

A
MISCELLANEOUS SELECTION

FROM

THE SCRAPBOOK

OF

THE COMPILER.



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“If thy first glance so powerful be,—
A mirth but opened, and sealed up again;
What wonders shall we feel, when we shall see
Thy full-ey'd love!

When thou shalt look us out of pain:
And one aspect of thine spend in delight
More than a thousand suns disburse in light,
In heaven above!”

GEORGE HERBERT.

PREFACE.

THIS little volume I trust may be useful in two ways. **FIRST**, in helping to give the people of God somewhat of a deeper insight into the blessedness of that portion which their God and Father has secured to them in Christ Jesus, the Son of His love. **SECONDLY**, in leading unbelievers to discover the vanity, the unsatisfactory nature, of all that which they are blindly pursuing, so that thereby they may come to a saving knowledge of Him who gave His life a ransom for all, **THAT INFINITELY WORTHY ONE** who alone can fill the dreary void in their hearts. With this double object in view, I prayerfully commend this

little unpretending missive to the blessing of Him whom I have known and in whom I have trusted, as the sure hope of my heart, for the last forty-eight years; and of whose unwearied love, in the words of George Herbert, I truly can testify, where he says,

“My God, what is a heart?
That thou shouldst it so eye and woo:
Pouring upon it all thine art
As if that thou hadst nothing else to do.”

EDWARD DENNY.

December, 1878.



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INFIDELITY AND FAITH.

“WHO,” says Voltaire, “can, without horror, consider the whole world as the empire of destruction? It abounds with wonders, it also abounds with victims. It is a vast field of carnage and contagion. Every species is without pity pursued and torn to pieces through the earth, and air, and water. In man there is more wretchedness than in all the other animals put together. He loves life, yet he knows he must die. If he enjoys a transient good, he suffers various evils, and is at last devoured by worms. This knowledge is his fatal prerogative: other animals have it not. He spends the transient moments of his existence in diffusing the miseries which he suffers: in cutting the throats of his fellow-creatures for pay; in cheating and being cheated; in robbing and being robbed; in serving that he might command; and in repenting of all he does. The bulk of mankind are nothing

more than a crowd of wretches equally criminal and unfortunate ; and the globe contains rather carcases than men. I tremble at the review of this dreadful picture to find that it contains a complaint against Providence itself : and I WISH I HAD NEVER BEEN BORN !”

Now let us hear the language of the excellent Hallyburton, who died, as he lived, full of confidence in God. “I shall shortly get a very different sight of God from what I have ever had ; and shall praise Him for ever and ever. Oh ! the thoughts of an incarnate Deity are sweet and ravishing. O, how I wonder at myself that I do not love Him more, and that I do not admire Him more. What a wonder that I enjoy such composure under all my bodily pains, and in the view of death itself. What a mercy that having the use of my reason, I can declare His goodness to my soul. I long for His salvation ; I bless His name that I have found Him, and I die rejoicing in Him. OH ! BLESSED BE GOD THAT I WAS BORN. O, that I

was where He is ! I have a father, and mother, and ten brothers and sisters in heaven, and I shall be the eleventh. Oh ! there is a telling in this Providence, and I shall be telling it for ever. If there be such a *glory* in His conduct towards me now, what will it be to see the Lamb in the midst of the throne !
BLESSED BE GOD THAT EVER I WAS BORN !"

" He is not dead whose glorious mind
 Lifts thine on high,
 To live in hearts we leave behind,
 Is not to die."

It is a good thing to *believe*, it is a good thing to *admire*. By continually looking upwards our minds themselves grow upwards, as a man, by indulging in habits of scorn and contempt for others, is sure to descend to the level of what he despises. So admiration and enthusiastic reverence for excellence impart to ourselves a portion of the excellence which we admire.

A BLESSED DEATH-BED.

A YOUNG man has lately "fallen asleep" in a village near Leeds who was converted a considerable time since through the gospel preached by Mr. Willans. His earthly home was a scene of wretchedness and sin, his mother being one of the most abject Scotch poor. But the messenger, Consumption, was soon sent to call him to another home. The testimony that he bore to his Lord in his life was happy. One who was present felt that the testimony of his death was sublime. At the last, sitting up with a renewal of strength, he clasped his hands, and exclaimed with a fervour of holy joy not to be expressed, "*Yes, it is for ever! for ever! for ever and ever and ever!*" Then calmly laying back his head and uttering the words, "*Eternal life!*" he died.

"Thanks be unto God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

STRUGGLES FOR HAPPINESS.

“ALAS, sir,” said Johnson, speaking of grand houses, fine gardens, and splendid places of amusements, “alas, sir, these are only struggles for happiness. When I first entered Ranelagh it gave an expansion, and gay sensation to my mind such as I never experienced anywhere else; but, as Xerxes wept when he viewed his immense army, and considered that not one of that great multitude would be alive a hundred years afterwards, so it went to my heart to consider that there was not one in that brilliant circle that was not *afraid to go home and think.*”

I am not what *I was*—I am not what *I would be*—I am not what *I should be*—I am not what *I shall be*—but, by the grace of God, I AM WHAT I AM.

ALL THINGS ARE SERIOUS.

QUEEN Elizabeth's Secretary, Walsingham, having retired from the busy world into the privacy of the country, some of his gay companions rallied him on his becoming religious, and told him he was melancholy. "No," said he, "I am not *melancholy*, but I am *serious*: and it is fit I should be so. Ah! my friends, while we laugh, all things are serious around us. God is serious, who exerciseth patience toward us; Christ is serious, who shed His blood for us; the Holy Spirit is serious, in striving against the obstinacy of our hearts; the Holy Scriptures bring to our ears the most serious things in the world; the whole creation is serious in serving God and us; all that are in heaven and hell are serious. How then can we be gay?"

N O W.

A DIFFICULTY WISELY AND HAPPILY SETTLED.

