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FREEMASONS' HALL ADDRESSES.

BY THE REV.

JOSEPH DENHAM SMITH.

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NO. 5.  
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—
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FIFTH ADDRESS.

THE Fifth and last Address of the Series was delivered, at Freemasons' Hall, on Thursday, November 21st, at two o'clock. The attendance was, if possible, greater than on the last occasion.

The proceedings were commenced by singing Hymn 99—

“ My soul, amid this stormy world,
Is like some fluttered dove ;
And fain would be as swift of wing,
To flee to him I love.”

MR. SMITH then read part of the 22nd Psalm, and proceeded with the following observations on the sufferings, ascension, and restoring grace of the Lord Jesus:—

These words so evidently indicate the Lord Jesus as the speaker, that there can be no doubt as to the identity. This leads me to remark, how rejoiced one's soul is to obtain such a glimpse of our Lord's experience as we have in this Psalm. If one had only the history which the Evangelists give, we should have known but little of the Lord's *secret* sorrows. The fact is, the Evangelists give us, if I may so speak, the outward or visible history; but in the Psalms, you find Jesus himself telling out

his own inward sorrows and sufferings. Ah! beloved, if *you* have sorrows and sufferings on account of sin, come to Jesus, and learn, in *His* groans, and pangs, and woes, how yours can be assuaged. I bless God for these hallowed and wondrous portions of Scripture, which so display the Lord Jesus himself.

The Evangelists tell us what Christ said to his mother, and what he said to the dying malefactor, and what the Roman soldiers did to him, and what the mob said—how they cried out, “Away with him! crucify him!” They tell of the scourge, the gall, the banter, the irony, and all the other acts of his foes. They tell of the thorny crown, and pierced hands, and feet, and side. They tell of the audible plaint which fell from his sacred lips—“*Eli, Eli—my God, my God—lama sabachthani—why hast thou forsaken me?*”

But here, in this Psalm, I listen to the beatings of his heart. *This* is Jesus, telling beforehand the reality—the solemnity of his death—the anguish of his mind—the dread and grief of his soul concerning the cup of wrath for sin, which he had to drink even to its dregs. It was sin, not his own, but ours, which oppressed him. God was afflicting him for sin when he became *sin*—a Sin-bearer—a curse for us. He well knew it all, and here he tells it. You understand me, dear friends. Oh! I bless those portions of His Word which tell me just his own thoughts.

How, as in a mirror, do we see Christ in all these Psalms—the 22nd, 23rd, and 24th? In this Psalm you have the sorrows and sufferings of the sorrow-

ing one depicted; in the 23rd, you have *the rest* from suffering—the green pastures and the still waters; and in the 24th, you have *the ascended one*—“Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in.” In the 32nd Psalm you have *the confessing one*; and when he says, “I acknowledge my transgression and my sin,” it is not his own, but ours. Again I say, what love is this that employs itself thus for us, and gives us its thoughts and sorrows on our account! May God grant that when you and I come to die, we may drink deep consolation from this 22nd Psalm, and may its shadows destroy our shadows of death. There you will hear the Saviour speak: “My bones look and stare upon me. . . . They pierced my hands and my feet, . . . they parted my garments.” . . . They gambled over his garments. The blessed Saviour had no property, no possessions to leave behind him but this one—the raiment in which he stood. I hardly know whether men or angels wove it, for it was without seam. We read of the glistening raiment on the holy mount, where he appeared in a heavenly robe, woven as if from a sunbeam—too pure for man—a robe of no earthly origin or manufacture. But this garment at the cross was, doubtless, mean and poor; yet over it did his murderers cast lots. They who hated him cast lots for it. Ah! if thou hast sorrows in this day, which cannot be assuaged, come and bathe those sorrows in his sorrows. Come, assuage thy griefs in his griefs. Come, mingle thy tears with his tears; and heal

thy wounds with his wounds. So far, as to this wonderful portraiture of his sufferings and sorrows.

