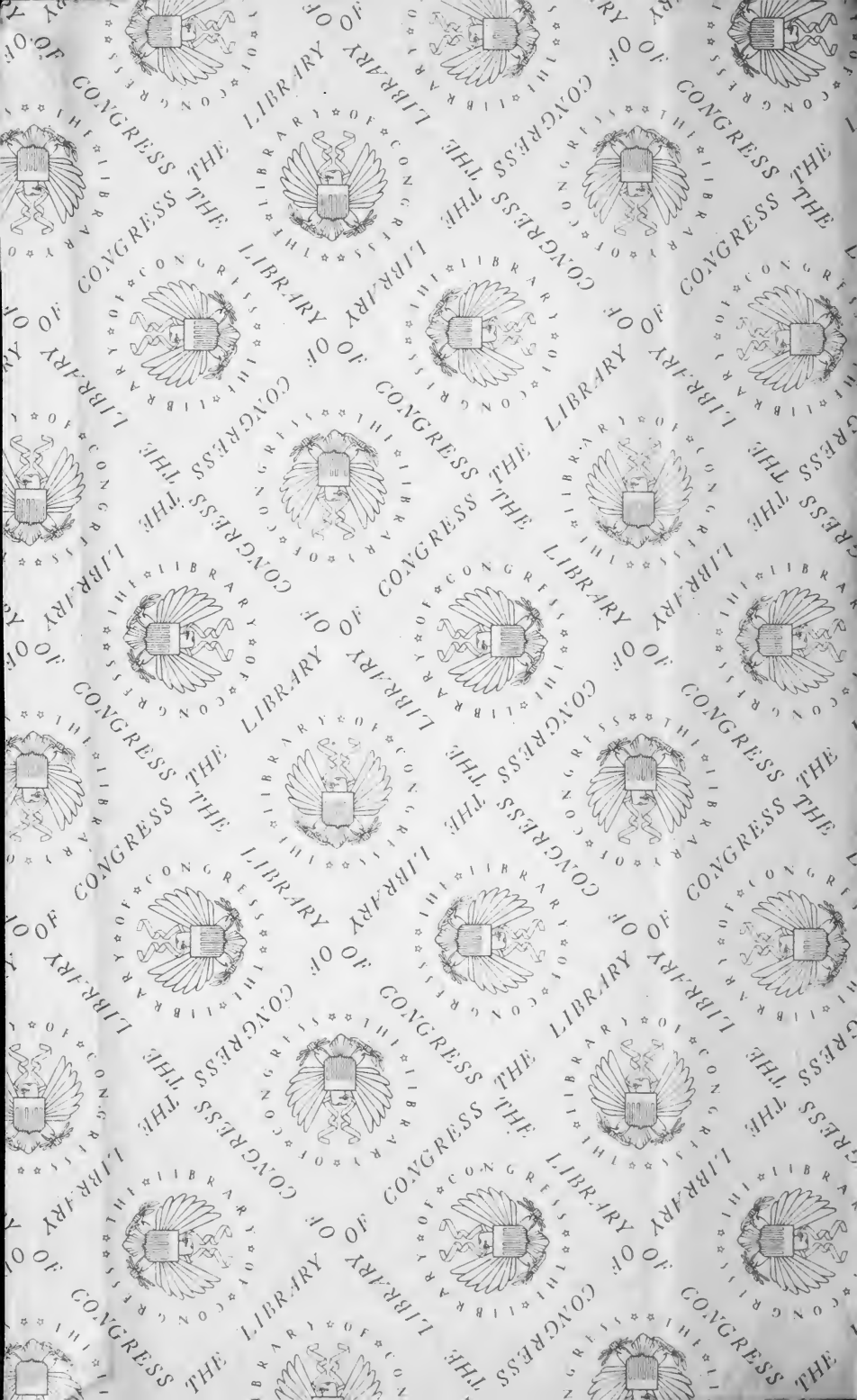


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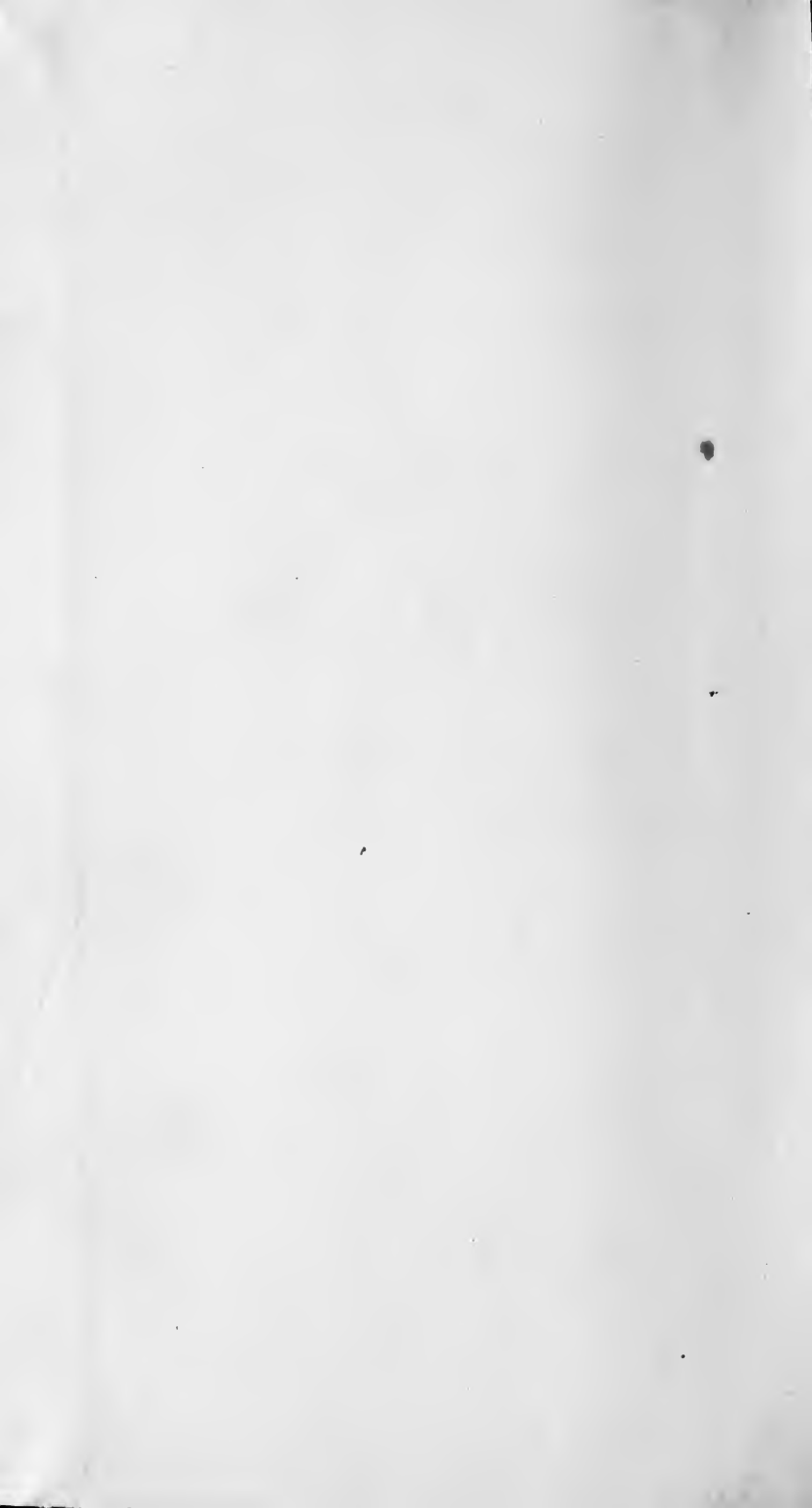
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1805







B. Swanger & Mary

SHORT COMPILATION

OF THE EXTRAORDINARY

LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF

THOMAS SAY:

IN WHICH,

Is faithfully copied, from the original manuscript,

THE

UNCOMMON VISION,

WHICH HE HAD WHEN A YOUNG MAN.

.....
BY HIS SON.
.....

(N)

NEW-YORK:

PUBLISHED BY JOHN LANGDON,

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AN
ACCOUNT
OF
THE LIFE
OF
THOMAS SAY.

.....

To delineate the characters of great and good men, is undoubtedly a pleasing and important task; it appears to me also to be a claim which posterity has upon us, inasmuch as exemplary virtue, exhibited in conflicting life, may act in such manner as to encourage others, who being made sensible of the excellency of their lives, and the good resulting therefrom, may be encouraged to follow them

in their bright paths of splendid morality, philanthropy and religion. I wish not to paint the character of my worthy progenitor in very strong or glaring colours, neither would it be proper for me so to do; but only, in a plain dress, to perpetuate the memory of one who may be truly said to have been an uncommon man, both with respect to the general tenour of his life, as well as his remarkable religious experience. I am sorry to say that I am not in the possession of manuscript materials to furnish a regular and circumstantial detail thereof, and shall have, in consequence, to depend principally upon memory, to exhibit those things which may be recollected: they are as accurate as the nature of the case will admit of. I wished him, some time previous to his death, to note in writing some of the most im-

portant traits in his own character, in order that a more minute history of his life might, in a proper time, be produced to the world; but he did not appear to be inclined to do so.

It may be right for me to mention, at this time, that none of his writings, which are contained in this work, were submitted to the inspection of the society of Friends, or of any individuals amongst them, of which my dear parent was a worthy member, believing it proper, on my part, to publish it in the form in which it was left by him, unmutilated by any one.

Some have thought, that the promulgation of the doctrine of universal benevolence, and restoration of man, might

do injury at this time ; but I believe differently, and think that every soul which can be made fully sensible of this extraordinary divine love to the creation, will be a humbled creature, and often have to adore the great and powerful condescending mercy and love of Omnipotence to itself, and to all men ; and have frequently to render thanksgiving and praise, as at the footstool of grace and power. I hope and believe, that this principle will yet cover the earth as the waters cover the sea ;* so that there may be none found who cannot say, “ Come brother, come sister,” &c.

His mother was a daughter of Thomas Paschall, by Johanna, late Sloper, of the city of Bristol, in Old England,

* Isa. xi. 9.

who married William Say at Friends meeting-house, in the City of Philadelphia, on the 4th day of the second month, 1693. His grandfather Paschall lived nearly eighty-three years, his grandmother Paschall nearly seventy-two years, his mother upwards of sixty, and his father, I believe, not quite so long.

He was born in the City of Philadelphia, Ninth month 16th, 1709, old style, and nothing material occurred, which has come to my knowledge, until he was bound out as an apprentice to William Robinson, to learn to be a saddler and harness-maker, in which, I have often heard him say, he was remarkably active; very few of the trade, after he had acquired a complete knowledge of it, were able to work with him, either with respect to neatness or facility, super

His grandfather and his mother came from England with William Penn, and his father dying when he was five years old, his mother, after being a widow for a reasonable time, how long I know not, married Benjamin Paschall, so that she became twice Paschall.

His parents being of a religious turn of mind, gave him such instruction as they conceived might contribute to the establishment of a moral and religious character, to which he appeared scrupulously to adhere. His step-father Paschall and uncle Robinson, I think I have heard him say, belonged to the Episcopal church, in the principles of which he was therefore educated; yet, notwithstanding this, he seemed to prefer the getting into stillness, and would, in consequence, often attend Friends meet-

ings, where, he said, he frequently found spiritual comfort. His aunt often used all her influence to endeavour to prevail upon him to continue his attention to the church, but without effect. He was united to the society of Friends when a young man. He had an austere master, and one who kept him very closely to work. He had a severe spell of the pleurisy when about sixteen or seventeen years of age, in which he had the uncommon vision or trance, an account of which is contained in this book.— After he had served a faithful apprenticeship, and acquired a competent knowledge of his profession, he commenced business in Water-street, where he was burned out. By his own industry he soon rebuilt his house, being exceedingly attentive to business, and was a

pattern of sobriety to his day and generation.

He was remarkable for being executor to many estates, and guardian to a number of orphan children, to whom, I have frequently heard him say, he had been a faithful steward, and had nothing to reproach himself for; but, on the contrary, could retrospect upon his past conduct with pleasure and satisfaction; having also often visited the widows and the fatherless in their afflictions, administering comfort and consolation to this slighted part of the community.

He was a zealous promoter and supporter of schools for the instruction of youth, black as well as white, believing that they were all equal in the Lord's eyes, and that he does not distinguish

them for their colour, but agreeably to their virtues and the rectitude of their lives; and that although men make distinctions, yet it was necessary to furnish the blacks with school-learning, that, by improving their understandings, they might make more valuable members of society, and be enabled to acquire a knowledge of the scriptures of truth, by which they might establish a good moral and religious character.

