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Initials: AN





# "MIGHTY TO SAVE:"

[ISAIAH LXIII. 1.]

OR

CHRIST FOR ALL THE WORLD,

AND

ALL THE WORLD FOR CHRIST.

BY THE

R. W. ALEXANDER BALLOCH GROSART,

*First United Presbyterian Church, Kinross;*

*Author of "Little Sins," &c.*

*Isabella.*— . . . . . "Alas! alas!  
WHY ALL THE SOULS THAT WERE, WERE FORFEIT ONCE;  
AND HE, THAT MIGHT THE VANTAGE BEST HAVE TOOK,  
Found out the remedy: How would you be,  
If He, which is the top of judgment, should  
But judge you as you are? O think on that;  
And mercy then will breathe within your lips,  
LIKE MAN NEW MADE."—

SHAKESPEARE, *Measure for Measure*, II. 2.

"How poor! how rich! how abject! how august!  
How complicate! how wonderful is man!  
How PASSING WONDER He who made him such."—YOUNG.

"One place alone had ceas'd to hold its prey;  
A form had press'd it and was there no more;  
The garments of the grave beside it lay,  
Where once they wrapp'd Him on the rocky floor.

*He only with returning footsteps broke  
Th' eternal calm wherewith the tomb was bound;  
Among the sleeping dead alone He woke,  
And bless'd with outstretched hands the host around."*

V. (MRS CLIVE.)

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1863.

Lead, kindly Light, amid th' encircling gloom,  
Lead Thou me on ;  
The night is dark, and I am far from home ;  
Lead Thou me on ;  
Keep Thou my feet ; I do not ask to see  
The distant scene ; one step enough for me.

I was not ever thus, nor pray'd that Thou  
Shouldst lead me on ;  
I loved to choofe and see my path ; but now  
Lead Thou me on !  
I loved the garish day, and, spite of fears,  
Pride ruled my will : Remember not past years !

So long Thy power has blessed me, sure it still  
Will lead me on  
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till  
The night is gone,  
And with the morn those angel faces smile,  
Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile !

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN.

“ Rest, weary soul !

The penalty is borne, the ransom paid,  
For all thy sins full satisfaction made ;  
Strive not to do thyself what Christ has done,  
Claim the free gift ; and make the joy thine own ;  
No more thine anxious heart with guilt and fear distressed,  
Rest, sweetly rest ! ” —

WITHDRAWN FROM  
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H. L. L. (Sir ROUNDELL  
PALMER'S "Book of Praise." 1862.)

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Initials: AN.



TO

JOHN BICKERTON,  
WILLIAM BROWN,  
DAVID CHRISTIE,  
WILLIAM FOOT, *Tillyochie*,  
JOHN HONEYMAN,

PETER MALCOM,  
PETER MALCOM, *Dichendad*,  
JOHN MONCUR,  
JAMES ROBB,  
JAMES ROBERTSON,

AND

CHARLES SINCLAIR, *Cockairny*,

*My Session, and "true yoke-fellows,"*

*I dedicate*

THIS BOOK,

*With cordial regards and gratitude for their fatherly  
kindness and unfailing co-operation in every  
"work of faith and labour of love"  
ever since I came among them.*

"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. LET US, THEREFORE, as many as be perfect, BE THUS MINDED" (PHILIP. iii. 13-15).

*Their affectionate Minister "in the Lord,"*

A. B. G.



“ ‘Believe and repent.’ There goeth out an Almighty power with the ministerial word, and giveth power to believers. Where God commandeth He helpeth. His Word is clothed with an Almighty power. And therefore though we exhort men to do so and so, we say not they can do it themselves, but together with the speech there goeth a commanding power. The Spirit of God clotheth the Word. God speaketh according to our measure, worketh according to His own. We are men, and are to do things by reason and understanding. God speaks to us by way of open reason, and shewing grounds of reason. But when He comes to give strength and power to reason, all moral power or reason will do no good without inward strength; and therefore He works mightily, powerfully, and by way of persuasion and reason, and all to condescend to our manner, yet still all the while as a God. . . . *There is no man converted but his heart will tell him that God was beforehand with him.* God enforceth goodness on men; they willingly resist it. There is no man that withstandeth God’s workings, but his heart will tell him that the fault is altogether in himself. . . . *I will always hope well of them that carefully and diligently come within God’s reach. Those that will come within the power and reach of God, never despair of them.*”—Dr RICHARD SIBBES on 2 Cor. iv. 7 (Works, Vol. IV. Pp. 385, 386.)







## *PREFATORY NOTE.*

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HAVE placed in the title-page of this, my second venture in the proposed Series, the words, CHRIST FOR ALL THE WORLD, AND ALL THE WORLD FOR CHRIST, not only to thereby truthfully describe the contents of my book, but likewise to attract a chance lifter-up of it. I was much struck with an entry in the Diary of that holy and remarkable man Stephen Grellet, the French Quaker, bearing upon this. During his early spiritual struggles in the quagmire of unbelief, he tells us :—"I now took up again the works of William Penn, and opened upon 'No Crofs, No Crown.' The title alone reached to my heart."\* I do not know whither my small book may go. I shall be grateful if my title-page should be similarly used to woo any Christ-seeking soul to read of Him who is "MIGHTY TO SAVE,"—yea, "able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him."

\* "Memoirs of the Life and Gospel Labours of Stephen Grellet." Edited by Benjamin Seebohm. Third Edition. Two Vols. 8vo. 1862. Bennet. Pp. 16, 17.

In reference, again, to the secondary title, CHRIST FOR ALL THE WORLD, AND ALL THE WORLD FOR CHRIST, it can scarcely be needful to deprecate any perversion of this into any approach to the creed of what is called Universalism, or Maurice-ism. Holding, as I do, that the theology of Augustine and John Calvin (which, by the way, is something very different from what many so-called Calvinists misrepresent it, just as John Wilkes had to complain that he was not a Wilkite) is the grandest and most masculine, as well as truest, interpretation of the doctrines of the Bible, I believe, with all my heart, and soul, and conscience, the Pauline teaching concerning Election, Predestination, Sovereignty, and their cognates. As in the present book I have tried to shew, I consider these mighty truths to be not less necessary to the plan of Redemption, than are the correspondent laws of gravitation, &c., that gird and grasp the physical universe, to it. To my mind, refuse to God Election, Predestination, supreme Sovereignty, and Salvation, in beginning, middle, and end wholly of His grace, and you ungod God, to appropriate Edwards's weighty expression; while you may as well try to get the law of gravitation out of the universe, as Election out of the Bible, and specifically out of our earth as out of the Epistle to the Romans. But what I must maintain with intensest belief is, that in taking his stand upon these doctrines as the very truth of God, as interpenetrating the whole Bible in Old and New Testament alike, the minister of the gospel who would rightly discharge his office, must proclaim that in nowise do they hamper or hinder the universal offer of a present salvation to every man who will take it from the Lord Jesus Christ, on His own gracious terms.

Nay, that Election, Predestination, Sovereignty, and the like, ARE HARMONIZED IN THE DIVINE PLAN WITH THE PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY OF EVERY MAN WHO REFUSES SUCH OFFERED SALVATION. I may put it in this way :—I know not the man, out of hell, upon whom I may not press Christ as a Saviour ; I know not the man whom I have not a right to hold guilty who refuses to accept Him. Experience and the dark roll of the lost tell all too mournfully, that *de facto* myriads reject, neglect the “great salvation,” spurn the claim and perish. But that does not touch the thing *de jure*. Hence my words, CHRIST FOR ALL THE WORLD, by which I would bring “good news” to every man the wide world over whose ear and heart I might reach ; and ALL THE WORLD FOR CHRIST, by which I would assert my Master’s claim upon the allegiance and love of EVERY MAN. I am not careful to protect myself from any who, with these explanations, may misconstrue either my title-page or my teaching. I have no wish to stir the fires of controversy as to LIMITED or UNIVERSAL atonement. I look at the great and blessed truth *practically*. I believe the Atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ to be LIMITED to those who accept Him. I believe it to be UNIVERSAL to the extent of including EVERY MAN who does accept Him. And I also believe that it is a hideous distortion of the gospel to so preach of Sovereignty and Decree, of Election and Predestination, as for a moment to make these hinder a man’s believing and being saved. Man, every man, is GUILTY who disbelieves. Every man who perishes is SELF-DESTROYED. I know a mis-called Calvinist who prays habitually after this sort—“Lord, *if there be* any of Thine own elect before Thee, do Thou bless them.” I would shudder to so

pray. For I read, 1 Tim. ii. 1, "I exhort that . . . supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for ALL MEN."

There is another matter, correlative, about which it may be well here to say a few words. A disciple of Augustine and of Calvin, in the doctrines already named, I am equally, and with equal abfolutenefs and unreserve their difciple in regard to man's, univerfal man's, native-born and thorough depravity, and consequent need of heart-change, by the renewing of God the Holy Spirit. I hold with them that man is utterly unable, of himself, to "believe;" and fo throughout. "Faith," in my creed, is "the *gift* of God," not a thing to be excogitated by us. I find both fets of "doctrines" in my Bible. Of the *rationale* of the divine operation, I know nothing, becaufe nothing has been revealed. But, as in the other matters, I am fure that the demand from us to "believe," is harmonifed in the divine plan with INABILITY in ourfelves. ABILITY from Chrift by the Spirit affures me of that, *ab eventu*. I cannot tell how they touch; but I believe God can, and I believe I'll know by and by. For the prefent, I apprehend our part is to "hold faft" the revelation of a reconciled Father in Chrift, an ever-interceding Lord and Saviour, our prophet, prieft, and king, and an ever-prefent God, the Holy Spirit, accompanying the word wherever preached with His gracious *power*.