“I do wish,” said a lady, speaking of her daughter to a friend, a man of God, who was visiting her, “you would speak seriously to Caroline. She does not care anything about the salvation of her soul ;” and, so saying, she went out of the room, and left them together ; upon which he, seeking, as Paul did to the Corinthians, to catch her by guile, and pretending for the moment to take her part, said, “Now, tell me, Miss Caroline, are they not wearying you with this subject ?”—“Yes, sir, they are,” she replied, taken quite by surprise at words so unexpected from him ; “they keep continually talking to me about it, till I am tired of hearing them.” “So I thought,” he replied.—“Let’s see : how old are you ?”—“Eighteen, sir.”—“Have you good health ?”—“Yes, sir.”—“The fact is,” said he, “Christianity is a good thing in itself ; but the idea of contin-

ually troubling a young creature like you with it!" and then, pausing a moment, he added, as though a new thought had suddenly struck him, "I wonder how long it would do for you to wait before you turn to God?"—"That's just what I have been thinking myself," said Caroline.—"Well," said he, "suppose you say till you are fifty." "No; that won't do. I attended the funeral, the other day, of a lady fifteen years younger than that." "Thirty: how will that do?"—"I am not quite sure that it would do to wait quite so long," said Caroline.—"No," he answered, "I do not think so either. Something might happen. Let us see, twenty-five, or even twenty, years, if we could be sure that you would live so long. A year from the present time, how would that do?"—"I don't know, sir."—"Neither do I. The fact is, my dear young lady, the more I think of it, the more am I afraid of your putting it off a moment longer, especially as the Bible says: 'NOW IS THE ACCEPTED TIME, NOW IS THE DAY OF SALVATION' (2 Cor.

vi. 2). It says so, you know, and, if it does so, is it not wise to act upon it, to seize upon the present moment, to seek the Lord while He may be found, to call upon Him while He is near? Had we not better kneel down and ask God for mercy?"—The young lady, perfectly overcome by her feelings, knelt down on the spot. In a day or two she was believing in Christ, whose blood had washed out her sins. Rejoicing in hope of the glory of God, she was accepted in the Beloved—eternally safe.

Reader, how is it with *you*? Is this mighty question settled in your case?

"To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts."

CHILDLIKE FAITH.

A PREACHER of Christ, once seeking to explain to his hearers the nature of faith, illustrated it in the following way: what he described having happened to himself. One day he was

engaged in a dark cellar under his house, to which access was gained by a trap-door. Whilst there, his little girl, who was about three years of age, wishing to join him, came to the door and called to him, "Are you there, papa? How can I come to you? I don't see you; it is quite dark."—"True, my child; but I am below you, and I see you, though you don't see me; jump down, I will catch you."—"Oh, papa, I don't see you."—"I know that, my child, nevertheless, since I am here, no harm can come to you." Little Mary opened her eyes as wide as she could, but in vain; nothing could she descry, she hesitated awhile, until at length, taking courage, she leaped down, and was caught in her father's arms. A few days after, Mary finding the trap-door open, and, supposing that her father was below, called out, "shall I come again, papa?"—"Immediately, my child," said her father, and hardly had he time to reach the spot where he was to catch her, when she, in her infantine joy, leaped down

into his arms. Taking him round the neck, she said, "I knew, dear papa, that I could not fall when you were there."

Such is faith; it is trusting our Heavenly Father in the dark. Like little Mary, we cannot see Him with our bodily eye, but, resting on His word, let us cast ourselves into the arms of His sovereign mercy, for He waits to receive us, and be gracious unto all who throw themselves upon Him with faith like that of this little child.

Faith, like a simple unsuspecting child,
Serenely resting on its mother's arm,
Reposing every care upon her God,
Sleeps on His bosom, and expects no harm.
Receives with joy the promises He makes,
Nor questions of His purpose, or *His power*;
She does not, doubting, ask, "*Can this be so?*"
The Lord has said it, and there needs no more.
However deep be the mysterious word,
However dark, she disbelieves it not;
Where reason would examine, Faith obeys,
And, "*It is written*" answers every doubt.

LORD, INCREASE OUR FAITH.

THE YOUNG MARTYR.

“WHEN the wretched 6th Regiment mutinied at Allahabad, and murdered their officers, Arthur Marcus Cheek, of Evesham, in Worcestershire, a youth only sixteen years of age, an ensign, who was left for dead among the rest, escaped in the darkness of the night to a neighbouring ravine. Here he found a stream, the waters of which sustained his life for four days and nights. Although desperately wounded, he contrived to climb up into a tree during the night for protection from wild beasts. Poor boy! he had a high commission to fulfil before death released him from his sufferings.

“On the fifth day he was discovered, and dragged by the brutal Sepoys before one of their leaders to have the little life left in him extinguished. There he found another prisoner, a Christian catechist, formerly a Mahomedan, whom the Sepoys were endeavouring to torment and terrify into a recantation.

“The firmness of the native was giving way as he knelt amid his persecutors, with no human sympathy to support him. The boy officer, after anxiously watching him for a short time, cried out, ‘Oh, my friend, come what may, do not deny the Lord Jesus!’

“Just at this moment the alarm of a sudden attack by the gallant Colonel Neil with his Madras Fusileers caused the instant flight of the murderous fanatics. The catechist’s life was saved. He turned to bless the boy whose faith had strengthened his faltering spirit, but the young martyr had passed beyond all reach of human cruelty. He had entered into rest.”

If I choose to identify myself with a Gibbeted Man, because He is the *Son of God*, the whole order of the world is upset to me. Where and what is the world to me, who honours a Gibbeted Man as the SON OF GOD IN THE HIGHEST HEAVENS

THE GOD OF THE BIBLE.

“IS THAT THE GOD OF THE BIBLE? I NEVER KNEW HIM TILL NOW,” said a dying young woman, suddenly raising her head from her pillow with evident wonder at hearing the parable of the good Samaritan (Luke x.) read by one who came to visit her, and speak to her of the Lord, at the request of her mother. Up to that moment she had been utterly apathetic and dead as to her soul, but after hearing this parable read to her, she found peace, which continued unbroken to the end, and in a few weeks from the time that her eyes had been opened, in the way here related, *to see the God of the Bible to be the God of all grace*, she fell asleep in Jesus, giving the fullest evidence of the reality of the work of God in her soul.