He was, for several years, one of the committee appointed by the society of Friends to attend the school for the instruction of blacks, which was under their direction, and of which board he also acted as treasurer.

He was likewise, for several years, one of the managers of the house of em-

ployment at the commencement of that valuable institution ; where his persevering attention and acts of benevolence were manifestly afforded, and much contributed to its then eminence.

He was also one of the committee appointed to the care of the French neutrals who flew to this city for refuge from Nova Scotia, about the year 1757 ; and although they had the small-pox amongst them, and he had two children, viz. myself and sister, who had not had that disorder, yet he maintained his post with fidelity, and discharged his duty to them, with that degree of commiseration which designates the christian. He, however, brought that formidable complaint home to his said children, by which he was so unfortunate as to lose his daughter.

He had a natural talent for medicine, and therefore, after he had acquired a small capital by his industry in the business that he was educated in, he commenced apothecary and chymist, in which he continued for several years. He often gave advice to the poor gratis, which frequently proved very useful to them; indeed he performed many cures, which the learned professor would not be ashamed to acknowledge.

If it is possible for any one to cure by the power of sympathy, he appeared to possess that art in an eminent degree: for there are a number of well attested cases of wens being removed; and indolent tumors dispersed in the glands of the human body, by stroking his hands over them a few times; and however this may be ridiculed by some, it is ne-

vertheless a fact, which a number of living testimonies can be produced to prove.

There was a circumstance which occurred, a few years before his death, of so extraordinary a nature, and which stands so well attested, as not to admit of any doubt; and I think that it would not be unentertaining to the reader to relate it in this place.

It is of a young woman who lived at a considerable distance from Philadelphia. She had been, for some time, severely afflicted with epileptic fits, and dreamed one night that a person appeared to her, and informed her that if she would go to the city, and make application to a man by the name of Thomas Say, she should be cured by such medicines as he would prescribe for her, and

that she could not be cured in any other way. Although the impression was deeply made, and dwelled lively upon her mind, yet she treated it only as a common dream, and paid but little attention to it; but sometime after, the same person appeared to her again, desiring to know why she had slighted his advice to her. She told him, that she had no way to go to the city, neither did she know the road, as she had never been there, and also that she was unacquainted with the man. He then, she thought, retired, and in a short time returned with two horses, one of which she mounted, and he the other, when they rode together to the city. He then accompanied her to the house, and shewed her the very man. The next morning she communicated her dreams to some of her friends; upon which a young

man attended with two horses like those she had dreamed of. She mounted the one that she thought in her sleep she had rode, and he the other; and as they went forward, she anticipated a description of the whole road. Upon their arrival she recognized the house, and upon coming in they saw me, when she said, "that is not the man." They then asked for Thomas Say, who being up stairs, I called him down, and upon his appearance, she exclaimed "This is the man who can cure me." He directly advanced and shook hands with them, as was his usual custom. She then related all the particulars, in my presence, of her remarkable dreams. He accordingly had some medicines put up for her, which, I was informed, she took, and was fully and perfectly restored to health.

He was very humane and benevolent, frequently administering medical, pecuniary, and religious aid to the poor and distressed, numbers of whom partook liberally of his beneficence.

He was a remarkable pedestrian, preferring to walk generally, unless the distance was very great. When he was a young man, he had a relation who resided at fourteen miles distance (which he has often told me of) to whom he would frequently walk to breakfast, stay with them the day, and return home in the evening.

He was of stature about five feet, nine or ten inches high, thin in flesh, and of a clear white skin. He was uncommonly temperate both in eating and drinking, the first of which was mostly

of a simple nature, consisting of one dish of meat with vegetables, and his drink was water, molasses and water, milk and water, and such like.

He never used tobacco in any way, excepting for a short time, being advised to smoke as a remedy for a complaint which he had in his throat; but, however, it not answering the wished-for purpose, he declined the use of it. As to ardent spirits, he very seldom touched any of it. I think I heard him say, that during his long life, he thought he had not drank a gallon of it.

He was married to Susannah Catharine Sprogel on the 15th of the Sixth month, 1734, with whom he lived fifteen years in harmony and good understanding. She died in a very sudden

manner: on the day of her death (Sabbath-day) as she was sitting at the table with him, she told him that she wished him not to go to meeting, as that would be the last day they would spend together; he endeavoured to reason her out of it, but in vain; he, however, yielded to her solicitations, and the sequel proved her to be right, for she died in a fit on that very day, which indeed was truly afflicting to him. He was left with four young children, having previously buried as many; the particular care of whom devolved especially upon him, and being a remarkably fond and indulgent parent, they were much attached to him.

He married Rebecca Budd (late Atkinson) widow of Thomas Budd, on the 3d day of the Tenth month, 1753, at

Mount-holly meeting-house in the state of New-Jersey, by whom he had two children, and with whom he lived in a happy connection for nearly forty-two years; so that he lived in a state of matrimony for upwards of half a century.

He lived to be an afflicted witness to the interment of both his wives, the last having died about ten months before him of a very lingering spell of illness, and also of all his children but one; which was, indeed, truly distressing to him, being an uncommon fond and indulgent parent.

He was remarkable for continuing, through his whole life, in the full possession of his mental faculties, and could, with great facility, recollect recent occurrences as well as those which took

place in his youth ; though the afflictions of his body wore down and debilitated his corporeal functions, insomuch that a constitution, which otherwise appeared to be sufficient to calculate upon one hundred years of existence, was completely worn out short of eighty-seven years ; yet this may be said to be a very advanced age at this period of the world.

He was a great enemy to atheism and deism : his arguments and reasonings were powerful, and, I believe, brought conviction to the minds of many of those who had the pleasure of conversing with him thereon.

In this place I wish to give a few sentiments upon these subjects. I do not mean to enter the field of contention, or

the list of combatants hereon ; but as, through the whole tenour of a dear father's life they were opposed, and being myself early convinced of their fallacy, by his frequent and powerful reasoning, I wish just to affix my seal against them, in this public manner ; and more especially anxious am I so to do, in this age of growing infidelity.

Indeed I have very often, upon reflecting a little, been much surprized to think how any rational man can bring himself to believe in either of those absurdities....may I not say infidelities.... and more especially in the first, of which, I charitably hope, there are but very few in existence. Even amongst the heathens, and the most unenlightened of mankind, there cannot be found many, I trust, who are so hardy as to deny

the existence of a great, Supreme Being, the Author and Superintendent of creation.

Even to the Athenians, who were a superstitious and idolatrous people, the apostle Paul says, As I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, **TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.** Whom, therefore, ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.* So that, notwithstanding their unworthy mode of worship, yet they must have been persuaded that there existed an invisible, incomprehensible Deity, the Author of all creation.

Man was formed by an all-powerful and benevolent Creator, who endowed

* Acts xvii. 23.

him with judgment to direct him aright upon this point, as well as others, and a faculty of reasoning, so that he may satisfy himself, even that this visible creation evidently manifests the works of an *omnipotent hand*.

“They lie,” says Seneca, “who say they believe there is no God: though they may profess this confidently in the day-time, when they are in company; yet, in the night, and alone, they have doubtful thoughts about it.”

“God never wrought a miracle,” says Lord Bacon, “to convince atheism, because his ordinary works convince it.” Here we see the opinion of this enlightened philosopher, that where natural reason and observation are properly applied to the works of the creation, they

will infallibly bring conviction of an omnipotence, to all those who will make a right use of them.

All nations and religious societies universally assent to the existence of a Supreme Being, and to the certainty of future rewards and punishments. Indeed, so forcible has this impression been, that the constitutions of many governments prescribe, that no man shall become a legislator, without first giving an acknowledgment that he believes in the being of a God; and many of them extend it so far, as in America, divers parts of Europe, &c. that they must also acknowledge Jesus Christ, the great Redeemer and Restorer of mankind.

He was very intimately acquainted with the scriptures, and expounded them in such a manner as to be exceedingly pleasing to those around him, so that they have often said, that they never heard them so fully and satisfactorily explained.

His description of the ladder that Jacob dreamed of, which was set upon the earth, and the top of it reached to Heaven: and behold, the angels of God ascending and descending upon it,* was extraordinary, a recital whereof may be agreeable to many.

He said, that he generally awoke an hour or two before day, from which time till he arose from his bed, he was

* Gen. xxviii. 12.

commonly engaged in meditation ; and at one of those times this subject occurred, when he was very desirous to receive an explanation thereof, and in viewing it deeply, it was opened to his mind in a satisfactory manner : there were a number of sevens brought to his recollection, as mentioned in scripture, and it struck him, that this ladder had seven steps, and they were named as follows, viz. add to your Faith, 1st, Virtue, 2d, Knowledge, 3d, Temperance, 4th, Patience, 5th, Godliness, 6th, Brotherly-kindness, and 7th, Charity. These, he said, we must ascend before we can arrive at that perfection of holiness, which will fit us for the mansions of eternal happiness.

He spent a great deal of his time in visiting and comforting the sick, dispens-

ing acts of benevolence and charity among them; being fully persuaded that it was better to go to the house of mourning, than to the house of feasting.

The uncommon affability of manners, and mildness of disposition with which he was almost invariably possessed, rendered him exceedingly agreeable to all his acquaintance, and a very useful member of society.

He continued in the possession of his sight to the end of his days, and could read common sized print during his whole life without the aid of glasses, although he for some years made use of spectacles, believing that they might preserve his sight, and indeed he thought that he could see better with their assistance. I have frequently seen him,

even in the latter part of his life, sign his name to instruments of writing with ease, without the use of his spectacles, holding his head about the same distance from the object that a middle-aged man would.

His sense of hearing appeared to be the most impaired, yet he could hear common conversation, if delivered with a clear, distinct, uninterrupted voice.

He was, for a long time, much redeemed from the world, and when any connection or intimate friend appeared to him to be very anxious for the accumulation of worldly riches, he would take occasion to advise them to be careful not to injure the spirit of truth in their own breasts, but to labour to acquire those invisible riches which will

work for them eternal happiness; and that it was his opinion, that they ought to endeavour to attain to that state of perfection experienced by the apostle, who says, "And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content;"* and even then, having their hands to the plough, they ought to have their hearts to the Lord.

He had many very severe and dangerous spells of illness, was much subject to the cramp for many years, often being attacked with it in his breast, which would even very frequently prevent his breathing for a short time; indeed, I have seen him lay as though dead, without respiration for perhaps two or three minutes at a time, and then

* 1 Tim. vi. 8.

wake up to undergo the same awful and heart-rending state again, which would be repeated for one, two, or three days at intervals : he was also exceedingly afflicted with a calculous complaint, for several years before his death, which induced him to lead a very domestic life : he was likewise very much affected with a severe and extremely painful hernia. With all these dreadful disorders was he sometimes attacked, in a most violent manner, at the same time, so that he was often heard to pray, " Oh Lord, if it be thy will, suffer this bitter cup to pass from me, yet not my will, but thine be done in me and upon me." At other times, " Oh Lord, support me that I may not murmur at thy dispensations, but give me strength to bear them with patience and resignation to thy blessed will." And in one very severe spell, he

said to this effect, "When I consider what my dear Saviour, the immaculate and unoffending Lamb, went through when in this world, for me and his whole creation of man, I feel my afflictions dispensed to me in great tenderness, and with a light and merciful hand, which causes my cup as to overflow with thanksgiving and praise." For several months before his death, he appeared to be uncommonly free in conversing with religious characters, upon the wonderful benevolence and powerful mercy of God, in his intentions, eventually to confer upon all men eternal happiness, but that a just and proportioned punishment awaited all those who died in their sins, which he thought was one of the greatest and most dignified attributes of the Deity. If, indeed, this was and is designed, what other power, either in Hea-

ven or in earth, can possibly prevent its being finally and fully accomplished, or in the least avert this beneficent intention of Omnipotence? He continued in this belief to the last moments of his life, and then could truly say, with an eminent one formerly, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*"

A few hours before his death, he spoke after this manner, that he was about dying in peace with all men, and hoped, in a very short time, through the merits

* 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.

