond that which has since been seen.

There were other devices of a

minor kind, the object of which was to *bind Christian hearts together*, and with the mention of one scene of this sort, which he well remembers, the writer of these Recollections will at length close.

It was an occasion when the Revival had nearly closed, and a company of some one hundred dear young converts were met by themselves to receive appropriate instructions. The place was an old academy building—since gone down to the dust, as have many who were then assembled within its walls. The text selected by the preacher was *John's III^d epistle, the 4th verse*—“*I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in the truth.*” And never was the unworthy pastor more conscious of entering into the full sentiment of the text, than on

that occasion. A little sea of upturned youthful faces was before him, and every mind seemed easy to be moulded as the plastic clay. We sympathized; we ran together at once, in our assent to the truth, in views, in holy feelings, in love itself, chaste, elevated, and heavenly, and yet without any thing to destroy reverence, for it was "*love like unto the angels.*"

When the preacher had finished his more formal instructions, and urged the sanctions by all the force of the occasion, he dismissed the meeting, and told these young disciples *they might rejoice together now, in a somewhat freer manner.*

And they did rejoice exceedingly. The scene cannot be described. They sung, they conversed, they congratulated, they strengthened

each other, and *hearts* were then bound together, we have no doubt, by ties which have since sweetened earth's toils, beautified Zion, taken off death's bitterness, and are enduring still where toil and death are no more.

“*When shall we all meet again?*” Never in this world certainly. But should this sketch ever meet, in earth's wide waste, any of the dear “*children*” then assembled, and now, like the writer, “passed into the sear and yellow leaf,” it may inform them that their then youthful pastor still lives, and has often been cheered in his pilgrimage, by learning that one and another of them was *walking in the truth*, or has finished his course in peace.

In the hope of yet aiding others in the same course of duty and

blessedness, he has undertaken, and now finished, this history of the GREAT REVIVAL OF RELIGION IN EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND TWENTY.



APPENDIX.

SPECIMENS OF NETTLETON'S PREACHING.

[First published in the New York Observer.]

They said he was *not eloquent*; and in the usual acceptation of the word, he was not. He generally chose the plainest subjects, preached doctrinally, as well as experimentally: and his object being only to do good, he urged his positions with great force, not withholding *repetitions*, in many instances, for the sake of greater effect.

But they said "he was not eloquent," and this was the impression under which I sat down to hear him for the first time.

It was a season of great interest, in the memorable winter of 1820-1, when a Revival was being experienced—and it did appear as if the mind of a whole population was moved by an unseen and awful influence from above. A company of young ministers had come together, hoping to learn something from this veteran evangelist, in relation to their professional duties. But he scarcely *told* us any thing! He was nervous and exhausted, and seemed really ill. Well, I remember his appearance. He sat by the open fire, got off his shoes and roasted his feet, took some pearl ash and cider, and finally went to bed. After tea, however, he seemed more revived, and we went to the evening meeting together. It was known that Mr. Nettleton was expected to

preach, and almost the entire population were seen assembling. Sleigh load after sleigh load arrived, some of them to my knowledge from a distance of not less than eight miles—and not the most busy fair or parade day, ever exhibited more zeal—tempered however with solemnity and the strictest regard to order. Mr. Nettleton was remarkable for the pains he always took to “keep his audiences as still as possible.” I have seen him spend half an hour in packing them away in a closely crowded school house, for this purpose. But to proceed. I watched for the effect of this appearance of things upon our friend, and found he was not insensible to it, more than any of us. As he walked up the middle aisle to his little temporary desk under the pulpit, and

saw the waiting masses on either side, I could observe his nerves to strengthen at every step.

He took his place, gave out the 39th of the Village Hymns, and made his prayer. It was short, hesitating, and very solemn. It seemed as if he was weighing every word, and seeking to express exactly "what *he felt* he needed from the great God," and nothing else. Then he took his text—Gen. xix, 17—and it was as it seemed to me, admirably appropriate. Many had been already awakened in our congregation, and some were rejoicing in hope. But there was a *lingering* with others, a sort of pause in the work, and we feared it was about to decline.

The preacher probably knew this, and his object appeared to be to

start these lingerers anew, and by the grace of God to carry the work further. It could be surmised how he would treat this subject in view of such a state of things. He first run over the whole history. I remember his introductory remark, "God," said the speaker very slowly, "God does not always speak *by words.*" And soon coming round to the same idea again, "God, I say, does not always speak *in words!*" It was the more impressive language of *God's acts*, to which he was about to direct us; and he then went on to describe the terrible fate of the cities of the plain. He gave us their character, the forbearance of God towards them, the visit of the angels and their treatment by the sons of Belial, the scoffing of the sons-in-law, (all spiritualized

and applied as he went along,) and approached his more immediate object. After infinite trouble, and strangely overcome reluctance, "the Lord being merciful unto them," the family of Lot are at length without the walls of the city.