A few more breathings in this dull and oppressive element, then all will be health and buoyancy, strength and gladness, purity and peace.

THE POWER OF THE NAME OF JESUS.

ABOUT two hundred years ago, there was a notorious thief in the south parts of Scotland, named, "John of the Score," who for many years had followed his wicked trade. At length, one day he met a poor man travelling along the road, with two horses, which he took from him by force. The man, upon this, fell on his knees, earnestly begging him, FOR JESUS CHRIST'S SAKE, to give him back one of them, saying, that he had nothing more by which to maintain himself and his family, than what he got by his horses. But all was in vain; the thief robbed him of both, leaving the poor man in a very desolate condition.

Not long after, Score became very unhappy without knowing the cause of it, only professing that what the poor man had said (though he was so ignorant of Scripture that he did not know who

Jesus Christ was) lay like a great weight on his spirits : and when he was afterwards sought for because of his robberies, he told his sons to shift for themselves, but for himself, he said, that there was a restraint upon him, and a something within him, that would not suffer him to fly ; so he stayed in his own home, till he was apprehended, and brought to Edinburgh, to be tried for his life, and condemned to die ; after which, Mr. Henry Blith, and Mr. William Cunningham, of Boniton, who knew something about him, paid him a visit, setting before him his miserable state, and the danger he was in, the only escape for him, as they told him, being *through the mercy of God, through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ*, when he cried out, “ O what a word is that, for it hath been my death ; that’s the word that hath lain upon my heart ever since the poor man spake it to me ; so that from that time I had no power to get out of the way.” Afterwards, being told who Jesus Christ was, and that without Him

he could not be saved, he cried out, "O will He ever look to *me*, will He show mercy on *me*, who for His sake would not show mercy to that poor man, and return him his horses?"

After further instruction, however, a gracious change was wrought in his soul, and at length, before his execution, he attained to such an assurance of his acceptance through Christ, that, on the scaffold, he spoke so wonderfully of the Lord's dealings with him, and that with such knowledge and judgment, as left a full conviction on the minds of many who heard him, that that name which, before he was aware of its worth, had wrought such convictions within him, had availed for his deliverance from wrath, for his eternal acceptance with God.

"Think of me to-morrow," said a dying saint, "as **THE HAPPIEST BEING YOU EVER HEARD OF**"

DISCIPLINE.

“NO ROYAL ROAD TO MUSIC.”

PORPORA, one of the most illustrious masters of music in Italy, conceived a friendship for a young pupil, and asked him if he had courage to persevere with constancy in the course he should mark out for him, however wearisome it should seem. When the pupil answered in the affirmative, Porpora wrote upon a single page of ruled paper the diatonic and chromatic scales, ascending and descending the intervals of the third, fourth, and fifth, &c., in order to teach him to take them with freedom, and to sustain the sounds, together with the trills, groups, appoggiaturas, and passages of vocalization of different kinds. This page occupied both the master and scholar during an entire year; and the year following was also devoted to it. When the third year commenced, nothing was said of changing the lesson, and the pupil began to murmur: but the master reminded him of his promise.

The fourth year slipped away, the fifth followed, and always the same eternal page. The sixth found them at the same task ; but the master added to it some lessons of articulation, pronounciation, and, lastly, of declamation. At the end of this year, the pupil, who supposed himself still in the elements, was much surprised, when one day his master said to him, "GO, MY SON, YOU HAVE NOTHING MORE TO LEARN, YOU ARE THE FIRST SINGER OF ITALY, AND OF THE WORLD !"

He spoke the truth, for this singer was Caffarelli.—*Fetis's History of Music.*

Such an anecdote as this well illustrates the Lord's ways with us. Thus, from one day, from one year, to another, we are learning the same unvarying lesson, getting more deeply acquainted, on the one hand, with our own utter unworthiness, and with His infinite grace, on the other. Often truly a perplexing, a tedious lesson to the heart ; so much so, that it seems as if it would

never come to an end. But it is not so. As this young pupil was told by his master, "You have nothing more to learn, you are the first singer of Italy, and of the world," so we, in a higher sense, having learnt our lesson, shall find, to our joy and amazement, that we are *perfect musicians*. And oh, what a song will be ours! such strains as no ear ever listened to before; telling out, as they will do, the praises of Him who is infinitely worthy—who was slain—who has redeemed us from death by His blood, and with whom our God and Father has assigned to us, poor creatures of the dust as we are, the nearest place to Him—the Son of His love, in that circle of glory and blessedness, of which He, in "that day," will be both the light and centre.

Viewing the above anecdote in another point of view, one learns from it the value of perseverance in whatever we undertake. Without this, who ever attained to excellence, whether in connection with the things of this life, or

the next? It shows, too, the need of being established in the principles of whatever we learn. Failure in this leads to failure when we come to put our knowledge in practice. Porpora certainly proved that he understood this, when he elicited that promise from his young pupil. And Caffarelli, as he looked back on those six years so strangely spent on one lesson, conscious at the same time of what he had gained, must have felt what a wise master he had.

The following is from a letter to a lady whose son had been killed, "I pray you, dear madam, let not one thought that would question the fulness of the love of God to you, enter your heart. These trials come, and they find out in us two different things: they find out the human *sorrow*, and with such, be sure of it, God can, and does, deeply sympathize; they find out the human *will*, and that God **MUST BREAK DOWN,**"

SELF SACRIFICE.

Related in the Blakeway Papers, in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

Two boys were at play inside the upper part of St. Leonard's tower at Bridgenorth, when the beam or joist, on which they were standing, gave way. One of them had just time to catch hold of the beam, and suspend himself from it; while the other, slipping over his body, caught hold of his legs, and thus they there hung for some time, calling for help; but in vain. At length the boy who clung to the beam, said he could hold out no longer; upon which, the other who was clinging to him, said, "Do you think you could save yourself, if I were to loose you?"—"Yes," said the other, "I think I could."—"Well, then," said he, "God bless you!" and loosing his hold, he fell, and was dashed to pieces on the stone floor below. Upon this his companion either climbed to some place of safety, or stayed till some one came to his help.