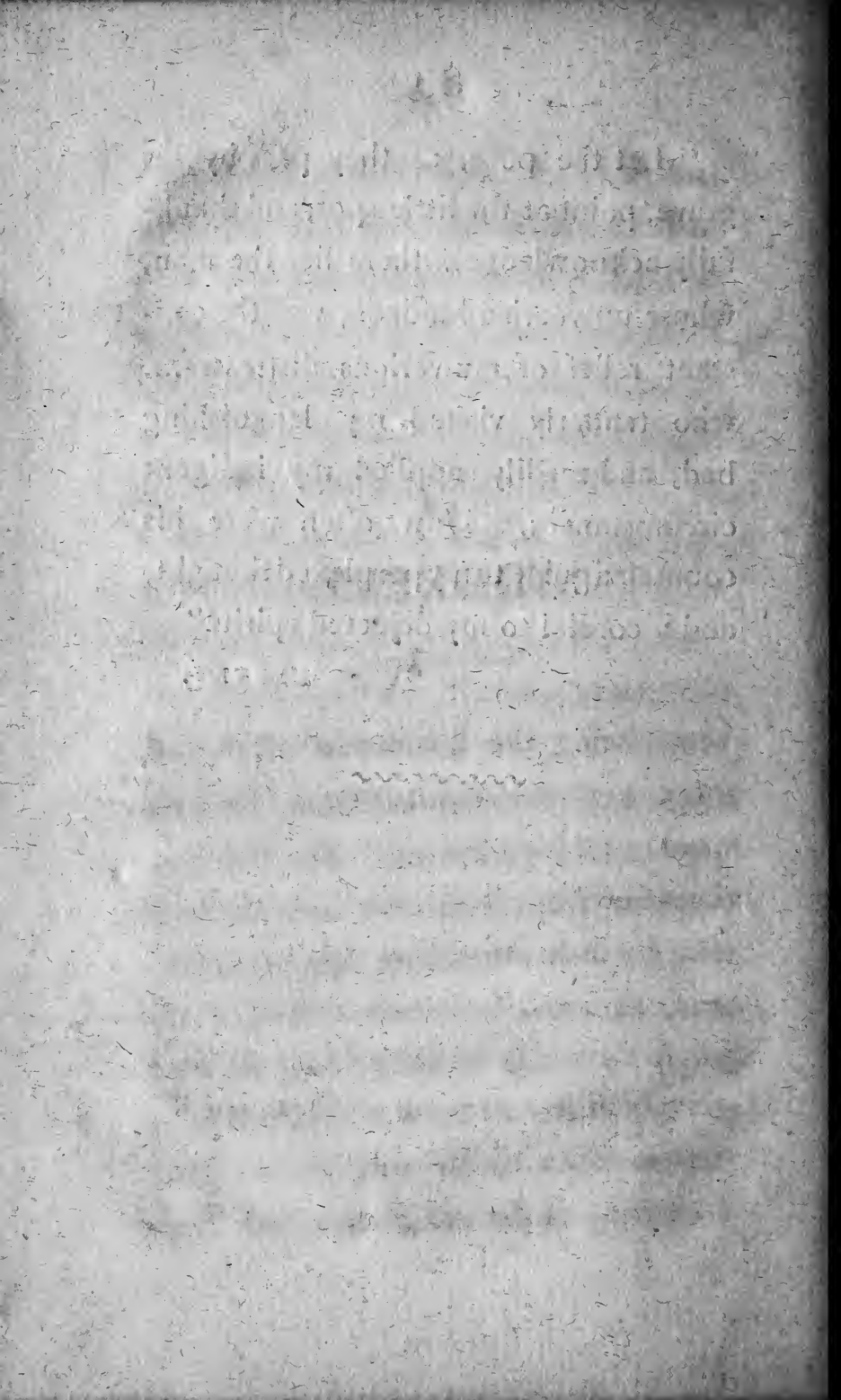
of his blessed Redeemer, to enter into those peaceful mansions which are prepared for the virtuous and the good. He then took leave of his friends about him in a solemn though deliberate manner, and said, that he hoped none would grieve for him, as he was about leaving a very afflicted mortal body for a more glorious state of existence, eternal in the heavens. He departed in a very tranquil, easy frame of mind, and I have no doubt, made a triumphant entry into the mansions of the blessed.

I think I may truly say, "That having glorified his Redeemer on earth, he will, probably, be as a star of the first magnitude in Heaven. He will shine with brighter beams, be replenished with stronger joys, in his Lord's everlasting kingdom."

“ Let the poor, as they pass by his grave, point at the little spot, and thankfully acknowledge....there lies the man, whose unwearied kindness was the constant relief of my various distresses.... who tenderly visited my languishing bed, and readily supplied my indigent circumstances. How often were his counsels a guide to my perplexed thoughts and a cordial to my dejected spirit !”

HERVEY.





AN
ADDRESS.

.....

God being the Creator of all things, must, as their common Father, have respect to all his offspring. For, being altogether free from the imperfections under which our nature labours at present, he must be totally devoid of the partiality which is too evident in most parents to one or more of their offspring in preference to the rest, few of them esteeming all their children alike. Now

this being confessed to be a weakness in parents, it would be a sort of blasphemy to attribute it to the all-perfect Deity.

I know that most people, who speak or write concerning the dispensations of God to themselves, do it in such a manner as to give others reason to conclude, that they esteem themselves the peculiar favourites of Heaven, thereby attributing that partiality to God which they find in themselves, not considering that what is imperfection in them can never be adored as a perfection in the Deity.

Since this way of speaking is not, nor cannot be true, and as it is disgusting to many, for few can bear to hear that their neighbours are more highly fa-

voured of God than they are ; I think it expedient to shew my opinion, and by a few reasons make it appear, that the ways of God are altogether without respect of persons : and, consequently, though his dealings may seem particularly kind to me, as in reality they are, yet God, who is the Father of all, equally loves all his creatures.

The apostle John, when speaking of God, represents him under the two characters of light and love. "God," saith he, "is light, and in him is no darkness at all." Now if we consider him under this character, he will appear altogether impartial. If God is essential eternal light, the fountain out of which all temporal light flows, then he causes his light to shine on the evil and the good, without respect of persons. Again (saith

the apostle) "God is love," and that his love is universal is certain, for he has impressed the sense of it so deeply on the hearts of all men, that every one is obliged to acknowledge his goodness to himself, whatever he may of it to his neighbours. Now it could not be that God would impress a sense of his goodness and love on the heart of every man, if he was not good and loving to every man. Neither would all nations of men, nor sects of Christians, characterize him with the name of great and good, which all nations have done, unless he were so to them. So that, from the consent of all nations, we may conclude, that God is loving to every man, and that his tender mercy is over all his works.

It is plain from the history of all nations who have written of themselves,

that the same causes which have raised one nation to glory and renown, have never failed to raise every other nation to the same, or to an equal pitch of glory, as often as they have used the same means. And it is also certain, that the same vices which have sunk the glory of one nation, have also sunk the glory of all other nations that have been guilty of them; therefore in this the ways of the Lord are equal. Now though we have not so clear evidence from history of the fact being so with regard to particular persons, yet, that the matter is so, I think, cannot well be doubted, since God, who is but one unchangeable Being, can have but one unchangeable way of dealing with his creatures, whether they be many or few; and if nations equally guilty, equally feel his rod, so must the particular persons of

which these nations are constituted.—
 The thing is founded in nature, and
 therefore cannot be otherwise; for vice,
 wherever it is, is by universal expe-
 rience found to be tormenting, and to be
 equally so where the crimes are equal.
 There is an awe and dread which pur-
 sues the guilty, and like a worm preys
 upon them, and never desists as long as
 guilt is found in their bosoms; ever ve-
 rifying that declaration of God by the
 prophet, “There is no peace, saith my
 God, to the wicked,” and indeed so I
 find it.

Human laws, it is true, and other
 circumstances altogether providential,
 often take hold of one man, and out-
 wardly afflict him, while they let another
 escape equally guilty; but it is not fair
 to conclude from thence that their pu-

nishments are in reality unequal. Nay, I believe that experience will evince the contrary to be most certainly true, namely, that VICE TRIUMPHANT is as miserable as VICE under the penalty of human laws, or any other outward afflictions. Many examples might be alledged as proofs of this truth ; let one suffice for the present.

A philosopher having seen Dionysius, the tyrant of Sicily, in all his splendour, while yet triumphing in his wickedness, complimented him as the happiest man in the world. Dionysius, to convince him of his mistake, invited him to a royal dinner, the table being spread in a most splendid hall, and a most luxurious dinner served up in a royal manner. The philosopher was seated in a chair (to partake of the delicacies) over which

hung a sword with its point downwards, fastened to the ceiling by a single hair; notwithstanding the dinner was furnished off with all the pomp and magnificence of majesty, the philosopher could enjoy nothing he tasted or saw: upon which Dionysius asked him, "Do you now feel happy?" To whom the philosopher answered, "The fear of the sword, which hangs over my head, hath destroyed the relish of the whole banquet, and in the midst of all the magnificence and splendour with which I am surrounded, I feel perfectly miserable." "Well then," says the tyrant, "the consciousness of my crimes renders me as miserable in the midst of my royalty: so that thou who yesterday complimented me as the happiest of men, mayest to-day be convinced that I am the most miserable."

Now could any visible distress or punishment inflicted by the hands of civil law, equal the torment which the tyrant felt inflicted from that conscience or light within, which is given to all men indiscriminately, and which, as it came from God, must of necessity do his work, reproving and correcting every man for his transgression, and that according to each man's wickedness, as well as the tyrant mentioned. Since God has repeatedly declared, that the love of the world is the death of the soul, and since it is universally experienced by the possessors of riches, that the increase of them is no increase of happiness, there can be no proof of partiality drawn from the dealings of God in this case, as riches or the want of them are equally nothing in the scale of bliss.— Yet some may object to what I have

said, by alledging that the most wicked are the most insensible, and feel the least from their guilt: to whom I answer, though the case be so for the present, yet it will not always be so; sensibility will one day spring up, and repay into his bosom the whole of his transgressions. More cogent reasons for what I have asserted here, are no where to be found than in the book of Deuteronomy, 29th and 30th chapters, part of which I will transcribe for such as will not read the whole, which I would recommend to all who doubt of what I have said, for no part of it is so complete as the whole.

“Lest there should be among you, man or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from the Lord our God, to go and serve the gods

of these nations; lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood; And it come to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst; The Lord will not spare him, but then the anger of the Lord and his jealousy shall smoke against that man; and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under Heaven. And the Lord shall separate him unto evil, out of all the tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the covenant, that are written in this book of the law: So that the generation to come of your children that shall rise up after you, and the stranger that shall come from a far land, shall

say, when they see the plagues of that land, and the sicknesses which the Lord hath laid upon it; And that the whole land thereof is brimstone, and salt, and burning, that it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein, like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim, which the Lord overthrew in his anger and in his wrath: Even all nations shall say, wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this land? What meaneth the heat of this anger? Then men shall say, because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers, which he made with them, when he brought them forth out of the land of Egypt: For they went and served other gods, and worshipped them, gods whom they knew not, and whom he had not given unto them: And the anger of the Lord was kindled against

this land, to bring upon it all the curses that are written in this book : And the Lord rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as at this day.”

Here is seen the certainty of what I have said : it is no matter whether the Jews be the nation that transgress, or the Gentiles, both shall fare alike. The Jews committing the same sins with the nations around them, shall share in their plagues. A tribe, a family, a single woman or man, though hardened even to insensibility, in iniquity, yet shall not escape ; but the Lord shall give him a trembling heart, failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind, and his life shall hang in doubt before him, and he shall fear day and night, and have none assurance of

this life. In the morning he shall say, "Would to God it were even," and at even he shall say, "Would to God it were morning," for the fear of his heart, wherewith he shall fear, and for the light of his eyes, which he shall see.

Sin is a disease under which the human nature labours, and as such is constantly represented in scripture, being signified under the types of a leprosy, a burning plague, a wound, a bruise, and a putrifying sore; and indeed if we said that as scripture makes outward sores and diseases the types and figures of sin, so in reality they are nothing but the outbreakings or different manifestations of this one sole and grand disease, we would affirm a most certain truth: for it will be allowed by all, that disease was never known, but where sin was

first known : therefore sin is truly and naturally the root or mother of all disease, and that sorrow, pain, anguish, and trouble are as natural and necessary effects of sin ; as joy, peace, pleasure and happiness are of a continual and uninterrupted obedience to the will of God. As the qualities of all fruit are generated in, and proceed from, the TREE which produces them ; so all diseases, having their nature, essence, and qualities from sin, must in every symptom manifest some quality of the root. Now all diseases are accompanied with a degree of pain equal to the degree of the disease ; and to conclude that a man will feel pain according to the degree of his disease, is a most irresistible truth : and yet no more true than to say that a man shall be unhappy according to the degree and nature of his sins, since the bitterness of

the root must of necessity be communicated to the fruit. True, many of those diseases which are the daughters of sin, may be so violent as for a time to destroy sensibility, yet this is a symptom of its desperateness, and not of the contrary; and so it is with the man that is hardened in sin even to insensibility; they are both founded in nature, and so are causes that produce as certain and invariable effects as any others whatever.

