

THE
MORNING OF LIFE:

A Memoir of Miss A—n,

WHO WAS EDUCATED FOR A NUN.

WITH

MANY INTERESTING PARTICULARS CONCERNING

DR. DOYLE.

NEW EDITION.

G. MORRISH,
20, PATERNOSTER SQUARE, LONDON, E.C.
1909.

MADE AND PRINTED IN ENGLAND

PREFACE.

THE writer of this little memorial was deeply attached, by the bonds of close friendship, to her of whom it speaks. Yet is she fully persuaded that the true object of a memoir, though of one so beloved, is not to pour forth the expression of an individual affection, in which the public is not interested; nor yet is it to raise a monumental panegyric of one whose name is assuredly written in heaven, and who desired no vain record upon earth. Such a memorial should simply consist of those passages which may prove useful to others. And, in that view, how would the treasury of the living temple, the Church, be enriched, were each one but with a willing heart to cast in his mite of spiritual

experience—his own individual mite of that coin of the sanctuary which bears the stamp and superscription of the great King.

That, then, which the writer considers as constituting the value of this little memorial is, emphatically, its *truth*.

Truth of *fact*, or a true relation of the providential dealings of God, both in its record of outward events, and in the inward teaching of His Spirit.

Truth in *principle*, inasmuch as it unfolds those gospel doctrines which that inward and outward training were the means of developing, and in which they both centred, as their genuine and ultimate result.

And, lastly, *truth* in *practice*, inasmuch as it is intended, in portraying her life, to set forth some of those fruits of righteousness which *must* germinate from those blessed gospel principles, when received and kept in the good ground of a heart prepared of God—even a heart looking unto Jesus, keeping the seed of His written and living Word, and which, con-

Preface.



tinually watered by the dews from above, cannot but produce a rich and abundant increase.

Allusion has been made to her attending the Presbyterian Kirk, but she never *formally* joined it, or any other body of Christians. After leaving the Church of Rome she was sadly grieved and puzzled by the distracted state of Protestantism. Her mind wavered for a long time between the Episcopalian and Presbyterian forms of church government, not knowing to which to give the preference. But when the writer knew her, she possessed a truly Catholic spirit, feeling herself a member of the *whole* Church of God; rejoicing to hold spiritual intercourse with any of God's children; losing sight of their minor differences of opinion in the one grand reality that they were all members of the body of Christ, and that, however they may be divided on earth, they will be one in heaven, and will all compose His bride.

M. M. C. M.

THE MORNING OF LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

BESSIE, the subject of this brief memoir, was born December 20th, 1815. She was the youngest but one of a large family. Her mother was of Irish descent, and a Roman Catholic; but her father was a native of Scotland, and a Protestant. As he died when she was only three years old, she was deprived of his instruction, and the whole charge of her education devolved entirely upon the surviving parent. Her only sister, named Sarah, was seven years older than herself, and was, as well as Bessie, brought up in the Roman Catholic religion; her brothers, by their father's dying request, were allowed to remain Protestants.

Mrs. A——, the mother of Bessie, was a woman of strong mind and superior intellect, well able to sustain the duties which now devolved on her alone. She had devoted Bessie from the cradle to be a nun, and, consequently, had adopted a peculiar mode of education to prepare her for a convent life. From infancy she was accustomed to observe the fasts of the Romish Church most scrupulously, and with the utmost rigour. On ordinary fast-days she partook of only one meal, which consisted of a few plain potatoes and salt. On particular occasions she was not even allowed that scanty meal until a late hour. Her hunger was once so pressing that she ate some raw potatoes, which she found in the garden.

Her whole education was one long novitiate for a conventual life; accordingly, she was led not to expect the same indulgences as the other children, as *they* were being educated for the world, but *she* for a “religious.” Her childish imagination was fired by glowing descriptions of heaven; and when she asked if she should ever reach that happy place, she was told she would without doubt, for she was to enter

upon "a religious life," and be a bride of Christ; and, of course, His bride would be with Him in heaven. Strengthened by this hope, she heroically bore the mortifications and self-denials imposed upon her, for the sake of the happiness for which they were preparing her; and she longed for the time when she should enter those walls which she looked upon as the portals of heaven.

With this object in view, her mother enforced strict obedience, and severely punished all departures from it. On one occasion Mrs. A—— went out walking, and told Bessie to stay at home quietly till her return. But as soon as her mother's back was turned, Bessie and her younger brother held a consultation as to the probable length of her absence, and came to the conclusion that she would not return for some time; they therefore went into the garden to play, and, in roaming about, they both climbed to the top of a hay-rick, from whence, to their consternation, they saw their mother returning home. They hastily jumped off, hoping to regain the house before her arrival; but poor Bessie twisted her ankle in her fall, and was unable to move. Her

cries brought Mrs. A—— to the spot. She bestowed no sympathy upon the little sufferer, but reproved her sternly for her disobedience; and, as a punishment, told her she should not set foot to the ground for a whole month, but lie on the sofa all day long. Though this measure was made a punishment, yet, no doubt, it was wisely intended to combine with it also an effectual cure; for when the month was expired, and Bessie was again allowed to stand on her feet, she did not feel the slightest inconvenience from her sprain, which had at first threatened to be serious.

When she was only about three years old she had a very narrow escape of losing her life. She was one day playing with several children, and fell into the river. The current turned her over and over, and carried her so far into the stream that none of her young friends could reach her. Whilst they were all screaming with terror, one of the bigger boys sprang across, catching hold with one hand of some boughs which stretched out over the river, whilst with the other hand he seized the drowning child, and held her, sustaining

himself in that position until proper assistance could be obtained. Did not this seem a foreshadowing of her future life? Tossed about by the waves, but rescued, and brought safely to shore.

She was yearly in the habit of accompanying her mother on a visit to her grandmamma, with whom they usually stayed some weeks. She looked forward with much pleasure to this visit, both from love to the kind old lady, and for the sake of the handsome presents she always received on such occasions. One year the preparations for the journey were being made as usual, and Bessie was wild with delight at the prospect before her. At length the hour arrived, and her mamma told her to go and be dressed. Bessie asked if she might wear her blue pelisse.

"No, my dear, you must wear the other."

"Oh! but, mamma, I don't like it, and I *will* wear the blue one."

"My dear child, you must not speak in that manner, but be good and obedient, and wear the one I told you."

"No, I won't. I will wear the blue pelisse, or not go at all."

After much arguing, the mamma obtained her way, and Bessie came down dressed as she had been ordered.

Her mamma then spoke to her seriously, and said, "I could not break my word, having said you should go to your grand-mamma's in this pelisse, and none other; and as I am jealous of *my* word, I wish you to be equally so of *yours*, and, therefore, as you said you would not go in the dress you have on, you must stay at home."

Bessie in vain retracted the foolish threat; her mamma was inexorable, saying, "No, my dear, if you were to go as you are, you would break *your* word, and if as you wished, I should break *mine*. You must take heed another time not to make a resolution without having fully considered whether you will adhere to it."

Such argument Bessie could not answer; and, as her conscience told her she had acted wrongly, she silently watched her mamma step into the carriage and drive off without her.

But this severity was exercised only to enforce moral principles. Mrs. A—— was generally cheerful with her family, and most

kind and affectionate, making herself quite a companion to her two daughters, and conversing freely with them; but Bessie being the younger, received most of her attention.

Mrs. A—— possessed all that glow of imagination so remarkably characteristic of the Irish; and Bessie, being of an ardent disposition, listened to her eagerly when she rapturously dwelt on the happy destiny which was before her. How peculiarly she would be favoured of heaven! In being shut out from the turmoil of the world, she would never feel the bitterness of disappointed hope, nor the uncertainty of the future; for, once within those hallowed walls, she would only leave them to enter a happier abode, and to receive the bridal crown reserved for the spouse of Christ. No cloud of sorrow would ever cross her path, but all would be quietness and peace.

In this anticipation of happiness, however, vital religion had no part; for Mrs. A—— had never known what it is to be brought out of darkness into God's marvellous light. 1 Peter ii. 9. She knew there was a heaven and a hell, but she knew not the

work of Christ; she trusted to the priests to secure her entrance into heaven, and believing herself to be a member of the "true Catholic Church," thought she was quite certain of eternal happiness; I do not say eternal *life*; for she knew nothing of the new birth, of that life from above which is alone eternal. She knew not that she was "dead in trespasses and sins," and, consequently, that she needed the blood of Christ to wash away her guilt, and the Holy Spirit to quicken her soul. She felt not her need of a Saviour, and the peace she enjoyed was a false one; she saw salvation only through the ordinances of the Romish Church, and infused into Bessie's mind the highest respect and admiration for every thing connected with it.

At the age of ten, Bessie was confirmed by Dr. Doyle, the celebrated Roman Catholic Bishop of Carlow, and admitted to frequent confession. She did not view it as a mere form, but most carefully examined herself, according to the directions laid down in the Missal. This examination convinced her of sin. She saw in how many things she continually offended the

justice of God, and it was in great sorrow of heart she approached the confessional, feeling deeply humbled at the recollection of her short-coming; and as she knelt, and laid her hand on her heart, and said she had sinned, "through my fault, my fault, my exceeding great fault," she felt overwhelmed, and uttered the words with the deepest feeling. After confession she felt as if a weight were removed, and that she had been fully forgiven. But this peace was of short duration, the week's preparation for the next confession soon came round, and her short-lived joy was gone. It seemed remarkable that, in one of such tender years, there should have been such deep conviction of sin; but her character in every point ripened early. A life of sorrow was hers—

"A stormy April day!
A little sun, a little rain,
And then night sweeps along the plain."

The gleams of sunshine between the storm were of short duration, but now she basks in eternal sunshine, without a cloud of sorrow on her brow.

“Blest is the tempest, kind the storm,
Whose billows drive us home.”

At the age of twelve she lost her only surviving parent. Her mother had long shown symptoms of consumption. At length they became more manifest, and no hope of recovery was held out to her.

When Mrs. A—— saw death approaching with rapid strides, the thought of eternity overwhelmed her. She sent for the priests, and told them what agony of mind she endured at the prospect of appearing before God. They appointed various services of the Church for her, directed her in her devotions, lent her books to read, and did every thing in their power to allay her mental sufferings. But it was all in vain, her misery increased; for it is only God who can give true peace of mind, and who can say to the stormy billows, “Peace, be still!” It is only acceptance through Christ that can satisfy a *truly* anxious soul. Other things in time of health may give false confidence, but in the dying hour nought but Christ can satisfy. It is only when He is with us that we can calmly enter the valley of the shadow of death, and fear no evil.

Priests and friends having failed in their utmost attempts to afford her any consolation, her daughter Sarah said to her, "I remember, mamma, when papa was dying he used to call me often to the side of his bed, and tell me to read the Bible to him, when he was so ill that he could not read it himself; and though I was too young to understand what I read, yet I well remember the pleasure it gave him, and the bright joy that lighted up his face. So that I used at last to offer of my own accord to read to him, that I might see the happiness he enjoyed. Perhaps if I were to read to you it might give you comfort."

Having obtained the permission of the priests, Sarah began reading the word of God to her mother, who found it to be "spirit and life." Light from above entered her heart, and all was peace and brightness, where before had been darkness and sorrow. Her joy was now as great as her grief had been previously. She no longer feared death; she only viewed it as the entrance to eternal life. Eagerly she devoured the sacred book, and gained increasing happiness from every line. How

different are God's words from those of men !

One evening, in the month of May, Mrs. A—— wished to be taken to the open window. An easy chair was placed for her, in which she sat gazing on the beautiful view before her. She knew her time would not be long on earth, and therefore she availed herself of that opportunity of speaking to her daughters, who were kneeling on each side of her, on many subjects of mutual interest, until, from exhaustion, she could speak no more ; but a placid smile played over her pale features, and the joy which filled her soul shone through the bright but sunken eyes.

She was looking at the prospect from the window, and Bessie mechanically did the same, and was struck by the contrast presented before her. All nature was bursting into life, and the bright sun was adding increased beauty to the scene. She turned from it, and looked at her mother, on whose face death was evidently marked ; but her clear blue eyes were brighter still, and seemed to express that which she had not strength to utter. At length she broke the

silence, saying, with great emphasis, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." The exertion was too great, she fell back in the chair, and they were the last words she spoke. She was carried back to her bed, and soon her spirit left its mortal clay to enter on the realization of those promises which had cheered her dying bed.

When Bessie saw that her mother was really dead, her grief knew no bounds. She threw herself on the lifeless corpse, clinging to it and embracing it, until her brothers were obliged to separate her by force, and drag her away.

Her sister, who had nursed her sick mother, and had been in constant attendance by her side, sank with fatigue when her attentions were no longer needed, retired to her room, and sickened of typhus fever, brought on by over-watching and anxiety.

Bessie was left all alone that evening; no one was near to whisper a word of comfort; and reflecting that her mother could never return to her, she left the house unobserved, and determined to spend the night at the end of the garden by the river without a bonnet or shawl, hoping that the

damp chills of the night air might give her such a violent cold that she should die, and thus quickly rejoin her mother. As the attention of every one in the house was bestowed on her sister, Bessie was not missed, and she spent the night undisturbed, walking up and down the garden by the river's side in the dark and the cold, giving full vent to her grief in bitter lamentations, calling in vain to her mother to return. No voice answered her, and no other sound disturbed the stillness of the night save the murmuring of the waters as they flowed past her. At length morning dawned, the sun rose, and the glad earth reflected his bright beams ; but no ray of comfort cheered this lonely child.

Whilst her sad heart was thus bursting with grief, the violence of which was varied only by deeper musings of anguish, as in mental vision she was still gazing on that loved face over which death had cast its stern and pallid shade, some notes of distant music fell upon her ear ; and as the sounds floated on the breeze, softened by the water over which they passed, they soothed her troubled spirit, and calmed her excited feelings. She

stened eagerly to catch every note, and when they had passed, and she heard them no more, she was so much quieted that she wandered back to the house. The music had proceeded from a pleasure party on the river. Perhaps young and thoughtless hearts were enjoying the gladsome beams of the rising sun and the freshness of the morning breeze, which, combined with the strains above alluded to, may have lulled into forgetfulness every anticipation of a cloud to obscure, or storm to disturb, the unruffled calm that reigned around.