Here we have a remarkable instance of heroic self-sacrifice—of devoted affection; a beautiful illustration of the ways of One well known to our hearts. Wondrous was the love of this dear boy to his friend! But what was it to the love that Christ has for us? What to the love that led Him to Calvary, there to give His life a ransom for us, to suffer the just for the unjust in order to bring us to God? that wrung from him that cry of unparalleled anguish: “MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAST THOU FORSAKEN ME?”

The natural mind is on natural things, and sees everything through that medium; it is shut up in its own little circle of feelings and ideas, and can neither see nor feel beyond it, there it looks for all its enjoyment, there it lives, there it continues, and there it dies.

“ALL FOR ME! ALL FOR ME!”

THE following is a remarkable instance of the way in which God will at times visit a soul independently of all the ordinary means of conversion. A poor idiot in Scotland, who, up to the day of his death, had never uttered a rational word, in his dying hour opened his eyes in amazement at what was revealed to his soul by the Spirit of God, and spake as follows:

“I see! I see!
What do I see?

Three in One—and One in Three,
And all the Three are all for me,—
All for me!”

Blessed be His name for letting us into the secrets of His love! Secrets He never whispered to angels; though I sometimes think, some of these volumes of faithfulness (believers' lives) are so tragical, that when read aloud hereafter, even the angels will drop a tear.

LADY POWERSCOURT,

ON SUCCESS AND FAILURE IN EXPLANATION.

IN order to a satisfactory result when one person has to explain anything to another, it is chiefly necessary that the person to whom the explanation is offered, *should really and sincerely try to understand what the other would express.*

It is very desirable that the explainer should use such words and such manner as shall best express his mind; but, though he spake never so clearly, if the other is listening without that real desire to understand, language will always afford to a disputer opportunities of raising questions, and of misrepresenting assertions and of so confounding (as the disputer thinks) the other, but really he himself is the confounded one; for the other still knows what his own meaning is, though he may be grieved at his failure to lead his friend to understand it, and profit by it, while the disputer has missed what perhaps might have been a

real increase of wisdom or knowledge to him, and certainly what would have been an opportunity of manly, friendly, and wise intercourse, and exchange of ideas.

There surely is wisdom in these observations. And we, Christians, would do well to lay them to heart. Is it saying too much to assert, that there is amongst us a lack of that patient waiting, both on God and each other, that would result in mutual edification and happy communion? "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened and heard it; and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name" (Mal. iii. 16.) What a contrast this Scripture presents to the case described in the above observations.

"It is with me," said a dying Christian, "as if there was NO WORLD AT ALL."

ONE OF SATAN'S WAYS WITH SAINTS.

“How heavenly their souls act
Who act from enjoyment of Christ.”

THE temptation with which Satan disturbs the people of God is to hinder them from living on Christ as poor, needy, helpless sinners, and from finding all they want in His fulness. This exalts *the Saviour* too much, and makes *them* too safe and happy; therefore Satan would persuade them to get riches, and strength, and a clean heart, quite without sin, *in themselves*, so that they may look *inwards* with complacency,—*outwards* with, “Stand by thyself, I am holier than thou”—and *upwards* with, “God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are.” Thus pride enters, and Christ is thrust out.

If the only perfect one of Adam's race dies for the race, then there is an end to the race: if He rises, He begins a new race,

BEDE'S LAST BLAZE,

And the going out of the candle of his life.
A.D. 734.

ONE of the last things he did was the translation of the Gospel of John into English, when death seized on him. One of his devout scholars, whom he used for his secretary or amanuensis, said, "My beloved Master, there remains one sentence yet unwritten,"—"Write it, then, quickly," replied Bede, and, summoning all his spirits together, like the last blaze of a candle going out, he indited it, and expired. Thus, God's children are immortal while their Father has anything for them to do on earth; and death, that beast, cannot overcome them and kill them, till first they have finished their testimony (Rev. xi. 7); which done, like silkworms, they willingly die when their web is ended, and are comfortably entombed in their own endeavours.

DR. GORDON'S LAST MOMENTS.

Just as he was expiring, he appeared no longer conscious of what took place around him. He gazed upwards as in a wrapt vision. No film overspread his eyes. They beamed with an unwonted lustre; and the whole countenance, losing the aspect of disease and pain, with which he had so long been familiar, glowed with an expression of indescribable rapture. As we watched, in silent wonder and praise, his features, which had become motionless, suddenly yielded, for a few seconds, to a smile of ecstasy, which no pencil could ever depict, and which no one who witnessed it can ever forget; and when it passed away, still the whole countenance continued to beam and brighten, as if reflecting the glory on which the soul was gazing. . . . Though his emaciated frame, propped up by pillows, was incapable of the least effort, yet such was the effect on the bystanders, of his upward outstretching gaze, that even the

motionless body itself seemed to be reaching forward, as if impatient for the summons to depart. We saw as much as mortal eye *could* see of the entrance of a soul into glory. Nothing more could have been given us, but the actual vision of the separate spirit, and its angelic convoy. This glorious spectacle lasted for about a quarter of an hour, increasing in interest to the last, during which the soul seemed pouring itself from the frail tenement which had imprisoned it, into the embrace of its Lord. The breathing now became shorter and shorter: then, after a long pause, one last gentle heaving of the chest, and, without a struggle, at two o'clock the soul had fled.

You must not call yourself old, as if you were tired. The Lord is never weary, though "THE ANCIENT OF DAYS." You have to renew your strength as the eagles, and to bear fruit in old age.

EXTRACT.

From a letter of F. S. describing the dying experience of her Sister M., whom she survived only two months.

“I AM soon going where all is light, and love, and holiness, and lowliness, and so much, besides, that we have talked about, and read about together, the love of God—the love of God in saving sinners—the love of Jesus—the soul, the soul that Jesus loves.”

Her words were nearly, if not exactly, these; but so exquisitely realizing by faith things in heaven, that the sounds were almost too much for my heart; I could only adore my God shining into her soul with such light, when her mind and body were so entirely enfeebled.

A lady, once reading the Word of God to a dying Christian, said to him, “I fear I am tiring you.” “If you went on till you tired *me*,” he replied, “you would be worn out yourself.”