But the sufferings and sorrows are succeeded by rest and joy. After death, resurrection. Hence, then, the brighter portion of this Psalm, beginning with the verse, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren." In the 16th Psalm we find Jesus saying: "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." Even those pierced hands were to rest in hope. Yes, those hands which were pierced down here, will, throughout eternity, appear, as it were, perforated with glory. "My flesh," he says, "shall rest in hope"—"thou wilt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." Then here—"I will—as a risen one—declare thy name unto my brethren." Blessed be his name; he never forgets what he says. When he rose from the dead he longed to declare the fact to his brethren, and would not linger with Mary Magdalene, but said, "Touch me not;" as if he had said, "Touch me not *now*; you will have ample opportunity of certifying it to your affections that I am risen;" for "I am not yet ascended to my Father and your Father—to my God and your God. Go and tell *Peter*." Oh! the love that was in that message to the cursing, the lying disciple, who had gone away from the cross with a misery which he could not endure! "Go," said Jesus, "lest that heart of Peter's should break." Now Peter was a backslider.

You know, beloved, the difference between a backslider and an apostate. The apostate is guilty of the deliberate renunciation of Christ, whilst the

backslider, notwithstanding his sins, has affections divinely created, and, accordingly, sympathy with the Spirit of God. It is sin that grieves the Spirit of God, and the Spirit prompts the cry, "Ah, Lord God! my soul is grieved, and I am miserable until thou come and give me peace." Did you ever think how it was the Lord put poor Peter—backsliding and repenting Peter—into rest again? He did it in the following manner:—Peter had said—"I go a-fishing." Now, that was, perhaps, as much as if he had said—"Jesus is crucified, and we are left alone. I have sinned against him. Yes—I have cursed and sworn that I did not know him. I will go again to my old employment—fishing." "Oh!" says Jesus, "I will bring Peter to know something better than that;" and, appearing to him in his resurrection body, as he stood on the shores of Galilee, he asked the disciples had they any meat? "They answered Him, No."

Now, Jesus had provided meat and bread. Jesus said, "I will restore Peter; he shall come and dine with me." Oh! if you have wronged a believer, or some believer has wronged you, seek to overcome him with love. The way to drive the evil out of a man who has injured you, is to break him down with kindness. This is what Jesus did when he asked Peter to "come and dine." He broke bread with one who had wronged him, and it was enough to soften and subdue poor Peter's heart.

But what more did Jesus? He added words to deeds. And what words! Said he, "Lovest thou me, Peter?" Peter said he did. Jesus asked a

second time, "Lovest thou me?" and a third time, "Lovest thou me?" Peter replied, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." It was as if Peter had said, "Lord, nobody else knows. John and James know that I cursed and swore, but *they* can hardly know that I love thee. The maid in Herod's hall heard me three times swear that I did not know thee, and *she* could hardly know that I love thee. But, Lord, *thou*—*THOU* knowest all things." Oh, it is well for thee, poor sinner, that Jesus knows thee, and that thou hast to do with him! If Peter had been living in these days, I believe some would have put him in quarantine for long months, if not years, for swearing and lying. They would not have admitted him to the Lord's table. The Lord forbid that his table should be otherwise than guarded. *His* table! You cannot be too careful about the character of those who sit at it. But this I say, that Jesus Christ receives many a sinner a thousand times sooner than some of us will receive him. Peter could appeal to the Lord, that notwithstanding all his self-confidence and his fall, his heart was true to Him. Jesus blots out the remembrance of the past. He restores his soul, and restores him to his office—says to him, "Feed my sheep. Feed my lambs. You know what tenderness of spirit is now. You have had a torn heart, and you can deal with the bruised reed in tenderness."

Ah, let me ask my dear ministerial brethren present, whether they have thought of this commission of Peter's as growing to him out

of communion? whether *they* have been personally in fellowship with Jesus before going forth to preach the Gospel? Oh, may God grant that, in this sense, all of us, ministers and people, may be refreshed with Jesus and by Jesus, before we go forth to make known his love and grace. That is the true ordination, dear people, to have the heart filled with the love and grace of the heart of Jesus, and then to take from his own lips the commission to feed his sheep and his lambs. *Believers, saints*, are "the sheep;" and the "lambs" of Christ's flock are the *little ones*. Oh, those precious little ones—those newly-born ones! many of whom are here this morning, who, this day week, when we commenced here, were in ignorance of Jesus; and now may be said to be lambs in Christ's fold. May the Lord bless to us the reading of His own Word.