What different scenes are often presented to us in the moving pictures of life ; each scene rendered more vivid by being contrasted with another. In that before us we have, on the one hand, the children of mirth, joyous as the morning beams that played around them ; and on the other, standing in mournful shade, a bereft orphan, fatherless and motherless in the wide world, now made to her a dreary waste and desolate void. If asked, “ With which of these will you take your place ? ” nature would reply, “ In that happy skiff, with sweet music and joyous spirits.” But pause—consider—that lone one

has an eye fixed on her, an invisible hand that is leading her through those avenues of gloom and darkness into the pastures of His grace. "Blessed are ye that weep now; for ye shall laugh. . . Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep."

The following lines, written by her some years afterwards, allude, in the third verse, to this occasion :

CONFLICTING FEELINGS.

- "Lo! the pearly gates unfolding—
All within exempt from pain;
Rise, as promis'd joy beholding,
Oh, my soul! nor now complain,
Soon triumphant,
Thou shalt join Messiah's train.
- "Wherefore sigh o'er vanished pleasure?
Weep not, though the weary eye
Meet no sweet oasis. Treasure,
Pilgrim, hast thou not on high?
There await thee
Joys that bloom eternally.
- "Rise and sing, oh, heir of heaven!
Bound is thy harp in memory's chain?
Break, oh, break the spell! 'Tis riven:
Sweep the trembling chords again.
E'en the desert's
Saddest places send the strain.

“Yet afflicted nature often,
Ere her journey’s o’er, will weep ;
But Thine own heart, Lord, was broken,
And Thou dost remembrance keep
Of its anguish,
Lest Thy sympathy should sleep.

“Having been ‘a Man of sorrows,’
Thou canst feel for others’ woe ;
Then behold these barbèd arrows,
Lord, and let Thy pity flow ;
In this bosom
See them fixed, and grace bestow.

“Grace to endure the Father’s chast’ning,
As believing ‘God is love ;’
Onward, ever onward hast’ning,
Till I’ve reached the goal above,
In the circle
Of thy crownèd saints to move.”

As might have been expected, she was laid up with a severe cold, and confined to her bed for some time. Then it was she felt the full extent of her loss, as she tossed about upon her bed, hour after hour passing heavily away, without either father, mother, or sister to break their silence ; she had only the recollection of happy days, now gone for ever ! And when night drew its dark curtain around her, sleep brought no

relief, for in her dreams were mingled scenes of past joyous times ; and she would awake with anguish, as she realized her lonely situation.

“Night is the time to weep :
To wet with unseen tears
Those graves of memory, where sleep
The joys of other years.
Hopes that were angels in their birth,
But perished young, like things of earth.”

MONTGOMERY.

CHAPTER II.

WHEN Sarah A—— was sufficiently recovered to mingle again in the family, she undertook the whole control and education of her younger sister. Dr. Doyle, who was their guardian, acted like a father to them, and viewed Bessie as his particular charge, expecting she would soon become the inmate of a convent under his direction. Her earthly friends had fixed that she should enter it at the age of fourteen, but God, in His wisdom, ordered it otherwise.

Sarah began to doubt whether the Church of Rome were right in its high pretensions, and whether it were, after all, that “holy Catholic Church” which she had hitherto imagined. She reflected on her mother’s agony of mind during her last illness; how utterly unable the priests had been to give her any comfort; how strictly she had observed the ordinances of the Church,

which yet brought her no consolation ; how every thing that man could devise had been tried in vain ; how the priests had owned that neither they, nor their Church, could do any more for her ; and how, even then, as soon as she read the Bible, she received peace and joy. “Why,” she thought, “do they not recommend her to read it? God commends the searching of the Scriptures. Acts xvii. 11. ‘The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.’ Also, in 2 Tim. iii. 15–17, it is written that the Holy Scriptures ‘are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,’ &c.; and there are many other passages in which God commands the reading of His word. Why, then, do they not enjoin that precept upon us? Do they think that Word condemns them?”

A circumstance occurred shortly after her mother’s death which helped to confirm the doubts which had now taken possession of her mind. We will quote her own words,

from a letter which she wrote to a Roman Catholic friend a few years afterwards :

“A friend with whose family I was staying for awhile in Dublin, was suddenly attacked with illness. I hardly ever left him for nine days and nights, and on the tenth he died. For the first few days after the commencement of his illness there were hopes of his recovery, and he often spoke with pleasure of the future, for all was bright before him. But oh, the struggle, the agony of soul he felt when hope could flatter him no longer ! I only, of all those concerned, knew the terrors that assailed him ; and it was well that I alone should know, for his physicians had commanded perfect quiet, and he himself desired that a priest should not be sent for. During health, moral excellence in his professional character, and amiability in his private life inspired him with confidence towards God ; but when driven to contemplate aright being summoned into His immediate presence, his heart condemned him, and he cast off every hope. His works had never been the works of faith ; he was a stranger to the ‘ Spirit of adoption.’ Rom. viii.

“My opportunities of speaking to him were not many; but while he owned himself unfit for heaven, and groaned with anguish, from ‘a certain fearful looking for of judgment,’ I prayed that true repentance might be given him, and faith so that he should find himself at peace with God, ‘being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.’ Rom. iii. 24, 25. Yes, hour after hour I prayed, leaning on the promises of Christ. I poured out my heart before God; and, blessed be His name, He delivered me from all my fears. He saved the object of my care. Within the last few days of his short illness his feelings underwent a change, and he professed to those about him not only resignation to the will of God, but happiness at the thought of being removed from all most dear to him on earth; and in this frame of mind, relying wholly on the merits of his Saviour’s blood and all-sufficient grace, resigned his spirit.

“A little while before, not more than half-an-hour, he said to me, ‘Now you will give me up; I am going to my God. Oh, may He bless you greatly!’

“ ‘ Will you go,’ I asked, ‘ with confidence in Jesus as *your* Saviour ? ’ ”

“ ‘ Yes,’ he replied, ‘ with perfect confidence in Him as my Saviour, for I believe He suffered all that was needful for my sins.’ ”

“ I watched him to the last, and witnessed perfect confidence. Glorious thought ! He owned himself a hell-deserving sinner, but, enlightened by the Holy Ghost, he saw the fulfilment in Christ of that prophecy, ‘ He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities ; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him ; and with His stripes we are healed.’ Isa. liii. 5. And seeing, he believed, as the apostle did, who said, ‘ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.’ 1 John i. 9. And thus believing, he experienced peace and joy, such as the Romans were instructed in of old. Rom. v.”

These two death-bed scenes, witnessed within so short a time of each other, completely unsettled her opinions, and shook her confidence in the Church of Rome. These thoughts she expressed to Bessie, who had also been struck with its

powerlessness to give consolation and confidence to a dying person who became then, for the first time, awakened to the reality of man's lost condition by nature.

The two sisters communicated these doubts to Dr. Doyle, who warned them against indulging such thoughts, and lent them books which he considered would set their minds at rest. He allowed them to read the Bible, but obliged them to promise that they would not look into any Protestant books on religion, or speak on the subject to any but Roman Catholics. He wished them to read his books diligently, and report to him what they thought of them.

It seems an unequal combat between two young girls not versed in theology, and a man so famed in controversy, who had proved a bold and unwearied champion of the Romish Church, and with whose power of mind few could cope. But human intellect cannot stand in opposition to the truth of God. His Spirit can give strength to the weak, and these two young girls felt their weakness, as they stood alone, without help from man.

This sense of their incapability *naturally*

to withstand Dr. Doyle's power of argument, drove them to seek light and strength from above, and to be frequently in prayer that they might be guided aright. They strictly adhered to their promise of not seeking aid from Protestants or their writings, convinced that God's Spirit could lead them into truth without human help, and show them, from His holy Word, wherein the Church of Rome differed from it, or whether its tenets were in accordance with the Scriptures. Thus they entered on this field of controversy with unbiassed minds; for they were intimate with no Protestant, and, had they followed their affections only, they would have clung to the Church of Rome. They had a sincere respect and love for their guardian; nor would it have been easy to find a dignitary of the Roman Catholic Church more truly worthy of respect. They were firmly convinced that he believed what he was arguing for was truth. When he spoke, enthusiasm fired his eye; his words became eloquent; and in his fine open brow there was no deception.

For two years this controversy continued. Bessie read attentively with her sister the

books lent by the bishop ; and, although so young, entered fully into the subject, and weighed the arguments on each side. When they had finished one book, they took it back to Dr. Doyle, pointed out to him what they thought wrong, and gave Scripture proofs. Then followed a long argument, which ended in his lending them other books. But the more they read, the more they were convinced of the unscripturalness of the assumptions of the Church of Rome.

At length Dr. Doyle said he would lend them only one more book, a great quarto volume, of which the only other copy in existence was in the Vatican Library. If that did not shake their opinions he should give up the contest, and argue no more with them, but consider them quite irreclaimable.

This book consisted principally of accounts of the private life of Luther, and others amongst the Reformers, which were clothed in the blackest colours ; grievous crimes were laid to their charge, and all their imperfections magnified.

But Sarah thought that principles were to be judged of abstractedly, and not according to the merits or demerits of their

supporters. That, supposing the lives of the Reformers were such as this book declared them to be, still it would only prove that they were frail human beings; and though such conduct would dishonour whatever principles they advocated, yet the principles themselves would continue unchanged.

After they had waded through this great book, a day and hour were appointed when they were to give their final and decisive answer. They went to the house of Dr. Doyle, who soon made his appearance, and, sitting down between the sisters, first turned to the elder one, and asked her if she still maintained the same opinion.

She answered firmly, but respectfully, "I will not weary you with a repetition of the opinions I have expressed; but they have not changed."

He then asked Bessie if she agreed with her sister. She said, "Fully and entirely; our judgments on this matter are quite agreed."

He then rose and stood before them, and, for not less than two hours, gave a most impassioned address, in which, with all the powers of eloquence with which a deep interest in their welfare inspired him, he

appealed, first, to their reason, and then to their affections and feelings, and ended by saying to Sarah, "And not content with throwing yourself into the dark abyss of error and perdition which yawns at your feet, you drag your young sister with you, and will have to account before the judgment-seat of God for the ruin of her soul, as well as for that of your own."

He ended, and fell back in a chair, overwhelmed with fatigue and emotion.

During all the time he spoke Sarah had not moved a muscle, or raised her eyes from the ground; and when he had ceased, a sharp conflict was taking place within her between natural affection and conscience. She saw, by Dr. Doyle's agonized countenance, the deep grief he endured on their account, and she could not bear the thought of giving him pain; yet what could she do? She must obey God rather than men. "He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me." Matt. x. 37. And before her stood one who was to her as a father; but she must rather forsake him than God. Still, nature will feel the severing of earthly ties; and God's grace

alone can enable any to make the sacrifice. She therefore lifted her heart in prayer to God for help in this trying moment; and she received help; conscience prevailed; the struggle was over, and she turned to Bessie, and said, "We had better return now." She made an attempt to rise, but fell back, having lost the use of her limbs from a stroke of paralysis, brought on, it was supposed, by suppressing her emotion during that long, heart-rending speech, in which her feelings had been wrought to the highest pitch, and had either been too deep for manifestation, or she had exerted such a strong effort to suppress them, that it was too much for her strength.

Dr. Doyle was by her side in an instant, deeply grieved at the result of the interview. He raised her, and urged her to make an effort to walk, but it was useless.

He was most kind and affectionate; and, foreseeing that the report of this remarkable occurrence would be widely circulated, and would generally be considered a judgment from heaven for leaving "the true Church," he told them he should use all his influence to prevent such a statement being made,

and would explain, to every one who should speak to him on the subject, that it arose purely from natural causes, and that if she had given full vent to her feelings, instead of restraining them as she did, it would never have occurred.

One cannot but admire his true generosity of mind, not to have taken advantage of so singular a circumstance, nor to have urged it as a proof of the truth of *his* arguments, and of *her* error.

Sarah was carried home, and confined to a sick-room for some months; and during the whole remainder of her life, which was prolonged some years, she could seldom walk without help, and then only for a short distance.

Thus were Bessie's prospects completely changed. It cost her a severe sacrifice to renounce all idea of becoming a nun, having always viewed the convent as a calm haven, wherein she would be sheltered from all storms and tempests, and with which every dream of future happiness had been connected. But now she must struggle on in the ocean of life against wind and tide, and breast many a wave of sorrow,

without finding a resting-place, until she reached the heavenly shore.

Her becoming a Protestant did not cause any coldness in her intercourse with Dr. Doyle; on the contrary, the unhappy termination of the last interview he had with Sarah seemed to call forth all the kindly feelings of his nature. He still retained his guardianship over the two orphans. He felt that Bessie was now more than ever thrown upon his care, being deprived of the constant companionship of her sister, from whom she had hardly ever been separated during the last two years, but who was now confined to her bed.

He therefore gave Bessie full liberty to resort to his house, and enter his study whenever she chose; and she gladly availed herself of this permission.

Sometimes when she entered he was busy writing, and would raise his finger to prevent her speaking. She would, therefore, take a book, and sit down quietly and read, waiting till he was disengaged; or she would watch his varying countenance as he wrote those stirring papers on political subjects, which were published in the

journals of the day, under a name not his own. When he had finished, he sometimes read to her what he had written, or a part of it; at other times he turned to her in a playful manner, and said, "Well, my pet, what have you come to tell me?" and then would listen, with the greatest interest, to whatever she had to communicate; or, if required, he would give his advice on any subject that perplexed her.

Frequently he would enter into a long dissertation on philosophy or science; or else discuss some metaphysical subtlety, till he quite bewildered Bessie, and perhaps himself also. By intercourse with a man of such universal information and deep thought, her intellectual faculties were early and fully developed. He spoke freely to her on many subjects, and found that, though she had not numbered many years, she had powers of mind quite capable of following him.

After Mrs. A——'s death Sarah and Bessie took up their abode with their eldest brother and his wife, at a pretty retired residence a little way out of the town of Carlow. There they dwelt for two years; and Bessie often alluded to these days as

among the happiest of her life ; but that happiness was of short duration.

A virulent typhus fever raged in the town and country, and carried off a great number of the lower orders. In consequence of the mortality it produced, many forsook their relatives and friends as soon as they became ill, and it was with great difficulty the parish officers could induce even hired nurses to remain with the sick.

During the height of the epidemic Bessie's eldest brother entered a cottage, and found a poor woman lying on some straw on the ground. She had seen her friends one by one leave her ; no kind voice spoke comfort, no tender hand smoothed her pillow ; but when she thought herself forsaken by all around, and that she should breathe her last neglected and alone, she saw this good Samaritan enter. For, though no human eye of affection rested upon hers, to catch from its expression what she desired to relieve her sufferings yet there was One above who saw and watched over her, and sent a Christian friend to her help. He shook up the straw on which she lay—it was her only bed ;

he lighted the fire, and made her some gruel to moisten her parched lips ; and, having soothed and cheered her desolate condition, he left her to procure a nurse who should remain with her till she had closed her eyes in death.