"And now," said the speaker, turning to sinners, "now, ye who are determined to remain behind, I have no more to say to you;" and he waved his arms with an abandoning gesture backwards, until it did seem they felt themselves given up, and almost hopeless. "I say, I have no more to do with you, my concern is with those who are out of the city, and on the plains." And then with a look and voice and manner, indicating the deepest feeling, he repeated his text—"*Escape for thy life, look not behind thee, neither*

stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed!” It may now be imagined, perhaps, the effect of this announcement, and his further prosecution of it!

His object evidently was to show to awakened sinners the danger of delay, of any pause, or looking back even for a moment. I remember one remarkable expression. “The sinner that looks back, in such circumstances,” said he, “don’t know what he does. *He rocks an infant giant.*” And then he described Lot’s wife, until it was an absolute reality before our minds. “She began to run as well as others. But she began to hesitate; she began to doubt perhaps whether it could all be true; she should like to see how the city looked now; she would just look over her shoulder, and run still;

she tried; when suddenly she was struck, stock and stiff, by a bolt from heaven:" and we seemed to see a cold, straight pillar of salt standing before us!

These are not imaginings of my own, nor did it on that occasion seem at all extravagant in the speaker. The fact was, it was dramatic, we were all in for it, and the master spirit carried us on at pleasure.

Thus he drove the trembling fugitives across the plain; the "little hill" was reached at length, and then rejoicing in deliverance, all this happy experience was made to body forth a like rejoicing in the recently converted sinner.

The preacher had said he would have nothing more to do with those who remained in the city. But he did have a word more to say con-

cerning them, and it was on this wise. Abraham is made to get up to the place where he had stood before the Lord; and he *sees* that burning, "*when all the smoke of the city went up as a furnace.*" A hundred times have I heard this scene described, or attempted to be described. But only now had I seen it made a reality. We saw the beautiful sunlight falling for the last time on those doomed towers, the overdrawing noon cloud, the arrest, the consternation of the godless inhabitants, the heavens riding over their heads, the savage lightnings, the bursting earth, and the sheets "of fire and brimstone descending from God out of heaven," all these were made to pass in awful vividness, and when the speaker said that "all this was so, and we might

see the evidence of it at any time, if visiting the scorched shores of the Dead sea," I found myself actually looking out into the night as if expecting to see the conflagration!

Many, I doubt not, in that awe struck congregation, turned in the same direction. At all events, the object of the sermon was evidently attained.

Some, on that memorable night, we have reason to believe, "*fled for refuge* to the hope set before them." The work received a new impulse, and the next day we found several new cases of anxious inquiry.

In consequence of what I saw this evening, *I changed my mind with regard to his being eloquent*; for what is eloquence but that which has the effect of eloquence?

SPECIMEN II.

His object this time was, evidently, to *indoctrinate* certain converts who had recently obtained a hope. It was at an advanced stage of the Revival; indeed the season was nearly passed; and the place of preaching was a school house. Well do I remember the rushing, solemn zeal with which we gathered. It was winter; the winds blew boisterously, and deep massy snows obstructed the ways that led to the place of that humble meeting. Yet they came, men, women, and children, from far and near, and the house was filled to overflowing long before the appointed hour.

Mr. Nettleton spent the best part of half an hour in *packing* that rushing crowd. He would beckon one here, and another there; put this one on the end of a box, this other on the stairs; clear a plank, clap a boy in a corner, and make one more seat for some old lady on his own chair, until all were fastened in some way, and there was no more moving without or within. He finally told them they were so crowded, he thought they had better not attempt to rise in prayer; and then, after the usual preliminary services, began his discourse.

His text was *the second chapter of Ephesians, the first seven verses*. His division of the subject, somewhat formal was, as nearly as I can recollect, as follows:

1. The condition of man by nature.
2. The nature of that mercy by which he is saved.
3. The manner of his change and the privileges of it; and
4. The ultimate object of this grace.

On the subject of man's state by nature, he insisted much, and carefully. Besides showing that he "walked according to the course of this world," he insisted that we are "by nature, children of wrath;" and dwelt much on the entireness of our moral corruption, by repeating the figure here used. "He is dead—'dead in trespass and sins.' Not sick merely, or likely to die; but dead, really dead; entirely destitute of moral life or holiness, and exhibiting only corruption and de-

formity in the sight of God." This was asserted, proved, illustrated, and repeated until it was understood, reflected on and felt, and then the speaker proceeded.

II. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love, wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins." *When* did God begin to love us? where and at what time did mercy move? Was it after we began to be holy and to love God? Ah, had he waited until then, this mercy had never been! But when did God begin to love us? "Even when we were dead in sins." Yes, dead! dead to law, dead to moral loveliness, dead to strength, dead to all hope, and morally loathsome in his sight. Here, you perceive, was another fundamental doctrine taught, and the hearers did not

know the name of it. But they saw it must be so, and drank it in with eagerness, wonder and delight.

III. Next comes the change; or our being quickened or raised up. This was "together with Christ." It was by Christ, and after the manner of his resurrection. "Thus were ye regenerated by the influence of the Holy Spirit, and for the sake of your Almighty Saviour." And all this, be it remembered, you being "dead in trespass and sins." ("By grace are ye saved;") you see Paul throws it into a parenthesis here, as if he felt crowded for room, to express so great a truth; but he must utter it again and again, "By grace are ye saved!" and then a double gesture of the speaker seemed to express the feeling of enclos-

ing, embracing, and hanging upon this great and glorious truth!