A large number of letters were then read, and the assembly joined in prayers and thanksgivings for mercies requested or acknowledged by the several writers, on behalf of themselves, their relatives, and their friends.

After announcing that arrangements were in contemplation for holding a few more special services in London, on some not distant occasion, and asking the prayers of the congregation in behalf of himself, for strength to support him in the midst of the work in Dublin,

Mr. SMITH proceeded to deliver the following

ADDRESS.

"While ye have the light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light." (John xii. 36.)

Let me ask you, beloved people, at the very outset, how hear ye these words? The Lord says, you *have* the light, and he plainly intimates that you *may not have the light always*. He also tells you what your duty is in regard to that light. "*Believe in the light.*" He tells you what the grand and glorious result will be if you believe in the light, namely, that you yourselves will be *the children of light*. Let us consider—

I. The truth stated:—*We have the light.*

I will first show you how they themselves, to whom our Saviour spoke, had the light. The Lord Jesus Christ was among them *as the Son of God*. What signs of his Godhead! Only God could raise the dead. It was he who had gone, for example, into the house of Jairus the ruler, and who said to the sweet form there lying in death, "*Talitha cumi—Damsel, I say unto thee, arise,*" when, in a moment of time, those eyes which had been closed in death, and which had been pressed by the loving lips of the mother, who sorrowed over her premature death, now opened at the sound of the voice of him who is "the resurrection and the life." Oh! the joy of that domestic circle when their child was restored—restored from nature's death, and perhaps from her death in sin—restored by Him

who is the sinner's *life*—the sinner's *light*; and they said, "Now draw back the shutters and let in the light of day, and tell all around that she that was dead is alive again."

And he it was, who, on the road to Nain met that widowed mother, following the corpse of her only son. It was he, who, standing by the coffin, said, "Young man, I say unto thee, arise;" and he that was dead rose up in the very place of death. He crowned that widow's heart with a joy she could never tell: she felt that she was in the presence of the Son of God, "the resurrection and the life." Never man spake like unto this man; for Elijah and Elisha spoke not in their own names, but in the name of the Lord, and the prophets of olden time wrought miracles in the name of the Lord; but He, the resurrection and the life, could say to corruption, "Give place;" and, putting in its stead the living trophy of his power, he shed the light of joy into the lone and desolate heart of this widow.

And when Martha said unto him, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died;" Jesus said to her, in all the calmness of self-contained omnipotence, and yet with all the sympathy of human tenderness, "I am the resurrection." "Oh," said Martha, "I know thou art. I know that in the last day my brother will rise again." Said Jesus, "No, I do not mean that." But Martha, like many other people, did not understand—did not want, perhaps, to understand; and so, instead of replying to our Lord, addressed herself to her sister, saying, "Mary, the Master is come, and calleth for thee." But Jesus had

not told her so. What he had told her was, that he was "the resurrection and the life;" and now onward they went—the Lord with these two sisters—one on either hand.

In passing, I may say, how beautiful is it when it is said that, "Jesus loved *Martha* and her sister." Many people say that Jesus loved Mary and her sister Martha; but that is not the text. It is as if Jesus was apprehensive lest Martha should feel herself low down in his love, instead of in the zenith of his regard, and on that account put Martha first. Not that he loved Martha more than Mary. No. The Marthas must not have it all their own way. Mary was a beloved disciple, but Martha is spoken of first in the text. What I mean to suggest is, that though more "cumbered," our Marthas (and many of us are Marthas) are still *loved*, and that grace, in speaking of us, even puts the cumbered ones first, lest they should be dismayed.