On his return home he mentioned the circumstance ; adding, "I know I shall have the fever—I felt that I had caught the infection whilst shaking up the straw for that poor woman ; but I could not do otherwise ; I could not see a fellow-creature in that condition, and not help her." His foreboding came to pass ; that day fortnight he was no longer numbered among the living.

The two sisters being again left homeless, their eldest surviving brother came forward as their protector, and they took up their abode with him.

"The Christian would not have his lot
Be other than it is,
For while his Father rules the world
He knows that world is his.
When clouds of sorrow gather round,
His bosom owns no fear :
He knows, whate'er his portion be,
His God will still be there."

CAROLINE FRY.

CHAPTER III.

No circumstance of particular interest took place from the time last alluded to until Bessie was seventeen, when a new era commenced in her spiritual experience.* From the time she left the Roman Catholics she had attended the Presbyterian Kirk, had taught in the Sunday-school, visited the sick and poor, and was always engaged in works of charity and usefulness. The minister found in her a constant, ready help in any labour of love he might require, whether to comfort the afflicted, or instruct the ignorant. Her zeal had not cooled in these outward services, but she felt that her *heart* had gradually grown cold, and estranged from God. She had neglected

* I am not acquainted with the particulars of her early conversion to God. I believe the light shone into her soul while examining the question relative to the doctrines of the Romish Church, a matter already referred to.

private prayer and meditation, and "God had not been in all her thoughts."

When she was roused from this spiritual lethargy anguish and despair laid hold on her. She reflected whence she had fallen; what peace she had once enjoyed; what communion with God, as she read His holy Word. And now that Book gave her no comfort; every word spoke condemnation; she thought God's frown rested upon her, that she had grieved His Holy Spirit, and that He had departed from her; that she had sinned against light and knowledge, and that there could be no forgiveness for her—nothing but banishment from the presence of that God whom she had neglected. The blackest despair reigned within her, and this unhappy state of mind lasted three months.

At first she tried to conceal her misery from those around her. Frequently she would leave the house, and choose a sequestered spot, where she might, undisturbed, give freedom to the bitter thoughts that occupied her mind; she would pace up and down in mental agony, and return to the house still a mourner. Sometimes, when she retired to her room

at night, she would throw herself into a chair, and sit for hours meditating on her lost condition, as she thought—on the awful futurity, and the destruction which awaited her; whilst the recollection of the peace and joy she once experienced made the present more melancholy, and the future more dark.

On one occasion she remained in the sitting-room after the other members of the family had retired to rest. Drawing her chair to the table, she buried her face in her hands, and was soon absorbed in sad reflections, whilst hour after hour passed away without her heeding them. The morning at last dawned, and found her in the same position, until she was roused by hearing one of her brothers coming down stairs; when, raising her head, she started to see that it was daylight.

It was not, however, to be expected that her relations and friends would not observe that some hidden grief weighed down her spirit. Her sister soon discovered the cause of this sorrow, and tried to apply a healing balm. Finding her efforts useless, she induced all her Christian friends in

succession to visit her ; but, though they reasoned and prayed with her, they afforded her no comfort.

One day a Presbyterian minister conversed with her a long time, and then prayed, but when he left the house she was as wretched as before. After he was gone her sister and herself sat in silence for some time, till Sarah broke it by saying, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from *all* sin." She added no more, but laid stress on the words "*all* sin." A gleam of light entered Bessie's soul as these words were uttered, and the Spirit of God brought them home with power. She had often read them, but they never struck her as they did then, and she exclaimed, "If it be written, 'the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from *all* sin,' mine can be included, and He can cleanse me even from *my* sins." She fell on her knees, and thanked God for the promise of forgiveness even to such a backslider as she had been. Her sister did the same, and they mingled their thanksgivings and tears of joy together at the throne of grace.

From that time Bessie never lost her

peace and joy in believing, but went on steadily increasing in the knowledge of heavenly things, till her short life ended, and her joy became full by seeing, face to face, Him whom her soul loved.

She now undertook with fresh zeal those labours in which she had been previously engaged, and was indefatigable in her exertions. One day she heard that a poor woman was dying in a miserable hovel at a little distance, without any one near to point her to Christ, or to tell her of the realities of the world to come. Bessie started off to see her; but in making her way across the country, she found a wall had been recently built, which seemed to forbid her progress. If she turned back, she feared the other way would be too long for her to walk, yet she did not like to abandon her undertaking. She therefore climbed to the top, but, to her dismay, saw it was deeper on the other side. Nothing daunted, however, she sprang off; but, from her dress catching in a stone at the top, she was checked in her leap. She fell on her head, and her forehead was cut by a stone which lay on the ground.

Stunned and bewildered, it was some minutes before she was sufficiently recovered to think what she should do. She then recollected that there was an aged Christian who lived near. She went to her cottage, and received from her much care and attention. When Bessie was thoroughly revived, the poor woman inquired the cause of her getting into such trouble, and when she heard the object she had in view, she said, "Now, miss, just listen to the advice of an old Christian. This poor woman is dying without the least knowledge of the gospel, and you were going to set it before her. Satan, thinking he was going to lose a victim, threw you off the wall; depend upon it, it was Satan threw you off, in the hope of preventing your going there; but God would not allow you to be hurt as much as he wished, but only just enough to try your love for poor sinners. Therefore, now, don't let the devil gain the victory, but make an effort again, being sure that God has purposes of mercy for that poor soul."

Bessie followed this advice, thinking it might have been a message from God to

her, which she should not despise. She found the poor woman in great poverty, weak in body, and dark and benighted as to spiritual things. She sat long with her, and laid the gospel plainly before her. She received it, and died a few days afterwards in a most happy frame of mind, rejoicing in a Saviour's love.

Though Bessie had thus won a jewel for her "crown of rejoicing," it was not without suffering. The effort she had made was too great; she walked home with difficulty, and was seriously ill for several days afterwards. But she did not mind a little personal suffering to herself, when she considered that she had been the means, under God's blessing, of saving an immortal soul from eternal perdition.

A little while afterwards she nearly involved herself in trouble of another kind.

A poor woman, who lived at a retired village in a distant part of the county of Carlow, had left the Roman Catholics, and become a Protestant. The priest had stirred up the husband against his wife, and persuaded him not to live with "a heretic," but to separate from her, and go to another

part of the country, which he did, leaving his wife and children ignorant of what had become of him. The neighbours, intimidated by the priest, were afraid to give her any help, and the whole family were threatened with starvation, when some kind Protestants relieved their distress, and tried to raise a subscription for them.

The Presbyterian minister of the church Bessie was in the habit of attending called on her, and interested her so much in the case, that she volunteered to become a collector for this destitute family.

One of the ladies at whose house she had called in the course of the day, was in the evening dining with some friends, and recounted the pitiable story she had heard in the morning. A young barrister was present who was a most determined character, and possessed much influence from being related by marriage to Mr. Daniel O'Connell. He fired up at the story, and declared he would bring an action for defamation of character against Miss A—— and Mr. J. N——, the minister. The lady tried to excuse Bessie, telling him that she had only repeated what she had heard.

But it was useless ; nothing would pacify him, and he left the house, saying he should write that very night to his lawyer to begin proceedings at once against the two offenders.

The lady was much grieved to think into what trouble she had thoughtlessly brought her young friend, and early the next morning she went to inform her of what had passed. After a little consultation with her sister, Bessie resolved to lay the whole matter before their kind guardian. It seemed a bold step to take, but it showed the entire confidence they had in his impartial judgment.

He was very much amused at her fright, and would not set her mind at rest immediately, but said, laughingly, "What are you doing now? Bringing heavy charges against a priest to his diocesan. What is this but defamation of character?"

"But, Dr. Doyle, it is quite true, indeed it is; the circumstances are well known in that neighbourhood. It has been attested by so many witnesses that there cannot be a doubt of its truth."

"But, my dear child, the more you say it

is all true, the more you defame the priest's character. You do not know what trouble you may be getting him into by telling me all this."

"I don't care what trouble he gets into; he richly deserves it, for bringing starvation on a worthy woman and her children."

After a few more playful sallies, Dr. Doyle took up his pen and wrote to Mr. —, the barrister, to this effect: "That having heard he intended to bring an action for defamation of character against Miss Bessie A——, and Mr. J. N——, he begged to inform him that the young lady was his ward, and therefore he desired that no proceedings might be entered into against her, and that if they had commenced, they might be immediately discontinued."

She was astonished at the peremptory style of the letter; but Roman Catholic bishops in Ireland exercise almost absolute sway over those of their own persuasion.

CHAPTER IV.

CIRCUMSTANCES arose which obliged the two sisters to leave the neighbourhood ; but, before alluding to them, we must take a retrospective glance.

As it had been fully determined that Bessie should embrace a conventual life, she had free access to the convent, as all viewed in her a future sister. She was allowed to walk in the garden with the nuns, and was much attached to several of them. There was one young nun near her age, of whom she was very fond ; a mutual friendship sprang up between them ; and they longed for the time when, from being under the same roof, they should be thrown more together. Their characters being quite different, made them the more dependent upon each other. Bessie's warm and ardent temperament would be softened by the quiet gentleness of her fair young

friend, who in return would receive encouragement and support from Bessie's bold and fearless disposition.

When the confidence of the latter in the Church of Rome began to be shaken, she used to draw the nun to a retired part of the garden, and confide to her all her doubts. But as she increased in spiritual knowledge, and deepened in Christian experience, she took more interest in the young nun ; and, considering that her fate was sealed for life, she forbore making any allusion to controversial subjects. She spoke to her only of heavenly things ; and holding sweet communion together, they conversed of Christ whom their souls loved.

But when it became known that Bessie was "infected with heresy," they were watched ; and as soon as they entered into conversation some of the older nuns put an end to it by joining them. After she had formally quitted the Romish Communion and become a Protestant, she still continued her visits to the convent, and often met priests, who disputed with her on the step she had taken, or tried to shake her confidence with awful warnings of the danger

she was incurring. Sometimes the older nuns, or even the Lady Abbess, would try to persuade her of the error of her way, and of the holiness of a "religious life," supposing, from her youth, that she would be easily overpowered by their arguments. But her judgment was more matured than that of most young people of the same age, and she stood her ground firmly, though often detained for several hours by these discussions.

Dr. Doyle frequently made allusion to her visiting the convent, but she never would take his hints to discontinue going there, as she was fond of the nuns, and particularly of that young one with the clear blue eyes, open countenance, and confiding disposition, who leaned much on her judgment in spiritual things, and seemed to need the help of a friend with a strong mind and clear intellect, to lead her in right paths, and uphold her courage when it failed. But one day the bishop said plainly to her, "I have often given you *hints* not to go to the convent; now I *advise* you plainly not to go there any more *alone*, as you have done."

"But, Dr. Doyle, what harm can arise? They cannot detain me, as I have made up my mind not to enter it; and even if they did, *you* could extricate me."

"My dear child," he said, with great emphasis, "*there are those* over whom I have *no* control. Do not ask me any questions; but do not despise my counsel, which is, not to go near the convent alone."

When Bessie repeated this conversation to her sister, she urged her to follow the advice given her, feeling sure that their kind guardian would never have enforced it if he had not had strong reasons. What these reasons were never came to light; but she discontinued her visits, lost sight of her young friend, and never heard any thing more of her.

As Bessie grew older she became indefatigable in visiting the poor, giving up all her spare time to them. As she visited and comforted all who were in distress, whether Catholics or Protestants, she often came into collision with the priests, who were vexed to find her so active in disseminating what they thought was "heresy," and regretted having lost such a champion.

That part of Ireland was much disturbed at different times by Rockites, and many families kept one in the capacity of a servant, as a pledge of safety. Her brother kept a gardener who was a Rockite, who often accompanied the members of the family when they walked out; the country being so disturbed, it would not have been safe to have gone without him, but when he was with them they were secure anywhere.* Bessie often tried to draw him into conversation, hoping she might find out their peculiarities, but she was unsuccessful, as he was particularly silent, and would not speak unless absolutely obliged.

Twice their house was attacked at night, when the brothers defended it valiantly, opening a battery upon the intruders from the windows. Bessie, on these occasions, manifested the most entire absence of fear, proving how courage and self-possession are compatible with the most perfect feminine gentleness.

One Sunday, their cook, who was a Roman Catholic, returned earlier than

* For interesting particulars of the Rockites see Charlotte Elizabeth's book on the subject.

usual from mass, in great terror and dismay. She said that when she came to the church, she found a crowd collected outside, who were very noisy ; and she had some trouble in making her way through them, but she did at last succeed in gaining the church. The mob continued increasing and becoming more tumultuous, standing on the steps of the church, and preventing either entrance to it, or departure from it. She had great difficulty in finding out the cause of this uproar ; but at last she was told “ that a report had spread that the two Miss A——s, who had left the Church, were coming in a carriage, and the people were determined that heretics should not pollute that holy place.” Soon a close carriage made its appearance, and the mob rushed towards it, shouting, “ Death to the heretics ! Death to the heretics ! ” and tried to overturn it. Those inside looked out of the windows frightened and astonished ; and it was with much difficulty the priests prevented mischief following, by assuring the people “ these were good Christians, and not the heretics they sought for.” Though the mob allowed these persons to

enter the church in safety, they were not pacified, but continued very noisy and tumultuous. The poor cook trembled all over, fearing lest she should be recognized as their servant, and took the first opportunity of slipping through the crowd, and, hastening home, assured the Miss A——s that if they had been there, they would certainly have been killed.

As under former difficulties, so now, the two sisters determined to apply to their friend and protector. Bessie, therefore, went to Dr. Doyle, and repeated the whole occurrence, and asked him if he could explain it. He merely answered, "I have several times expressed an opinion that it would be better for you and your sister to live in some large city, where you would not be so well known; and now that this circumstance has occurred, I think it would be decidedly better for you to leave this neighbourhood without delay," repeating emphatically the remark, which he had often made to her in confidence, that "there were *some* in his diocese who were not under his jurisdiction;" alluding, as she understood him, to certain members of the

“Order of Jesus,” who are subject to no authority but that which is derived from the “General” of their own order at Rome, to whom they are bound by the most solemn vows to yield implicit and unhesitating obedience. Whether Dr. Doyle did in truth intend an allusion to them, or to the violence of the Rockites, cannot now be certainly known, since he did not farther explain himself.