Then he dwelt upon some of the privileges of this happy state, under the representation of "sitting together in heavenly places." He did not critically explain the expression. He just took the common sense view of its expressing Christian fellowship. "Sitting together in heavenly places." Perhaps Paul was reminding them of some happy Revival season at Ephesus. O, do *you* not remember such seasons? and was it not a blessing indeed, thus to rejoice together in Christ Jesus! Indeed it was a happy season—a happy place: "'twas heaven below." And you must, you do desire to live always in such a frame as this. Well, hearer, watch, pray, and obey

always, and then you may, “for by grace are ye saved!”

Thus he accomplished two leading objects—the binding of hearts, as he would sometimes call it, and the magnifying, in all things, the honor of sovereign grace. And therefore, behold—

IV. The ultimate object of this mighty work of God. The ultimate, the great object is now intended. He did not wish to have concealed the interest they had in it. This was great, very great; but Christians, this is not the great end of your being thus saved! No; but it is to illustrate the honor and glory of God hereafter. “That in the ages to come, He might show the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness towards us in Christ Jesus.” Thus he says in another

place, "For this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all long suffering, for a pattern to them that should hereafter believe." And here is the great, the worthy end, for which all this wondrous grace of God has been! In eternity past—in all its after developement—now, and as it will be "in the ages to come"—the object is to illustrate, as it could never have been seen without this, what Deity is—in all his wondrous perfections, worthy of our adoration, wonder and love! Christians, you are to be held up hereafter for showing this. Should you not rejoice in the thought? To stand as mirrors in a future world; to reflect the exceeding grace of God! to be pointed to by adoring intelligences, when

they exclaim, "Behold what the exceeding grace of God can do!"

Thus happily, as it seemed to us, were these young disciples brought forward to take large and comprehensive views of the ends for which they were to live, and to feel the whole nature of their hope and their true condition. They could not be self-trusting, who thus understood the plan of salvation; they could not be narrow in their views of social privileges in religion; they could not want for appropriate motives to zeal and holy love. Having thus urged these views, the speaker's main objects for that occasion were evidently accomplished.

A man was present who had recently obtained a hope, after a season of great distress. Having previously communicated with the

preacher, he was now called upon to state his experience, which he did in a few words, and then the meeting was brought to a close. That man still lives, as do many others who attended this remarkable meeting. Should this sketch meet their eyes, may it strengthen their faith!

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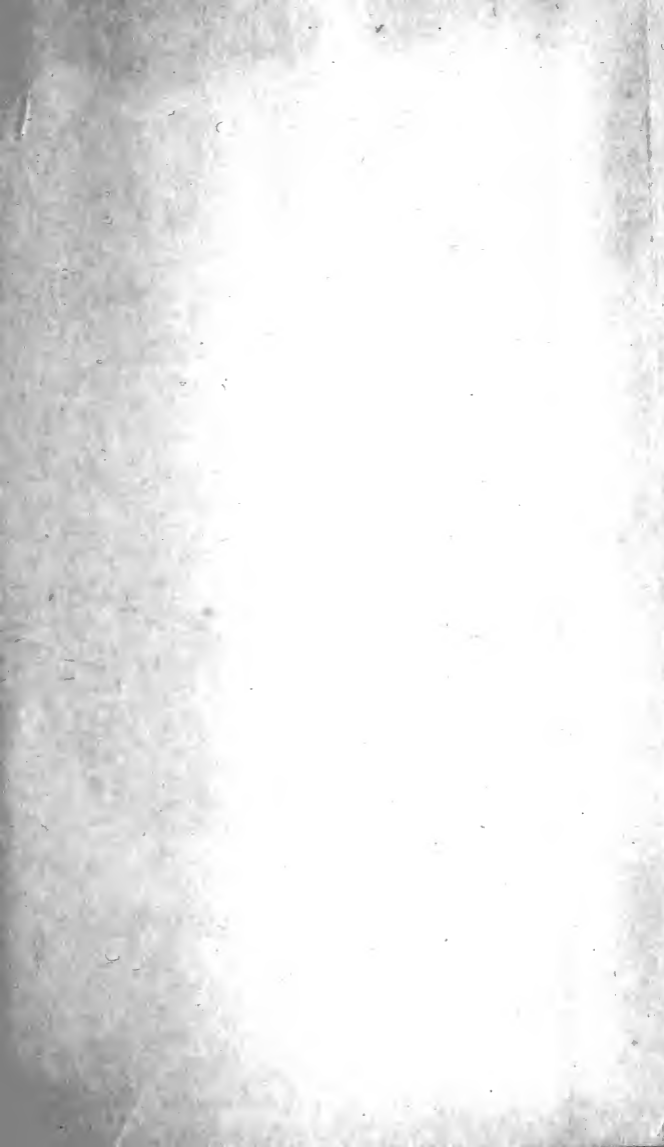
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