Here I would call two ancient witneffes to illuftrate and confirm what I have juft faid.

The great and good David Clarkfon, in his noble fermon entitled, "Chrift's Gracious Invitation to Sinners," from Rev. iii. 20, in combating the objection "that finners of themfelves

are not able to open, the heart being too fast shut," among other things replies—

"Sinners may do more than they use to do, than they are willing to do ; and therefore there is reason to call upon them. They cannot open : [but] though they can do nothing spiritually that tends thereto, yet, in a natural and moral way, they may do much more than we see done by any of them. Spiritual good is above the power of nature ; without Christ no such things can be done. But that which is morally good they may do, and that which looks towards opening, though it do not reach it. They cannot subdue the corruption of nature, nor of themselves crucify the flesh, &c., but they can avoid the outward acts of gross sins. Mere moral men we see can do it without the power of higher principles.

"They cannot free themselves from the miteries into which sin has plunged them ; but they can assent to a plain word discovering their misery, and consider, and think of it as they do of other things which are of consequence.

"They cannot enlighten their own darkened minds, nor mollify their hardened hearts ; but they can place themselves in the way where the light shines, and where mollifying influences are wont to fall, and where the Sun of righteousness has appointed to rise.

"They cannot meditate, nor read, nor pray, nor hear spiritually ; but they can attend the ordinances as they do any other ordinary business which concerns them.

"They cannot convey a healing virtue into the waters of the sanctuary, nor put themselves in when the waters are troubled, no more than the impotent man that lay at the pool

of Bethesda could do it; but they can wait at the pool, and there they are in the way where Jesus may meet them and cure their impotency, how long soever they have laboured under it.

“They cannot command a gale of wind, but they can put the vessel into the channel and spread their sails that they may be ready to take the advantage of a spiritual gale whenever it shall please the Spirit of Christ to bestow.

“It seems very hard, and they would make advantage of it who over-magnify the power of nature to the prejudice of the grace of Christ—that the Lord should condemn men for not doing that which they have no power to do. *But I take it for an undoubted truth, that amongst those who are in a capacity to use the means, He never condemns any who really do what they can to be saved.* NONE PERISH WHO DO THEIR UTMOST TO AVOID CONDEMNATION. Amongst the most zealous asserters of free grace, I find none that question it. None who shall be found at Christ’s left hand at the last day will be able to say truly, Lord, I used all the power that I had, to avoid the misery and prevent that dreadful sentence. It may seem harsh that any should perish for not opening to Christ when they were not able to open; but there are none perish who do all they can to open to Him.” \*

\* From the folio, 1696, pp. 473, 474. The above sermon, in common with the entire volume, having been published posthumously—under the editorship of John Howe and Mead—explains perhaps why no acknowledgment of indebtedness to a previously published sermon or treatise from the same text is not made. While Clarkson’s sermon overflows with his own profound and masterly thinking and richly scriptural illustration, it yet reveals a careful reading of Obadiah Sedgwick’s inestimable little volume, entitled “The Riches of Grace displayed in the offer and tender of Salvation

Again, the excellent John Bisco, in his "Glorious Mystery of God's Mercy, or a precious Cordial for fainting Souls" (1647), thus speaks of the demands of God from us :—

"The gospel promifeth and gives whatsoever it prefcribeth. Look, whatsoever God requires of His by way of duty, He hath promifed to give them in fuitable fupplies of fupernatural ability. As for inftance, *first*, He calls for a fpiritual obedience to all His commands, and He promifeth 'to write His laws in the hearts of His people, to make them able to walk in His ftatutes' (Heb. viii. 9, 10. ; Ezek. xi. 19, 20. ; and xxxvi.). *Secondly*, As the Lord requires newnefs and onenefs of heart, fo He promifeth to give this onenefs and newnefs of heart (Ezek. xi. 19). *Thirdly*, As He commands us to repent, to mortify fin, fo He hath 'fent his Son to give repentance,' and He hath promifed 'to fubdue our iniquities for us' (Micah vii. 19). *Fourthly*, God commands us 'to love Him with all our heart,' and He promifeth 'to circumfife our hearts that we may love Him with all our heart' (Deut. xxx). *Fifthly*, He calls for a fpiritual knowledge of God in Chrift, and He hath given His promife that all His 'fhall be taught of the Lord and know him from the greateft to the leaft.' " \*

Oh if men would but accept the two halves of the great completed circle—GOD'S ABILITY, MAN'S INABILITY—man guilty,

to poor Sinners, wherein is fet out the gracious behaviour of Chrift ftanding at the door and knocking for entrance ; the dutiful behaviour of finners in hearing Chrift's voice and opening to him ; and the comfortable event upon them both " (2d Ed., 1658, 18mo).

\* Pp. 227, 228. Nathanael Church condenses the above into the aphorifm, "Good inclinations and abilities are both from God alone : He wills the work and works the will."

depraved, worthless, helpless, *and* salvation by Christ, ministered by God the Holy Spirit in divine adaptation to man's need—without attempting the humanly impossible discovery of the *nexus* that unites the two. “A blind man lets himself be led by a child. So must we be brought to feel and to acknowledge to ourselves that we are blind; and then the time may come when a little child shall lead us.”\* Be it the prayer and endeavour of writer and reader to be brought to this; and then, in the spirit of Miss Charlotte Elliot's priceless hymn, we shall be able to say

“JUST AS I AM—without one plea  
But that Thy blood was shed for me,  
And that thou bidd'st me come to thee,  
O Lamb of God, I come!

“JUST AS I AM, and waiting not  
To rid my soul of one dark blot,  
To Thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,  
O Lamb of God, I come.”

With all my heart I would greet every reader and say, “I leave these things with you. Oh that you would often think of them, especially in soul distresses, and be ever drawing from them till your hearts be even brimful of heavenly consolation.”†

Intending this Series for ordinary English-reading readers mainly, I feel that it would be out of place to enter into any critical disquisitions or analyses of the original of the words upon which the several volumes are based, in, at any rate, the

\* Guesses at Truth. By the Brothers Hare. 2d Series, vol ii. p. 209. 3d Ed., 1855.

† Dr Jacob. “Sermons on Romans viii. 1-4.” 4to, 1672, p. 316.



body of the Sermons. Perhaps it may nevertheless be kindly conceded to me, that the same objection does not apply to any separate prefatory remarks or annotation that I may be led to make. These, being independent on the matter offered primarily to my own congregation, seem to admit of explanations which only those acquainted with the languages of the original may be able fully to follow. This caveat has partial reference to the present volume ; but in the third I must examine critically the Hebrew and Greek elucidated.

Looking at the passage and context from which I have fought to "publish" the "good news" of the Lord Jesus Christ as being

"MIGHTY TO SAVE,"

in their varying, and even conflicting, interpretations by scholars, I think it right, as I certainly deem it easy, to establish the exactitude and critical authority of my representation of Christ as the One who is thus "Mighty to Save."

(a.) *It seems to be very much forgotten by the Commentators*, even by men like Dr Joseph Addison Alexander of America,—whose Commentary on Isaiah, with all its deficiency of glow, forms an invaluable contribution of *materials* for its accurate exposition ; and who, as man, scholar, and divine, has received, as he deserved, the eloquent and pathetic praise of Dr Charles Hodge, *clarum et venerabile nomen*—that the book is a prophecy, and therefore speaks, in the substance of it, of things yet to take place. It is astonishing how the element of *futurity* is left out in Commentaries and Expositions bearing to be the productions of men in the "high places" of our Colleges and Churches ; astonishing how the prophets are looked at rather as servants

of God explaining the present—which was their office likewise—than as seers piercing the future. Ifaiah and Ezekiel have been robbed of their most Christful utterances by this perversely-ingenious system.\* I ask my readers to carry this principle with them to the reading of the prophets, viz., that the events and conditions of the people described are not delineations of what was existent when the prophet delivered his “burden,” but *future*. This, I apprehend, sweeps away, at once and Scripturally, all that miserable pottering over occurrences contemporaneous with the seer and his “burdens,” so frequent on the Continent and among ourselves.

\* I relegate to this footnote an example. We turn to Ezek. xxxiv. We read therein a very appalling and very mournful description of the worldliness and utter godlessness of the “shepherds” of God’s people. Expositors accumulate authorities to prove the then worldly and godless state of the priests and other servants of the sanctuary. They overlook, not merely the opening words, vers. 1, 2, “And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, *prophecy* against the shepherds of Israel, *prophecy*, and say,” but the *promise*-character of all the after-representations. A thoughtful consideration will satisfy that Ezekiel looks far onward into the future, and launches the terrible “woe” against *a state of matters that should then be*. Infinitely tender it was in God to place the warning so long on record, nor do I doubt it touched and saved many of the “shepherds.” But further, see how this elimination of the future abstracts the very life-blood of the prophecy. At ver. 23, a glorious promise gleams out of the “woes:” “I will set up ONE Shepherd, and He shall feed them, even my servant David: He shall feed them, and He shall be their Shepherd.” That is to say, in the so sad crisis, when all the appointed shepherds should be found faithless, One was to be “set up.” Well, the crisis came—the *very condition described*—while the Lord Jesus Christ was on the earth; and reverting to the promise, as He confronted worldly and godless Scribes and Pharisees, He

(b.) *By comparing Scripture with Scripture*, which is the best of all expositions, it appears to me very clear that, inasmuch as Edom is a synonyme for Esau (Gen. xxv. 30), and Esau for the adversaries of God's people (Amos i. 11; cf. also under 4), while Bozrah (represented by the modern El-Bufaireh, first visited by Burckhardt\*) was a chief city of Edom, it follows necessarily that the terrible conflict delineated in our text and context is a *prophetic* dilation of one of the many fmitings of Edom, wrapped up in the "woes" and denunciations of nearly all the prophets, and especially Obadiah. Stricken Bozrah

calmly said, "I am *the* good Shepherd," even that "One Shepherd" who in the fulness of time was to come. Read John x. 1-18, especially vers. 8, 10, 11, 14. However the *present* may have lent its hues, to the vivifying, illustrating, enforcing of the prophetic messages, it is to misf their innermost blessedness to stop short of Christ and the Gospel-Day.