For some time past Bessie had observed a decided change in his manner on religious subjects. He no longer argued in favour of Romanism, and even listened silently and attentively to whatever she said against it; and he often seemed lost in deep and anxious thought. She gave him a little book containing a text for every day in the year. He valued it very much, and always carried it in his waistcoat pocket, from which he often took it, read the text for the day, made remarks, and conversed with her upon it, taking more interest now in spiritual conversation than he had formerly taken in political strife.

For nearly a year before she left Carlow she had noticed a great difference in his

general health. He frequently complained of not feeling well, of great lassitude, and yet he did not suffer pain, and had no symptom of any disease; but he became thin and languid, without being able in any way to account for it. The fire of his eye was dimmed, and the power of his mind weakened. The two sisters were deeply grieved to leave him in that state, but they did not like to disregard the advice he had given; they therefore left Carlow, and went to live near some friends in Dublin.

They had not been there long before they heard that their revered guardian was dangerously ill. They immediately started off to Carlow, but were not allowed to see him. They wrote frequently to ask for a time to be appointed when they might have an interview with him. A day was often fixed, but each time they were doomed to be disappointed. The priests who lived in his house made various excuses; and, in spite of their persevering efforts, he died without their having seen him.

When informed of his death, they were told, at the same time, "that he had requested the Holy Communion to be ad-

ministered to him, and had died whilst in the act of partaking of it." The sisters sent for the nurse who had attended him in his illness, and who had returned to her house as soon as he breathed his last, desiring her to come to them without delay. They asked her many particulars respecting him, and whether he had died taking the "Communion." She said, "No; he had not taken it during his whole illness." The woman was a Roman Catholic, and appeared dreadfully shocked to think that her Bishop had died without either the Eucharist or Extreme Unction. She seemed possessed of a very dull intellect; and either could not, or would not, repeat any thing he said. She represented that he hardly ever spoke, and suffered only from debility.

During the last three months of his mortal career he was closely guarded by the two priests who were with him, and they allowed no one to approach him but themselves and the nurse; thus no one saw him who could give any account of his state of mind. There must have been some special reason for keeping him a prisoner in his own house, with two priests

for his gaolers ; and the general impression is that he died a Protestant.* Charlotte Elizabeth, in her *Personal Recollections*, alluding to this, expresses a similar opinion ; and an Irish lady, in speaking of him to the writer, said she had heard a report that he had been converted by the instrumentality of two young nieces. No doubt the Miss A——s were intended, and, being wards, were mistaken for nieces. At all events, there seems little doubt that he died trusting in Jesus, for in the little text-book which Bessie obtained after his death, there were several passages marked in pencil, especially those which alluded to the finished work of Christ for the salvation of sinners.

After his death the body was laid out

* A few years afterwards Bessie was going over Prior Park Mansion, near Bath, and saw a room where there were marble busts of all the Roman Catholic Bishops of recent times, who had distinguished themselves in Great Britain or Ireland. She looked round anxiously for that of her own loved guardian ; and, not perceiving it, she asked the person who accompanied them why he was omitted. He replied that he believed the bust was in the lumber-room. She thought that was indirectly conclusive to the truth of his having renounced Romanism ; and that, as the authorities of the Roman Catholic Church considered him a heretic, they would not allow his bust to stand amongst the others.

in state, and the public were admitted to see him. The two sisters availed themselves of this opportunity of beholding, for the last time, those features so dear to them both. When they entered the room there were no other strangers present. He was dressed in full canonicals, a number of large wax tapers were burning around him, and several priests stood on each side chanting masses.

As Sarah A—— stood at his feet, and gazed on that lifeless form, and thought how much more he could reveal, were he now living, of all that had passed in his mind, and all that had happened during the last three months, her indignation arose within her, and she looked sternly at the priests, and said, “*Now* that those lips are sealed in death, and can disclose nothing, we are permitted to see him; though, when he was alive, you kept him a close prisoner, and allowed no one to approach him. *Now*, in solemn mockery you dress him up in these gorgeous robes, when his soul is much more glorious in heaven, and you sing masses for him as if he were in that purgatory which has no existence but in the vain imaginations of men.”

The priests seemed electrified ; they all ceased at the same instant, and fixed their eyes on the speaker. She met theirs calmly, but firmly, and said no more ; and they, when they had recovered from their astonishment, continued their chanting.

It was a painful and melancholy scene. The two sisters returned to Dublin, feeling that their strongest tie to that neighbourhood was broken. A few months before, they had left Carlow very reluctantly, but now it brought so many sad recollections to their minds that they hastened from it without regret.

Bessie being still young, her sister wished her to avail herself of the advantages offered in a large city to finish her education ; and as she herself desired it, she went to a boarding-school for a year.

But amid the busy hum of a school-room, she missed the quiet time for reflection to which she had been accustomed. She sighed for communion with God, feeling it was impossible to maintain it whilst she was always in the company of young and thoughtless companions. She knew, by bitter experience, that her soul would not

prosper, that she should never be happy, but by cleaving closely to the Lord ; and she thought that if she could reserve an hour for converse with Him, she might derive strength from above not to be led away by the worldliness of those around her. She therefore watched the arrangements of the establishment, to discover when it would be most convenient for her to choose her season for retirement. All the young people were allowed an hour at the close of the day, when it was growing dark, during which they might occupy themselves as they pleased. "Now," thought Bessie, "if I can but find out some quiet corner of the house, where to hide myself, I can have this period all to myself, instead of joining the girls in their games and amusements."

So she sought for a hiding-place, and found a ladder leading out upon the leads on the top of the house ; she ascended it, and resolved to spend there her leisure time daily. She was quickly missed by her young friends, for she had already become a great favourite with them : her lively spirits had made her take the lead in the sports with which they occupied their time

for relaxation ; and when they found she did not join them, they started on a regular search for her. She heard their voices at the bottom of the ladder, and made her appearance at the top. As soon as they saw her, several voices cried out at once, "What are you doing up there? Come down ; we have been looking for you everywhere." But she firmly resisted all their entreaties, and would not allow one of them to ascend ; saying she was determined to be alone during that hour. For many days they tried to induce her to alter her resolution, but finding their efforts useless, they desisted, and she was left undisturbed.

Daily did she walk up and down those leads alone, in prayer and meditation, with no human eye resting upon her. She would look forward throughout the day to the time when she should retire and commune with her own heart, and be still (Ps. iv. 4), seeking from God grace to be preserved amidst temptation ; and wisdom, that she might testify for Him by her consistent walk and conversation. Or her thoughts would wander back over by-gone days, and dwell on the many sad scenes she had already

witnessed, the many deep trials she had passed through. At other times she would look over the parapet, remarking the busy life of the city below, and moralize on their different ways; then, turning from that restless tide of human beings hurrying to and fro, would gaze at the calm sky above her, to watch

“The lingering light in the crimson West,
When the sunbeams had died away;”

and the stars, shining more brightly as the shades of evening closed in.

Thus passed her lonely hour. She felt it very profitable to retire for a little while from the mirth of those around, and give herself up to sober reflection, self-examination, and prayer.

After she left the school, the two sisters soon found themselves in a pleasant circle of friends. They were well acquainted with Mr. —, a member of the Scientific Institution, and his wife, who was very kind to Bessie, and at whose house she often stayed, and obtained through Mr. — admission to the library and museum of the Institution, where she acquired much

information, and became acquainted with several scientific men.

She also derived much profit and comfort from the society of Lady Powerscourt, whose sympathy she found very precious in a season of bitter trial that she was soon called to pass through, in the bereavement of a very dear friend, to whom she was shortly to be allied by the most tender ties. He was a faithful servant of God, and they both hoped to devote themselves to missionary work in foreign countries. But this child of sorrow had to mourn his sudden dissolution. One morning she was told he was taken suddenly and dangerously ill, and that, if she wished to see him alive, she must immediately hasten to his side. But, before she could reach him, he was gone !

Some years from that period had passed when the writer became first acquainted with her, and the deep wound that had torn her heart was healed. It was an event to which she rarely alluded, and then but as to a dark dream, that had left only a shadowy trace in her memory; for there is an elasticity in early youth that often gives power to cast off sorrow, however poignant it may have been at the time.

CHAPTER V.

“Often the clouds of deepest woe
So sweet a message bear,
Dark though they seem, we cannot find
A frown of anger there.

“It needs our hearts be weaned from earth,
It needs that we be driven,
By loss of every earthly stay,
To seek our rest in heaven.

“Most loving is the hand that strikes,
However keen the smart,
If sorrow’s discipline can chase
One evil from the heart.”

MRS. M——, one of Bessie’s most esteemed friends, having written a full account of her feelings at this time, as she expressed them to her, I have thought it best to transcribe it nearly verbatim.

In the year 1838 Bessie was visited by an illness of a most painful and tedious nature. Many circumstances combined to render it a season of peculiar trial.

It was occasioned by a blow on the chest, received while playing with some little

children, to whom she was fondly attached. And here we may notice what was very marked in her character. Though endowed with a mind of no common order, developed by high cultivation, and capable of the most enlarged and expansive thought on any subject,* yet, in the hours of relaxation, her spirits were playfully buoyant and elastic. Without a spark of levity in any act or look, she could mingle most heartily in the merry infantine plays of children, and, making herself completely one with them, enjoy them as if she were herself a child.

It was on one of these occasions that she received, by accident, the injury referred to above; which, though considered at the time to be of little or no consequence, began shortly to assume a more serious character. Being then in London, the first surgical advice was sought for, when two of the most eminent men in their profession,

* She had acquired a knowledge of Greek and Hebrew, and, I believe, also of Latin. In philosophy and metaphysics she had been well instructed by Dr. Doyle, and delighted to converse on these subjects. As she shrunk from making a parade of her knowledge, few knew the masculine powers of her mind.

Sir Astley Cooper and Sir Philip Crampton,* pronounced it as their opinion, that though possibly no serious mischief might be experienced for some years, yet that, according to all human calculation, she must expect it eventually to assume a more dangerous aspect, and that a perfect cure could only be effected by submitting to a painful operation.

To her ardent temperament suspense seemed more than she could bear. God had endowed her with much natural courage, and looking to Him for support, as the exigency of the hour should require, she decided, after some deliberation, on submitting to the operation, which was skilfully performed by the persons above named. It was, indeed, a trying hour; but she realized the presence of her heavenly Father, and, thus sustained, was strengthened to endure all with perfect calmness and composure. Sir Philip Crampton supported her in his arms, and said, "Lean against me, and you are as firm as a rock." She answered, "Oh, Sir Philip, if I were not leaning on

* Sir P. Crampton, being in London on the occasion of the Queen's coronation, attended Bessie as a friend, having known her previously in Ireland.

the Rock of Ages, I could not go through what is before me !”

Whether her decision in this matter were according to the Lord’s mind, or otherwise, is a point on which there will be, no doubt, much difference of judgment; and various were the opinions and advice given by her Christian friends on this occasion. By some it was suggested that, there being no immediate danger, “faith and patience” would be more manifested by her yielding herself entirely into the Lord’s hands, and spending her present strength in His service, rather than by incurring the hazard of breaking her constitution, and thus crippling her powers of exertion, by submitting to the terrible ordeal which had been pronounced to be the only means of effecting a cure; considering, moreover, that her professional attendants did not conceal from her that in all probability her constitution would not rally for at least three years from the effect of such a shock. Others there were who thought it would be better, for the peace and tranquillity of her mind, that the removal of the evil should be at once effected.

Whether the one opinion or the other were more in accordance with God's mind may seem doubtful. One thing, however, is certain, that she acted according to her measure of faith, and that her judgment was, at least as to the result, overruled for infinite blessing to her soul. A short time previous to this illness she had become acquainted with some Christian friends who had set before her what she then considered to be an overdrawn and exaggerated view of the high standard of Christian holiness, and entire separateness to God, which should be the aim of every believer—nothing short of following Jesus in His “meek and lowly” walk, as a stranger and pilgrim upon earth, not only entering into the blessedness of that peace arising from the sense of being “redeemed . . . by the precious blood of Christ” from the condemnation and guilt of sin—for such experience she fully enjoyed—but, moreover, as being redeemed from “this present evil world,” with all its most attractive snares and illusions. This was a hard lesson for this dear young disciple to learn. Her warmth of imagination, tender natural affec-

tions, and unusual elasticity and buoyancy of spirits, rendered her, in a peculiar way, capable of enjoying every pleasant thing that crossed her path, every little green spot in the wilderness. God may give us such by the way, for "He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust," and He will sometimes allow the weary spirit of the pilgrim to be refreshed by occasional relaxations of His own providing, even as in the case of His people in the desert; but Israel would have made little progress towards the promised inheritance, had they lingered too long under the shady palm trees, and by the refreshing wells of Elim. This, perhaps, was Bessie's special temptation. It would be well if every believer, in professing to give up the world, were in truth to cease to expect any thing from it. Let it be crucified to us, and let us hold every thing connected with it loosely and tremblingly. Let us never be satisfied till we can say, "My soul, wait thou *only* upon God; for my expectation is from Him." Such an experience will never be attained by dwelling on the sacrifices that God expects us to

make, as though He would take pleasure in depriving us of this or that blessing, and so leave us empty and comfortless. No, He rather says to us, "My child, give Me thy heart. My love is a jealous love, and desires a full response. Think of the blessed position into which I have put you, as risen with Christ, made to sit together, even now by faith and by the Spirit, in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, blessed with all spiritual blessings in Him, sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, the earnest of the inheritance. My word passed that that inheritance is yours; not now in possession, it is true, but the earnest thereof given to you. And will not such proofs of my love, my everlasting love, revive the languishing soul, confirm the feeble knees, lift up the weary spirit, and cast into the shade every earthly desire or expectation, which, if realized, would be found, sooner or later, only vanity and vexation of spirit?" The grave tells us the tale. As regards the child of earth, all closes when he has once entered there; in that very day all his thoughts perish; every thought, at least, that is apart from

God. His life-work may be brilliant: it may be useful in its place: it may even add to the world's comfort and prosperity: but when viewed in the light of heavenly things, is no more than glittering tinsel. It follows him not into eternity; it has had its day, it has accomplished its uses in time, and the grave has shut her mouth on it for ever.

Such were the thoughts of this poor young sufferer, during the many solitary hours that she passed in her sick-chamber alone with God; for, feeling this affliction was sent to her in mercy, to teach her some lesson she had not yet learned, she requested that none might be admitted to see her except those who would speak to her of the things of God; as she wished to derive all the blessing and instruction which the Lord had in store for her. And now those same friends of whom she had so lately felt afraid, lest they should tear from her every little lingering hold that she still had on earthly things, were the very friends she most desired to visit her, and she derived lasting comfort from communion with those who ministered what

they had themselves received in their own souls' experience, from intercourse with God, fresh from the fountain. How much more power and life are felt from words that flow from the lips of one whose soul is evidently in living communion "with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ," than from words, be they ever so good and correct, which come to us as a lesson learned, retained in the memory rather than in the heart.