When God formed man, he constituted his nature such, that nothing but a perfect subjection to the divine will (which in scripture is termed righteousness) could constitute his bliss or happiness; and hence it is said, that "Light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart." Light and joy, peace and happiness are sown in the very

ground, and bottom of nature, for the righteous, and for none else : and therefore, whoever he be that doth righteousness, he is joyous, he is peaceful, and he is happy ; be he Jew or Gentile, Turk or Christian, black or white, bond or free ; for God respecteth no man's person ; but in every nation, he that feareth God and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him. Again, as nothing but righteousness can constitute a man's happiness, so nothing but sin can constitute his misery. Darkness and sorrow being as deeply sown in the nature of things for sinners, as light and joy for the righteous ; sin and righteousness are exact contraries, and so produce as contrary effects : and hence the same God who declares, that peace is sown for the righteous, has also declared that the soul that sinneth, it shall die, be it

who it may, for God excepteth no man; but he that sinneth without law, shall also perish without law; as certainly as he that sinneth in the law, shall be judged by the law. Now in all this, God is impartial, and none can say unto him what doest thou, or why dealest thou thus?

Sorrow, you see, wholly and solely arises from our departure from God, or in other words, is caused by sin; and not from any arbitrary infliction of the Deity, or wrath that arises in God upon our committing sin; or which was unknown to him before, and which he can dispense with at pleasure, loving one while he commits sin, and hating another who is no more guilty than the one he loves. Far be such contradictions

from the Deity, and as far be it from us to think so meanly of God.

Moreover, joy arises, as I said before, from OBEDIENCE ALONE, and not from any arbitrary infusion thereof; these things are founded in nature, and are as irreversible: for whatever God founded in nature at first, was founded according to his own nature, and he can no more reverse them than he can change his own nature: therefore they are unchangeable, and must have their effect wherever they are found.

Now though the thing is so founded in nature, both respecting sin and righteousness, and though there is but one medicine in nature, which can effect the removal of sin, and sorrow, its consequent, viz. the name and power of Je-

sus Christ revived in man by the effectual operation of the Holy Ghost, destroying all earthly passions and lusts, and subduing human nature to that degree, that it will be its proper food, life and nourishment, to do the will of its heavenly Father, and to walk in that straight path of righteousness, which leadeth in endless peace and joy for ever more. I say, though this is the only remedy, yet God uses various ways to bring men to the knowledge of their disease, and also to the knowledge and acceptance of the cure.

This variety in the dispensations of God to his people, is what, by many sects, has been brought forward as a proof of his partiality to one part of his creatures, and which they found in an original decree of God before all worlds,

to bless and make happy one part of his offspring, in preference to all the rest, whom he has everlastingly rejected ; but what in reality (for the following reasons) appears to me to be the only proof of his IMPARTIALITY or universal love.

Though all men are in a degree like to one another, yet differ as much in the internal frame and structure of their minds as in the external lineaments and complexions of their bodies ; men's tempers varying as much as their faces, which gave rise to that proverb, viz. as many men, so many minds. If God, then, will make man partake of the goodness he has in store for them, he must of necessity use the means best adapted to the accomplishment of his designs : as much, therefore, as their tempers, capacities, constitutions, and

other circumstances differ, so much must the means he uses differ; so that what at first sight might be deemed partiality in God, will, upon this second view of the matter, appear the height of impartiality, universal love, and consummate goodness. As a skilful and tender physician will administer a gentle purgative to one patient, while he prescribes a wrecking emetic to another, and as a masterly and knowing surgeon will apply a lenitive plaster to one sore, while he uses incisions or instruments of amputation to another, and in both cases equally loving to their patients; even so, God, the great and incomprehensible, most tender physician and surgeon, uses different means to accomplish the cure of that disorder, SIN, under which men labour, according to the different degrees thereof: and the charge of par-

tiality is infinitely more unjust when applied to the dispensations of God to his creatures, than when applied to the surgeon or physician, because in one case they use a lenitive, and in another a corrosive; a charge which never entered into the head of any man in his senses to draw up against them: yet, strange it is, they have drawn it up against God, the good, the wise, and righteous God, who is the Father of all flesh, as he himself declareth. "All souls are mine," saith the heavenly Father, "as the soul of the father, so the soul of the son is mine."* All are his offspring, and therefore equally share his paternal affection, and whenever he deals differently with them, it is because their conditions require it, and his love will not deny what

* Ezekiel xviii. 4.

they stand in need of, though they may judge hard of him while under the operation, and others may imagine it the effect of disregard. This is manifest in the case of Job and his friends; both judged amiss respecting God and his ways; but behold, in the end it appeared that all his works were done in mercy, that his ways were in wisdom, that he was a God of judgment, and that just and right was he.

Time would fail me to tell of Joseph, of Daniel, of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and of all the prophets, how that God's particular ways with them proved not only a great salvation to themselves, but as great to the whole world besides: all which would tend to render the doctrine of the universal impartial love of God indisputable. Yet one case,

which has been much misrepresented, I will relate, hoping that therein it will manifestly appear, that the most contrary dispensations of God are equally the effect of his unchangeable love to the subjects of them. What I shall relate is the case of two different persons, and two different nations, wherein it will appear, from the express declaration of God, that notwithstanding the ways he took with them were very different, and that men have imagined his designs to have been as different, yet he accomplished one and the same good in both by these different methods.

The two different persons are Moses and Pharaoh, and the two nations or people are Egyptians and Israelites, at the time of the latter's departure out of Egypt.

God raised up Moses to be a captain and leader, and armed him with miracles of terror and dismay, that he might the better accomplish his designs of bringing the Israelites out of Egypt. He also raised up Pharaoh, and endowed him with a degree of hard-heartedness sufficient to withstand the miracles of Moses, until the designs of God were accomplished, and then he ceases to withstand, and the good designs of God have their effect.

Here, then, are two persons and also two nations under the divine operation; and at first sight the one seems to be highly favoured, and the other as highly despised. In favour of the one he shows signs and wonders, which threaten confusion and destruction to the other. Moses is raised with a soft, gentle, and

pliant heart, willing to obey the commands of the Lord, though ever so difficult ; Pharaoh with a heart full of stubbornness and cruelty, and hardened to such a degree, that he is hardy enough to ask, who is the Lord that I should obey him ? Now, as I said before, the only possible way of man's recovery from sin, is by a deep and feeling sense of his own wickedness, and by as deep and feeling a sense of the name and power of **JESUS CHRIST**, who is the only true Son of God and our Redeemer, of both which the Jews and the Egyptians were at that time entirely ignorant. Therefore God first raised up Pharaoh with a heart as hard as steel, who by the cruelty wherewith he oppressed the Israelites, forced them to turn to, and seek after, their God, whom they had so long forsaken.

See then, by the instrumentality of Pharaoh, and his hardened heart, the one nation is brought to acknowledge and seek after God, the fountain of bliss. They are made to cry unto him, and he hears their cry, for he always hears the cry of the needy. And here the goodness of God did not stop, but as the Egyptians and other nations had reaped little or no advantage as yet by Pharaoh and his hard heart, he sends Moses to them; and having cloathed him with means as effectual to their conviction, as Pharaoh's hardness was to the Israelites, he accomplishes the same: so that, by means widely different, he accomplishes one and the same end.

Both nations being hereby made sensible of the name, nature and power of the only living and true God, and also

to seek after him ; for it is most likely that the same means which brought Pharaoh, who must be acknowledged to be the most stubborn of the Egyptians, to acknowledge his own wickedness, and beg of Moses to pray to God for him, did also bring all the Egyptians to make the same acknowledgment to God themselves, and to seek his help ; which cry was undoubtedly heard by the Lord of hosts ; and not only the Egyptians, but the whole earth partook of this advantage by their means, as the Apostle, who knew the councils of God as well as any others whatever, has positively declared, that the choosing of the Jews at this time, was the salvation of the Gentiles.*

* Romans xi.

And I with justice affirm, that the hardness of Pharaoh's heart was as necessary to the accomplishing the great and good designs of God to the world at that time, as the miracles of Moses; nay, in reality, Pharaoh was the first of the two employed in the work: therefore, where we read that God raised up Pharaoh and hardened his heart, we read also, that for this very purpose he raised him up, viz. to shew his power in him, and make his name known throughout all the earth; being the very end for which he raised up Moses and all the PROPHEETS, notwithstanding they act in very different characters. Let no man stop me here, and object to this by saying, that God drowned the Egyptians in the Red Sea, while he caused the Israelites to pass on safely; for if he does, I will answer, that God overthrew those

very Israelites, whom he carried safe through the Red Sea, in the wilderness, destroying them with as great a destruction there, as he did the Egyptians in the Red Sea : and I moreover add, that those Israelites and those Egyptians who fell, had lived as long upon earth as the dispensations of God, in this world, could benefit either of them ; and therefore they were both carried into another state, and more effectual dispensation, where they will in the end receive the adoption of sons ; for when God shall bring again the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of Samaria and her daughters, then will he bring again the captivity of these captives in the midst of them : for he will remember his covenant with them in the days of their youth, and will establish unto them an everlasting covenant ; making them partake,

by those more powerful dispensations of the same good, which their children and the whole world received by the dispensation which brought death to them.

After this manner reasons the apostle in his epistle to the Romans, mentioned above. While he beautifully opens the mystery of the divine goodness, in the different dispensations of his Providence, he concludes, that the choosing of the Jews would, in the end, prove the salvation of the Gentiles ; and again, that the choosing of the Gentiles would end in the salvation of the Jews ; and that God had concluded all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all ;* thus making their fall in turns prove the rising of both ; thereby shewing incontest-

* Rom. chap. xi.

ably, that his ways are not as our ways, neither are his thoughts as our thoughts; but as the heavens are above the earth, so are his ways above our ways, and his thoughts above our thoughts, making what we think ends in damnation, to land in salvation: therefore, let no man henceforth judge after the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

Now my desire is, that men would accustom themselves to view the dispensations of God in this light; which, if they did, they would be constrained to cry out, with the apostle, Oh, the height and the depth, the length and the breadth, both of the knowledge and wisdom of God! How unsearchable are his councils, and his ways past finding out! And they would also reap this advantage from it, that they would be enabled to pos-

sess their souls in *patience* under all the dispensations of God to them, and with a certain BEGGAR, whom I have read of, be made to bless God as much for sending pain and distress upon them, as for sending peace, ease, and plenty; as knowing, with the utmost certainty, that when he rains fire and brimstone upon them, it is out of as great love, and does as great good to them, as when he rains manna, each being the highest good they are then capable of.

And now having shewed, by a few arguments, that the variety of God's dispensations to man is alone the effect of his universal, omnipotent, and never-ceasing love to his creatures, and which, in the end, must and will accomplish

the salvation of all men, especially of those that believe.*

I now come to mention a few of his dealings to me; as none can by this time judge, that I tell them to make others believe that his kindness is greater to me than to others, but rather as an encouragement to all to trust in the Lord at all times, and not to lean to their own understandings: for as God is undoing in a mystery of love and goodness, all that the mystery of iniquity has and does work, as the apostle sheweth, saying, the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now letteth, will let, until he be taken out of the way, and then shall that wicked (one) be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of

* 1 Tim. iv. 10.

his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.* Therefore trust in the Lord, who letteth and will let until the wicked one be revealed, and then his destruction will be certain and sudden, as well as thy salvation; for the Lord's anger endureth but a moment, in his favour is life, weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. †

¶ The mystery of iniquity is so great, that the whole world (as the apostle John saith) lieth in wickedness; but if it be great, the mystery of godliness is as great; for, as the Psalmist declares, All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord, and shall glorify thy name. †

* 2 Thess. ii. 7, 8, 9.

† Ps. xxx. 5.

‡ Psal. lxxxvi. 9.

AN
ACCOUNT
OF
THE VISION, &c.

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IT is not my intention to enumerate all the particulars of God's great goodness and mercy to my soul in the way of regeneration, for this would be endless; but only a few, wherein he, by an outstretched arm, and great power, delivered me from the enemy of man's salvation, THE DRAGON, whose tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven,* and

* Rev. xii. 4.

cast them to the earth. I have found, by sad experience, this roaring lion, in the subtle workings of my imagination, attempting to destroy me with the like destruction, by infusing into my mind false and unjust notions of God and his ways, and striving to make me walk by that rule. This is one of the most successful methods whereby he devours the souls of the unwary and heedless; for when once he has impregnated their imaginations with wrong conceptions of things, they are easily made to swallow error for truth, and truth for error, to take darkness for light, and light for darkness. How evident is this in those numerous multitudes, whom he hath so far blinded in their understandings, as to preach to others, that the light which checks men for sin, is not the illumination of God's spirit, but another sort,

which they call the light of a natural conscience. But let such as believe so, and persuade others to follow their example of faith, be persuaded to recollect, and deeply consider, the words of our Lord and Saviour, when casting a devil out of one that was dumb: say the Pharisees, this fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils. And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city, or house, divided against itself, shall not stand. And if satan cast out satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand? * So say I; if our fallen nature condemns the works of our fallen nature, it is divided against itself, how

* Matt. xii. 24, 25, 26.

shall then our fallen nature stand? For, if God be at work to redeem fallen nature, and fallen nature itself attempting the same, it cannot be eternally without a redemption, which is a thing they cannot allow.