I would ask if it were not better to render the Hebrew in Ezek. xxxiv. 23, not David, as a proper name, but as "Beloved," the often-recurring New Testament name of Christ. David (דָּוִד) means "Beloved," while David the king was *long dead in the time of Ezekiel*. I am aware that David is used as a type of his mightier Son, but never, I apprehend, after his death. Moreover, a like rendering of David in the Psalms brings out with precious vividness the designed antitype. I would observe, in conclusion here, that to apply the denunciations of Ezek. xxxiv. and elsewhere to the then "shepherds of Israel," makes them no longer prophetic, disconnects them from the promise of the "One Shepherd," and empties the Lord's own announcement—"I am *THE* good Shepherd"—of its blessed significance. I might shew how Isaiah, Zechariah, and other prophets, have been similarly darkened.

\* Travels in Syria, 407. Cf. article under Bozrah in Dr Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible." Also, Porter, in Kitto's Cyclopædia, as re-edited by Dr Alexander.

and desolated Edom furnish historic and indubitable attestation of the fulfilment of the threatenings. The warfare with Edom, in one of its unrecorded incidents, therefore, is the historic base of Ifaiah's setting-forth of the Lord as the dread Avenger of all who oppose Him in His people. (Cf. Ps. cxxxvii. 7.)

(c.) This being so, we have in the words, "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save," *a historic fact transfigured into a proclamation of the grace of the mighty Being delineated towards those who "turn" to Him.* The shadow is the measure of the light; and the preliminary "fury," and vengeance, and terror, and bloodshed of God as a "man of war," only the more magnify His love and mercy as a Saviour. Be it remembered that there had been a specific promise of such a Saviour (Isa. xix. 20). Earlier in Ifaiah He had pronounced judgment to be His "strange work" (xxviii. 21), whereas He *delighteth* in mercy" (Micah vii. 18). I know nothing finer than the outbeaming of the grace of God in the "mighty to save" of the otherwise dreadful verse.

(d.) Apart from the words as mere words, *the acts and attributes ascribed to Him* who is "mighty to save" separate the speaker from all merely human, from all created power, and lead us to Him whose "delights were with the sons of men" long anterior to His manifestation as the Messiah. Cf. ver. 4, 8, 9, 10; with which also Ps. xciv. 1; Acts iv. 12. I would also wish these direct references of all to the Lord, Isa. xxxiv. 6, and Jer. xlix. 13, to be read and pondered.

(e.) It is peculiarly interesting, and, as I take it, decisive as to Christ being the speaker, to compare in the original our text with Rev. xix. 1-3. Let it be kept in mind here that John—

equally the penman of Revelation *and* the fourth Gospel—is above all others the revealer of THE WORD. Read also Rev. xix. 19–21, and Isa. xlv. 19, 20.

(*f.*) *The good old divines, e. g.,* the unapproached translators of our English Bible; Matthew Poole, and numerous other of the older worthies, *had no doubts concerning the speaker being Christ.* Thus in the headings of our version we read, “Christ sheweth who He is, ver. 1, what His victory over his enemies, ver. 2–6, and what His mercy toward His church, ver. 7–9. In His just wrath He remembereth His free mercy, ver. 10–14.” Poole again thus heads the chapter in his “Annotations,” “Christ’s victory over His enemies, and mercy toward His church, in judgment remembering mercy.” The men who thus inscribed CHRIST over this chapter were scholars beside whom recent pretentious sciolists are boors. Dr Ebenezer Henderfon, alike in his translation and Exposition brings out the right reference and meaning. I refer my readers to his admirable Commentary, and I beg here to introduce his rendering of the verse:—

“Who is this that cometh from Edom?  
In purple array from Bozrah?  
This, that is glorious in His apparel,  
Advancing stately in the greatness of His strength?  
It is I, the Announcer of righteousness,—  
Mighty to save.”

I may add a few words from his Exposition: “In prophetic vision a triumphant conqueror is discovered, arrayed in military attire, and returning from Idumea, the scene of battle and victory. To excite attention, the question is put, who He can

be? To which He Himself replies, *in language which leaves us at no loss to doubt that He is the divine Logos or Speaker*, who from the beginning revealed the will of God to men; and as the Angel or Messenger of the divine presence, acted as the Protector and Saviour of ancient Israel." Vitringa, Maurer, Day, recognise Christ as the speaker. Dr J. A. Alexander may also be profitably studied.

I think that I may now assume that, in appropriating the gracious and very precious words, "Mighty to save," to our Lord Jesus Christ, I do so, not by an accommodation, but as giving the very "mind of THE SPIRIT."

Like "Little Sins," the present volume is an expansion and adaptation of a sermon preached in the ordinary course of my ministrations. The footnotes and quotations are added. The larger footnotes will be found at the close, and are referred to by the letters (a), (b), &c. I may be permitted to ask that the related notes be read on finishing the several divisions of the discourse.

I have gratefully to acknowledge the many kind, approving words that have reached me from far and near, from friends cleric and laic, concerning "Little Sins." In reply to the numerous requests for copies, which I was unable to meet, I have the pleasure to state that Messrs James Nisbet & Co., the eminent publishers, London, will *publish* immediately a new and pretty edition. I fervently hope that it, in its wider sphere, and "MIGHTY TO SAVE," in its narrower, will meet with the same welcome, and be useful in the same rewarding way.

And now, in the words of dear old Thomas Hall, "The good Lord awaken us, and humble us all for our own sins, and for

the fins of the times we live in, and make us to mourn for the things we cannot mend, and enable us to receive the truth in the love of it, and make us at last to serve him with gladness of heart in the abundance of all things;”\* and in the farewell words of holy John Sheffield: “Thou hast here a resemblance of Christ and of thyself. Of Him a dark and dim one, one every way short; such a one as I could make, not such a one as He is, or ought to have been made of Him. But of thyself it may not be such a one as thou art, but what thou oughtst to be; and if this fall short too, though I shall be the less happy, yet art thou the more happy.”†

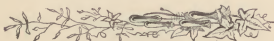
A. B. G.

1ST MANSE,

KINROSS, *March* 30. 1863.

\* “The Rising Sun, or the Sun of Righteousness Shining upon the Sons of Unrighteousness” (8vo, 1654. “To the Reader”).

† Exposition of Amos iv.–ix. 4to, 1661.





“ Sermons *preached* are, for the most part, as showers of rain that water for the instant ; such as may tickle the ear and warm the affections, and put the soul into a posture of obedience. Hence it is that men are oftentimes sermon-sick, as some are sea-sick ; very ill, much troubled for the present, but by and by all is well again as they were. But *printed sermons* or other discourses are as snow that lies longer on the earth. They are longer-lived. They preach when the author cannot, and which is more, when he is not. Sights, as they come sooner to the eye than sounds to the ear, so they abide longer. Audible words are more transient ; visible words more permanent. The one may make the ear more attentive, but the other the memory more retentive ; both in themselves excelling.”—PHILIP GOODWIN (*Evangelical Communicant*).

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“ Wife sayings often fall on barren ground ; but a kind word is never thrown away.”—*Thoughts in the Cloister and the Crowd* (HELPS).

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“ If these little sparks of holy fire which I have heaped together do not give life to your prepared and already enkindled spirit, yet they will sometimes help to entertain a thought, to actuate a passion, to employ and hallow a fancy.”—JEREMY TAYLOR (*Epistle Dedicatory to Life of Christ*).

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“ Better to sit at humble hearths, where simple souls confide their all,  
Than stand and knock at the groined gate, to crave a hearing in the hall.  
Oh ! ye winged ones—shall I stand a moment in your shining ranks ?  
Will ye pass me the golden cup ? Only tears can give you thanks.”

*Passion Flowers* (Mrs HOWE).



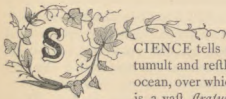




## “Mighty to Save.”

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“Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.” — ISA. lxiii. 1.



SCIENCE tells us that, underlying all the tumult and restlessness of the waves of the ocean, over which the winds trample, there is a vast *stratum* of altogether motionless waters, so utterly tranquil, even when, through storm and gloom, “there is sorrow on the sea” (Jer. xlix. 23), that the tiniest and most fragile shell at the bottom is not stirred, nor in the slightest abraded by the turmoil above.

It seems to me that this remarkable fact and phenomenon may be taken as a symbol of our blessed Lord, regarded as at once “the man Christ Jesus” and very God. In His human nature there was a well of tenderness, that was easily stirred to softest tears; a depth of yearning love that was eager to flow out, and pour itself into the lowliest heart that would lay itself upon His broad bosom; a measureless amplitude of

fympany, that was ever ready to bear the heaviest, yea, all the burdens of others; and, I would add, a large and generous charity, that was quick to anticipate confession and to lavish forgiveness,—meeting the penitent confession and request of the returning prodigal, "Make me as one of thy hired servants," with the welcome of a son.\* But, underlying all, there was the ETERNAL CALM—unstirred, unmoved—of His divinity. What I have just spoken of was as the tossing of the surface waves, that leaves the infinite depths of calm—untouched.