Previous to this season she had surely been taught of God, and loved the Lord fervently; but now it seemed to her that every truth she had before learned had lain only on the surface, and that now the seed sown was taking deeper root, for it was a season of "receiving the Word in much affliction." She had now learned in earnest the lesson that God had been long teaching her, through the various troubles and disappointments that in a most marked manner had filled up her short career. So many prospects of earthly joy seemed at times to open to her view, just flitted before her path, and vanished as her hand appeared to grasp them. Now she had learned to calculate on nothing but His

blessed presence, to live but for His glory, to give up body, soul, and spirit to His service; and from that period to the hour when her spirit was received into the presence of Jesus, such was all her salvation, all her desire. 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

The following lines were written by her as she was recovering :

HEBREWS iv. 15, 16.

“Sighs the lowest dungeon’s captive?
Will his sighs unheard ascend?
Strike they not a chord responsive
In the mourning exile’s Friend?

“Lord, Thine infinite compassion,
Thine exhaustless sympathy—
This believing, consolation
Shall I not receive from Thee?

“Trembling, fainting, Lord, behold me,
Words befitting me I’ve none;
Yet the grief that can’t be told Thee
Equals not, dear Lord, Thine own.

“Dost Thou not, then, know the feeling
Which I would but cannot tell,
That which needs Thy Spirit’s healing?
Ah! Thou dost, dear Lord, and well.

“Fellow-pilgrims ask a question,
Why I should not cheerful be?
But the tearful eye’s expression,
It is understood by Thee.”

CHAPTER VI.

“Jesus ! my sorrow lies too deep
For human sympathy ;
It knows not how to tell itself
To any but to Thee.

“Jesus ! my fainting spirit brings
Its fearfulness to Thee ;
Thine eye, at least, can penetrate
The clouded mystery.”

IN February, 1840, Bessie was in London. She had been separated from her sister for some time, and was looking forward with joyful anticipation to rejoining her at ——. She had felt the separation deeply, and hoped in future to remain with her whom she loved so fondly, and with whom her soul was so closely united.

In the days of her childhood Sarah had acted towards her as a mother, and watched over her most carefully. As Bessie grew older, she became her companion and confidant. A complete union of thought bound them together more closely than natural

ties of relationship could have done. Their opinions, tastes, and pursuits were the same, so that there was not one discordant note to break the harmony of their intercourse.

Bessie was counting the hours until she should again embrace her dear sister, and resolved that nothing but unforeseen circumstances should ever cause them the trial of another separation.

On Monday morning, however, the friend with whom she was staying received a letter from ——, informing her that Sarah A—— had died on the Sunday morning. She had appeared in better health than usual for some time past, and had retired to her room on Saturday evening, feeling comparatively well. An attack of apoplexy came on quite suddenly, medical aid was obtained, but it revived her only for a minute, when she exclaimed, “For ever with the Lord!” relapsed into insensibility, and spoke no more.

A short time before her death she said to a friend, “I have been thinking that Bessie and I will never leave each other’s side in glory.” This little remark showed the deep love she bore to her sister.

Bessie's beloved friend, Mrs. E——, felt so overcome herself at these sad tidings, that she asked a much-esteemed Christian brother to come and dine with them, and afterwards to break it to the bereaved one. On Bessie's rising to leave the room, Mr. D—— opened the door for her, and she noticed that he looked at her mournfully, and that his eyes filled with tears, which she thought very singular.

As she had expressed a desire to speak to him, he followed her into another room. He did not allow her time to tell him what she wished, but gradually broke to her the sad news of her sister's departure from this life. She fell senseless on the floor, and remained unconscious for twenty minutes.

As soon as Bessie was able to travel, she hastened to be with those friends in whose society her sister had been immediately before her death. Mrs. J—— most hospitably welcomed her to her house, and, by her kind Christian sympathy, comforted this afflicted one, and bestowed the same care and attention upon her that she would have done had she been her own sister. Here we see a proof of the Lord's tender

love, in providing this shelter for His sorrowing child, at a time when she seemed most forlorn and homeless. She had just lost an earthly sister, and He gave her a Christian sister, whose heart was overflowing with love to God's dear children.

It was her custom, when she arrived in a fresh place, to find, out of doors, some retired nook, where human foot had rarely trod, that she might make it a hiding-place, to which she could withdraw for meditation and prayer. At this time such a spot would be most dear to her. She sought and found it amongst the rocks by the sea-shore ; and there she spent many a lonely hour ; her mind roaming over the past, or pouring out her grief to God, whilst the clear waters rippled at her feet ; the ocean spread out before her, being, in its vastness, an emblem of eternity ; and the clear blue sky, arched over her head, reminding her of God's faithfulness, and of the everlasting arms which were spread over her to protect her.

In allusion to this retreat, she says, in one of her letters : " Often when alone amongst the rocks at ———, and thinking of

that house of many mansions, I have been so happy singing that sweet hymn—

“‘My Father’s house on high,
Home of my soul, how dear;
I long to see thee, and I sigh
Within thee to appear.’

“Whilst sitting in my solitary haunt (a picture of what the world had become to me), I looked up, waiting, as it were, for the Lord to have pity on me, only desiring to be called hence; the Comforter the while cheering me with visions of eternal blessedness, with a sweet anticipation of future blessings.”

But it must not be imagined that she spent all her time in solitary contemplation, or in cherishing a morbid grief. No, she sought out objects of pity amongst the poor; she wandered into the streets and alleys of the town, administering to others that consolation which she had herself received from God.

And even during the heat of a summer sun she continued her labours unremittingly, visiting the close, ill-ventilated abodes of the most destitute, and returning home worn and exhausted.

At length her health began to suffer from these exertions, and having received an invitation to visit some friends who lived in the country, she accepted it, hoping to recruit her strength by change of air.

CHAPTER VII.

“Lo, He beckons from on high !
Fearless to His presence fly ;
Thine the merits of His blood ;
Thine the righteousness of God !
Angels, joyful to attend,
Hovering round thy pillow, bend,
Wait to catch the signal given,
And escort thee quick to heaven.”

TOPLADY.

IT was four months after the death of her sister that Bessie came to visit the parents of the writer. It was then that their acquaintance commenced. Circumstances threw them peculiarly in each other's society. Soon their hearts became knit together, and a warm and firm friendship was the result.

Never shall I forget the impression made upon me by my first interview with her. Lovely in person she truly was ; but it was not so much the loveliness of symmetry and outward beauty that attracted, as the

beaming in her countenance of a mind filled with sweetness, gentleness, and intelligence. There was a peculiar sadness and solemnity in the expression of her soft dark eye that was really imposing. But that which was most remarkable was her deep spirituality; and may it not have been the reflection of His image, which dwelt within her, that shed this heavenly, unearthly expression upon her countenance? A friend observed to the writer, "I never met a young person who appeared to dwell in such constant communion with God; in whose whole deportment there was such a savour of holiness." And could it be wondered at, when her spirit had been so exercised and tried, "as gold is tried," in the fire of affliction. Zech. xiii. 9. She realized the Lord peculiarly as a Friend, to whom she referred the most minute circumstances. At all times of the day she used to retire to her room alone, to pour out her soul in prayer.

To finite judgments her being so soon taken from earth seems incomprehensible; she who was so calculated to be a blessing to all who crossed her path; whose whole

life appeared to be a training to service for God's glory.

From her mother's singular method of education she derived that moral strength of character and self-control which were so conspicuous; from acquaintance with Dr. Doyle her intellectual powers were fully developed, and her mind became richly stored with knowledge. From the many various scenes into which she was thrown by circumstances she had opportunities of studying human nature under different aspects; and all the sorrows she passed through softened her character, and gave her those deep sympathies in others' woe which made her a comforter to many who were themselves in affliction. The agony of mind she endured at the age of seventeen, and the clear view she had afterwards of the work of Christ, enabled her to raise the hopes of those who despaired of salvation, and to point them to Him who came to save sinners, telling them how she had been bound with chains of darkness, and by what means the Lord had broken those chains, and brought her into the peace and liberty of the gospel. But we cannot pene-

trate God's ways, or "say unto Him, What doest Thou?" It is one of those dealings of Providence of which we can only say—

"God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform."

He who does "all things well" must have had a wise purpose in this dispensation towards His child, that we shall know hereafter. He may take away His servants in the midst of their work, to show that He can do without them; or to shelter them from the evil to come; or it may have been, in the instance before us, because, from the natural loveliness of her character, He saw that some would be tempted to make an idol of her; and God will have no rival in our hearts; He must reign supremely there.

It was shortly after her arrival at P—— that she was engaged to be married to Mr. A. W——. As a few particulars of the spirit and views with which she contemplated this new course of life may be interesting to the reader, they will be here given.

Before she left Ireland she became ac-

quainted with Mr. A. W——, and, according to her usual custom, she spoke to him of the things of God. There was an earnestness, a solemnity, in her manner, when she spoke on religious subjects, which immediately arrested the attention of those whom she addressed, for it showed that her words proceeded from the inmost depths of her heart. Her remarks made a deep impression on him ; they were accompanied with the power of the Spirit, and he viewed her as an angel sent to bless him, and to point out the heavenward path. Circumstances separated them before they had seen each other many times, but he could not forget her words ; they still sounded in his ears, and her image was constantly before his eyes. Four years passed away, and he saw and heard nothing of her, but daily he prayed that he might meet with her, though he knew not where.

One day he had just landed on the English shore, after having travelled over different countries of the Continent, and remembering that a lady who knew Bessie lived in that town, he asked at a bookseller's shop for her address, hoping she could give

him information respecting the object of his search. A friend, at whose house Bessie was visiting, was in the shop, and heard his inquiries. She came forward, and said that Mrs. —— had left that neighbourhood, but she could procure her address for him, if he wished it, through Miss A——, who was staying with her. He started, and said :

“Can you tell me where her sister, Bessie, is ?”

“It is Bessie to whom I allude. Sarah died a few months ago.”

The reader can imagine his joy at thus finding his prayers answered, and being in a few minutes in the presence of her who had constantly been in his thoughts. Their meeting was short, he being hastily called from —— . Meanwhile Bessie accepted the invitation to P——, alluded to at the commencement of this chapter, where he again met her, and the engagement took place.

Every temporal circumstance connected with this alliance seemed to promise days of future happiness. Nothing seemed wanting to fill up their cup of earthly prosperity ; and, added to this, higher sources of blessing

opened before them, for their spiritual sympathies were one.

With so fair a prospect in view, many a heart would have indulged in fond dreams of future happiness. But her spirit had been so chastened by sorrow, and sanctified by grace, that she cherished no such sanguine expectation. Experience and faith had taught her that this earth is a "dry and thirsty land, where no water is." Unthankfulness formed no part of her character. She had recognized her heavenly Father's love in affliction; and, when visited by temporal mercies, equally acknowledged His love, but she rested not in them. There never was, perhaps, a time when her soul was more quietly and calmly stayed upon God than during the few months previous to her marriage.

Mr. A. W—— did not remain long at P——. In a letter to him who was to be the companion of her few remaining days, she writes thus, in allusion to a proposal that they should meet at the house of a mutual friend:

"Let us patiently wait the Lord's time. He will arrange for us as shall be for His

own glory, and our profit. He doeth all things well. 'Lord, increase our faith.' I fear I could not, in such circumstances, rejoice in spirit, for I cannot see that my leaving P—— would be for the glory of God; neither would it be, I think, so much for our own edification, as giving ourselves to prayer, for the time that must intervene between this and April. Then we shall have to praise Him for the end of this painful separation. I appeal to you as a Christian. Judge what I say, as in the Lord's presence; and if the Holy Spirit lead you to agree with me, pray do not resist Him. I may be wrong; if so, and you wish me to comply, I will yield. Spread this letter, I entreat you, before the Lord; on your knees seek His counsel. 'Commit thy way unto the Lord,' and He will direct thy steps. If the enemy has laid a snare for us, oh! may it be shown to you, ere you have fallen into it. I really do think it may be a device of Satan, to prevent that communion with the Lord, which would strengthen us. A little while, indeed, it is, which I ought to devote to poor dear M——, who has most unselfishly

absolved me from my promise to remain with her till April. Yes, dear child, when she thought my happiness was in it, she kindly sacrificed her own will, and said, 'Dearest Bessie, you may go to *him*—you may leave *me*—though I know I shall be wretched all that fortnight.' She could add no more; but a flood of tears, and an anguished countenance, told a tale that touched my very heart, and *conscience* too. Oh that I might tell you of the secret link that thus unites! but hereafter you will bless the Lord for having used your Bessie, as I believe He is doing in this business."

This letter received an answer, agreeing with her judgment, that it would be better not to have their minds unsettled by meeting before their marriage.

A few more extracts from different letters she wrote to him during this period of separation will show how her mind was fixed on heavenly things.

"I rejoice in hope of being with Jesus; yet I should not like to be called hence before the sounding of the trumpet, when you too will ascend to our final home.

I do not now regard my wish to remain together here for the little while as sinful ; and I cannot express the comfort of my changed opinion on this subject, if it be, as I trust it is, of the Lord. We should be careful while we think we stand to take heed lest we fall. I hear, as it were, the Holy Spirit saying, ' Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.' I have been led to pray that we may ' grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,' in fellowship with Him. And by no other means, beloved, can we keep our affections set on things above ; and so have power to pass through the world as pilgrims and strangers. I have been praying that the Lord would restore my health, not alone on your account, but that He may use me, as in former days, ' as a servant of the Church.' My selfish nature would, of course, seek rest here ; but by the grace of God I do desire to spend and be spent in His service."

"Your picture of 'our house' is very charming ; but, oh ! let us not forget the place which Jesus is preparing for us, where

we shall be ever with Him, in whose presence is fulness of joy. And will you be glad to be assured that *I* should like a simple cottage far better? Indeed, dear A——, I could not conscientiously reside in such a great house. How could we there declare plainly that we seek another, even a heavenly?”

“It would be sweet to think our minds had been cast in the same mould; but, oh! how much more blessed to know that we are both temples of the Holy Spirit.”

“The good Shepherd can supply green pastures and still waters where we least expect them. His power is not confined to space, but is co-extensive with His love; and is not that unbounded?”