Wo unto them that call evil good, and good evil; saith the prophet Isaiah, that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter.* Let any one tell against whom this wo can be pronounced, if not against those who ascribe the operations of the spirit of God to be the darkness of our fallen nature. Such appear to me to be wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight, giving that honour to their own nature which

* Isa. v. 20, 21.

is due to God alone, against whom there is a wo pronounced.

Now, my fellow travellers and dear companions, my prayer is, that all of us may mind the teachings of God's spirit upon our own souls, and no more call that divine light, which reproveth us for sin, the light of nature.

In the morning of my youth, while I yet knew but little of the evil nature of sin, the Lord was pleased, by his divine light and holy spirit in my heart, to create a fear and terror in me when I did evil. And being often invited, by my young companions, to go to places of mirth and diversion, I sometimes yielded to their solicitations; but, in the silent hours of my retirement, and when I was upon my bed, the following ques-

tion arose in my mind ; how hast thou spent this time ? To which the reprov-er in me made answer, Not according to the mind and will of God ; for, when thou followest thine own will and pleasure, thou knowest that thou displeasest God. Thus, when my actions were brought to the light, I found that it manifested of what sort they were, and when they were evil, I was reprov-ed thereby. Thus the Lord, by his good spirit, wrought in my heart, keeping me in fear of offending against that small measure of the light of Jesus Christ, that is the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.* This is that light which setteth our sins in order before us, which, if we obey and follow, we will find a deliverance from

* John i. 9.

all sin ; but, if we reject and refuse that divine light, we cannot receive Jesus Christ himself, as he has assured us in the scriptures of truth, who said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me, and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me.* This light of heaven is that measure of the spirit given to every man to profit withal, and must be received in SIMPLICITY, SINCERITY, and INNOCENCE OF HEART, before we can profit thereby ; but whosoever is humble, attentive, and obedient thereunto, will profit unto eternal life ; for God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. This is the comforter promised by our Lord, † who reproves men for sin, and who, as I find, reproves me for the same, begetting in

* John xiii. 20.

† John xvi. 7, 8, 9.

me a fear and dread, when I do evil, and peace and joy when I am thereby enabled to do well.

The holy spirit of God having wrought in my young and tender heart, in order to turn me to righteousness, begot in me a strong desire to read the holy scriptures, with which I constantly complied, reading but little in any other book : at the same time, a strong inclination to serve God arose within me ; and finding it commanded in scripture to be obedient to our parents in the Lord, for it is right ; to honour thy father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise ; servants be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ.* Finding these

* 1 Eph. vi. 1, 2, 5.

things commanded in scripture, I began to do them with all my might; thus judging, that if I did not, the Lord would not receive me into his rest. In this manner was I employed for some years, striving to purchase my salvation by outward compliances, with what I (from reading the scriptures) thought to be the mind and will of God: not knowing that there is an inward freedom from sin, which the son gives to such as follow him, and which, if we do not attain, we shall remain children of the bond-woman (notwithstanding our outward obedience to the commandments) and so cannot obtain part of the inheritance with the children of the free. But I was not permitted to continue long in this state; for the devil, that roaring lion, who goeth about, seeking whom he may devour, was permitted to sift me,

which he did so thoroughly for the space of two or three years, that my confidence in the outward observance of the commandments was altogether overturned, proving incontestably that the foundation was sandy, since the house built thereon could not stand the storm. The temptation was so heavy, that it rendered me altogether incapable of reading the scriptures, and made me almost doubt whether there were a God, a Christ, or a future state; so that my days were days of sorrow, and my nights nights of mourning; and my life was a trouble, and death a terror. So I travelled along in the wilderness state, seeking rest and finding none.

Under this dispensation I came to see that the faith I had in God the Father, Son and Spirit, withdrew their light.

Behold, saith Isaiah, the day of the Lord cometh; cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it; for the stars of heaven, and the constellations thereof, shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity: and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible; (that the Lord said he would do) and make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man, than the golden wedge of Ophir.* Therefore I can say, in the language of Hosea xiv. 9. who is wise, and he shall un-

* Isaiah xiii. 9, 10, 11, 12.

derstand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? For the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein.

I was apprentice to William Robinson. Many were the ways and methods I took, in order to get rid of my evil thoughts and melancholy meditations. I frequently used to stretch myself along upon a bench, viewing and counting the stars; and it often arose in my mind, if there be no Divine Being, whence came those stars? And why ranked in such order? And who made all things? These serious and expostulatory meditations caused me to sigh deeply, and tears to flow down my cheeks, while my soul inwardly cried and said, Oh! if there be a God, let me know it

before it be too late. At last I concluded, that to believe there was a God and a future state, and to strive to obey him, could not hurt me; but if I should die in a state of unbelief, and find a God, my state would be bad, nay, most miserable indeed. Here it pleased the Lord to work upon me according to the riches of his goodness, and under these considerations to beget a desire in me to know him, and a longing to be reconciled to him and he to me. At length he visited me with a sickness called the pleurisy (being about the age of sixteen or seventeen) in which I continued for some time, in extreme anguish and torment, both of body and mind. Sometimes a small glimmering hope of mercy seemed to revive me a little: at other times I was almost in despair. Thus I continued for nine days; the fifth and

seventh days being exceeding thirsty, I cried out to my mother, and said, Oh! that I could get my thirst quenched for a moment, before I go hence, that I might enjoy a moment's happiness; for I am afraid that if it is not quenched here, it will not be quenched hereafter: (so deplorable was the state of my soul at that time, expecting to die every moment. My speaking in this manner, made my mother burst into tears, and say, Why speakest thou in this manner? If that is thy state, what will become of the world?

None but God knew the distressed condition of my poor soul at that time. But here the Lord shewed me that he opens rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: that he makes the wilderness a pool of water,

and the dry land springs of water, &c.*
 For the Lord's anger endureth but a moment, in his favour is life; weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.† Wherefore glorify ye the Lord in the fires. For, he will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces, and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it.‡

On the ninth day, between the hours of four and five, I fell into a trance, and so continued until about the hour of three or four the next morning. After my departure from the body (for I left the body) my father and mother, Susannah Robinson and others, who watch-

* Isaiah xli. 18. † Psal. xxx. 5. ‡ Isa. xxiv. 15. and xxv. 6.

ed me, shook my body, felt for my pulse, and tried if they could discern any remains of life or breath in me; but found none.

Some may be desirous to know, whether I was laid out or not: I found myself, when I opened my eyes, laid on my back in my bed, as a corpse is on a board; and I was told, after I got better, the reason why they did not lay me on a board, was, because my mother could not, at that time, find freedom to have it done: then they sent for Dr. Kearsley, who attended me, to have his opinion. When he came, he felt for my pulse and found none, nor any remains of life in me, as he told them; but as he was going away, he returned again, and said, that something came into his mind to try further; he then desired somebody

to get him a small looking-glass, which Catharine Souder, who lived with my father, procured ; the Doctor laid it on my mouth for a short time, then took it off, and there appeared on the glass a little moisture ; then the Doctor said to them, If he is not dead, I believe he is so far gone that I think he will never open his eyes again ; but I would have you let him lay while he continues warm, and when he begins to grow cold, lay him out.

This they told me when I returned into the body, at which time I enquired why so many sat up with me, not knowing that they thought me dead. Upon hearing me speak, they were all very much surprized ; the second time I spoke, they all rose out of their chairs ; and when I spoke the third time, they all came to

me. My father and mother enquired how it had been with me? I answered and said unto them, I thought I had been dead, and going to heaven; and after I left the body, I heard, as it were, the voices of men, women and children, singing songs of praises unto the Lord God and the Lamb, without intermission, which ravished my soul, and threw me into transports of joy. My soul was also delighted with most beautiful greens which appeared to me on every side, and such as never were seen in this world; through these I passed, being all clothed in white, and in my full shape, without the least diminution of parts. As I passed along towards a higher state of bliss, I cast my eyes upon the earth, which I saw plainly, and beheld three men (whom I knew) die. Two of them were white men, one of whom entered

into rest, and the other was cast off. There appeared a beautiful transparent gate opened; and as I and the one that entered into rest came up to it, he stepped in; but as I was stepping in, I stepped into the body. When I recovered from my trance, I mentioned both their names, at the same time telling how I saw them die, and which of them entered into rest, and which did not. I said to my mother, O that I had made one step further; then I should not have come back again. After I told them what I had to say, I desired them to say no more to me, for I still heard the melodious songs of praises; and while I heard them, I felt no pain; but when they went from me, the pain in my side returned again, for which I was glad, hoping every stitch would take me off, and longing for my final change. Af-

ter I told them of the death of the three men, they sent to see if it was so ; and when the messenger returned, he told them they were all dead, and died in the rooms, &c. as I told them ; upon hearing it, I fell into tears, and said, O Lord, I wish thou hadst kept me, and sent him back that was in pain ; after which I soon recovered from my sickness.

The third was a negro, named Cuffe, belonging to the widow Kearney, whom I saw die in the brick kitchen, and when they were laying him on a board, his head fell out of their hands, when about six inches off the board ; which I saw plainly, with the other circumstances of his being laid out, &c. for, N. B. the walls were no hindrance to my sight. Though the negro's body was black, yet the soul was clothed in white, which

filled me with greater joy than before, as it appeared to me a token of his acceptance; which has brought to my mind that text of scripture which says, Likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance.* And if joy over one sinner that repenteth, what must there be over many?

Though I was filled with more joy upon seeing the negro on his way to happiness, yet I was not permitted to see him fully enter into rest; but just as I thought myself about to enter into rest, I came into the body again.

Some think the negroes have no souls to be saved; what saith the Lord? Be-

* Luke xv. 7.

hold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine; the soul that sinneth, it shall die.* Therefore the souls of the negroes are the Lord's, as well as the souls of the whites; for God made them all, and made nothing but what he loved, and for his own glory to glorify him; and there is no respect of persons with the Lord; let them be Jew or Gentile, bond or free, male or female, they are all one in the Lord. When Christ preached to his disciples and said, that servant which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes.† So the Lord deals

* Ezekiel xviii. 4. † Luke xii. 47, 48.

with his creation, mankind, to bring them to glorify him, for which they were made : so that the promise of the Lord made to Abraham, should be accomplished, he called him, blessed him with a promise of Christ, and said to him, In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*

Some time after my recovery, the widow Kearney, the mistress of the negro man, sent for me and enquired, whether I thought the departed spirits knew one another? I answered in the affirmative, and told her, that I saw her negro man die, whilst I was a corpse. She then asked me, Where did he die? I told her, in her brick kitchen, between the jamb of the chimney and the wall,

* Gen. xii. 3.

and when they took him off the bed to lay him on the board, his head slipped out of their hands : she then said, so it did, and asked me, if I could tell her where they laid him : I informed her that they laid him between the back door and the street door : she said that she did not remember any thing of that ; I told her he laid there whilst they swept under the window, where he was afterwards placed : she then said, she remembered it was so, and told me that she was satisfied, and had reason to believe, what she often thought, that it was so.

These men, upon inquiry, were found to die at the very time I saw them ; and all the circumstances of their death were found to be as I related them. As some may be desirous to know how, and in

what shape, those dead appeared to me ; I would satisfy their desire by telling them, *that they appeared each in a complete body*, which I take to be the spiritual body, separated from the earthly sinful body. They were also all clothed, the negro and the person who entered into rest, in white, and the other, who was cast off, had his garment somewhat white, *but spotted*. I saw also the body in which each lived when upon earth, and also how they were laid out ; but my own body I did not see. The reason why I neither saw my own body, nor entered fully into rest, I take to be this, *that my soul was not quite separated from my body*, as the others were ; though it was so far separated, as to see those things, and to hear the songs of praise before mentioned.

Now some may think that the dead know not each other ; to whom I say, did not Dives know both Abraham and Lazarus, though afar off ?*

Some years after, I was tempted afresh with the *same unbelief*, which continued for some YEARS. So industrious was the devil in laying his snares to get an advantage of my soul. At one time the temptation was so strong, that I thought I should certainly fall thereby ; whereupon my soul cried out, and said, O Lord ! stretch forth thy hand, and save me, or I perish ! Which made the enemy fly away (or depart from me) in the twinkling of an eye. When I came home I related, in every particular, how severely I was beset, saying within my-

* Luke xvi. 19, &c.

self, Lord, if thou dost but preserve me from this temptation, I can never be beset with any other so hard. Nevertheless, one morning, some time after, before my eyes were open to behold the light of the day, or I well awake, and my heart and thoughts turned towards heaven, I was attacked, and tempted to curse God and die, which continuing for three mornings successively, alarmed me very much, and made me cry out, O Lord, guard my spirit, and save me in the hour of temptation!