We cannot tell how the human and divine were united in "God manifest in the flesh" (1 Tim. iii. 16). It was not to be expected that we should, with the lesser mystery of the union of our own body and soul unfused. But we accept the FACT; and thus accepting it, surely the point which I have indicated and symbolised is one of its most unearthly, most impressive, and most magnificent characteristics. Think, my friends, of how "mighty" those hands were,—the very hands that had upbuilt the universe,—that were yet stretched out as gentle human hands, ay, that would not flinch back, even when such insult and wrong as this happened, "Then did they SPIT IN HIS FACE, and buffeted Him; and others *smote* Him with the palms of their hands" (Matt. xxvi. 67, 68). Think of the infinitude of power that slumbered in those eyes, one tender pleading "look" from which melted to agonising tears His denier, and one flashing forth of which, in interrogation, smote to the earth, as though they had been dead, the mailed

\* Cf. Luke xv. 17-19 with verse 21. Mark, the Father's welcome makes the poor prodigal forget his intended request to be made a "hired servant." I take this opportunity of emphatically commending the exposition of this parable by Dr Obadiah Grew. It is entitled, "Meditations upon our Saviour's Parable of the Prodigal Son." 4to, Part 1st, 1678. Part 2d, 1684. The latter is often lacking, and the complete work is rare. It has all the better qualities, without the not infrequent tedium, of the earlier Puritans.

foldiers of Cæsar ; and that yet wept human tears over human sin and with human sorrowers. Think that those lips had but to "speak the word" as "in the beginning," and whatever He willed should instantly have come to pass ; and that yet there fell from them not words of vengeance, or threatening, or terror, but of welcome, pardon, promise, peace, blessing, love. Think, in fine, how "mighty," even Almighty, the Lord Jesus Christ was to destroy a guilty, condemned, and perishing world ; and that yet, as in my text, He proclaims Himself "mighty TO SAVE." Here, if anywhere, we have a theme that, in the "breadth, and length, and depth, and height" of it, may well bow us in adoring gratitude and wonder,—may well draw from us the exclamation of the great apostle of the Gentiles, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and love of God" (Rom. xi. 33).

Regarding, then, the words before us—"I that speak in righteousness, MIGHTY TO SAVE"—as presenting the Lord Jesus Christ as a mighty Saviour, I wish in the sequel to so exhibit His attributes and qualifications, as to establish the great and blessed "good news" of my watchword—"CHRIST FOR ALL THE WORLD : ALL THE WORLD FOR CHRIST."

For all practical purposes, it will suffice to consider *four* qualifications of the Lord Jesus Christ :—

I. HIS KNOWLEDGE OF MAN.

II. HIS POWER OVER MAN.

III. HIS SUPPLIES FOR MAN.

IV. HIS RELATIONS TO MAN.

#### I. HIS KNOWLEDGE OF MAN.

**K**NOWLEDGE is the starting-point of all rightly-regulated action. Before I may hope to do anything successfully for another—if what I do touch intellect or conscience, and be not a mere outward thing—I must *know*

him, or about him. Now, my friends, in relation to knowledge, there are some minds of such a peculiarly observant and subtle character as to possess a startling discernment of what is passing within a fellow-man confronted by them, from the expression of the face. I do not refer to the more plain and unmistakeable revelations, such as the smile rippling with funny gladness over every feature, telling that the heart is glad; the frown darkening, as a falling shadow, the forehead—the forehead itself lined and seamed with thought, as though the billows of life's mysterious sea beat there, and there left their marks as on the sea-shore sands; the melting in ruth, the kindling in wrath, of the eye; the flushing to crimson, the whitening to pallor of the cheek; the silent trickling down of the unbidden tear; the tremulous mobility, in tenderness or scorn, of the lips. These any, all, may interpret.\* I refer rather to that keen insight into character by the most fugitive glance of the face, which can tell almost as accurately as though the face were a printed book, the thoughts, the feelings, the fears, the hopes, that are flitting, shadow-like, across the inner spirit. But while this is true, while there are *awesome* instances of this, there is a divine peculiarity in the knowledge of man by the Lord Jesus that marks it off by an impassable boundary from the knowledge of man by his fellow-man, be he the most astute and argute. There is all the infiniteness of difference and distance between prescience and vigilance, between positive, absolute knowledge and tact; in short, between the divine and human. Take an example. *You do not know what is in the mind of the person at your*

\* The quaint observation of Henry Church nevertheless holds:—"We cannot always tell what's o'clock in a man's breast by the dial of his face. Jeremiah xvii. 9, 10; 1 Samuel xvi. 7." (Cheap Riches; or a Pocket-Companion made of Five Hundred Proverbial Aphorisms, by Henry and Nathanael Church. 1657. 32mo.)

*elbow in the pew.* You cannot lay bare the difference between your (*false*) friend's (*fair*) faying and his (*base*) doing (Ps. lv. 21). If there be one covered, and curtained, and inscrutable domain in the universe, it is to be found in that little world in the great world—the human heart. How securely we sit, though holding the dreadest secret! Surrounded, it may be, touched on every side by many, we yet can face and out-face them all. We know that none holds the key to our heart's chamber save ourselves; that while a few words would reveal what should appal or drive like wolf-driven sheep from us, so long as they remain unpoken we are safe from detection. How thin the veil that a spoken word rends: yet how thicker than Tabernacle-curtain, fold on fold—unpoken! History is full of examples. The murderer has fat with face of calm, and lip without a tremor, and eye with undrooping lid, in the very house of God; ay, and *his* response has mingled with the psalms. *Within* there might be terrible fear. In after-confession he may have told—

"I burned by day and night :  
I feared that fire of sin,  
Its covering seemed so thin—  
Would shew to others' fight."\*

*Still without, "others" saw not.* While this is so, how often and often have we examples of hearts bolted, barred, fast-shut against inspection, being "naked and open" to Him. Thus we read in Mark ii. 6-8, "There were certain of the scribes sitting there, and *reasoning in their hearts*, Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only? And *immediately*, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that *they so reasoned within themselves*, He said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?" You observe these Scribes and Phari-

\* "Fresh Hearts that Failed Three Thousand Years Ago; with other Things." Boston. 1860.

fees had not uttered a syllable! But silence was articulate to Him. He *knew* their "reasoning." And He put His searching question "immediately." There was no placing together of look and attitude by which to conclude against them. No. "*Immediately.*" On another occasion, certain of the priests and higher ones stirred into momentary credence, professed themselves to be His disciples. What is the record? They were self-deceived. Was He deceived in them? I read in John ii. 22-25, "Now, when He was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast-day, many believed in His name, when they saw the miracles which He did. *But* Jesus did not commit himself unto them, BECAUSE HE KNEW ALL MEN, and needed not that any should testify of man: FOR HE KNEW WHAT WAS IN MAN."

Without turning to other instances, real life, my friends, the awful greatness of the KNOWLEDGE herein ascribed to Christ. Think of what is involved in knowing one human heart, and that the nearest of all to us—our own. You remember how, as he found himself baffled in the self-scrutiny, even holy and Spirit-enlightened Jeremiah cried out, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: WHO CAN KNOW IT" (Jer. xvii. 9).<sup>\*</sup> Think how even a Paul

<sup>\*</sup> This text, with its great question and great answer, will form one of my prayer-meeting addresses intended to be included in the fourth volume of this series of little books. Otherwise I might here have dwelt upon the relieving, comforting, reply to the prophet's piteous appeal. Be it noted that the deceitfulness of the human heart was a wonder and a perplexity to Jeremiah: and herein lies a profound differencing of human and divine knowledge of that heart. *It was no wonder, no perplexity to Jesus.* And, indeed, the one fundamental doctrine of *regeneration* shews Christ's universal knowledge of universal humanity. I feel that He knows me thoroughly when He says, "Ye must be born again." He has put His finger on my real need of new life. So that we respond to and real life His knowledge of us.

shrank from a decision upon himself, saying, "I judge NOT *mine own self*" (1 Cor. iv. 3). Extend the thought. Think how it at once stamps a man as wise above his fellows, to shew any deep reading of another human heart besides his own—the husband of his wife, the parent of a child. *Reflect how idly we speculate on the internal history of another (a)*. Still further widen the thought. Think of one knowing, not his own heart and nature merely—knowing not the hearts and nature only of the inner circle of his friends—but of all that ever had lived, who were then in the world, and that should to the latest age and last man crowd the stage of existence—UNIVERSAL MAN.

If language be capable of rendering thought, *that* is the KNOWLEDGE affirmed in the Word of God concerning Him whom it sets forth as the God of the Word. Grasping this delineation, we understand how, under the wonder and the glory of its manifestation in acts, the gathered disciples should have prostrated themselves in absolute adoration, and, as if "caught up" to the throne, worshipped Him in words like these: "Now are we sure that THOU KNOWEST ALL THINGS, and needest not that any man should ask Thee: by this we believe that Thou camest forth from God" (John xvi. 30).<sup>\*</sup> And earlier, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we *believe and are sure* that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God" (John vi. 68, 69). Nor, my friends, was this other than the Lord claimed. When He had returned to His throne, where He now sits, He reverted to the prayer of Solomon, as before the kneeling tribes he dedicated the temple, and said, "Thou, even Thou only, knowest the hearts of all men" (1 Kings viii. 39), and proclaimed HIMSELF,

<sup>\*</sup> This passage—John xvi. 17-19 and 30—it will be well for the studious reader to look over in the Greek. The disciples *privately* say, "What does He mean?" Jesus *knows* what is in their thoughts, and answers the unspoken question. Then, in verse 30, "*Now* are we sure," &c.