“I rejoice in hope of meeting my darling sister in heaven, where parting is no more. And I feel thankful to the Lord for His mercy in having given *you* to me, and so happy is the prospect of meeting you; and I trust our day of happiness will not be like the rainbow—transient. Yet I desire that we should set so loose to every earthly blessing as to be able to say at all times, ‘Come, Lord Jesus’”

On the anniversary of her sister's death she writes :

“February 16th, 1841.—This hope of re-joining my dear sister in the Father's house sustained me ere the Lord in mercy gave me another comforter, whose tender love has filled the aching void.

“‘Joy! what is joy? 'Tis like the bow
That glistens in the sky ;
We love to see its colours glow,
But while we gaze *they die!*’”

Another time, in writing to her sister, she said: “When in London I saw very little of it; Regent's Park was my favourite haunt. Sometimes I passed through the crowded streets, but seldom noticed the surrounding objects, for my heart was far away with one who is *now* in heaven. Happy soul! Her days of mourning are ended. Oh, may *we* have grace to run with patience the race set before us!”

Having given these short extracts, we will now see how she occupied the remainder of the time she spent at P——.

Eight happy months we spent together under the same roof, amidst a rural population, far removed from any large town or

city. She seemed to delight in this quiet country life, and spent most of her time with the poor, who were particularly fond of her—her kind, gentle manners won their hearts. She took an interest in their temporal and spiritual welfare, and beautifully identified herself with all the trials and cares of poverty. She gave her counsel to them with wisdom and love; they felt they had all her sympathy, so that her admonitions were graciously received, because they were graciously administered.

In a little hamlet, close to the house in which she was staying, she used once a week to collect together in a cottage the poor women who inhabited it, read the Bible to them, explain it, and converse with them on the parts she had read. We will quote her own account of one of these occasions. "This morning, at the little Scripture reading in E——'s cottage, I observed a coldness between two of the party, unkind glances, &c., and took occasion to speak of charity, looking to the Holy Spirit to bring home the word with power. One of them received it as meant for her; and afterwards, when the other had left the

house, begged of me, if possible, to make peace; said she was willing to humble herself in any way, to do any thing I thought right, in order to bring about a reconciliation. I have since seen the second. She at first tried to justify her conduct, which had been most blamable; but, by the grace of God, she was at length subdued, and promised to embrace, in the arms of Christian love, a person with whom she had been many months at enmity, and to whom she had determined not to speak in this life! Oh, how deplorable that children of the same Father, fellow-heirs of Heaven, cannot bear with each others' mutual infirmities! And there is no excuse, for the saint can do *all* things through Christ strengthening him."

Another time she writes: "To-day the Lord was pleased to make me 'a cup of consolation' to a wretched widow, whose son, a fine boy, was killed on 'the line' yesterday. She, being a converted person, viewed this affliction as sent in judgment for her sin in placing the poor child in such a situation, and could see no mercy in the hand that chastened for her profit. I found

her a picture of intense and hopeless grief; I read a passage in Heb. xii., made a few observations, prayed with her, and left the poor creature comparatively calm. She said, 'His will be done; He does not afflict willingly.' I thought the loss of this son might be the means of making her more careful in bringing up some others which she has, 'in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.'" Eph. vi. 14.

Again, she says: "I trust I can truly say I *am* drawing water from the wells of salvation, with joy unspeakable, and there my spiritual strength is renewed. Shall I not seek to bring others to the fountain which I find so precious? I have just received a summons to visit two neighbouring villages, and on my return I intend, if I do not feel tired, to spend a little time with E——, a dear Christian brother I wish you had seen when you were here. He has had his leg fractured, and his head hurt, by a log of wood he was splitting with gunpowder. His head is so painful, but he feels comforted by hearing of those great and precious promises which are Yea and Amen in Jesus."

“.... Yesterday I did too much, at least I suppose so, for to-day I feel very weary. I was not tired when I entered E——’s house of mourning; but I found him very poorly, his head agonized with pain. I remained a long time, applying vinegar and water to his burning forehead, and I think standing so long by the side of his bed fatigued me.”

The following extract will show the interest she took in the temporal welfare of the poor: “I was asked if I would be so kind as to take some coal tickets to the poor at ——. I, of course, said ‘Yes,’ and made the best of my way through an English glacier, to relieve a few half-frozen peasants. On my return I was called upon to visit poor E——, who is still a great sufferer; this cold weather is so bad for him. I remained a very little time with this brother in the Lord, for his next-door neighbour, poor old David, had a claim on me. He is, I believe, on his death-bed, rejoicing in the hope of the ‘rest that remaineth for the people of God.’ As his outward man decays, his inward man is renewed day by day. He spoke with great

animation of the Saviour's love, and repeated a passage from Isaiah liii., viz., 'He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities ; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him ; and with His stripes we are healed,' and a verse of one of Watts's hymns. When I was leaving him, he took my hand, and said, 'The Lord bless thee, and be thy guide and comfort, and thy portion for ever.'"

In speaking of her labours in the Sunday-school, she says: "In teaching the poor children this morning I was much interested; two of them being deeply convinced of sin, and, I trust, anxious to know the Saviour. Their eyes filled with tears while I told them of the love of God in having given His beloved Son to die for sinners. I read many passages of Scripture to them, but they seemed untouched by any till I turned to John iii. 14-19, which is a great favourite of mine. Oh, what a privilege to be allowed to speak of Jesus to poor sinners!"

Shortly before she left that neighbourhood she wrote: "Now that the time of my departure hence draws nigh I cannot write much. I have to make so many fare-

well visits to the poor around, in which circle I feel deeply interested, as I feel sure the Lord Jesus would be if He were here. The great ones of the earth were not His favourites. I have taken leave of —, who gave me such a sweet text at parting; viz., ‘Cast thy burden on the Lord, and He shall sustain thee.’ This, so appropriate to my circumstances, was given without knowing anything about them.”

At this time she had a strong presentiment that her earthly mission was drawing to a close, and that her days were numbered. She constantly alluded to it, and was fond of repeating the following verses of a favourite hymn :

“ Here in the body pent,
Absent from Him I roam,
Yet nightly pitch my moving tent
A day’s march nearer home.

“ My Father’s house on high,
Home of my soul, how near,
At times, to faith’s transpiercing eye,
Thy golden gates appear !

“ My thirsty spirit faints
To reach the land I love—
The bright inheritance of saints,
Jerusalem above.

“ Yet clouds will intervene,
And all my prospect flies ;
Like Noah’s ark, I flit between
Rough seas and stormy skies.

“ Anon the clouds depart,
The winds and waters sleep,
While sweetly o’er my gladdened heart
Expands the bow of peace.”

One day in autumn, whilst walking in the shrubbery, when the leaves were falling, one withered leaf fell upon her. I was just going to take it off, when she looked at it mournfully, and said, “ Don’t touch it ; let it stay. It is an emblem of what I shall soon be. But though my body will resemble this leaf, I shall not be altogether like it. Oh, no ! I shall be changed into the likeness of Christ’s glorious body, while this leaf will have decayed, and ceased to exist.” She then repeated some lines she wrote for a little child :

“ Hark ! the leaves that round us fall
From the shaken branches, call,
And in solemn accents tell
Little folk to ponder well
Their destiny.

“Youth departs on wings of speed,
And autumnal days succeed,
When the blighting blast of age,
Sweeping with resistless rage,
Shall wither thee.”

Early in the month of April the two friends were standing on a hill, admiring the gay prospect. The cold, chilling winds of March were gone; the air was mild and balmy, and all nature seemed to rejoice in the change. The birds were hymning their songs of praise, whilst they fluttered in the bright sunshine; and the flowers were struggling to rear their heads above the green grass. Bessie's ideal turn of mind led her to be a great admirer of nature, and frequently to expatiate on its loveliness, as a visible manifestation of that God her soul loved. She gathered a daisy at her feet, and remarked on the many beauties that little despised flower possessed. But her soul did not seem in harmony with the scene around; and, as she turned the little flower in her hand, and admired the delicate pink which fringed its silver petals, her thoughts seemed far away. I asked her if she had noticed that some daisies were

altogether white, without any tinge of pink. She said, "I do not remember seeing a daisy altogether white; but if you will gather me one, I will say something upon it."

Thinking she would make some allusion to her wedding-day, which was fast approaching, I soon brought her a snow-white daisy. "Now, Bessie, let me hear what you have to say." She fixed her dark, expressive eyes upon me, and said :

"White will be my winding-sheet;
White will be my funeral shroud.

I know not how it is, but I do not feel as if I shall be long on earth. My home is in heaven. By far the greater number of those I loved the most dearly are there. My ties to earth are all loosed, excepting *one* precious object of affection, and my dear brother R——, whom I love and esteem so dearly;* but they will soon join me, and we shall be parted no more."

At the time I tried to think it was only

* She was much attached to this brother. They were nearly of the same age, and of the same mind in almost every thing. It was one of her greatest trials that they could be so little together, being separated by distance. His love for his sisters was only equalled by theirs for

the passing cloud of a highly susceptible imagination; for, with the exception of frequent headaches, she appeared as well as most persons. But when, in the morning of the day we parted, she said—her eyes bedimmed with tears—“We shall no more meet together on earth; I shall never behold this place again;” my heart sank within me. An impression of sorrowful foreboding took possession of my soul, which I vainly tried to throw off. I felt that her words were prophetic, and would soon be realized.

One evening, shortly before I was separated from this beloved companion, we were sitting alone together, lamenting the necessity of being parted, when she said:

“It will be but for a little while.

“Sweet friend!

On yon celestial happy shore

Soon we shall meet to part no more.”

She was looking up as she spoke. **A** heavenly brightness illuminated her coun-

him. But, besides the natural affection which bound them to each other, he valued the spiritual graces they manifested, and speaks of them now as “those two holy sisters.”

tenance, and she appeared to be feasting her eyes on that "celestial shore," as if she already by anticipation saw its glories. After a few minutes' silence, she asked for a piece of paper, on which she wrote the above lines, then giving it to me said :

"Keep this. It is a parting token. A little while hence you will need it. *Remember this evening.*"

Within a year from that hour she was safely landed on that "happy shore"—all her trials and sorrows left behind : she was tasting eternal happiness.

On the 26th of April, 1841, Bessie became the beloved wife of Mr. A. W——. No fond father or mother gave her away ; but God, who makes orphans His especial charge, and promises to be a "Father to the fatherless," raised up for her Christian friends, who tried to act the part of parents, and who felt honoured in being allowed to minister, even in a feeble measure, to one of His dear children.

But even this cup of earthly happiness was mingled with bitterness. A few weeks after her marriage, a severe illness brought

her very low, and for a short time her life was in danger; but God, in mercy to others, prolonged her days for a brief space.

Not having met that dearly-loved friend after her marriage, in consequence of her having gone to live in a distant part of England, I can give no detailed particulars of that period; but as we kept up a constant intercourse by letters, I will make two extracts from them.

The presentiment, to which allusion has been made, increased after her marriage. In the month of August she wrote to her friend, saying:

“Perhaps our next meeting-place may be the house of many mansions, where all the children of our heavenly Father shall spend an eternity together. I feel as if my earthly journey were almost ended. My doctor says I have not one alarming symptom; but I fancy such a fire (as it seems unquenchable) will shortly burn up the sap of *animal* life. It cannot touch that everlasting life, which is hid with Christ in God. Oh, no! His sheep shall never perish. . . . My sleep is disturbed and unrefreshing; but my midnight hours,

though wearisome to the body, are often seasons of rejoicing to my soul, which is then, as it were, alone with the Lord, enjoying uninterrupted communion with Him. . . . Oh, what a prayer is that in behalf of His disciples, 'Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory!'"

Another extract from a letter to the same will be added.

"Jan. 1, 1842.—Your Bessie wishes you a Happy New Year. May you, as its course rolls onward, rapidly advance in the narrow way of wisdom, which alone is truly pleasant. There, and there only, peace is to be found. Lean not to thine own understanding, but pray for the Spirit's guidance. He may lead you by a thorny path, very painful to the flesh, but not so to the soul, which is driven by those very trials to the bosom of its unseen but ever-present Friend. I speak from experience. I have proved His power to sustain and comfort me in various circumstances. * When in danger of death for the truth's sake, I endured as seeing Him who

is invisible. By faith I heard His voice, saying, 'Fear not.' And when, from another cause, I seemed to be near the dark valley, what made the grave appear as little to be dreaded as my bread? Was it not the hope of a glorious resurrection? When first I saw you, I was almost broken-hearted: the world had become a dreary wilderness, in which I expected not to find an oasis. Yet, you say, I looked cheerful. Who had wiped away my tears? Not an earthly hand. And now that the scene has changed, what keeps my affections fixed on things above? My chief treasure is in heaven. Jesus, my risen Lord and Saviour, is the great attraction. I long for His appearing, when He will take me, and all His redeemed people, to be with Him in the Father's house. But while below, I shall thankfully enjoy the blessings He has given me—my beloved husband," &c.

A few weeks before her death, she wrote to Mrs. M——: "I *long* to 'depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better.' It is only when I think of others that I wish my life here below to be prolonged. As

far as *I* myself am concerned, my heart would say, 'Let me depart.'"

On the 12th of March, 1842, she became the mother of a little girl, but there soon followed fever and delirium. In a brief interval of consciousness she exclaimed, with a countenance quite illumined, "Joy cometh! Joy cometh! Oh, yes!" But that heavenly joy was as the bright rose, that beams in beauty from amidst the sharp thorns of rending earthly sorrow.

Deep and severe were the bodily sufferings of the mortal illness which immediately ensued.

One most painful source of trial that followed this bereavement to her sorrowing husband was, that for some days he was not allowed to enter her apartment, on account of the absolute necessity of her being kept perfectly quiet, and free from all excitement. Actual danger was not pronounced till near the end. In the meantime hope was kept alive in his bosom, and his self-denial, in absenting himself from her, he trusted would be rewarded by her more speedy recovery. The thought was very bitter that the preventive had been vain,

and many precious hours were lost to him, which, if passed by her side, would have been treasured up in fond remembrance after her decease. He was only called in to witness her last sighs, and to receive her parting farewell.

On the 17th all excitement left her, and she was evidently sinking rapidly. Then the sorrowing husband hung weeping over that precious object of his affections, from whom he was soon to be severed. She threw her arms around his neck, and they shed tears together. But how different was their source! His were tears of unmingled sorrow at separation from her who had been to him as a ministering spirit. She, on the other hand, shed mingled tears of joy and grief—joy at the bright prospect which was opening before her; grief, because she was leaving one she so tenderly loved, alone and disconsolate.