In the year 1740, as I stood in my parlour with my back to the fire, it pleased the Lord, by his gloriously manifesting light, to set my sins in order before the view of my mind: but not knowing then that it was the Lord, I was pressed almost to the earth with the

burden of them. Next morning, before I arose from my bed, he opened my understanding so far, as to make me perceive that it was that goodness and mercy, which wounds only that it may make a more perfect cure, which had done that, in order to discover to me my state by nature, that with the greater IMPORTUNITY, EAGERNESS, and HUMILITY, I might supplicate his mercy and forgiving love. He also brought to my REMEMBRANCE the former temptations wherewith I was tempted, and how he delivered me out of them; whereupon my soul cried out, Lord, thy arm hath saved me. Then it was said unto my soul, Those sins which thou committedst, I have brought to judgment, and they shall no more be remembered against thee. This caused great joy and peace to spring up in my soul, and made

me assured, that though sorrows endure for a night, yet joy shall arise in the morning.

Some time after this, a darkness overshadowed my mind to such a degree, that I began to fear that I must have blasphemed God, otherwise I could not be left in this condition. This darkness continued so long, that it brought me to wish I had been any beast of the field, or any creeping thing upon the earth (even a snake) which God calleth not to judgment. But here the merciful, the loving and gracious God, did not leave me long to lament my existence; for, he appeared in the storm, letting me know that he thus dealt with me to make me more sensible of my miserable state, when shut out of his divine and holy presence; and also, that I should glory in

nothing, save in the cross of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ; because, when I am weakest, then he is strong. Here I was made to adopt the language of the prophet, I will praise thee: tho' thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me. Therefore, with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.*

At another time, it was impressed strongly upon my mind, for some months together, that I should be visited with a fit of sickness near unto death. This caused me to cry mightily, both day and night, unto the Lord, to preserve and keep me in the hour of trial and of death. At the same time there arose a desire in me to know the mystery of the trinity, if

* Isa. xii. 1, 3.

the Lord would please to reveal to me, how Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are three in one. Soon after this, I was visited with the yellow fever (in the Eighth month, called August, 1741) in which I was given over by the Doctor and all that saw me ; being speechless for the space of two or three days, and unable to take any nourishment, save a small matter out of a tea-spoon to moisten my throat, though all the while I remained in my perfect senses. During those days in which I was deprived of my speech, my desire of knowing the mystery of the Father, Son and Spirit, was satisfied. For there was presented to my view a large square place, the length and breadth whereof were equal: and I beheld in the midst thereof, a throne as clear as chrystal, and brighter than the sun at noon-day. All around

the throne there appeared to be seats raised one above another, how many I know not. I also beheld many placed upon these seats, and raised one above another, according to their seats, which appeared to be the heavenly host. In the midst of the throne I saw a body of light and glory; and I saw another body of light, proceeding or extending into this body, which was in the centre, which filled the whole heavens, and all the heavenly host, and was that whereby they were enabled to join in endless songs of praise for evermore. And I heard a voice say unto me, "*The Lamb, who is in the midst of the throne, feeds them; so that they shall not hunger any more, neither shall they thirst any more; and there is no need of the light of the sun to shine in it, for the Lamb is the light thereof.*" And methought I saw one

stream of light extending into this body of light, and passing through it into the hearts of all men universally.

This light appeared as universal as the sun at noon-day. And I heard a voice speak unto me and say, "Behold this light which thou seest extending from the Father, through me (the light proceeding from the body in the midst of the throne, which filled the whole heavens and heavenly host) into the hearts of all mankind, is the light which checks men for sin when committed, and warns them, by fears and dreads, when they are about to commit it. And if they obey the same, and are led thereby, it will lead them to me; for it came from me, and then they shall find peace with God (for out of Christ, God is a consuming fire.)" And I heard the same say unto me, "That one stream of

light, which thou seest, is of the Father, I am the Son, and this light, which proceeds through me from the Father into the hearts of all men universally, is the Spirit, which are one and the same light. Here thou seest in part the mystery of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." And I answering, said, Lord I see it: and my heart and soul were filled with joy, to see that the Lord, in his infinite goodness and mercy, was pleased to reveal, in part, to me, what I so much desired, and also the way he hath cast up for the righteous and ransomed to walk in.

And now let me entreat you, my dear brethren, who think that the light which reproveth men for sin, is the light of a natural conscience, and who teach others to believe the same, to consider this matter; in so doing, ye teach them to

despise it, and become disobedient to their only Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; they, thereby, believe the operations of the light of heaven, to be the dark workings of the degenerate nature; and light is put for darkness, sweetness for bitterness, and God himself is taken for the apostate spirit; for all our works are done in and by one of these two spirits; and if they are not done in and by God, they must be in and by the devil. Only consider these few passages of scripture, which cannot be broken, and be convinced of your mistake: God said, Let there be light, and there was light; And God saw the light, that it was good.* Here you see light, that it immediately proceeded from God, and was, by him, pronounced good. And if the outward

* Gen. i. 3, 4.

light of this world came from God, much more the internal light of the soul: nay, Jesus Christ himself is called that light by the apostle John, who calls him that light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.* And, in another place, the same apostle, who, being the beloved disciple, had as good an opportunity as any to know the revelations of God, and cannot be suspected of giving a false or mean representation of him, speaketh on this wise: This, then, is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.† Darkness is not from God, but from the evil one; and, therefore, all darkness and its works are reprov'd by the light, and the darkness hates the light. The

* John i. 9. † 1 John i. 5.

nature of all light is to manifest darkness and its works, and to expel them ; for it has no nature but that of him from whom it came. Now, as it came from God, it can have no nature but his, nor do any work but his work ; for God giveth nothing from himself, but what is in himself. Light, therefore, all light, as it came from God, so it doth the works of God ; for that which God sendeth, doth God's works ; and it will, in the end, return to God, when it hath finished its work, that is, when Jesus Christ shall have delivered up the kingdom to the Father, that God may be all in all : for, Jesus Christ must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet ; The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death, viz. *As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive.* Then shall be sung that anthem of triumph, by

all the once degenerate, but now renewed, part of the creation : O death ! where is thy sting ? O grave ! where is thy victory ? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law ; But thanks be to God, *which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Let no man think this, or any other declaration of Jesus Christ, being an universal and complete Saviour, to be any inroad to iniquity, or encouragement for men to continue in sin ; for, whoever concludes so, must be altogether ignorant of the nature of *sin* and *salvation*.

That we may the better understand what sin and salvation are, it will be ne-

* 1 Cor. xv. 25, 26, &c.

cessary for us first to understand, in some degree, what God is, and what we are ourselves. God is love; one unchangeable and never-ceasing love; for whatever else may change, yet he abideth the same unchangeable love, who can never cease to be love, nor ever do any thing but what is the effect of love; for love only can do and rejoice in the works of love, as is fully shown in the apostle's description of it, Now we are the offspring of God;* and therefore our true, original, and perfect nature, must be love. And every thing besides, be it what it will, must be contrary to our nature, and do for us what pain, sickness, poison, misery and death do. Hence our Saviour says, that all the law and the prophets hang upon this law of love;

* Acts xvii. 29.

which is the law of God's nature and of all his offspring, whether they be angels or men. The apostle also, who understood well the counsels and laws of God, says, that he who loveth, hath fulfilled the whole law : he hath done that which all the law and the prophets came to assist him in, and therefore is returned to his original nature and element, from whence, by transgression, or by deviating from this law of love, he fell, and became subject to pain, disease, misery and death. For all these are the nature and necessary consequents of sin, and no arbitrary infliction of the God of love. No ; punishment is not inflicted upon his creatures by this God of love, but wholly and solely arises from themselves, as often as they transgress against him : for he, having constituted their natures like his own, their punishment springs

from their constitution, whenever they act contrary to the law of love. God made all things for himself (saith the wise man:); therefore nothing but a full enjoyment of him in themselves can make them happy. As soon, then, as any creatures turn their desires from this full enjoyment of God, to the enjoyment of any other thing, they separate the love of God from themselves, in which their life and happiness consisted, and bring that into them, in its room and stead, which is their poison and death. Here grows that tree of the knowledge of good and evil, of which, if a man eat, he shall surely die; not by any outward infliction of God, but because he hath poisoned himself. And to say, that God inflicts death upon a man for drinking poison, or that he drowns him for throwing himself into the river; neither of

which consequences could have followed, if God did not, out of revenge or vindictive justice, inflict the same, is as true as to say, that God punishes his creatures for sin. In both cases, the creature departs voluntarily out of his own element, or takes into his constitution what is contrary to it, and so must abide by the consequence which in both is certain.

For, in the case of sin, they having separated themselves from the love of God, wherein consisted their supreme and never-ceasing happiness, fall under the anguishing sensibilities of nature, devoid of all bliss; and so become the prey of their own self-tormenting nature; and, being stretched on the rack of an unfailling existence, they fall into the most excruciating tortures and torments,

and awaken in themselves that worm which dieth not, and that fire which cannot be quenched ; but which must burn in rage and torment, until it hath burnt up and destroyed all that poison and death, which, upon their departure from God, they brought into themselves (as it was with me, which you may read in page 85, &c.) And thus being freed again from all that self-arrogance and high-mindedness into which they were fallen, they feel that humility and lowliness of heart which seeks after and finds the love and light of God : and then the worm which dieth not, and the fire which cannot be quenched, having obtained what they so long sought for, and being once more united to their own light and love, will, I can say, blaze and speak forth the praises of God their Saviour (who hath not forsaken them in

their distress) in a flame of glory, joy, and blessedness to all eternity. Let him, therefore, who thinks that he may continue in sin, that grace may abound, think this also, that as he sins, so he must suffer; sin and suffering being inseparably connected. No love nor omnipotence of God will keep him from suffering who hath sinned. Nay, quite the reverse; all-recovery from sin is by suffering; therefore, the very God of love has repeatedly declared, that the only means for a fallen creature's recovery is, by cutting off every thing that is to us as our right hands, plucking out our right eyes, by a continual suffering, dying, and self-denial: all which are such grievous afflictions, that we see few who have resolution enough to undergo them; which made Jesus say, Straight is the gate and narrow is the way which

leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.* This he also confirmed by his own example, when he took upon him part of our fallen nature. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; he was mocked, scourged, despised, spit upon, and crucified: thus the Captain of our salvation was made perfect through sufferings; † plainly shewing in example, what he had taught in precept, viz. that the only way to redeem fallen nature, was, by suffering. Hence the apostle Peter tells the converts to whom he writes, that they were called to this very thing: for even hereunto were ye called (saith he) because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps. ‡ And, saith Paul, if we suffer with him,

* Mat. vii. 14. † Isa. liii. ‡ 1 Pet. ii. 21.

we shall also reign with him : and none but such as conquer by sufferings and die with him, can reign with him ; for it is only he that overcometh, that shall sit down upon his throne, even as he overcame and sat down on his Father's throne. The victory of the one must be even as the victory of the other : and no other way can that victory be obtained, but by suffering with him ; for, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.* It is vain to think to find out an easier way ; for he is the author of eternal salvation, to those only that obey him. He, then, who sins, in the nature and necessity of the thing, must suffer. And he who says, let us continue in sin that grace may abound, must

* Luke ix. 23.

continue in suffering, before grace can abound. This doctrine, therefore, of Jesus Christ's subduing all things to himself, and making every knee bow to him, whether they be things in heaven, things in earth, or things under the earth;* of his being an all-sufficient, all-perfect, universal Saviour, when rightly understood, is the most powerful call to mortification and self-denial. Since it is not possible for us to enjoy Jesus Christ and his salvation, so long as we continue in that spirit and temper which at first separated us from them; and since, before ever we can enjoy them, we must go through a degree of purifying sufferings equal to the greatness of our sins; let us, therefore, be persuaded, in time, to break off our sins by righ-

* Philip. ii. 10.

teousness, to amend the evil of our doings, to enter heartily into mortification and self-denial, and to renounce our love to the world and the things of it, which are our poison and death, and the root from whence all our sorrows and misery flow ; because God takes no delight therein. Nay, he has even determined to make us forsake it at last, and that by greater degrees of suffering according as our wickedness may increase ; for every knee shall, at last, be made to bow to him, and every tongue shall confess Jesus to be Lord, to the glory of God the Father, and the salvation of those who are thus humbled, which no power, but that of the Holy Ghost, can accomplish : for none can call Jesus Lord, in truth and sincerity, but by the Holy Ghost.