"I am He that searcheth the reins and hearts" (Rev. ii. 23). So that, again to recall His name of the Word, what is predicated of the Word of God, receives its fullest realisation in Him. Of Him it is true absolutely, if indeed it be not of the God of the Word, rather than of the Word of God as a Book it is declared, "The Word of God is quick (living) and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. iv. 12) (*ð*). A thought—how swifter than a weaver's shuttle! An intention—how fitful! how fickle! how freakish! Yet "the *intents* (*c*) of the heart" He knows!

You perceive, therefore, my dear friends, that in the fulness of its awful meaning the Lord Jesus Christ knows man. He perfectly comprehends the nature of man. "He *knoweth* our frame" (Ps. ciii. 14). He knows the secret springs of all our faculties. He understands how to unravel the strange intertexture of warp and woof in the affections. He can instantly place His Almighty finger upon the pulse of the will. He knows how deep-seated sin is in us. He sees how deep it has struck, how wide it has spread its ramifications into our constitution. Every faculty and affection—every thought and emotion—every desire and aspiration—every wish and feeling—as tinged and tainted by sin is familiar to Him. He thoroughly knows how sin is so intertwined and incorporated with our very spirit—how *natural* it is to us; though I use the word natural under protest: for most surely it is unnatural—how closely intertangled are stalk and blossom and weed—that it has become the hardest thing possible for us to regard it as a dread something that is in us but not of us, something that is tremendously against us, something that carries perdition with it, something that demands for its mastery divine interference as direct as that in him struck down on the way to Damascus. And, my



brethren, the Lord Jefus Chrift—thus piercing through all thofe masks of clofeft fit and moft deceitful guife—all thofe guards that would hide us from Him—thus feeing into every dim unlighted recefs and "chamber of imagery"—thus knowing all that is corrupt and depraved and defiled—fees and knows what man, man fallen, ftands in need of in order to his recovery and redemption.

Another characteriftic of the Lord's knowledge of man is, that He not only knows us as we *are*, but all that has gone to make us what we have become. The poet has faid—

"What's DONE we partly may compute,  
But know not what's refifted." \*

He knows every refiftance. He looks back from the *fact* to the character, and from the character to the training. He mistakes not the guft of paffion for a principle, the iffue of miftake for that of calculation,† misfortune for fin. He, with fharper than "golden hook" of ancient Druid, difcerns between the tree-trunk and the twining and entwining parasite. Very, very affuring to you and me ought to be this afpect of the knowledge of Chrift. The world is fo wont to judge us merely by what we *are*, merely by a given *fact* that comes before it, without inquiring how I or you, or others, have become fo, or what preceded the particular act, that it is divinely-fuftaining to know that there is One who takes in all that has gone to form our character,—all that explains, and it may be palliates, a particular fault, even crime. Methinks, my brethren, men would have fewer harfh words for the backslider—lefs of fcorn, and contumely and feparation for the moft fallen and abandoned—did they more frequently afk themselves the queftion, "What

\* Burns.

† Henry Church has finely faid, "'Tis an uncharitable ignorance to cenfure that for a love of error which was but an error of love. I Samuel xvii. 28, 29."

would I have been, had I breathed the (moral) atmosphere he—she—did?" "What might I not have done, had the temptation come with a rush upon me?" The finless One takes all, all into account in His estimate and verdict; and how often and often His heart overflows to the salvation of "the very chief of finners." *He knows all—yet He loves.* "Let the wicked FORSAKE HIS WAY, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for He will ABUNDANTLY PARDON. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, faith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa. lv. 7-9).

Further: there is this weird and utterly unearthly characteristic of Christ's knowledge of man—He alone knows what an unfallen human soul is. He alone knows the soul of man without sin. Every man comes into the world a ruin—"fallen." Adam, no doubt, had touching and very solemn memories of what he once was; of the infinite faculty that was now hampered and hindered; no doubt wistfully reverted to the glory and the splendour that had paled and vanished. He might have left a record of what it was to bear the very "image of God." *But we have none.* There is no splendid tradition floating like a nimbus round the memorial-words of the dis-crowned head upon the Fall; so that the nimblest imagination, as the holiest experience, can only distantly approximate the reality. But the Lord has the archetype and original before His eye, after which to recreate and refashion the fallen spirit. I have spoken of man as a ruin. Well! the Lord Jesus has the august temple of man's soul ever visible to Him, as primarily built up in holiness. He has *that* before Him, after which to rear again the fallen shaft, the shattered architrave, the splintered dome, the displaced corner-stone, the violated shrine, all the

beautiful adornment of the holy and beautiful house. The knowledge of Christ is thus equally of man as fallen and as unfallen—as he now is, and as he must be, ere ever he can be placed as a "living stone" upon *the* "living stone." He knows the *possibilities* in every man—knows what can be made out of him, out of the most abject ; ay, and sees the niche in the great temple above that is to be filled by him.

I know not that I need to dwell longer upon this first qualification of our Lord and Saviour—HIS KNOWLEDGE OF MAN. I think I must have said sufficient to have shewn you, that His knowledge of us is infinitely removed beyond all others' knowledge, and that it reaches to every necessity and phase of UNIVERSAL MAN. It were, then, superfluous carefulness, to press upon you that from this omniscience of knowledge—of man as a sinner and as a saint—the Lord Jesus Christ, according to the measure of the necessity of knowledge in order to save, is "mighty"—even Almighty—"to save." You can readily see how absolutely necessary this omniscience is, in order to the qualifying of Christ as a Saviour, sufficient, all-sufficient, "*mighty to save.*" I content myself, therefore, with indicating one aspect of His office. Coming as He does with a remedy for sin's sad and dread disease, it is evidently needful, even essential, that He should perfectly know its innermost depths and secrets, the innermost depths and secrets of man's nature. And such *is* His knowledge.

Before passing on, I would wish, my dear friends, to pause a moment, to shew "the exceeding great and precious" consolation contained in this attribute and qualification of the Saviour, to the tried, sorrowful, and despondent believer, and to the lowly, it may be despised, neglected, "hidden one."

I stand here as your minister, having in no common measure your confidence and affection. I bless God for it : I think I know you all as thoroughly as most ministers know their

flocks. But in common with every servant of Christ, much more is unknown than is or can be known to me. It is of the necessities of our nature. One soul must ever be apart from every other: one soul must in largest degree be outside of every other. It may be that trustful love is half-fadly constrained at times to put Laban's question, "Wherefore standest thou without?" (Gen. xxiv. 31),\* as it discovers that he—she—whom it would fain admit to the innermost recesses of its heart, cannot approach there; but it is inevitable. Not now or here can we fully "know as we are known." This comes out very tryingly in spiritual trouble. Who among us really "in Christ" has not felt what a lonelying thing spiritual sorrow is—how instantly it sunders us as by a yawning chasm, from the most congenial spirit. None of us who has fought out the great contest, under the shadow of discovered guilt, of conscious sin, of conscious peril, but knows that its secrets are incommunicable, unshareable. In our struggle we retire alone with God; and it were well if even our nearest and dearest invaded not, for the time, our sanctuary, as we read in the old, old story that is still repeating itself: "So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights; and *none spake a word unto him: for they saw that his grief was very great*" (Job ii. 13). But such thoughtfulness is not common. Our friends *will* gather around us and expostulate, and even argue and contend. They rebuke our "groaning," and flout it, until in our anguish and heart-consciousness that we do not exaggerate, there is pressed from us the bitter cry, "My stroke is **HEAVIER** than my groaning" (Job xxiii. 2). Eliphazes, and Elihus, and Bildads get about us, take up our stammering, confused, inadvised words. They seek, mean, long to comfort. But, my brothers and sisters who have gone through that, how have

\* This will be the subject of another of the addresses in the fourth of our series.

we found ourselves wishing them all away—how have we fighed for solitary vigil—how have we in our distrefs cried out, "*You don't know what I feel—don't know what I need—don't touch what is my burden—don't come within myriad miles of my sorrow.* It's not there, or there, the wound bleeds, not there is the pain, not there the doubt, the dread, the contest, the weakness, the impatience, the wilfulness, the exigency. If you could but know how hollow your words, your consolations, are to me—how unreal, how far away your counfels—you would leave me, pity and leave me, and let me in stillness tranfact with my God in the stead of meeting your miserable loquacity and din!" Such, I hesitate not to avouch, is the experience of the true Christ-seeking soul in the travail of the "new birth." Again he reflects the experience of the smitten patriarch. He must exclaim, "I have heard many such things: MISERABLE COMFORTERS ARE YE ALL. Shall vain words have *an end*? or what emboldeneth thee that thou answerest? *I also could speak as ye do*: if your soul were in my soul's stead, I could heap up words against you" (Job xvi. 2-4). "*Ye are all physicians of no value. OH THAT YE WOULD ALTOGETHER HOLD YOUR PEACE*" (Job xiii. 4, 5). Even so. No one so knows another, so understands another, as to be able to speak THEN to his case. But, my dear friends, I turn your eyes, ay, if tear-filled, to One who does know you—does understand you—does comprehend you as you really are—does see every element of your anguish and of your need, and is gloriously, graciously "able to speak a word to him that is weary." A-weary, tried, crushed, lonely, misunderstood, misconstrued soul,—go to Jesus. Be assured you are no stranger to Him. Be assured He knows you. Be assured His words are not unreal, hollow. Be assured His "consolations" are "not small." To thy "secret chamber," my brother, my sister, in thy sorrow and doubt, and harassment and loneliness. No priestly consecration is needed! No ritual of fet

words is needed ! Out from thy heart fend up thy CRY, if thou canst not even to Him utter words. Uncover thy foul's secrets—thy foul's sins—thy foul's sorrows—thy foul's temptations—thy foul's backslidings and failures—thy foul's broken vows—thy foul's falls in face of clearest light—thy foul's uprisings against the very Spirit of God—everything, anything,—carry the promises to the Promiser, and “wrestle” with Him : and though thy deliverance may come, as the morning sometimes comes, with a grey rainy dawn, yet come it shall as He is true and faithful. Friendless one—unknown and unknowing one—far-erring one—prodigal son, daughter, down among the swine-troughs—I tell thee, wherever thou art, thou art not friendless, thou art not unknown. Oh listen, listen, listen to me, and cheer thee ! God loves thee—God's eye is on thee—God in Christ knows thee and all about thee, and He seeks, pleads, waits that you may know Him—that you may turn to Him and live. “*Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold*” (Ps. lxxviii. 13).\*