She then gave him a text to express her perfect peace and confidence—"I know whom I have believed, and . . . that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him." Her last words were those of her dying sister, "For ever with the Lord.

Amen"—words that in health were often on her lips. Her husband asked, "Is Christ precious?" She bowed her head in token of assent, and her happy spirit winged its way to those mansions of love where sin and sorrow are unknown. The conflict was for ever passed; she was sheltered in the bosom of Him whom her soul loved above all beside.

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

CHAPTER VIII.

“ There is an hour of peaceful rest
To mourning wanderers given,
There is a tear for souls distressed,
A balm for every wounded breast:
'Tis found above—in heaven !

“ Then Faith lifts up the tearful eye,
The heart with anguish riven,
And views the tempest passing by,
The evening shadows quickly fly,
And all serene—in heaven ! ”

“ OUR chief hindrance to entire resignation is, that we are so much addicted to things present and visible, while eternal realities are as yet so foreign to us, and so little known. But, could we take one glance at the condition of a spirit departed, we should never regret and lament, as we are apt to do, the decease of relatives and friends; but our grief would rather be on account of the dim-sightedness of weeping survivors.

“ Surely when the door of paradise is

opened, to let in any of our departed friends, delicious breezes blow through it upon us from that abode of blessedness. And we ought to avail ourselves of such refreshing influence; we ought to let it quicken us in following after those who have gone before us, rather than wish those friends back again to a world like this. Who could ever think of congratulating any that have been enjoying heavenly rest for ten, a hundred, or a thousand years together, upon their having to return back again to the perils and dangers of this present life? Why, then, should we regard it as an affliction that any one of our number has escaped from such perils, and is only entered into perfect peace and security? If a vacancy has been made in the family circle, let it also be remembered that another vacancy has been filled up in heaven. The nearer we in this world are approaching the end of all things, the more welcome should be the thought of dying, because every departed Christian finds that the multitude of the blessed is increasingly outnumbering the militant remnant, and because the whole family of God are thus suc-

cessively gathering in, that we may be all together for ever with the Lord.”*

What lesson, then, is to be learned from this short, eventful life? The soul that is daily exercised before God, by the habit of entering into His presence by faith, has been taught, by such constant intercourse, much of His mind and ways; and, consequently, will gather much instruction from His dealings with His children; will receive many profitable lessons from observing the path in which He leads them through the wilderness; lessons that will escape the observation of the inexperienced Christian, or of those who take only a superficial glance at the Lord's dealings. Every fresh view that presents to us, in this way, more of God's character, deepens the inward experience of the saint, strengthens the spirit of prayer, and must lead to practical results.

The life of every child of God is fraught with circumstances of encouragement and warning; and if our spiritual judgment were more frequently exercised in discriminating between good and evil, we might perceive deep lessons of truth lying

* Extract from a memoir of J. A. Bengel, born 1687.

hidden in those *little* occurrences which often appear to us unworthy of serious attention. Or, on the other hand, the event may be full of natural interest to us; but if we view it not in God's light, we can derive from it only natural light (for it is only as viewed in the light of God that we can receive from it that spiritual instruction which is the paramount blessing our Lord offers us in it), and then His instructions fall to the ground, and He speaks in vain, inasmuch as we lose the blessing intended to have been conveyed to us through them.

In Bessie's sorrows we may trace the Lord's love and faithfulness. He raised up sources of comfort which exactly met the exigency of the hour; and yet, in so mingling her cup with trial, that she might not be tempted to loiter by the way, to take up her rest in things below, but might receive a daily memento to walk wisely in the perfect way. Her mind was eminently ideal and imaginative; it needed the discipline of the sanctuary to sober her expectations, and to mellow her pictures. That discipline was, in love, afforded. She retained her

buoyancy of spirit; she increased the power of clothing every object in the natural world around, and every circumstance of life, with a halo of charm and beauty; but it was with the beauty of holiness, with the beam of the sanctuary. She excelled in the natural capability of gathering delight and sweetness from every object and circumstance from which a drop of honey could be extracted; but it was honey from the rock—the Rock of Ages—her Rock. Her God had weaned her from every broken cistern, and so filled her with His own love, that nothing could satisfy the heavenly affections and desires of that sanctified one but His own immediate presence, to which she was early taken. *If* she had once indulged in earthly visions of enjoyment, a blight had come over them all; and when I knew her she had discovered their worthlessness; and, lightened of every weight, she ran with patience the race set before her.

Alas! how often is it to be lamented that many who, in the earlier stage of their heavenward course, appeared to follow Jesus with fervour and single-heartedness, as time proceeds, insensibly

slacken their pace, and suffer established habits to be substituted for the uninterrupted communion with God, the continual guidance of His Spirit, the renewing of the inward man day by day by that Spirit which is the alone Teacher, and Maintainer of life, either in the Church at large, or in its individual members—thus appearing to resemble the Israelites of old, who, though they were fed with heavenly manna, yet, when they were weary with the length of the journey, longed for the food of Egypt, saying, “Our soul loatheth this light bread.” When they were in a murmuring spirit they called that which had supported and strengthened them during so many years “light bread.”

And, as it was with the Israelites in temporal things, so is it with us in spiritual things. The soul that has grown languid, and is not in a healthful state, is not satisfied with simple truth. It is those that desire to grow thereby that love the *sincere milk* of the Word. In *former* days Christ had been all-sufficient for them—they had eaten angels’ food; but now they seek for amusement and excitement from external

objects, forgetting that we are never led by God to expect happiness from that earth of which He has expressly declared that it is cursed, and that it shall alone, spontaneously, bring forth to man thorns and thistles; therefore we are here like "strangers and pilgrims," travelling on to "a better country, that is, an heavenly" (Heb. xi. 16); that ours is a life of faith; that our joys are hidden joys, such as the world cannot take cognizance of. As our Lord tells us, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in *Me* ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." John xvi. 33. When, from not cleaving closely to the Lord, we cease to enjoy peace in Him, we fly to the world to supply that void which He alone can fill; but we learn, in bitterness of spirit, that it is an empty show, and that we shall not find rest unto our souls until we return to Him from whom we have grievously departed.

Though this spiritual declension is often met with, it cannot be palliated; for it is written, "The path of the just is as

the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.''' Proverbs iv. 18. The light itself cannot grow dim, for it is as imperishable as that God from whom it proceeds; but we may obscure or hide the light.

Earthly fire exhausts itself, but the eternal life which God has imparted unto us is indestructible. God saw that in His Church, both collectively and individually, there would be a natural tendency to depart from Him, therefore sets forth a solemn warning in the first exhortation to the seven Churches: I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Thou hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted, etc. But love was absent. Therefore those works of labour and zeal, from which that sanctifying principle was absent, were as a husk without a kernel, as a form without life. They were exhorted to return to the point whence they first started, to do their first work—LOVE. But what is departing from Him? It is turning the eye of the soul from beholding Him in the Spirit; for it is only by the eye of a heart purified

by faith we can behold God in the Spirit.
“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”

But it was not so with Bessie. She not only whilst on earth viewed in the Spirit Him whom she loved, but she had the favour to be taken to her Father's house whilst the candle of the Lord shone brightly upon her. No remembrance of her exists but such as is fraught with the love of Jesus. One feature in her experience, that we may mention as a striking proof of her grace, was the entire absence of everything speculative and mystical. She passed much time alone, in prayer and meditation, in order that she might come forth with renewed strength for service and endurance. Every incident, however trifling in itself, became to her a sanctified occupation, for God was brought into it. She lived not for herself, but for others. Her daily life was a beautiful pattern of self-renunciation. She seemed never to think of herself, but if others needed her help she would (according to the example of her blessed Master) relinquish the enjoyment of being alone, that she might attend to the claim which was made on

her for the ministry of love. If brought into contact with any worldliness or inconsistency in others, a grieved look, or a gentle rebuke, spoken with the utmost tenderness, was the only sign she gave of the pain it caused her. Faithfulness with her was no effort; it seemed the effect of love—love to her heavenly Father, love to her brethren on earth. Deep and anxious were her desires for the welfare of others. She told me that her natural disposition was proud, and her temper passionate; that as a child she used to stamp her foot on the ground from anger. But I never saw her once ruffled. Tears of sympathy or sadness she often shed, but a shade of fretfulness never darkened her brow.

In reference to her death, some might say that, at such an hour, when on the borders of eternity, if her soul had been filled with the Lord's presence, she could not have turned aside to look with so much interest on an earthly object—to comfort *him* whom she was leaving alone and disconsolate. But was not this a striking proof of the enlargement of her heart through grace, and of the full con-

fidence with which she reposed in God's love? Had a shade of doubt as to her acceptance in Christ come over her mind at this hour, when she was soon to appear in the presence of God, she would have been occupied with self—anxiety would have filled her breast; and there would have been no room for the exhibition of human sympathies, which, whilst sanctified by grace, are also deepened by it.

This was shown by the example of Him into whose image she was moulded. When, for the joy that was set before Him, He endured the cross, His mother, and His loved disciple, were not forgotten. In the bitter anguish of His spirit on the cross His love for them remained.

In the instance before us, Bessie only reflected the grace she had derived from her God and Saviour. One who was present said, that nothing could have been more solemn or touching than that parting scene. The dying tears she shed, when embracing her husband, were quite characteristic of her whose sensibilities were so deep. Never was he dearer to her affections than when the earthly link

was dissolving. In writing of his departed one, Mr. A. W—— says, “To paint fully what I think of Bessie is impossible, and therefore I shall not attempt a word on it. I feel far too unable, in presence of such vivid love, light, and life.

“ ‘ Sweet is the memory of her name,
And soft her dying bed.’ ”

She is one of the brightest children of the coming day, and she is waiting for the honour that shall be hers, at the right hand of Him who cometh at that day.”

She was much beloved and esteemed by the members of the family into which she married. Mrs. W—— acted as a true mother to her; and Bessie returned her affection by the fullest confidence and love. After her death Mrs. W.—— wrote, “What a heavenly-minded creature she was! *How dear* to me I could not express, but I loved her quite as my own precious child; and truly were our hearts bound together by the most tender and loving ties; and we had such perfect confidence in each other, that she was endeared to me in a most especial and remarkable manner; and severe, indeed,

was the pang of separation. Yet all is in love and mercy I am sure—the discipline of a tender and loving Father; and sweet, most sweet, is the hope of an eternal reunion when He sees best.”

Before closing I would address a few words to those who are still young.

You have been dwelling on the life of one who in youth sought the Lord and found Him; and, if you are yet thoughtless, occupied merely with the things of this earth, oh! let me beseech you to “consider your ways.” If in the morning of life you sow to the flesh, what can you expect in the evening but of the flesh to reap corruption? Gal. vi. 8. Do not say you are young, and there is time enough yet to seek the Lord. Life is uncertain: you do not know how long you may live. But even if your life should be spared for some years to come, are you only willing to give to God the close of your days, whilst you spend the prime of life upon yourselves?

“Think, oh, think, how much you owe Him!”

the many mercies He has already made you prove; of the gracious invitations He

holds out for you to seek Him, and the promises that those that seek shall find. "I love them that love Me, and those that seek me early shall find Me." Prov. viii., 17. Will you make no response? Oh! resist not these gracious appeals any longer. "Wilt thou not from this time cry unto Me, My Father, Thou art the guide of my youth?" Jer. iii. 4. From this day seek the Lord with "*all* your heart," being assured that if you do so, you shall find Him.

"Oh! let the roving, treach'rous heart,
Like Mary, choose the blessed part,
And leave the trifles of a day
For joys that never fade away.

"Then let the wildest storms arise,
Let tempests mingle earth and skies,
No fatal shipwreck need we fear,
For God our Saviour still is near."

But these pages may meet the eye of those who *have* sought the Lord early, and found Him. Such would I urge to press forward to greater holiness. It is not often we find those who are young so entirely devoted to the Lord as was Bessie. But why should they not? It is true there are many snares and dan-

gers around the path of youth; but do not be appalled at the difficulties; draw freely from God's strength, and you will overcome the wicked one, who places these temptations in your way, hoping, by them, to lead you from the narrow path. But though in yourself alone you have no strength to resist Satan, yet through Christ strengthening you, you can do all things. Phil. iv. 13.

Consider, then, the example of her whose life you have been reading, and follow her, as she followed Christ. 1 Cor. xi. 1. The same grace that was given to her, and which enabled her to bear faithful witness for her Master, is also offered to you, and God is more willing to give than we are to receive. But whilst we are allowed to derive profit from observing the fruits of the Spirit borne by any believer (and the more we are taught of God, the more quick shall we be to discern that which is spiritual in others), at the same time let us not have our eye turned from "*the Great Exemplar*," while we are admiring His work in others. The brightest saint that ever trod this earth had that light in an

earthen vessel. There is only One who is worthy of our entire confidence, who is set before us as an infallible standard of truth and holiness; even He who died for our sins, and put them away for ever, and who left us an example that we should follow His steps. 1 Peter ii. 21.

We cannot dwell too minutely on every word and action of His blessed life; but the more we gaze on Him, the more shall we be transformed into His image, the less shall we value all that the world can afford, and the more shall we desire to consecrate ourselves to God, body, soul, and spirit, as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto Him, which is our reasonable service. "Learn of me," says the Lord; "for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Rom. xii. 1; 1 Thess. v. 23; Matt. xi. 29.

"Lord Jesus, could we always keep
Our eyes on Thee, the living way,
We then, though now but wand'ring sheep,
Should no more err, or go astray;
But wheresoe'er Thou goest, we
Would follow on most cheerfully."

EXTRACTS

FROM

THE CORRESPONDENCE OF BESSIE.



“I LIKE a faithful friend ; the wounds inflicted being so many channels for the grace of God to flow in. Such was my darling sister, and I miss her very much on that account.”

“ Truly, Satan goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. He frightened me with stories of the desert, and my own weakness. My dear old bishop seemed to stand before me . . . as though I could repose amongst the slaves of error. So foolish was I, and wayward, I may truly say with Asaph, ‘As for me, my feet were almost gone ; my steps had well nigh slipped.’ Oh, pray for me, that I may be strengthened, and enabled to go forward, looking unto Jesus !