But, to proceed. They came to the grave of Lazarus. Some of the unbelieving Jews, who accompanied them, might have said, it was all very well for Jairus, the ruler, to say that Jesus had wrought a miracle in bringing his child to life. They might have said, "the life blood had not ceased to flow in her." And when they heard about the young man at Nain being raised from the dead, they might have said "the youth was in a trance. Who ever heard of a mechanic, like Jesus, raising the dead?" I wonder not it is said that "neither did his brethren believe in him." He had the garb of a common mechanic. He was despised and re-

jected of men. He was not like a flower, the humblest even; but was like a "root"—a dry unsightly root, not a root by the side of living waters, but a root "*out of dry ground.*" There was no form—no comeliness in Him for the eye of men unenlightened by God. Nor do I wonder at Jesus saying that no man (so alienated is man's heart from God) could come to him unless the Father drew him. I do not wonder that men, blind, and dark, and dead as they are, should have rejected him. I do not wonder at the divine saying:—"no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." But faith *can* say it, and does say it. Oh, may my God give a thousand hearts here to-day to see and understand the excellency of Jesus, to see his fitness to meet all their need, and to exclaim with delight, with Thomas of old, "My Lord, and my God"—and with the poet—

"Jesus, my God, I know his name,
His name is all my trust;
Nor will he put my soul to shame,
Nor let my hope be lost."

He is your hope.

"None *can* my hope destroy,
Jesus is mine."

And so the sceptical Jews, brethren, may have declared that Jesus had not raised from the dead Jairus's daughter, or the son of the widow of Nain. They might have explained it away, as I have described; but when they came to the grave of Lazarus, there could be no mistake. Martha objected to the removal of the stone, for by that time corruption had fostered itself upon that once loving and

loved form of their brother. But, oh! with what living power the Son of God said—"Lazarus, come forth!" He that was dead came forth! Yet was he bound with grave-clothes, as many of you, poor souls, are, immediately after conversion. Converted, but not happy, you cannot get rid of your doubts and fears; and oh, we come this morning with the heaven-attempered scissors of the truth to cut the cords of your grave-clothes, and to send you forth living men, by the power of the Spirit, rejoicing in a present salvation, and longing to do something for that precious Saviour who has redeemed you for himself.

Thus I might show you how in the wondrous *Godhead* of his nature he was a light amongst men. Says John, "We beheld his glory. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. He was in the world, and the world was made by him." Take away his *Godhead*, and the darkness is immoveable and impassible.

But though he was God, he was also *man*. He took on him the seed of Abraham. He was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, and suffered for sin. *Man* had to die. He became man, and died. He died for man, and by death redeemed man. He was among men *as the son of man*. How he loved that name! And how I love to hear the recurrence of it upon his lips, showing how he loved that name. He said, "The Son of *man* can forgive sins;" "the Son of *man* came to seek and to save that which was lost." And do not think he has dropped that name now

that he is in heaven. Ah, no! when he spoke of the glory of the kingdom of God, he said—not, “The Son of *God* shall come in his glory,” but, “The Son of *man* shall come.” He does not lose his humanity in yonder heaven. No, but God hath highly exalted it. He is one with his saints. He is the head, we are the members; and we are one with him. The Son of *man* shall come in his glory; the once marred countenance shining like the sun of the heavens; the hands that were pierced, yes, the very wounds, refulgent with glory. Those feet that were nailed down upon the wood will come in glory—their foot-prints we shall follow, for we shall follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth; meanwhile we go to Him in heaven—

“The King, there, in his beauty
Without a veil is seen;
It were a well-spent journey,
Though seven deaths lay between.”

When on earth he had all the griefs, sorrows, and necessities of man. Weary and worn, he had not wherein to rest. The beast of the forest had his lair, in which to lie down when the shadows of night fell; and the worn-out wave had a shore of destination, whereon to sing its lullaby of rest. “The foxes had holes, and the birds of the air had nests, but the Son of man had not where to lay his head.” Mark this, beloved. He was down here as God—as man. “*God manifest in the flesh.*” But for that manifestation of God, we should never have known him as he is.