Thus amid the *castle*, worldly, and, alas ! churchly—amid the ignorance of us by those who would comfort us if they could, and the neglect of those who, by a kindly word kindly spoken, could, if they would—amid abounding misunderstanding and misconstruction of character and motive—amid the blundering guesses at what we need when “the hand of the Almighty is upon us”—amid the sorry formality of stereotype-uttered texts—amid the isolation and hiding through poverty or shame, or enforced retirement, the servant of Christ comes with the “good news,” reviving, sustaining, saving news, that upon the throne there is One who, while His omniscient eye looks lovingly

\* For a peculiarly interesting illustration and elucidation of this verse, see “The Bafutos ; or, Twenty-three Years in South Africa.” By the Rev. E. Cafalis. (1861. 1 vol.) Page 130.

toward—as now—our dear widowed Queen in her palace, disdains not the lowliest sufferer on the barest pallet of straw. I proclaim my testimony for the Master: CHRIST FOR ALL THE WORLD—ALL THE WORLD FOR CHRIST. He KNOWS all—He claims all—and in His name I claim all for Him. Wherever I go—whomsoever I address—when I have a MAN to speak to, I am free to preach this very gospel of the kingdom. I must regard all as rebels—as wilful sinners—as choosing to perish who refuse to “seek Him while He may be found, to call upon Him while He is near” (Isa. lv. 6).<sup>\*</sup> Ay, and I have a word of solemn warning for Christless and still unheeding, unconcerned souls before me, and to all such whom my words may reach. O sirs, my fellow-men, if—as most surely is the case—it be sweetest, tenderest, truest consolation to the Christ-seeking soul, that the Lord Jesus knows him, knows her—if, in the face of all misunderstanding and maligning, the believer can appeal to Him “by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: AS DECEIVERS, AND YET TRUE” (2 Cor. vi. 8)—what is the bearing of this knowledge upon the Christ-forfaking, Christ-rejecting, Christ-neglecting sinner? Poor sinner! I warn you HE KNOWS YOU TOO. Your every tremor of conscience—your every sting of moral pain—your stout resolve, to put down these checks, and oscillations, and pressure, as of a mailed hand laid upon you—your skulking in the dark to “do evil”—your dextrous contrivances to conceal—your close-fitting mask of profession with conscious heart-enmity—your thoughts and feelings—your desires and lusts—your “idle” profane words—your very self nakeder than to the skin—I tell you Christ knows. I tell you

\* “NONE PERISH WHO DO THEIR UTMOST TO AVOID CONDEMNATION.” (David Clarkson.) Sermons, Folio, 1696. Page 474. My readers will find it profitable in many ways to turn to the noble sermon of the present reference. There are few such sermons as Clarkson’s, and none even by him surpassing this one. See *Prefatory Note*.

He has followed your every outgoing and incoming. I tell you His eye has marked every winding of your life's labyrinth. I tell you that, seated there in your pew, in this His house, He is looking at you, looking *through* you—recording of you—nothing forgotten—nothing mistaken—nothing "out of Christ" cancelable. Can you, O man! O woman! bring *that* close to your conscience, and still go on neglecting "the great salvation?" Not in wrath—not in judgment—not to condemn—not to destroy will He so *know* you, if you will but cast yourselves upon His love. He knows you only to pity you—He pities you to spare you—He spares to help you—He helps to fully save you—He saves to sanctify you—He sanctifies to glorify you. But delay, neglect, reject, and you will make, by-and-by, the awful discovery that He who *knows* you, while He is One able, even "mighty" to "save," is also able, mighty to destroy. I speak not my own words, but the words of the Lord: "*There is One lawgiver who is able to save, AND TO DESTROY*" (James iv. 12).

Oh my brethren, I cannot end with so dread a word as destroy. I know judgment is His "strange work"—I know He "DELIGHTETH in mercy"—I ring out therefore yet again my watchword, CHRIST FOR ALL THE WORLD: ALL THE WORLD FOR CHRIST. "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in His apparel, travelling in the greatness of His strength? I that speak in righteousness, MIGHTY TO SAVE." He is "mighty to save" from HIS KNOWLEDGE OF MAN (*d*).

I affirm that the Lord Jesus Christ is "mighty to save,"

## II. FROM HIS POWER OVER MAN.

**Y**OU perceive, my friends, that this is an advance in our inquiry. The Lord Jesus, I now observe, has this heart and nature of ours that He so perfectly, so



absolutely knows, and all that in any way affects or influences them in His own power. He not only sees and knows all that goes to make that enigma of enigmas, "the evil heart of unbelief," but He has that "evil heart of unbelief" itself altogether within His divine control. He can remove all stumbling-blocks—He can defeat all opposition—He can overthrow every stronghold—He can step across every barrier-line. As on that hushed Sabbath-eve, He can enter "when the door is shut." In this the long, lustrous day of His power He can gloriously "*make a people willing.*" All those fences and battlements which the natural heart rears up against its God fall before Him like the walls of mystic-beleagured Jericho. How is all this? Because He has the soul of man, of which He has omniscient knowledge, in all its mysterious faculties and gifts, in His own hands, to fit and prepare it for receiving Him. He is the framer of the spirit: and consequently can make what changes in it He sovereignly wills. He has the understanding in His grasp, and can with infinite ease render it susceptible and receptive of light; and He can rekindle under the dome of reason the half-quenched lamp of conscience. He has the will, with all its carnality and cleaving to the dust, beneath His divine touch. "Hell and destruction are before the Lord; *how much more then the hearts of the children of men*" (Prov. xv. 11). Select the mightiest, grandest, and most irresponsible ruler. Is he above the power of Christ? Let one whose will, whose lightest whim, gave law to untold myriads—a despot absolute—answer. I turn to Prov. xxi. 1—"The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water; He turneth it WHITHERSOEVER HE WILL." The mystery of sin is not only unfolded to His eye, but is within His mastery. All that through sin blinds and deceives—all that through sin deludes and degrades—all that through sin governs and crushes the heart of the sinner—is in His hands. Whatever opposes

the repentance and conversion of a human soul, be it that of the "chief of sinners," and the "chief of sinners" at the darkening eleventh hour, He can "put out of the way." The Lord our God hath laid help upon One who is "mighty," and adored be His grace and mercy, "mighty TO SAVE." "God hath spoken once, twice have I heard this, that POWER belongeth unto God" (Ps. lxii. 11). "Thine, O Lord, is the greatness and the POWER" (1 Chron. xxix 11). "In Thine hands is POWER and might" (ver. 12). "Touching the Almighty, we cannot find Him out: He is EXCELLENT IN POWER" (Job xxxvii. 23). "Great is our Lord, and of GREAT POWER" (Ps. cxlvii. 5). I salute you, then, my brethren, with the exultant greeting of the apostle, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who according to His ABUNDANT MERCY hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you WHO ARE KEPT BY THE POWER OF GOD, through faith, unto salvation" (1 Pet. i. 3-5).

Thus, my friends, from the OMNIPOTENCE OF POWER OVER MAN, the Lord Jesus Christ, according to the necessity of such power in order to save, is "mighty"—even Almighty—"to save."

You see, again, how absolutely this omnipotence of power is demanded in a Saviour, *the* Saviour,—sufficient, all-sufficient, "mighty to save." Seeking, as He does, from man His heart; seeking, as He does, to enter the soul, and to set up His throne there; claiming, as He does, to cleanse and re-erect the defecrated shrine,—it is needful, even essential, that He should have perfect power to remove all obstacles, to overcome all opposition, to take full and rightful possession.

Such we instinctively recognise as qualifications demanded in one "mighty to save." And, my dear friends, how cheering

a thing it is to have this blessed gospel to turn to, wherein are written affuring words of this POWER in Christ. "Thou hast given Him POWER over ALL flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him" (John xvii. 2).