LIBERTY AND NECESSITY.

DISPUTES on liberty and necessity are vain and idle, as much as if you were placed *within a spherical surface*, and I *without it*, and we were to enter into abstruse arguments on the question, whether the surface between us was *concave or convex*. In *my* situation it is convex, in *yours* it is concave. If we consider events in reference to THE DIVINE MIND, it seems utterly impossible to think of them as otherwise than *fixed*; if we consider them with reference to *responsible agents*, it seems as impossible to regard them as otherwise than *contingent*.

A well-skilled musician can recognize an air, even in its variations, so those Christians who live at heaven's gate, through constant communion with an ascended Lord, often catch glimpses of God's great plan, and the variable dispensations of His providence.

SINS OF THOUGHT.

“Cleanse thou me from secret thoughts.”

IN contending against sensual sins, the main stress must be laid on the principle of EXCLUSION—*the absolute keeping away of bad suggestions and imagery from the mind.* Once in, the stain has struck on a substance so sensitive, that, if not quite indelible, it is terribly tenacious, and terribly prolific of sorrow.

It is here with beginnings that we all have chiefly to do, in ourselves and in our children; here peculiarly the battle is secret and invisible: not so much can be *said*, and so much the more must be done by prayer and instantaneous self-command; expelling the first contamination, and crying, “Cleanse thou me from secret thoughts.”

In respect to many sins, self-examination may be safe, and even necessary; but there are others where it is scarcely wholesome or profitable. Simple prevention, avoidance, the shutting of the

eyes and ears, and pressing on to known duty, are the best security. It does not help much to go back and trace the ways of temptation. The wise man was right in saying, "Avoid it, pass not by it; turn from it, and pass away."

THE BIBLE BURNT.

A CERTAIN Irish priest, being greatly incensed against one of his congregation, who had, through the reading of the Scriptures in his native tongue, been converted to God, and had consequently been instrumental in the conversion of others in his neighbourhood, called at his house, and, not finding him at home, insisted on his wife's telling him where her husband was to be found. While he was, talking with her, he saw on a shelf, a copy of the Bible in the Irish language. This he laid hold of, and deliberately putting it into the fire, burnt it to ashes. The poor woman remonstrated.

but in vain: while her aged mother-in-law—who had listened with delight to her son reading the Scriptures to her, and through them had been brought to the knowledge of God—when she saw the Bible thus treated, burst into tears; and, in an agony of passionate grief, which those alone can fully conceive who know what the national character is, and how much the Irish language expresses, exclaimed, “O God! O God! now is burnt the Book of books, the Father of all good stories: there were in it stories from heaven, stories of angels; O yes! and stories of Jesus! stories of His apostles and saints; and amidst all, was the dreadful, but oh, the joyful story for sinners,—the story of the crucifying Friday. Oh, it's burnt! it's burnt! THE BOOK OF MY SOUL—THE BOOK OF MY HEART—THE BOOK OF MY SAVIOUR!”

This, it may be said, was enthusiasm—Be it so—would that we had a little more of it ourselves! a little more of that devoted affection to HIM, whose love in giving Himself to us, and for us,

is recorded in this wonderful volume ! Would that we, each one of us, could think and speak thus of the Bible as “the book of my soul, the book of my heart, the book of my Saviour.”

GOD HIMSELF OUR COMFORTER.

HAVE you never observed, when a little child has been in very deep distress, if a *stranger* has attempted to compose and comfort him, that all his efforts have only increased the anguish of the child ; but that as soon as he has *heard his father's voice, and felt his father's embrace*, his sorrows have been hushed, and a smile of gladness has lighted up his countenance ?

Child of God ! your heavenly Father will not leave it to *strangers* to comfort you. He will not suffer a *servant's hand* rudely to touch His child. “God HIMSELF shall wipe away all tears from your eyes.”

THE MARTYR'S FAREWELL

TO EVERYTHING ON EARTH.

Hugh Mackail, who suffered martyrdom in Edinburgh, the year 1666, at the early age of twenty-six, went up the ladder to death telling his fellow-sufferers that he felt, at every step of it, a degree nearer to heaven, and when he had reached the summit, he said, "And now I leave off to speak any more with creatures. Farewell, father and mother, friends and relations! Farewell, meat and drink! Farewell, the world and all its delights! Farewell, sun, and moon, and stars! Welcome, God and Father! Welcome, sweet Jesus Christ! Welcome, sweet Jesus Christ! Welcome, blessed Spirit of grace, the God of all consolation! Welcome, Glory! Welcome, Eternal Life! Welcome, death!"

Nature has circumstances between itself and God. Faith has God between the heart and circumstances.

J. N. D.

TAKE CARE, WARD IT OFF
AT THE BEGINNING!

I KNOW right well the deep abyss of gloom that like an atmosphere, surrounds the human heart: and I know, too, how often even physical weakness lets one drop into it, and how hard it is to shake it off. Our strength is gone, and oft we "wist it not"—so that I always say to myself, "Take care, ward it off at the beginning." If one gives way, one drops deeper and deeper into it; into the thing, of all others, most fallen, most afar from God—a dark brooding human heart. The Lord is very pitiful to such a one—very tender and gracious; but if (as has been said) I have *all* the grace of Christ, I have no business to give way as if it were not "sufficient." What oppresses me to-day, will be gone to-morrow; but a glimpse of Christ—the felt answer of His heart in the moment of oppression—will last until to-morrow, and the next

day, and for ever, and for ever. Shame on the heart that can go down so low for the worry of the moment, and rise so little to the realities that are for ever!

G. V. W.

EXTRACTS

FROM THE LIFE OF EDWARD PAYSON.

NO WILL BUT GOD'S.

“Oh what a blessed thing it is to lose one's will! Since I have lost my will, I have found happiness. There can be no such thing as disappointment to me, for I have no desire but that God's will may be accomplished.”

A CRIPPLE'S TESTIMONY.