If it had not been for him, "*the light of the world*," we should not have had light. Yonder sun, travelling towards the western horizon, gives us natural light; and if it were not for that sun we should be in the dark—our cities, fields, wharves, and warerooms, would be shrouded in darkness. Calm is his soft radiance over this solemn assembly. Ah, what a faint image is it of him who is "*the light of the world*!" To me Jesus has been the light of salvation. I should never have known God, had it not been for Jesus; but in him I see *God* to be love, for *God* it was who gave His only-begotten Son that he might take away sin. Oh, the unfathomable love of God, that would take a poor, guilty sinner to His bosom, and make him fit for Himself by the cleansing power of the blood of Christ! And I should never have known God's unalterable truth, had it not been for Jesus. God said, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." And when Jesus took the place of the guilty, with the cup of wrath in his hands, such was God's unalterable truth, that even he, though he said "If it be possible let this cup pass from me," could not alter it. Ah, no; "the soul that sinneth it shall die." And if Jesus comes in the place of the sinner, he must die; to save the guilty he must take the place of the guilty. "He gave his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair." And he drank the cup of wrath against sin down to the very dregs; so that now, looking into it, I see an empty cup, that is, empty of wrath, but full of life—a cup of salvation—a cup of divine

acceptance, and a cup of heavenly redemption. I take that cup and look into it, and I see all its golden glories sparkle with light and life; and, as I gaze into it, I see righteousness, redemption, acceptance, reflected from its sparkling lustre. Oh, beloved, look into that cup, and take it as a cup of salvation, and you will have rest and peace to your own souls.

If it had not been for Christ, who is "the light," I should never have known the terrific nature of sin. Never, till you know the death of Christ, can you know what sin is. Sin, looked at in the light of the Gospel, becomes hateful to the believer in Jesus Christ. Some of the very shot that pierced the bodies of our brave countrymen in India have been brought over to this country. Ah, when I speak of this, I speak softly and solemnly, for there are some here to-day who have their precious dead lying in Cawnpore, Delhi, Lucknow, and places of similar interest—places invested with gloom, and a renown which I do not describe.

Now, when a bullet that has pierced the body of a loved one is brought home, and taken to the sister, or wife, what does she do with it, think you? Does she say "Precious bullet—I love thee. I will gild thee with gold, and I will make a chain of silver or gold and hang thee about my neck?" No. She says, "Sad bullet, horrible bullet." Instead of hanging it about the breast she says, "Away with it—that ball of death." And so, ever since I saw the cross where sin nailed Christ to the tree, I say, "Cursed sin, horrible

sin." I say, "Mortify it, mortify it." Oh; they lie against us, that say that the truths we preach are not sanctifying truths. They lie against God's blessed truth that tell us this; they lie against the cross, yea, against Christ himself.

"His dying crimson, like a robe,
Spreads o'er his body on the tree;
Now am I dead to all the globe,
And all the globe is dead to me."

And how can I love either the world that rejected him, or the dark Golgotha and Gabbatha where he was rejected. The cross was the world's instrument of rejection. I had never known *the world* but for Christ—its hate, its sin, its enmity to God.

"It was the sight of thy dear cross
First weaned my soul from earthly things,
And taught me to esteem, as dross,
The mirth of fools, and pomp of kings."

And I had never known the righteousness of God had it not been for Christ, the light. Christ is the righteousness of God. And, oh, dear anxious souls, here is a thought of comfort for you. God's love wants the sinner up in heaven. Says God, a sinner in heaven will be a brighter mirror of all my attributes of justice, mercy, love, truth, and judgment against wickedness, than an angel in heaven. He will sing more loudly, he will be more allied to me, says the Saviour—more truly and gloriously allied to me as a member of my body, than an angel. An angel will be but a servant; but a believing sinner will be part of the bride—will be a

member of the bridegroom's body. But, says God, in His righteousness, I have sworn in my wrath that sin cannot enter into my rest. The sinner cannot be saved, then, but through righteousness : the righteousness of God. And oh! wonderful—it is “*grace reigning through righteousness*” that saves man. There is the sinner with his sins upon him ; but God, in His righteousness, (and the righteousness of God, you know, is that which makes all He does consistent with Himself, and includes the exercise of all the great moral attributes of integrity, truth, love, justice) God says, “I will take the sin from the sinner. Sin cannot enter into my rest; I will therefore take the sin from the sinner, and I will put it on the Son of my love; and I will place the weighty condemnation, I will put the curse of sin, upon him.” And so, sin being put away by Christ, the sinner is brought up into the presence of God without sin. There is no sin, as a condemning power, and consequently there is no condemnation; and consequently, again, there is no punishment; and consequently, again, there is no purgatory; and consequently, again, there is no hell for the sinner who believes. Do you understand, dear friends? This righteousness of God is imputed to faith. “He that knew no sin, became sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” Oh sinners, forget yourselves ; but think of him, *the righteousness of God*.