But here does any one bring up the problem of the free choice of man, as in conflict with the omnipotence and sovereignty of God? My answer is—I ACCEPT THE TWO DOCTRINES; and I believe them to be *parallel, not conflicting*. I accept them. Why? Because I find them BOTH "written" in the Word of God. Such is my inevitable attitude to all objectors. I must decline to launch out on the shoreless ocean of speculation, whither every attempt at solution must lead. *God has kept the key of the mystery in His own hands*. But the two doctrines are plainly revealed. *My own consciousness* attests the freedom of my choice, spite of the hindrances of sin; attests that, being a believer, I have chosen the Lord, and that yet I never would have done so unless He had ruled and overruled my choice by His Spirit. *My Bible* addresses such a faculty of choosing in me, if invitation, promise, warning, appeal, pleading, threatening, are not to be explained so as to be explained away. *My faith* can trust my God and Saviour with His (gracious) omnipotence and sovereignty. *My hope* looks upward in certain expectancy of—not reconciliation, for there is no conflict, but—explanation that will shew harmony. I accept the revelation of the omnipotence and sovereignty of God; and I am sure He can so use these, in relation to my soul's salvation, as to leave my choice inviolate,—as to employ, without impinging upon, my faculty of choice—of acceptance or rejection. It were to ungod my God to find difficulty in believing that. But I have not the shadow of a difficulty—I believe that He who created the mystery and marvel of the human soul,—that He who has so dowered it with imperial capacities of thought and aspiration,—can and does so bring it into relation

to His omnipotence and sovereignty of grace, as to save it in perfect harmony with, alike His own and its attributes. What is involved in the opposite? Even this, that given the problem of His own omnipotence and sovereignty to be at once absolute and in harmony with the free choice of man,—given the accomplishment of His will through the contingent yes or no of man, the All-wise God is unable to solve that, unable to secure this. From such a conclusion, sound philosophy, true science, and a reverent Christianity recoil in horror. What then? The believer accredits the double revelation, and waits, "nothing doubting," the key above.

. . . "The hand of One  
Who took the guilt that bound me long,  
And put it on His only Son,  
Can never do my soul a wrong." \*

But looking deeper into this PARALLELISM of the omnipotence and sovereignty of God and the free choice of man,—looking at what I am now enforcing, viz., that the Lord Jesus Christ has this heart of ours, and all that in any way affects or influences it, in His own power,—does any one, in right earnest and as a thing of real soul-anxiety, return upon the wondrous words cited from John, "Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given him"—I say, does any one return upon these amazing words, and ask, Who are the many given to Christ? Then, blessed be God, my answer needeth not to be with an "uncertain sound,"—needeth not to be hesitant, as though half-revealed or unrevealed. My answer is—EVERY ONE WHO WILL ACCEPT HIM ON HIS OWN GRACIOUS TERMS AS A SAVIOUR : CHRIST FOR ALL THE WORLD—ALL THE WORLD FOR CHRIST. Nothing less, nothing else than that have I to claim and proclaim for Him.

\* "Night-Cry to God," in "Blossoms in the Shade." (1863. Strahan. 18mo.)

I grant that, as a problem of metaphysics, as a speculative question, taking to "intermeddle" with matters "too high" for human ken, this matter may be, nay, has been, darkened into very bewilderment and terror. But my answer "shuns profane and *vain* babblings, and oppositions of science, falsely so called." Once more, I am willing to leave "secret things" with my God and Father; I am willing to trust Him with election, predestination, foreordination, and all the other mysteries of our faith. REPROBATION, DECREED BY GOD, NEITHER AS WORD NOR THING, DO I FIND IN ALL THE BIBLE. I know the God I have given my soul to; and when I also know that it is the Lord, whom I know as holy, righteous, merciful, gracious, loving, Who "calls," "purposes," "foreknows," "predestinates," "justifies," "glorifies,"—NOT a dread Being of whom I have been told nothing, after whom I have to dimly grope, as in midnight darkness, I can and do, without reserve, leave it confidently to Him to "unseal," in His own good time, the "deep things," and in trustful calm, read the mighty words of the great apostle, every "jot and tittle" of which I believe as I believe my own existence: "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom he justified, them He also glorified" (Rom. viii. 28–30). I know who the "He" is in these profoundest of even Bible words. I know it is my Father, says the believer, "who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all" (ver. 32). I cannot solve the humanly insoluble. I cannot harmonize predestination and contingency, the DOGMAS of the Book of God, any more than can the highest philosophy the DOGMAS of the book of

Nature,—most real yet all inscrutable facts, of which no account is rendered, and that hold their secret in the face of subtlest interrogation. I cannot solve these problems: BUT I BELIEVE MY GOD CAN. "I know not now, but I shall know hereafter" (John xiii. 7).

"Father! THY WILL be done,  
Thy will that doth intend  
My likeness to Thy Son,  
How can it me offend?  
Thy will be done.

"Father! Thy will be done—  
Thou that didst will to save  
The world, and for its sake  
Thy Son to judgment gave  
Thy will be done!

"Father! Thy will be done—  
Surely a child of dust  
May rest in such control,  
And say, with perfect trust,  
THY WILL be done!"\*

Even so:—FOR THE PRESENT, as He has appointed, the child of God is willing to "walk by faith, not by sight"—he reposes IN THE REVEALED AND MANIFESTED CHARACTER OF THE GOD with whom he has to do, and rests assured that whatever He does, by the mere fact that He does it, must accord with His holiness and righteousness, love and mercy, *and with His own explicit, unre-served, and unreserving commandment laid upon the servant of Christ* to "preach the gospel," to offer a free salvation by Jesus Christ "to every creature." My dear friends, I must ever hold, and ask you to hold, that it is upon this last we are to take our stand. "THE SECRET THINGS BELONG UNTO THE LORD OUR GOD: BUT THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE REVEALED BELONG UNTO US AND TO OUR CHILDREN FOR EVER, that we may do all the

\* From "Blooms in the Shade," as before, pp. 24-26.

words of the law" (Deut. xxix. 29). What then? We turn to the Word, and we find invitation without limit, welcome without exception, warning universal as sin, expostulation and remonstrance passing into entreaty, words into tears, tears into the "red rain" of Gethsemane, over perishing men, who "will not come" unto Jesus. We find historic facts, incidents in human lives, type, symbol, parable, miracle, argument, barbed with the one great, even impassioned, averment, that upon every one that is lost must for ever and for ever rest the guilt of SELF-DESTRUCTION. Such is the revelation of the "purpose" of the Lord God; upon such revelation is based the "ministry of reconciliation," that calls, beseeches, pleads with man the wide world over to be "reconciled" and saved. I might and should tremble to leave predestination, election, foreordination, in the hands of a "strange God." I could not but hesitate, if the God I adored were a dreadful and inarticulate God, and did He predestinate, elect, foreordain. But *as it is*, "I KNOW IN WHOM I BELIEVE;" and I am confident that His so transcendent and wondrous DOGMAS are my security, not my danger—my safety, not my snare—my very salvation.

I look upon this earth in which I live. I find it grasped and girded by God's all-embracing laws, as of gravitation, of the ebb and flow of the tides, of light, of the procession of the seasons—all utterly and absolutely beyond my control. They reach above, beneath, around, within me; I cannot touch them. There they are; unalterable, unswerving, necessitated; in its profoundest sense predestinated. And what is the issue of obedience to these laws? *Happiness in the measure of such obedience.* Is that no revelation of the character of the God of the universe? No revelation! I could shut my Bible, and from creation, from the meanest flower that blows up to the stars that hang like lamps before the great white throne, find infinite proofs that my God is also my Father. Exactly so; I cannot tell how

free will, choice, contingency, accord with predestination, election, foreordination. I do not feel that I am called upon to do so. But as we have seen, our own consciousness attests the former, while the Word of God recognises and addresses them, recognises and addresses man as free to think, feel, will, choose, reject. Equally does the Word of God affirm the latter. I therefore accept them also, and can defer knowing how the All-wise harmonises them until He is pleased to reveal them to me. Nay more, I have deepest belief that even as the physical world is grasped and girded by its great laws, so must the other and grander world of mind have underneath it, like the granite base of the "everlasting hills," above it, like the dome of the sky, kindred laws. THESE LAWS I RECOGNISE AND ACCEPT IN PREDESTINATION, ELECTION, FOREORDINATION. Remove the law of gravitation, and many a fair star "flaming on the forehead of the sky," yea, the big sun and the whole stupendous universe, should rush to ruin, and wander off from the throne of God. Similarly I believe, remove the law of predestination, and you snap the many-linked chain that binds man to God. And just as I have the power to violate God's great laws, to my destruction; so may I His law in the plan of redemption, equally to my destruction. Obey His laws physical, and until the appointed hour I live. Obey His laws spiritual; accept "eternal life" according to His predestinated way, even in and from God the Son, as offered in the gospel; and I am saved. Such is my message. I am not to keep my Father at arm's length; I am not to doubt, suspect Him; doubt, suspect the reality of the charge given me as a sinner—given me as His servant—because of any speculations and presently insoluble problems of harmony as between divine election and human choice. He has wisdom to reconcile all the complexities and *apparent* irreconcilablenesses; and the believer trusts Him.

Thus, taking a stand UPON THE REVEALED AND MANIFESTED



CHARACTER OF GOD ; thus leaving in His hands—Oh they are the hands that were pierced by the nails!—the vast "SECRET THINGS," I lay hold of the mission and commission given me as a minister of the gospel, "to preach the gospel TO EVERY CREATURE," to be an ambassador of the cross wherever I find a man. Therefore is it that, unfalteringly, unhesitatingly, I give my answer to the question, "Who are the many given to Christ?" which is even this, EVERY ONE WHO WILL ACCEPT CHRIST ON HIS OWN GRACIOUS TERMS. I hold up the words as a silver lamp, to stream light over the glorious delineation of the Lord Jesus as "mighty to save." I ring out again and yet again on the ground of it my watchword and demand in His name, CHRIST FOR ALL THE WORLD ; ALL THE WORLD FOR CHRIST.