“Christians might avoid much trouble and inconvenience, if they would only believe what they profess,—that God is able to make them happy without any-

thing else. They imagine that if such a dear friend were to die, or such and such blessings to be removed, they should be miserable; whereas God can make them a thousand times happier without them. To mention my own case, God has been depriving me of one blessing after another; but, as every one was removed, He has come in and filled up its place; and now, when I am a cripple, and not able to move, I am happier than ever I was in all my life before, or ever expected to be; and if I had believed this twenty years ago I might have been spared much anxiety."

THE CHRISTIAN'S WAKING THOUGHT.

"And oh, how terrible does it appear to me, to sin against this God; to set up our wills in opposition to His! and when we awake in the morning, instead of thinking 'What shall I do to please my God to-day?' to inquire 'What shall I do to please myself to-day?'"

HAPPINESS, NO DELUSION.

“Yet, while my body is thus tortured, the soul is perfectly, perfectly happy and peaceful, more happy than I can possibly express to you. I lie here and feel those convulsions extending higher and higher; but my soul is filled with joy unspeakable. I seem to swim in a flood of glory which God pours down upon me. And I know, I know, that my happiness is but begun; I cannot doubt that it will last for ever. And now, is this all a delusion? Is it a delusion, that can fill the soul to overflowing with joy in such circumstances? If so, it is surely a delusion better than a reality. But no: it is not a delusion; I feel that it is not. I do not merely know that I *shall* enjoy all this: I enjoy it *now*.”

SUFFERINGS WEIGHED IN THE LIGHT OF
THE GLORY.

“A friend, with whom E. Payson had been conversing on his extreme bodily sufferings, and his high spiritual joys,

remarked—"I presume it is no longer incredible to you, if ever it was, that martyrs should rejoice and praise God in the flames and on the rack." "No," said he, "I can easily believe it. I have suffered twenty times—yes (to speak within bounds), twenty times as much as I could, in being burned at the stake ; while my joy in God so abounded as to render my sufferings not only tolerable, but welcome. 'The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed.'"

I AM A CHRISTIAN.

"At one time he was heard to break forth in the following soliloquy:—
 'What an assemblage of motives to holiness does the gospel present ! I AM A CHRISTIAN; what then? Why, I am a redeemed sinner, a pardoned rebel—all through grace, and by the most wonderful means which infinite wisdom could devise. I AM A CHRISTIAN, what then? Why, I am a temple of God, and surely

I ought to be pure and holy. I AM A CHRISTIAN, what then? I am a child of God, and ought to be filled with filial love, reverence, joy, and gratitude. I AM A CHRISTIAN, what then? Why, I am a disciple of Christ, and must imitate Him who was meek and lowly in heart, and who pleased not Himself. I AM A CHRISTIAN, what then? Why, I am an heir of heaven, and hasten on to the abodes of the blessed, to join the full choir of glorified ones in singing the praises of Him who hath redeemed us to God by His blood; and surely I ought to learn that song on earth.' "

GOD A SUN.

"Hitherto I have viewed God as a fixed star, bright indeed, but often intercepted by clouds; but now He is coming nearer and nearer, and spreads into a sun so vast and glorious, that the sight is too dazzling for flesh and blood to sustain. I see clearly that all these same glorious perfections, which now only serve to kindle my affections into a flame, and

to melt down my soul into the same blessed image, would burn and scorch me like a consuming fire if I were an impenitent sinner."

A LETTER OF EDWARD PAYSON TO
HIS SISTER.

"MY DEAR SISTER—Were I to adopt the figurative language of Bunyan, I might date this letter from the land of Beulah, of which I have been for some weeks a happy inhabitant. The celestial city is full in my view. Its glories beam upon me, its breezes fan me, its odours are wafted to me, its sounds strike upon my ears, and its spirit is breathed into my heart. Nothing separates me from it but the river of death, which now appears but as an insignificant rill that may be crossed at a single step, whenever God shall give permission. The Sun of righteousness has been gradually drawing nearer and nearer, appearing larger and brighter as

he approached, and now he fills the whole hemisphere; pouring forth a flood of glory, in which I seem to float like an insect in the beams of the sun; exulting, yet almost trembling, while I gaze on this excessive brightness, and wondering, with unutterable wonder, why God should deign thus to shine upon a simple worm. A single heart and a single tongue seem altogether inadequate to my wants. I want a whole heart for every separate emotion, and a whole tongue to express that emotion.

“Why do I speak thus of myself and my feelings? why not speak only of our God and Redeemer? It is because I know not what to say. When I would speak of them, my words are all swallowed up. I can only tell you what effects their presence produces, and even of these I can tell you but very little. Oh, my sister, my sister! could you but know what awaits the Christian; could you only know so much as I know, you could not refrain from rejoicing, and even leaping for joy. La-

hours, trials, troubles would be nothing: you would rejoice in afflictions, and glory in tribulations; and, like Paul and Silas, sing God's praises in the darkest night, and in the deepest dungeon. You have known a little of my trials and conflicts, and know that they have been neither few nor small; and I hope this glorious termination of them will serve to strengthen your faith, and elevate your hope.

“And now, my dear, dear sister, farewell. Hold on your Christian course but a few days longer, and you will meet, in heaven,

“Your happy and affectionate brother,
EDWARD PAYSON.”

THE BIBLE AND THE INFIDEL.

At a literary gathering at the house of Baron von Holback, where most of the celebrated infidels of the age used to assemble, the gentlemen present were one day commenting on the absurd.

foolish, and childish things with which the Holy Scriptures, as they maintain, abound. But the French philosopher and infidel, Diderot, who had himself taken no small part in the conversation, suddenly put a period to it by saying, "But it is wonderful, gentlemen, it is wonderful! I know no man in France who can write and speak with such ability. In spite of all the evil which we have said (and, undoubtedly, with good reason) of this book, I do not believe that you, any of you, could compose a narrative so simple, and at the same time so elevated and so affecting, as the narrative of the sufferings and death of Christ—a narrative exerting so wide an influence, and awakening so deep and universal feeling, and the power of which, after so many hundred years, would still be the same." This unlooked-for remark filled every one present with astonishment, and was followed by a protracted silence.

JOHN BROWN,

“The Christian Carrier.”