And now I say to you, dear people of London, and you who have come up to this meeting from the belt of towns around, I say to you all, in the

name of the Lord Jesus, that you have, in the truth, the light amongst you this day. You have the glorious light shining on all these great questions. You have Jesus lifted up before you to-day—Jesus, who is the light of the world. So far, then, as to the first part of our subject. I will be very brief on the second; which is to consider—

II. *The truth implied.*

The Lord implies that you may not have the light long. “*While ye have the light,*” says he, “*believe in the light.*” Now, beloved, let me say that there are many blessings we once had, that we have not now. There are many blessings some of us now have, that we may not have long.

He who is talking to you, can look back a few years to childhood. But where is childhood? Childhood is vanity. Written upon childhood are the words, “*Passing away, passing away, passing away!*” And many of you who are here may say, Where are the days of our happy childhood? We had them once. We have them not now. They are gone for ever. Some of you can remember the time when yours were the vigorous limbs of youth, and stalwart manhood. But youth and manhood are now flown by; written upon youth and manhood was the sentence, “*Passing away, passing away, passing away!*” And those gray hairs of yours, which, God grant, may be a crown of glory to you, and those enfeebled limbs, which have brought you to the door of this sanctuary, they tell that life itself, like the autumn leaf, is falling to the dust, and

that you, poor souls, are upon the verge of that boundless eternity, which will be either a heaven of joy to you, or a hell of infinite despair.

There are some of you here to-day who have had dear friends who are gone—a sainted mother in heaven ; a dear husband, the stay and guardian of your youth ; a beloved wife who fell asleep by reason of death, who is not, for the Lord has taken her. Written upon the fondest object of life, even while thou hadst it, was the sentiment, “Passing away, passing away, passing away !”

Some of you, in past days, have had many a joy and many a pleasure, which when you have plucked them, instead of finding them unfading, perennial flowers, you discovered them to be shattered in the plucking, the leaves lying desolate around. On them, too, was written the sentiment “Passing away, passing away, passing away !”

And oh, these happy meetings in Freemasons’ Hall, that already I have learned to love so well—they, too, must pass away. I have thanked God for these meetings and for these letters, and the Lord knows I would that this were the beginning instead of the end, of these meetings. But upon these hallowed assemblies is written the same sentiment, “Passing away !” You see me speaking to you this afternoon ; you have never seen me before ; God knows whether you will ever see me again. But I tell you what God says—what he said, through His Patriarch, many years ago—one whose eloquent utterances on the stars, thirty centuries ago, astronomy cannot improve upon. Said

Job, "Thou wilt change my countenance and send me away." This is true of me. It is true of you. God will send us away. Yes, away! *Passing away*, **PASSING AWAY!** is written upon each one of us.

And now, to apply these truths ; the light that shines in the Gospel—the light of the glorious Sun of Righteousness, will pass away. Fain would we, like another Joshua, command that Sun to stand still while we preach the Gospel of a Saviour's love to perishing sinners.' May God the Holy Ghost look down upon us and apply His word !

"Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly dove,
With all thy quickening powers ;
Come, shed abroad a Saviour's love,
In these cold hearts of ours."

You have the light now, beloved, but will not have it always; you may not have it long. The very receptive faculty within you, you may not have long. Your reason, which is God's candle in the soul—you have it now, but you may not have it long. It may reel upon its throne and leave you a wreck, and the devils may say of you, "Ah! we have him now. He is dead in trespasses and sins, finally dead." You have now the power to think, compare, know, judge. Oh, then, I do again invoke the Spirit of God, without which no soul can be saved:—

"Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly dove,
With all thy quickening powers ;"

those "powers" by which the God-man, with all the signs of omnipotence and all the sympathy and

tenderness of humanity, said gently to the damsel, "I say unto thee, arise," and to the young man at Nain, "Young man, arise :"—

" Oh ! shed abroad a Saviour's love,
In these cold hearts of ours."