Thus God's works are all love: and salvation consists in abiding therein: misery and pain proceed alone from our sin, or forsaking that love. God's love, therefore, is as great to us, when sinners, as when saints, and he no more inflicts punishment on sinners out of vengeance or vindictive wrath, than on saints. Here some, after all I have already said, may stop me, and say, How dost thou know this, since God hath nowhere said so? To whom I answer, he hath said so, in these memorable words of the prophet Jeremiah ii. 19. Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee:—know, therefore, and see that it is an evil thing and a bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that his fear is not in thee. See here whence punishment springs, and be convinced.

At another time, in the last mentioned sickness, I thought that I was all in white, and was taken by one who was sent to me as a guide, into a most beautiful place : as soon as I entered, I was an hungred and athirst ; but I was satisfied in a moment, and my soul cried out and said, Who hath satisfied me so soon and with such sweet water? (which water, I thought, I had once drank of before) and I heard a voice answer and say, It is the Shepherd of the sheep ; behold the sheep running upon the green mountain ; which sight ravished my heart, and made my soul leap for joy, and I said, I hope I shall be with them by and by ; whereupon there appeared a narrow path leading to the top of the mountain, and my guide, who was upon my right hand and clothed in white, said unto me, that if I did not proceed for-

ward with great care and a watchful eye, I might fall, and so not arrive at the top of this glorious mountain. I also thought that I saw a basket upon the floor, with some of that which I was fed; and seeing a dog coming up to it, I said to my guide, there is a dog coming up, and he will eat thereof. But my guide answered, No; a dog cannot eat thereof. At another time, in the same illness, and the same guide being with me, I beheld a beautiful place, garnished with all manner of PRECIOUS STONES, and the light of the Son of glory shining in it, caused the stones to appear in exceeding brightness, and always illuminated; so that it had no need of the light of the sun to shine in it. I asked my guide, and said, What place is this? And he answered, This is the place where the souls of those who have fol-

lowed the Lamb, dwell, after they have conquered upon earth. I said unto my guide, Oh, that I might see some of them! But I was permitted to see none, save my mother, who came out to me. And I said unto her, What a beautiful place thou dwellest in! I wish I could live here too. But she said unto me, Not now, but thou shalt come by and by, which gave me great joy. These things I have seen, whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell.— Wherefore, I, Thomas Say, do honour and praise and magnify the God of the WHOLE EARTH, who is able to relieve the DISTRESSED and AFFLICTED soul; and who, when our souls are at the greatest distance from him, and have the least hope of his aid, doth stretch forth his arm, and bring salvation: who, when I was brought very low in body and mind,

and ready to perish through lack of knowledge, opened the fountains of his wisdom to me, and shewed me the mysteries, in part, of his kingdom; who sent his angel to be my guide, and manifested his universal, omnipotent goodness to me; *wherefore* my soul is humbled in me, and with gratitude ask, *What shall I render to the Lord for all the benefits that he hath bestowed on me.*

Oh, that it were in my power to make a return of his love and grace to me, who deserve no favour at his hand! but not unto us! but unto him be the glory of all his ways! For it is his own goodness that is the cause of all his various ways and dispensations: therefore, I cannot think the days that he hath lent, or spared me, can be better employed than in spreading the knowledge

of his universal goodness, and of the pernicious consequences of sin; that thereby all may be brought to renounce their evil ways, and to turn unto the Lord, and taste his goodness, for he will be merciful to them; and to our God, who will abundantly pardon them, and all who forsake the evil, and cleave to the good. To the wicked there is no peace, saith my God (though he proclaims it to them, and good will to all men) because they have forsaken the God of peace, and will not return to him, though he entreats them, with the tender affection of a Father, to turn to him, from whom they have departed. Let us, then, turn in heart to him, before whom all our desires are known, and from whom none of our secrets can be hid.

God created man, and he watches over him as a parent over his beloved offspring. And when he transgresses his law, and will not walk in his statutes, he corrects, entreats, and mourns over him; for, the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.*

Wherefore, when you hear his voice, my brethren, *speaking* within you, give way to it, listen and attentively obey it: for it means *no harm*; it intends your endless peace, welfare, and happiness.—

Though it commands you to renounce your most darling affections, yet obey, for your life lies in obedience; and tho' you lose your life in obedience, yet you shall find it tenfold; but if you disobey, though you gain your life thereby, yet ye shall lose it; for the mouth of the Lord

* Deut. xxxii. 9.

hath spoken it. Let not the cross of Christ prove a stumbling-block to any one, for it will deliver him from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. And in no other way can any obtain that liberty and eternal bliss, than by a patient conformity to Christ and his sufferings; for to every man is left a measure of suffering to be endured by him, which, if undergone with due resignation, will deliver him from the power of the flesh and blood, which cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven, by crucifying it with its affections and lusts; and will fit him for the enjoyment of the divine flesh and blood of our Lord and Saviour, which he gave for the life of the world, of which, if any man eat, he shall live for ever.*

* John vi. 51.

Oh, blessed are they who are crucified with Christ, and who live no more themselves, but have the life of Jesus Christ revealed in them. Their daily suffering, dying, and self-denial have, at last, proved their life and salvation: they will enter into life, joy and peace, with Christ, their Lord and Captain. And because they have followed him in the regeneration, he hath appointed them a kingdom, that they may eat and drink at his table, and reign kings and priests unto God and the Lamb for ever more. Many are the tribulations and sufferings, both inward and outward, which await every one who will follow a Saviour, who himself was made perfect through sufferings, but let not such become weary and faint in their minds; for this suffering Saviour has overcome the world, and the prince thereof, and

will go before them, making straight the crooked paths. For such he will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron; he will give them the treasures of darkness and hidden riches of secret places.* He will also enlighten their minds in the knowledge of the mysteries of his kingdom; he will shew them the New Jerusalem, that beautiful city, coming down from heaven; and will open their ears, so as to hear the songs which are sung unto the Lord God and the Lamb. These things did the Lord reveal unto me, in my sufferings and death, turning my sorrows into the joyful feelings of exalted bliss; and he will do so to every one, who patiently endures the cross and despises the shame. Therefore, I reckon,

* Isa. xlv. 2, 3.

that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.* Here the old man of sin, viz. the flesh, willeth its lustings, which delights in earthly pleasures and sensual delights, whose utmost ambition is bodily ease, great wealth, honour and esteem among men, and who must undergo a perfect death by the cross, will cry out with Jacob, upon another occasion, *All these things are against me*; and will therefore speak vehemently against this way, calling it dreaming enthusiasm, moping hypochondriacism, and what not. But a soul truly awakened to a deep feeling of its lost and degenerated condition, and of the absolute impossibility of enjoying real, substantial happiness, without the

* Rom. viii. 18.

destruction of the flesh, will earnestly beg, saying, Lord, let no fleshly pleasure, nor earthly enjoyment, rob me of my birth. I am ready, with Moses, to suffer affliction with the people of God, rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.* Let others ask what they please, I will seek thy face and favour, and though it cost me my life, with all its enjoyments (as the upright follower of Christ doth say) I shall not sell my blessing for them: therefore, O Lord God, fix my heart on thee and goodness, which is the centre of all bliss, perfection and happiness; and crucify the old man in me, so that as long as I bear this body of clay, I may bear in it the marks of my Lord's sufferings. And with the blessed apostle, let me joy in nothing but

* Heb. xi. 25.

the cross of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,* which let me feel as long as any seeds of sin or death remain in me ; for well I know, that all these are not to be compared with the weight of glory which is reserved in the heavens for all those who follow Christ, and are made perfect through sufferings. Suffering in this life is the best of all blessings. Men are ready, on all occasions, to bless God for bodily pleasures and worldly felicity ; but few (too few) for suffering and distress ; and yet, happy and only happy is he whom the Lord afflicteth : for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth, and to be without chastisement, is to have the mark of bastards, and not sons. † Therefore, Blessed is the man

* Gal. vii. 14. † Heb. xii. 6, 8.

whom the Lord chasteneth, and teacheth out of his law,* for he will give him strength in the time of adversity, so that he shall not fall with the ungodly. God, in his wisdom and goodness, appoints all who seek his face in sincerity, to tribulations, afflictions, injuries, persecutions, and death; because he knows, that there is no other way to destroy the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life, wherein consists the man of sin and our fallen life, and to raise up in us that life of faith, humility, patience, self-denial, and *charity, that top-stone of goodness and perfection of bliss*; for charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her

* Psal. xciv. 12.

own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth.* And therefore it is the top-stone of all virtue, and the perfection of bliss: for, when this perfection is come, then that which is in part shall be done away; whether it be knowledge, faith, hope, or any other spiritual gifts. But this pearl of great price, is only to be dug out of the earth of our fallen nature, by the labour and sweat of suffering: for what man can love his enemies, who has none? or who can pray for them that persecute him, while he enjoys peace from the world? In a word, who can be perfect as our Father in heaven is per-

* 1 Cor. xiii. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

fect (and who alone is the standard of perfection) but he, who is kind to the evil and the good, and who possesses a heart as ready to heal the ear of a Malchus, his enemy, as to cure a Simeon's wife when sick of a fever, or raise a Lazarus when four days dead? Suffering and dying with Christ is the only way to attain this spirit and temper, and therefore the only thing we should long after or pray for; yet, few can bear sufferings patiently, when imposed on them; fewer yet, who bless God for causing them to suffer; and fewest of all, who long after and rejoice in them: and therefore we may say, Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.* Few seek salvation, because suffering

* Matt. vii. 14.

is the way to it. Sorrow alone makes the heart better, and yet few love it. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for he hath ordained sorrow of heart and failing of eyes; weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth;* even greater and more severe plagues than any in this life, for those who have proved too hard for the present afflictions, and whom the sorrows of this world could not mollify, that thereby they might be made to seek after and enjoy that never-ceasing joy, which they drive so far from them by their carnal delights, earthly gratifications, and the love of this world. This way of inward and outward sufferings is very hard to bear, as we see in the case of Job, whose patience was so great,

* Matt. viii. 12.

that though in one day he saw himself spoiled both of his children and fortune, yet, with unparalleled resignation, in calmness and serenity of mind, he falls down and worships God, saying, The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord: * yet, when the distress had advanced but a little farther, and laid hold on his skin and flesh, his patience fails him, and he no longer can hold out, under the load of calamities, but curses the day of his birth, and condemns the hand which had dealt out this last blow, though he had blessed it for dealing out all the rest: so hard a thing it is to bear the cross in all its degrees, and so deeply must human nature suffer before it can be thoroughly sanctified. Whoever will desire

* Job 1st and 2d Chapters.

to be made partakers of eternal happiness in the kingdom of heaven, must, above all things, prize, value, and long for a state of suffering: he must place his sufferings among his chiefest blessings, and be ready, when suffering, to say with suffering Job, What is man, that thou shouldst magnify him; and that thou shouldst visit him every morning, and try him every moment? For the more constant and severe our trials are, if we bear them patiently, the shorter will be our way to the kingdom of heaven; let us, therefore, in our sufferings, never fly to man for relief, or long for a deliverance out of them, until they have accomplished that for which they were sent, but let us humble ourselves under God and his goodness, being fully assured, that all these things, when borne patiently, will land us in unfailing joy.

Never are we in more danger, nor in a worse condition, than when we enjoy outward peace and quietness, though we are so apt to seek after it. We must tread the paths of a suffering Saviour, in order to our being made perfect with him: he was despised and rejected of men, and so must we, if we will be his disciples; and therefore, when all is peace and quietness around us, to conclude that all is therefore well, is the greatest deceit in the world; and to be anxious to preserve ourselves in the good graces and esteem of the world (except it be by walking contrary to its maxims, customs, and politics, as Christ did, and which will never preserve the good-will of any society on earth) is only to lock ourselves up the faster in the arms of sin and death. Jesus Christ was rejected of men, because he was not a man of

the world; he had neither worldly passions nor possessions; and, therefore, would not worship its prince, nor accept of his offered gifts, but renounced him and them; with a Get thee hence, satan, &c.* He despised them, and walked through the territories of the devil, unhurt by any of his wiles or stratagems; therefore he was maltreated and bruised by them upon all occasions. And he not only did so himself, but also taught and commanded the same to all that would become his disciples, saying, Sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.† This was the way he pointed out, to a youth whom he loved, and it is in vain to seek out an easier way, for the one Lord and

* Matt. iv. 8, 9, 10.

† Luke xviii. 22.