JOHN Brown, a poor Carrier in Lanarkshire, commonly known as “The christian carrier,” who lived in the reign of James the Second, being in the act of cutting turf, was seized by the soldiers of Claverhouse, the well-known persecutor of the people of God in those days, brought before him, rapidly examined, convicted of Non-conformity and sentenced to death. Claverhouse ordering him to go on his knees, as he must immediately die. Brown, without any remonstrance, knelt down, and proceeded to pray in terms so touching for his wife, who was present, and their born, and unborn children (she being near her confinement), that Claverhouse, seeing the hard eyes of the dragoons beginning to moisten and their hands to tremble, thrice interrupted him with volleys of blasphemy. When the prayer was ended, John turned to his wife, and reminding

her that the day was come, of which he had told her, when he first proposed marriage to her, asked her if she was willing to part with him. "Heartily willing," was the reply. "This," he said, "is all I desire. I have nothing more now to do but to die." He then kissed her, and also the children, and said, "May all purchased and promised blessings be multiplied unto you."—"No more of this," roared Claverhouse, whose iron heart this scene was beginning to move. "You six dragoons there, fire on the fanatic!" They stood motionless—the prayer had quelled them. Fearing a mutiny, both among the soldiers, and in his own heart, he snatched a pistol from his belt, and shot the good man through the head. He fell: his brains spurting out; and the brave wife catching his shattered head in her lap. "What do you think of your husband now?" said Claverhouse. "I aye thought muckle of him, sir," she answered, "BUT NEVER SAE MUCKLE AS I DO THIS DAY."

It was rumoured at the time, that the impression made upon Claverhouse by this wonderful scene was never effaced from his memory.

“VANITY OF VANITIES.”

Found among the papers of the late Professor Burnet of King's College, in his own hand writing.

WHY labour for honour? Why seek after fame?
Why toil to establish a popular name?

Fame! aye, what is fame? a bubble—a word—
A sound that's worth nothing—a hope that's
deferred;

A heart-sickening hope, too often denied,
Or withheld from the worthy to pander to
pride.

Then out upon Fame, let her guerdon be riven,
Nay—hold—let me strive, as I always have
striven.

Out, out upon Fame! too late will she come,
Her wreath mocks my brow—will it hang o'er
my tomb?

Too much have I laboured, too willingly gave
My thoughts to the world—and have earned
but a grave!

THE BOOK OF GOD, A BOOK OF FACTS.

I HAVE been interested lately in this character of the book of God—that it reveals God to us, not by description, but through His own actings. From the beginning of the Book it is so, and it is a blessed fact. What a different thing we should have heard, if our God had employed prophets to describe Him. What a precious thing we have in seeing God in action Himself. Philosophy seems to delight itself in describing God, thinking to magnify its object by long and learned treatises. But this is not the Scripture. The Scripture allows God to show Himself by His acts, not undertaking to describe Him. And what a proof that God reveals Himself to us in action and in personality, and not by theological description, is the mystery of the incarnation, with all that it led to, in the life of Jesus, His childhood, His youth, His⁴ subjection under the law at Nazareth, His ministry, in

His sayings and doings, His sorrows, temptations, and death, His resurrection and glory. What a witness does all that bear to the great truth that we are here considering together, that God's method has not been to commit the revelation of Himself, what He is, and who He is, to the pen of inspired description, but that He has chosen to show Himself to us, lovingly and personally. His own activities bespeak Him, and not the pen of a theologian. Theology's first and best thought of Him is thus miserably defective, and thus perceptively rebuked; that thought of Him is this, *God is in heaven*. Nay, God is on earth, among us, in acting, speaking, sympathizing, in our natures, and in our wills, and in our circumstances. It is indeed true, that He is in heaven, provided we remember all this of Him at the same time; but as an abstract theological maxim, that God is in heaven—all of Him is lost to us.

CRUCIFIXION WITH CHRIST.

" O groundless deeps ! O love beyond degree !
Th' offended dies to set th' offender free "

Quarles' Emblems.

At the time of the late war, a young man, a husband, and at the same time, a father, was called to serve in the ranks, upon which a fellow-countryman of his who was unmarried, presented himself, saying, that he having no wife or children dependent on him, his life was of less importance than that of the other, and that he was willing to serve in his stead. Such an offer, under the circumstances, was not likely to be rejected; he accordingly took the place of substitute for his friend, went forth into the field, and fell in battle.

After this, there was another conscription, and the survivor through an oversight on the part of the Government, was again required to serve. Now, however, he had a plea in his favour which he at first had not. How do you

suppose he answered the summons? He answered it thus—"I AM DEAD—I HAVE LOST MY LIFE IN SERVING MY COUNTRY, AND SHE HAS NO FURTHER CLAIM UPON ME: and so it actually was, *he had died in the person of his substitute*, and hence, a living man as he was, he could *reckon himself to be dead*, and, therefore, exempted from exposing his life in the field.

So is it with us whose hope is in Christ. We reckon ourselves to be dead. And why? Because He, the Son of God, has died in our stead; because the penalty due to us has been borne by our Surety. (See Rom. vi. 11.) On the cross He was made sin, forsaken of God: all, all to satisfy the justice of Him who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, who required that sin should meet its due punishment. This, and this alone, is our plea. By faith we identify ourselves with Him who first identified Himself with us, so that we realize ourselves to be dead—

dead to sin, *in two ways*, dead to it both *judicially* and *morally*, simply because, in the person of our Substitute, we have suffered, and can therefore say with the apostle, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." (Gal. ii. 20.)

And now, how is this? Has every one a right to speak thus of himself? No, in no way, we answer. No one can do so but the TRUE BELIEVER, HE WHO WITH THE HEART BELIEVES UNTO RIGHTEOUSNESS. He who by the Spirit is united to Christ, who lives because He lives, who is alive unto God through JESUS CHRIST our Lord—he alone can speak of himself as *dead*, as having the old man crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth he should not serve sin. (See Rom. vi. 6.)