Ah, yes—a *Saviour's love* ! That "love," timeless, endless, boundless—the love he bore to perishing sinners when he died for them. Oh, to know—to *know* the love of Christ !

Oh, will not a thousand of you this morning repeat from your hearts your own Amen ?

III. And now *the duty that is involved here.*

"Whilst you have the light, *believe in the light.*" The devil never was so busy as now. He does not like the words, "only believe." Whilst you have the light, *believe*—"Believe in the light." It is a glorious thing that this gospel of faith is preached now to so many multitudes. From the Land's-end to John-o'-Groat's—from the dreary cliffs of Connemara to the white coasts of England—the cry is raised, Believe ! only believe ! Brethren, there is not between the two covers of the Bible any warrant for doubt. Oh, if one could only get the doubting out of people ! You know, if one can only make a hole in a wall the light will find its way in. You do not want to entice it in, or to have an act of parliament to bring it in, or navvies to work it in. You have only to make a breach, and in comes the glorious ray. Oh, for a breach to-day in all your hearts, then would faith come in. That is what I want. I want to get the wretched doubts out.

You cannot expect faith and doubt to occupy together in unity. Oh, no. There may be strange combinations in nature. When the oil ran out of the burning warehouses into the Thames the other day, and the flame caught it, it really seemed as if the Thames were on fire; but fire and water will not blend; so, doubt, having possession, will never allow faith to have free breathing-room in its own citadel. Never. They cannot live together. But there is not in all the Bible any warrant for doubting. The Lord never said, "Doubt," or "whilst ye have the light, come up on the dark stairs of doubt." Man tries to get Christ by going up two steps. Before believing, he wants to have deeper feeling; then he wants to believe in his belief—to have the right faith instead of the right *object*, which is simply *Christ*. These steps lead to doubting; and beyond, there is no step save despair. You can never get any higher. Oh, may God grant that the sledge-hammer of His truth may just knock these steps down.

Where are you now? Ah! in the presence of God—it is the blessed Comforter Himself—it is the Word—the Spirit—who says, "While ye have the light, *believe in the light*." Just as you are—a sinner, a hardened, condemned, lost sinner—believe. Only believe. As to the first step, if you want feeling, go to the 22nd Psalm; if you want deeper feeling, go to that Psalm again. Ah, beloved, what if thy Lord had not felt thy sin? Wouldst not thou have had to groan bitterly in sufferings for ever? As to the object, faith, like

the eye, looks not on itself; it looks *on Christ*: it sees Christ dying for our sins, raised again for our justification. This Lamb, then, that was slain, and is gone up in perfectness before God, faith sees as my light, my life, my salvation.

And then, if there be no warrant in the Bible for doubting, there is none for procrastination. The Lord does not say, "Some time *soon* believe in the light," but "*whilst ye have the light, believe.*"

I know the case of a young lady who had her deep convictions. She went home and told them to her mother, but her mother did not understand convictions. She told her daughter that she must go into the world, as the word is. The mother thought that religion was never meant to make people gloomy, and so, indeed, it never was; but religion was never meant to give ease to a soul till that soul finds it in Jesus. Take care what you do, beloved, with your convictions. This child was taken into the world of miscalled pleasure, and along with that her convictions ceased; but, being of a fragile nature, she became ill, and was, before long, brought to her dying hour; and, as death was putting the last mortal hue upon her sad face, the child, with a feeble, dying utterance, said: "Dear mamma, when I am dead, and in my coffin, and you lay me in the grave, let there be no head-stone or tomb-stone over my grave. I would not like my name over my grave. But when they have uttered the last words over my grave, and you come away into this room, will you open that wardrobe? There you will see my last ball-dress And,

mamma, when you see that ball-dress, you will see the sign of *your sin* and of *my doom*."

Oh, dear hearers, take care what you do with your convictions. You have them now, you may not have them long. They are passing away, passing away, passing away!