Saviour has but one way of salvation. This is the doctrine of Jesus, and yet is that which has been, is, and ever will be, reckoned enthusiasm, demoniacism, and folly, by those who make the world and its wealth their summum bonum, notwithstanding they call themselves by the name of Jesus. But the life of Jesus is not seen by, or manifested in them, for he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; he was oppressed and afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. This is the patience of Jesus, and must be the patience of such saints as will partake of the kingdom of Jesus; for out of these patient sufferings grows that poverty of spirit, which shall inherit the kingdom of heaven. And they who endure such sufferings in quiet resignation to the will of God, are the poor and needy, who seek for water and there

is none, and their tongues fail for thirst: yet the Lord will hear them; the God of Israel will not forsake them; but he will open rivers in high places to them, and fountains in the midst of the valleys, even the rivers of joy, which flow from the throne of God and the Lamb, as clear as chrysal, for evermore. For those needy shall not always be forgotten, and the expectation of such poor, shall not perish for ever.

God does not bestow any lasting blessing upon such as are at ease, and enjoying the good things of this world, without desiring or feeling after a better; wherefore his call is to such; but when he calls, it is Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. To the man of the world, this sound of glad tidings of great

joy appears only an idle tale, and not worth the attending to, and when the offer is made to such, they make light of it, and go away, one to his farm, and another to his merchandize, with I pray thee have me excused. Their hearts are so much set upon buying and selling, and making gain, that no time is left for them to reflect thus within themselves, Why do I run thus after this world? What will it profit me, though I gain the whole of it? My desires are growing faster than my possessions; so that I shall never find happiness in this way; besides, yet a little while, and I shall go the way where I shall not return, and so leave all behind me. I shall one day die; and if I die in my present condition, I need no revelation to tell me, that I shall be miserable; my own conscience bears witness thereto: and the

fears, suspicious and awful forebodings of my heart, whenever I think seriously upon death and eternity, promise nothing to me beyond the grave, but blackness, darkness and horror. For, though I may outbrave my rebuke, and mock at him who preaches religion to me; yet my own heart condemns me, and sets nothing before me but the fearful dread of impending ruin, as often as I listen quietly to its dictates; and which nothing but the hurry of business, and the noise of revelling, silences; and if I have such a witness against myself, in my own bosom, how can I expect to escape? I dare appeal to any one who hath had the highest expectations from the *enjoyment* of any earthly gratifications, whether, in the *enjoyment*, he hath not found himself disappointed; and if it be so, is it not folly (to call it no worse)

to seek unto such deceivers? Is there any among the sons of the merchants, who hath set his heart upon silver, and been satisfied therewith? What man of pleasure hath spent only one year in his delights, without feeling a palled appetite or disgust? Who among you can see himself slighted, or but even neglected in company, and not feel that uneasy sensibility, *resentment*? Are you not often disappointed in your expectations, and thereby unhappy? Will not a look of disdain cast upon you, throw you into a foment? Will not the sight of a person whom you dislike, throw you into disorder? And, lastly, when you have enjoyed all that your heart can wish of pleasure, when you have revelled amidst all the scenery of mirth and jollity, have heard men-singers and women-singers, and tasted all the delights

of the sons of men, are you then happy? Now these things are partly what happen or may happen to you daily; and therefore only look back and seriously consider, and say, Are not the wise man's words true; vanity of vanities, all is vanity? If these things are so, your way is not the way to happiness; and therefore, no more brand them with the name of enthusiasts, who propose to you a more excellent happiness, an happiness quite of another nature, and show you a more excellent way to arrive at it, viz. by renouncing all those false pleasures, which, as your own experience proves, do not carry peace in their own bosoms, and by beginning to feel your real wants and poverty, and by humbly applying to him, who can satisfy to the full all the cravings of your immortal spirits. The truly weary and heavy la-

den needs none of all these arguments to rouse him into a serious attention to his utter want and necessity, and therefore feels an argument more powerful than all reasons, to renounce all earthly pleasures and sensual delights, and to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world. He needs no terrors of eternal damnation to deter him from wickedness: for he knows and feels his sentence in himself, as often as he does evil, which alone is sufficient to make him long after, and unceasingly pray for, a complete redemption through Christ his Lord. This world and all that it affords are to him but dross and dung (that he may win Christ and his salvation) from the power of which, he longs as much to be delivered as from any evil disease. He knows that the love of this

world is poison to the soul, and that to live under its influences is to be separated from God and goodness, life and happiness; therefore he shuns it, and every thing leading thereto, as he would shun death. He is ready, upon every call of God, whether inward or outward, to give up his flesh, with its affections and lusts, to be consumed by the fire of God's jealousy; which will last no longer than it finds corruption to consume, and which was ordained for that very end, viz. to destroy sin and iniquity, to make an end of transgression, and to bring in an everlasting righteousness: and when accomplished, it will burn forth in all the meekness of love and joy for evermore. All the commandments contained in our Lord's sermon on the mount, which to many seem so hard, and are so much ridiculed by vain and

sensual men, are to him easy and delightful, because in them he exercises that spirit of charity which never faileth, and finds them powerful to destroy the dominion of sin in him; he needs no arguments to convince or persuade him, that it is his duty to let the man have his cloak, who has sued him at the law and taken away his coat; for he knows the love of such things to be evil, and therefore, being without affection to them, he has no resentment against the man who thus deals by him; neither has he any desire to recover the things which are thus taken away. For it is, and ever will be, not only an eternal truth, but a self-evident one too, and what is borne witness to by every person in the world, that no man ever resented, but when he thought himself injured; nor ever grieved the loss of any thing, but what he

loved; or sought for the restitution of any thing which he disregarded: therefore, whenever we find an uneasiness for the loss of any thing, or are offended with him who is the cause thereof, it is because we love it, and if it be either this world or any thing in it, the love of the Father is not in us; for no man can love God and Mammon at once, or serve both at the same time, if Jesus Christ speaks truth.

A Prayer.

O LORD GOD of the righteous, before whom my soul is bowed, though unfit to appear in thy presence, yet I have to acknowledge thy great love and restoring power, that thou, O Lord, hast showed unto me, thy unworthy servant,

when I was under distress of mind, and walking on the barren mountains of profession, and the desolate hills, where my soul thirsted for water, and found none; and almost overcome by the many temptations that surrounded me, even to that degree as to bring me, as it were, into the depth of sorrows and distress of soul, seeking rest and finding none, till thou, the God of all nations, and Father of all souls, showedst unto me, that thou makest the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water, and openest rivers in high places and fountains in the midst of the valleys, in which my thirsty travelling soul found refreshment.

O Lord God, Father of our redeeming love, Christ Jesus, hasten the time, if it be thy holy will, that the know-

ledge of thee, the God of the Christian's Sabbath, may cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea; and that all souls that dwell in the pit, wherein is no water, may be refreshed, so that there may be no more pain, nor sorrow; and all old things may be done away, and all things be made new; that every soul may be refreshed by thy restoring and redeeming love, created anew, and fitted to dwell in the celestial habitations, and receive peace and universal enjoyments.

O Lord, increase the number of thine elect, and be near the souls that are under distress, sorrow and tribulation, and, being oppressed with fears, do water their pillows with tears of repentance; support them, O Lord, I pray thee, and cause the enemy of their souls to flee

from them ; give them comfort when it seemeth most convenient, and raise them to the state that is desirable, viz. a dwelling in Christ Jesus our Lord. Do thou, great Jehovah, arm us more and more with strength to overcome satan, that roaring lion, who goeth about seeking whom he may devour ; so that we may come to live in that supreme love which knoweth no limits ; O Lord, strengthen the inward man, and give us comfort and hope, under the severest trials and tribulations that we are to go through. Wash our robes in the blood of the Lamb, and make them clean. O Lord, open thou the windows of heaven, and pour water upon the thirsty souls, and floods upon the dry ground ; blot out our transgressions and remember our sins no more : and bring us to dwell in the celestial regions of divine

light and love, and partake of the joys of our Lord, who dwelleth in the highest heavens, and sitteth upon the seat of judgment. Cause misery to pass away, and the long suffering to have an end.

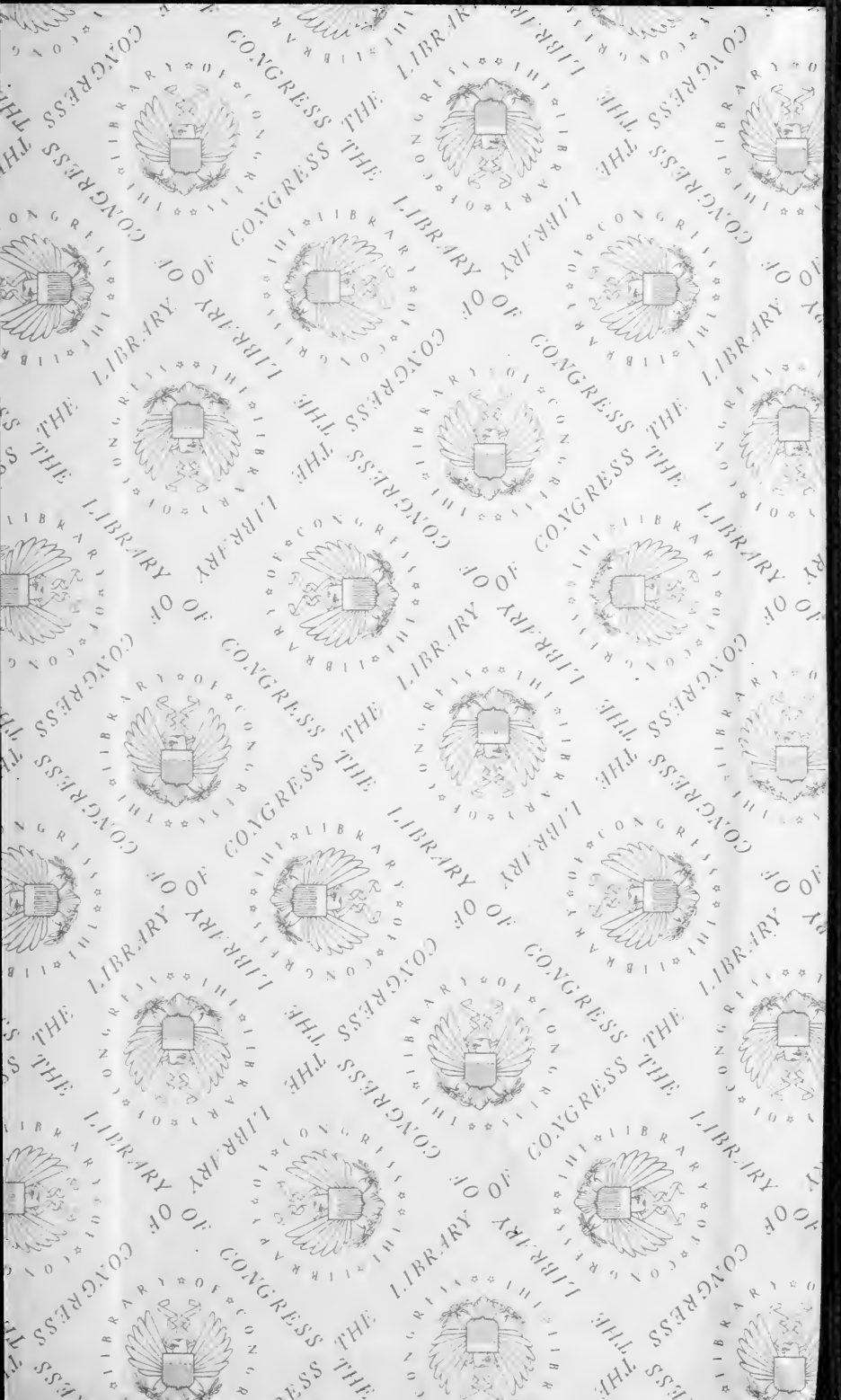
O Lord, arise, judge the earth, and put an end to sin, and finish transgression; so that thou mayest complete what thou camest to do, and inherit all things; for thou gavest Adam a living soul; and placedst him in paradise, to glorify thee; and he and his offspring, through disobedience to thy commands, fell from thee, O Lord, the rock of our salvation, and fountain of all existence, who fillest all things with thy presence, and art glorious in all thy works. Hasten the time, if it be thy holy and divine will, to cause the fire of thy word to consume all sin; so that the souls of thy creation,

mankind, may be redeemed, that thy glory may shine in all thy works, and they brought to praise thee. O Lord, I pray thee, bring us out of the land of Egypt, the dark state of nature; so that we may follow after thee, the rock of our salvation. Comfort Zion, and make her waste places and her deserts like the garden of the Lord, that joy and gladness may be found in her; so that thy fallen creation may be brought to the state of holiness from which they fell, and ever dwell in that fountain of light and redeeming love, and join the glorious company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, in psalms and hymns, and melodious spiritual songs, to the Lord God and the Lamb, who is worthy both now and for evermore. Amen.

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