Such is the position of the believer,

though often, unhappily, through weakness of faith, he cannot speak of his state with the full confidence that he is entitled to do. But let him only look away from himself, and cast his eye upon Christ, and it will be otherwise with him. Let him, as in the case of the young man who gave that remarkable answer, when called to risk his life in the field, simply realize the fact, that *another has died in his stead, and that, consequently, he is dead*, and he will be perfectly fearless, no judgment, no wrath, he will feel, can reach him. Identified, as he is, in resurrection with Him in whom the Father is well pleased, *the sufferings of that infinitely worthy One are imputed to him, as well as His worthiness*. This is the ground of his confidence; hence he knows himself to be, not only delivered from death, but also entitled to perfect, infinite happiness in "THAT DAY" when Christ shall reap the reward of His work — of that devotedness which brought Him down from His true

home above into the midst of the darkness and desolation of this sorrowful world; which caused Him, in the likeness of sinful flesh, to give His life a ransom for the lost and unworthy. (See Rom. viii. 1—4.)

E. D.

GOD LEADING US ON.

I AM persuaded that when you look back over that part of life which you have passed, you see how God does, according to His promise, somehow or other, bring us on. How He will do so, we can never tell beforehand; but, when He is leading, He does lead on somehow or other: and as He has done for you and yours, through the years that are past, so He will do for the future also: HE CHANGES NOT.

G. V. W.

THE WORD OF GOD.

WE should more intensely press the Scripture on the soul. We should remember that all in us is to be Christ's disciple ; the heart, the conscience, and the understanding. The light, and joy, and beauty of the truth may be received at the door, but the *reality* of the truth must be known in the soul, its *dwelling-place*. God looks for it, that *our very selves* be occupied with this truth. It addresses itself to *us*, in the deep, full sense of *us*.

J. G. B.

Gambold, writing to Charles Wesley, says, "I will not exhort you to courage. We need not talk of that, since nothing that is approaching is evil." (See Psa. cxii. 7.)

I have now a living Christ, perfectly awake to all His people's wants, a living person in heaven occupied with me.

G. V. W.

REST OF HEART.

It was a sweet reply a woman once made, upon her death-bed, to a friend who asked whether she was more willing to live or die. "I am pleased with what God pleases." "Yes," said her friend, "but if God should refer it to you, which would you choose?" "Truly," said she, "if God should refer it to me, I would refer it to Him again." Ah! blessed life, when our own will is swallowed up in the will of God, and the heart at rest in His care and love, and pleased with all His appointment.

It is an eternal *reality* when Christ looks into the heart. It is the *most real of truths*—NO DREAM.

G. V. W.

Enthusiasm wears itself out; imagination grows calmer; but the heart never grows old, like the eagle, it plumes itself with new wings in its old age.

May He shelter our feelings, and shelter our affections, they are too keen for such a world ; they need to be SHEATHED IN HIMSELF, embosomed in Him, till the time when they shall be able to expand to the creature without idolatry, without a wound, without a sorrow.

LADY POWERSCOURT.

If I think of the *world*, I get the *impress of the world*.

If I think of the *trials and sorrows*, I get the *impress of my sorrow*.

If I think of my *failures*, I get the *impress of my failures*.

If I think of CHRIST, I get the IMPRESS OF CHRIST.

Go, and with more than angel violence, drag them out of Sodom. Tell them that you are conscious that you carry about with you a moral dignity that can never mingle with such a world. J. G. B.

DOCTRINAL PARODIES.

How absurd does the scriptural requirement of faith seem to the unbelieving and the misbelieving among us! What! say they, can it be possible that on so small a matter as one's belief, salvation and perdition are made to depend? What can be more unjust or irrational than to make faith, and not works, the test of character?

*"For modes of faith let graceless bigots fight.
He can't be wrong whose life is in the right."*—*Pope.*

Thus men ignorant of the word of truth talk and feel respecting evangelical faith. And yet, such discourse, while it may have an air of independence, betrays a real shallowness of reasoning that would be ludicrous were it not so full of peril. For reflect a moment, and see how this mode of thought will fit the conduct of men in the common concerns of life.

One is sick, and would fain be delivered from his disease. But there are many ways of treating disease, and he

is perplexed. So, to relieve himself from the burden of care involved in any discriminating difference between quacks and physicians, he straightway concludes to remain passive, and changes the couplet we have quoted, thus :—

For modes of cure let greedy doctors strive,
He can't be dead who yet remains alive.

Or, this same man may be drawn into a law-suit, and the safety of all his possessions become endangered through the craft and cruelty of others. But the intricacies, and the uncertainty withal, of the law appall him, and so he says :—

O'er legal quirks let lawyers hold debate,
He can't be poor who yet has his estate.

Soils are many, and seasons vary, and enemies innumerable assail the vegetative products of the earth, and so a farmer, true to his religious maxim, might declare :

Let others wrangle about nature's laws,
I seek *effect* and nothing care for *cause*.

Ridicule is not always the test of truth, but it is a sharp opponent of

error. And when a principle of belief or of conduct can be run down or demolished by a few words of transparent sarcasm, it is safe to conclude that the principle is not worth the holding, and cannot be trusted, especially in so grave and solemn a matter as the possible future of one's soul.

In the Greek liturgy is the following petition: "By all Thy sufferings, known and unknown, good Lord, deliver us;" in reference to which Rowland Hill wrote, "I consider that prayer to be one of the most touching ever uttered—
"THE UNKNOWN SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST!"

Faith is believing the *Word*, trusting is believing the *character*. I don't ask a person I love to give me his word, because I trust it (or rather, *him*). Faith is connected with *power*, trust with *love*. The thing that makes me trust in power is *love*. J. B. S.

When Christ died, Dionysius the Areopagite (Acts xvii. 34) is said to have exclaimed, on witnessing the earthquake and darkness, "Either the God of nature is suffering, or the framework of nature is dissolving."

Deeds alone beget deeds, and only life kindles life. The Parent who would successfully teach, must BE the great lesson and spirit of all lessons: he can teach love only by loving.

EPIGRAM.

The ungodly man but *once is born,*
 But when he feels the life-strings sever,
 Then *twice he dies,* and angels mourn
 A Spirit lost, that dies for ever.

Twice born, the godly die but *once,*
 The second death enduring never ;
 His life through endless ages runs,
 He dies to live, and lives for ever.