I conclude, then, dear people, by once again imploring the Holy Spirit of God to quicken in you these words about my blessed Saviour. There is a glorious promise you see here, which I might, had I time, have spoken of at length. Thus it is. If ye believe in the light, *ye shall be the children of light*. Ye shall have divine knowledge, and grace, and sanctification. You shall be in the light as God is in the light—"unblameable and unreprouable in His sight." You shall see His face in righteousness. You shall have a practical, personal holiness down here in accordance with the light and life above, and, my friends, you shall have heaven itself. There is no night there. We are going home, where there will be no sorrow. Those who believe in the light shall be "the children of light." May God grant it *now* to you. The Lord grant it.

At the conclusion of the above Address part of the congregation left. The remainder, comprising persons who, according to Mr. Smith's invitation, acknowledged to having received spiritual benefit from the services, continued in the Hall for about half-an-hour longer, singing some parting hymns, and listening to a brief and affecting farewell address from Mr. Smith on the words, "Stand fast in the Lord." The

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scene was a deeply affecting one, and will long be remembered.

The following letters, selected from many others, indicate the happy results of this series of meetings:—

One writes—"I cannot tell you the boundless blessings I have received. My heart is full of gratitude to my Heavenly Father for leading me to hear you, and for bringing your words with such saving power to my soul. I have been all my life under religious training and influence, for my parents are devoted servants of the Lord, and about two years ago I began to think seriously of my soul's salvation; but I have gone on in fear and trembling, wishing to love Jesus—wishing to serve him, but finding sin too strong in me—having no assurance of salvation, no joy, no peace, and, as you will easily believe, far from happy. Oh! the blessed contrast now! Now I feel Jesus to be *my own* precious Saviour. I feel, in his strength, strong to fight against the evil of my nature. I am assured of my acceptance in Him, and that all my sin is *now* put away through his all-sufficient sacrifice. As I listened to you (on Thursday) how my heart bounded with joy!—you explained to us so simply how to come out of ourselves into Jesus. And now all my thought is no longer '*just as I am,*' but '*just as he is.*' Oh! those precious words! From this time Jesus shall be my '*all in all*;' and, if tempted to look at myself, at my sins, my shortcomings, I will think '*just as He is,*' and so find comfort and strength to go on my way.

"Unbelief has kept me so long from Jesus, but now all doubt is gone. I *know* whom I have believed.

"God bless you for what you have done for me! I *can't* thank you. May He reward you a thousand-fold! Will you pray for me that I may be kept in this joyful consciousness of His presence and His love—that I may have strength to resist sin—that I may grow every day more like Jesus—never, never grow cold in His service—and that I may be a blessing to those around me? I am so very happy, my heart is singing all day

long. Those blessed 'Times of Refreshing Hymns,'—how sweet they are to me!"

Another—" * * * Your labours amongst us were not in vain. The service at Freemasons' Hall (on Tuesday evening) was blessed to two precious souls living in the same house of business as myself; and my own soul was much quickened and refreshed. Much prayer had been offered for this house previous to your visit; the result of that evening's services was the commencement of the answer, for since then the Lord has been amongst us. Of a truth, we have good evidence of *ten* who now sing with joy, '*Jesus is mine.*'"

Another, a Minister—"It was my privilege to attend those precious services in Freemasons' Hall, and I feel that I must write to tell you what a blessing my soul realized. Within the last three years God has given me some 200 souls in this town, but lately, although the congregation is good as ever (some 800), yet the spirit of revival seems to have gone down. I went to your meetings seeking a blessing. I sent up a request that you would pray for my congregation. I know that I got a blessing myself, and believe that my people are now reaping the benefit. On the Lord's day following I introduced your little Hymn-book, and I believe I preached with that simplicity and earnestness that, by God's blessing, seemed to arouse the people to a sense of their privileges. Inquirers are again rising up, a spirit of love is prevailing, and many are anxiously inquiring. Truly to God be all the glory. I earnestly entreat the prayers of the dear friends in Dublin and Kingstown, that God would grant us a great awakening in——.

"The Lord bless you, my dear brother, and fill your heart with joy, and still honour you in making you the messenger of good to many souls."

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