Once we take the eye off Him, like Peter on the water, we begin to sink. And, oh ! should we not ere now have perished, if our Jesus had withdrawn His watchful care from us for *one moment*? He may have seemed to slumber, when, in sinful unbelief—

“ ‘Dismayed, we gazed upon the waves,
Listened to the tempest’s roar, and, trembling,
Thought about our fragile bark ; forgetting
That on board Almighty power was resting ;’

which, though unseen, we knew was exercising its restraining influence.’ ”

In encouraging another to bear faithful witness for Christ, she says :

“ Oh, yes, I know full well the pain of wounding others ; but I trust it will be ultimately for their good ! Think of this ; it is to me a sweet thought. Oh, be strong ! . . . Men do not light a candle to put it under a bushel. . . . May you have grace to keep your eye on Jesus, ‘the Author and Finisher of faith ; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame.’ ‘If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him.’ ” Heb. xii. 2 ; 2 Tim. ii. 12.

“If you are not already well acquainted with the prophecies, pray read what I send you on the subject. It was written by a truly Christian man, of ‘sound mind,’ who has given much attention to prophetic Scripture. ‘Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.’ I believe the present sad condition of the Church is chiefly owing to her sinful disregard of the sure word of prophecy, whereunto she would do well to take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place.” 1 Thess. v. 21; 2 Peter i. 19; 1 John iii. 3.

“Should they wish you to remain in ‘Egypt,’ think of Moses, of what he sacrificed, and how he suffered. Follow his example, and *you* also will be strengthened to endure, ‘as seeing Him who is invisible.’” Heb. xi.

“Your words concerning them who are asleep came quite in season. I was at the time in heaviness through manifold temptations. Oh, how delightful to behold, as in a telescope, the coming glory! The dreary waste that intervenes is then lost sight of, and the way-worn pilgrim, freed from Egypt’s thralldom, presses forward, longing

to set foot upon the goodly land. Oh, may we run the appointed race with patience! Yet a little while, we shall see Jesus. 'Behold, I come quickly;' what a cheering answer to the cry of His afflicted people. Soon the pealing trump shall summon us to meet Him, whom not having seen we love, and in whom, though now we see Him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable." Rev. xxii. ; 1 Peter i. 8.

"The change of air has done me good already. I feel less languid than I did at —, and hope next week to be again engaged in active service. Dr. H. says I shall be quite well shortly. If this be indeed the case, I hope I shall be thankful; but I pray not that I may recover strength before I go hence, and am no more seen. I do most earnestly desire to 'depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better.' Phil. i. 23. Perhaps this is a selfish feeling. . . . That place of peaceful safety, where alone the tempest-tossed soul can really cast anchor; where alone it is secure from the rocks that surround it; and, oh, sweet thought, 'the night is far spent'! But do we indeed wish for day? I believe there

must be something very wrong about us if we cannot say, 'Come, Lord Jesus.' This has been impressed upon my mind especially of late, and now, I trust, I am amongst the number of those happy saints who 'love His appearing.' And if I had a choice I would not have Him 'tarry,' no, not for an hour; I rejoice in the hope of being with Him."

"I can truly say my joy is 'unspeakable and full of glory' (1 Peter i. 8), and I believe the more we know of Him, whom not having seen we love, the greater will be our joy in the hope of His appearing; . . . till the morning without clouds, with its everlasting joys, bursts on our enraptured gaze, when we shall behold the Sun of Righteousness in unveiled glory."

"What a subtle thing is self. How often it misleads the Christian. When I feel an inclination to do any thing in any way according to the flesh, I tremble, lest it may be altogether contrary to the Spirit."

"It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when with Jesus we shall be like Him. It is but for 'a little

while;' soon shall we be taken up to heaven, there to dwell for ever.

“‘Fair distant land ! could now our eyes
But half its charms explore,
How would our spirits long to rise,
And live on earth no more !’

“Oh that we could at all times fully follow Him who pleased not Himself !”

“How blessed will be the time when we shall no more need prayer. I have had much comfort in the hope of it the last few days. It would be well to bear in mind, both in joy and sorrow, that we shall not be long in the wilderness.

“‘Soon shall close our earthly mission,
Soon shall end our pilgrim days,
Hope shall change to glad fruition,
Faith to sight, and prayer to praise.’”

“Nothing tries my head so much as writing, even on common-place subjects. I find it far more distressing than visiting the poor, reading to, and praying with them. This sort of work I have been doing lately, on a small scale ; but I trust I may say, without boasting, the Lord has been pleased to make me a blessing in more instances than one.”

“ Oh that we were less selfish, willing to spend and to be spent in the blessed service of our Lord, who gave His life-blood for us ! This is not the time for ease ; a rest *remaineth* for the people of God.” Heb. iv. 9.

Speaking of a trial, she says :

“ It is among the ‘ all things ’ that work together for our good. I trust it may be the means of inuring us to trial, for in the world we shall have tribulation. John xvi. 33. . . . ‘ Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee.’ Psalm lv. 22. His ear is ever open to His children’s cry. He is a present help in time of trouble. ‘ Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.’ O the depth both of the grace and wisdom of God ! how merciful are His thoughts, and marvellous His ways ! ”

“ How it nerves the timid soul for battle, to know that through Christ we shall be more than conquerors ; to be able to say, in full assurance of faith, I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to

separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans viii. 38, 39.

"To-day is the anniversary of my beloved sister's death. I feel unusually sad, but am not disconsolate; no, I have a cheering hope of *soon* rejoining her in heaven, in our Father's house, where we shall for ever dwell together."

"So 'the seed' has been sown, but who can tell whether 'by the wayside,' or in the 'good ground'? The day will declare it. Our business is to sow, leaving the result with God, who alone can give the increase. 'In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.'" Ecclesiastes xi. 6.

"Let us not look at the things which are seen and temporal, but at the things which are unseen and eternal; then the light affliction of the moment will not appear worthy to be compared with the far more exceeding weight of glory which it worketh for us. 'Lord, increase our faith.' What is faith? 'The substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.' This

is a truth on which I have been led to dwell with much joy, yea, with joy unspeakable, this morning." 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18.

"Let us not lose sight of that which is to come. Let us exhort one another daily, and so much the more as we see the day approaching (Heb. x. 25); that day when we shall meet the Lord, 'in whose presence' alone 'is fulness of joy.' Yes, *there* alone is bliss. . . . How every cup of earthly pleasure has a drop of sorrow mingled with it. In the Lord's presence *only* is fulness of joy."

"His position in this world seems dark and cheerless to the natural eye, but by faith he walks in the blessed light of his Father's smiling countenance. How much easier is it to bear the frown of our fellow-mortals than the frown of God."

"The Chief Shepherd shall ere long appear, and take us to be with Him in the green pastures, beside the still waters of unruffled peace. Blessed hope! It ought to be sufficient to sustain the most weary traveller."

"Sunday.—I have been to the throne of grace, the only place of escape from the

dark shadows of our own foolish thoughts ; the only refuge in time of trouble ; the only place to get our strength renewed. Isa. xl. 31."

"Let us seek grace to make use of the precious moments as they fly. Let us now sow seed, even should it cost us tears, which may produce such fruit as the Lord may look upon with approbation. Ps. cxxvi. 5, 6. But we must not be selfish. The One who hath left us an example 'pleased not Himself,' and He will make His grace sufficient for us, if we seek it ; and what would be half so blessed as the power to say, 'We delight to do Thy will, O God'?"

"Poor — is no more ; and sadly instructive, in the way of warning, has her end been. There was a feeble trust in her death, but *no joy* : the absence of which she attributed to want of communion with the Lord, wh. & she confessed she had neglected when in health, through overmuch attention to the things of time and sense."

" * * * God knoweth my heart's desire and prayer for them is, that they may know more of His revealed will ; that they

may grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour; that they may 'know' more of 'Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death.' Phil. iii. 10. It is only as we rise in spirit with our risen Head that we become practically dead to this world, which the Holy Ghost describes as being under the dominion of its god, Satan (2 Cor. iv. 4), willingly led captive by him, destined to destruction, and despising warning; just as in the days of Noah, who, while the ark was building, was a type of what all Christians ought to be at present; *i.e.*, 'a peculiar people,' witnessing against the evil in the world. How? By alliance with it? Nay, the commandment of the Lord is, 'Come out . . . and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing.' 2 Cor. vi. 17. Yet, alas! how many of His servants, in the face of this command, say, 'It is expedient to conform to the world.' There are others who, through ignorance of Satan's wiles, become entangled in its mazes, and, deceived by his devices, literally call evil good."

The following little tract was written for children by Bessie :

“THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

“JOHN X.

“IN the former part of this Gospel (chap. vi.) the Lord Jesus Christ had spoken of Himself as the life, and (in chap. viii.) as the light of the world ; but here He speaks of Himself in a different character, as ‘the Good Shepherd.’

“He does not call Himself the Shepherd of the world, but the Shepherd of the sheep.

“It is true that the Lord Jesus made the world, and that He rules over every thing ; but it would be a poor thing to know Him only as the Creator. To know Him as a Shepherd, and to be one of His sheep, will make you very happy.

“Jesus is not in the world now, neither is His sheep-fold in the world. He is in heaven, and His sheep-fold is there too. Heaven is the home of His sheep.

“Jesus is the Good Shepherd. He never did any one any harm ; yet wicked men

killed Him, and cast Him out of the world. But He always did what pleased God; so God raised Him up from the dead, and opened heaven to Him, and took Him up there. There He is now; and He is the door into heaven. John xiv. 6.

“We are all born in sin, and are not, by nature, fit for heaven. But those who come to Jesus, and believe in Him, are washed in His precious blood, and so are made fit for heaven, and go in by Him who is the door.

“What a happy thing it is for poor sinners, that Jesus is the door into heaven. He is the only door. He is the door to let in those who come to Him; and He is the door to shut them safely in when there. There they are, for ever safe with Jesus.

“It is said of the Good Shepherd that He calls His own sheep by name, and leads them out. So when Peter, James, and John, and the other disciples, were called, they were *called out* from the religion of the world, and from a religion of form, to worship God in spirit and in truth.

It is something like this now. People say they belong to the fold of Jesus, and

call themselves Christians, but they do not follow Jesus, because they are not His sheep; if they were His sheep, they would hear His voice, and follow Him. Jesus, the Good Shepherd, knows His own sheep, and calls them all by name: they hear His voice, and follow Him.

“Two children may be sitting close to each other, hearing the word of God read, or spoken, to them, but they may hear it very differently. One may hear it as the Word of God; that is, as the voice of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, calling to him, and may listen to it, and obey it, and be called out of every thing here below—out of sins—out of pleasures—out of every thing his heart was full of before.

“The other may not listen to the Word, nor believe it is the voice of Jesus calling to him, and remain just the same as before.

“I wish you to pay attention to those words—*called out*, which I mentioned just now to you.

“The sheep of Jesus have two characters; the first is, that they are called out; the second is, that they hear His voice and follow Him.

“They are called out to forsake and give up the things which they formerly pursued and delighted in.

“This is what is called taking up the cross, which is sometimes very hard.

“We do not naturally like to do this; and there are many who would persuade us not to be so foolish as to give up the world; but be sure that this is the voice of the stranger, which you must not follow.

“There are plenty of strangers and robbers in the world, and many wolves in sheep’s clothing which look very like sheep, but they come only to lead the sheep astray. Suppose a lamb of Jesus heard a person say, that Jesus is not a Saviour; or that He is not God, but a mere man; that lamb would know that it was the voice of the thief and the stranger.

“Satan is the great thief. He comes to steal some glory from God, and some blessing from man. If he can get our hearts to love the world, he is very glad: he then tries to kill and destroy us, as he did Eve.

“Sometimes worldly relations do the devil’s work, by being very kind to young

Christians, and seeking to draw them into the world, and away from Christ.

“The wolf came in the person of Judas, but Jesus did not run away like a hireling whose own the sheep were not, but met him, and said, ‘Whom seek ye?’ And when they said, ‘Jesus of Nazareth,’ He said, ‘If therefore ye seek Me, let these go their way.’ Did not this show His great love? ‘Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.’ And this is what Jesus did; for knowing nothing else would do, He gave Himself up, and laid down His life for His sheep.

“Jesus, having died for His sheep, now shows His great love for them by watching over them as the Good Shepherd: if any sheep or lamb goes astray, He goes after it Himself, picks it up, and carries it home on His shoulders. The poor little foolish lamb may bleat and cry very much, yet He will not stop, but put it into the sheep-fold, because He loves it. If one is weak, He takes even more care of it than of the others, for He carries the lambs in His bosom. Isaiah xl. 11.

“All the sheep and lambs of Jesus are

very precious to Him, for He has bought them. You know that you value what you have bought, and paid, perhaps, a high price for. So Jesus says of those who follow Him, that they are 'His sheep,' and they are precious to Him.

"No man can say of any number of believers, 'My sheep,' or 'My flock;' not even the apostle Paul, for no man has bought them: the Lord Jesus alone can say, 'My sheep.' They are His in two ways: first, His Father gave them to Him; secondly, He purchased them. If He were to lose one of these sheep He would not be the Good Shepherd.

"Satan cannot take the least lamb away. But I will tell you what he can do, and has often done: he can scatter the sheep, if they will be foolish enough to let him; and he can frighten and distress them very much, whenever they are so foolish as to go astray from the fold. Indeed he is always watching for an opportunity to do this.

"All believers in Jesus are His flock and *His sheep*. It is true that Satan has been able to divide and scatter them very sadly; but still, the Good Shepherd cares for them,

and watches over them all ; and not one of them shall be lost, for no one is able to pluck them out of His hand. John x. 27-29.

“If a little child can say in his heart, ‘I believe in Jesus,’ even though it finds itself sinful, yet that little child may be sure that Jesus cares for it ; and may say, ‘I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon me.’

“No matter how needy you are, you have a mighty and a Good Shepherd, who is able to save to the uttermost all those who come unto God by Him, and trust in Him.”

[The foregoing little paper forms one of sixteen small books bearing the title of *Gospel Stories*, all written by the same lady, and sold by the publishers of this volume, at fourpence per packet of sixteen, and in a cloth-bound book at one shilling. They are also translated into the Norwegian and Swedish languages. At least a million-and-a-half have been sold in the English language.]

H Y M N.

How carefully the shepherds keep
Their flocks within their sight ;
So Jesus watches o'er His sheep,
And guards them day and night.

The shepherd numbers twice a day
The flock beneath his care :
He knows if any go astray,
Or sick, or dying, are.

So Jesus reckons one by one,
And numbers all His sheep :
He knows if but a lamb is gone,
For He doth never sleep.

The flocks of men are bought with gold ;
And grass is all their food ;
The sheep and lambs of Jesus' fold
Are purchas'd with His blood ;

Their food is living and divine ;
Of heav'nly things they eat:
The blood of Christ supplies them wine,
His flesh affords them meat.

O Lord, who would not wish to be
One of that happy band,
Who know Thy voice, and follow Thee,
Led by Thy gentle hand ?

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