Why, my dear friends, should we act otherwise? I can drink of the clear-cold spring, and be refreshed, though I may not hope to pierce the awful foundation of granite from whence it comes gushing up. I can take of the grain of the tawny sheaves, or of the laden grapes, though I cannot tell how the unconscious root and fibres select, elect—never mistaking—out of a common soil that which shall produce their specific fruit. I can rejoice in the shining sun, and fan my cheek with the breathing wind, though I am ignorant as an infant of the great palace of light, and "know not whence the wind cometh, nor whither it goeth." Even so ; I stoop my parched lip to the "living water," and I rise revived ; and I know nor man nor woman who ever fought to do so and was hindered. I am content with that. I will know the deep foundation whence it comes in due time. I take the "bread of life," I drink of the sacramental cup ; and the peace within my heart assures me I am a welcome guest ; and again I know nor man nor woman who ever has truthfully fought so to "remember" Christ, and been hindered or unblest. I am content with that. I will know one day how it came about that with a universal offer and

universal provision the lost came not. I am sure the guilt and blame will be their own, not God's. I walk in the light of the Sun of righteousness. I find my heart opened to the breathing, quickening, sanctifying Spirit; and once more, I know no man nor woman who ever went forth beneath the healing beams, or waited on the use of means for the Spirit, and went unvisited. I am content with that. I will know up yonder how others waited not; and how contrariwise all the redeemed were moved, inclined, enabled; how in sovereign mercy the saved were visited of the Spirit and "made willing." I can confide all—all—all to my God, the God and Father of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Such, brethren, is the way of dealing with the great *dogmas* of predestination, and election, and foreordination, which I am anxious you should follow. *We hold not now the key to them.* Therefore, simply accepting them, and unreservedly confiding in God, I turn your gaze from them to what is "clearly revealed;" and nothing is so revealed if this be not, that God has ill-will to no human being in the universe who will turn to Him in His Son, while God the Holy Spirit, in magnanimous patience, waits to give that faith which turns the soul to Him. Yet again therefore I lift up my watchword, CHRIST FOR ALL THE WORLD; ALL THE WORLD FOR CHRIST. May it be given to you and me increasingly to transact with Christ Himself as the unseen but all-seeing; to rejoice in His KNOWLEDGE absolute to understand, and POWER uncontrollable to execute whatever we need. I pray God that He may be pleased to grant unto us a verification of the prayer of Paul; Eph. i. 17-19, "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation for the acknowledgment of Him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the

faints, and what IS THE EXCEEDING GREATNESS OF HIS POWER to us-ward who believe."\* Oh ! with such saving power manifested toward and in ourselves, may we not well blush that ever for a moment we should have despaired either of our own foul's case, or of any other human being still alive ! (e)

And now, my friends, as I observed with reference to the OMNISCIENCE of the KNOWLEDGE of Christ, that it was a delightful and sustaining thought, that in coming to Jesus as our Saviour we come to One to whom we are no strangers, to One who KNOWS us, so I would make the same remark in relation to the OMNIPOTENCE OF HIS POWER.

My fellow-believers, amid all your exercises of spirit, your hesitations, your dreads, your fainting and failing, even grievous falling, remember who is on your side, and on whose side you are, through grace. Let the great adversary accuse—send him to Christ. Let the law condemn—plead the shed blood. Let conscience alarm—turn its eye to the cross. Let obstacles high as heaven, deep as hell, barriers massive as the gates of the pit, block and bar the way to the mercy-seat—cast yourselves on the infinite power of Christ. Realise—and take the peace, the joy, the consolation of it—that nothing, absolutely nothing, can interpose between the omnipotence of the Lord Jesus Christ and the salvation of WHOSOEVER cometh unto Him.

Oh my brethren, if I and you would but confront all that seeks to come between us and salvation by Christ, we should find

\* I should have liked to have worked out this other thought concerning the exercise of the power of Christ as different from ours. I may take a child, and by my power strike him, break his very back, and still gain not my end. Christ "*makes*" the child "*willing*." Christ's power is not *force* merely. Again, I may place a child on his little stool beside me—I may impart knowledge, I may fully inform him on all that concerns his soul ; yet make no change. But when Christ imparts knowledge, it is operative. My readers may carry this out.

out that what in our anguish we take to be threatening, barring, and debarring mountain-ranges, carrying storms and lightnings in their peaks, are but mist-clouds, that need only to be shone upon by Him who is "mighty to save" to melt away in silver-sheening rain. If only we would fetch all our difficulties and oppositions to Him, to be dealt with by His power, we should find His promise gloriously true, "Him that cometh to me I will in NO WISE cast out" (John vi. 37).

The accuser of the brethren knows that. He has sent out into the world; has interwoven into the creeds of churches many very awful lies; and has found interpreters within the house of God. He has gotten men to designate God the Holy Spirit as an influence, not a Person; a thing, not supreme God. He has persuaded others that the man Christ Jesus is merely man the Christ; a man of the loftiest and beautifullest type, but no more. He has fought to tear out of the Bible its most "healing leaves" as unhistoric and unreal. He has flung perplexity and misleading mirage of ritualism over numerous of the doctrines of the gospel. He has found advocates for no creeds, no confessions, who would sneer away the good name of their framers,

"Those whom, to our grateful knowledge,  
The ages reverently hand down—  
Whose tasks they wrought were tasks Titanic;  
With strength proportioned to their need;  
With mighty sweep of line and plummet  
Laying the basis of our creed." \*

All that, he and his have done, and worse; but he never has adventured this so hideous lie, that down among the tossing, quenchless fires he has one solitary foul THAT HAD FLED TO JESUS. No. He has not dared a mendacity so tremendous. His grand endeavour is to keep back from the shed blood—to hinder from going to Christ. Once at the cross—once within

\* "Passion-Flowers," by Mrs Julia Howe. *ΘΕΟΣ*, p. 125 (3d Ed., 1854).

"the door"—once clasped by the wounded hands—once hidden in the "clefts of the rocks"—he knows well no power of earth or hell can reach the escaped sinner. Hence my watchword of to-day, my good news, of CHRIST FOR ALL THE WORLD; ALL THE WORLD FOR CHRIST. "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in His apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, MIGHTY TO SAVE." He is "mighty to save," from HIS POWER OVER MAN (*f*) (*g*).

At this point I would look back with you upon our inquiry thus far; and then we shall be better able to prosecute it.

We have seen that the Lord Jesus is OMNISCIENT IN KNOWLEDGE OF MAN. But it had been possible to have had this knowledge without POWER. We have seen that he is OMNI-POTENT IN POWER OVER MAN, and over all that in any way affects or influences him. But it had been possible to have possessed power without KNOWLEDGE. Combining the two—KNOWLEDGE WITH POWER—observe man might have been none the better. Let us illustrate these three things:—

1. *It is possible to have knowledge without power.* Few of us live long, my friends, without experience of this. How, over and over, have we fullest knowledge of what is needed, while, at the same time, we cannot help. I take a single case. I lead you to the dying chamber of your loved and loving. I take my stand with you there, beside the death-bed where *she* lies—

. . . . . "Beauteous  
As consumption just before she's christened death."\*

You *know*—you see life's lamp is flickering in its socket, as a candle before the flaring wind; you *know*—you see life's fountain is ebbing out, drop by drop; you *know*—you see the dear, dear face is changing. (*How it does change!*) Amid the difficult and laboured breathing, you draw near with softest

\* T. Lovell Beddoes. (Poems I. 118.)

foot-fall, and gently clasp the thin, pallid, blue-veined hand—wipe the damp forehead—filently interrogate the fading eye. Alas ! alas ! the "right hand" has "forgotten its cunning," and cannot return the faintest answering pressure—the eye, so quick and loving once, is dim to even "the old familiar faces"—

"We sadly watch the close of all  
Life balanced on a breath ;  
We see upon the features fall  
The awful shade of death." \*

The old tragic story is being repeated : "the silver cord is loosing, the golden bowl breaking, the pitcher breaking at the fountain, the wheel breaking at the cistern." You know—you see all that ; and yet you can only gaze, with wet eyes, your heart in your throat—helpless to help. You *know* that mother, sister, "little one," is in the dark valley, and you would fain leave not alone ; but you cannot take so much as one lingering, hindering step. *Human power* fails here. Who among us has not felt his infinite weakness in such extremity ? I know you would have laid yourselves gladly down—filled their coffin—bereaved ones, to have spared them. But no ! "There is no man that hath *power* over the spirit ; neither hath he power in the day of death : and there is no discharge" (Eccles. viii. 8). "None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him, that he should still live for ever, *and not see corruption*" (Ps. xlix. 7). And so with all our *knowledge* we see our little one lie down like a "*wee*" wearied lamb on Jordan's banks—to die ; see mother, brother, sister reaved away ; see tender ties fundered ; see grey heads vacating the "old arm-chair ;" miss the cooing of pleasant voices, and the pattering bicker of tiny feet. It is possible *to have knowledge without power*.

\* The Vision of Prophecy, and other Poems. By James D. Burns, M.A. 2d ed., 1858. P. 223.

2. *It is possible to have power without knowledge.* Half the world's woes—at least, I am sure, half the woes of the children of God, within THE CHURCH—are traceable to ignorance of them by the other half. Oh, it is because the bleeding hearts—the bowed-down heads—the weary watchers—the pinched and pained ones—the tempted, forsaken, solitary, overwhelmed ones are not known, that so many go unhelped. I explain; far be it from me to extenuate. I explain; and I know that it brought terrible accusation upon the shepherds of Israel, that they did not "SEARCH OUT" the "sheep" of THE SHEPHERD'S "flock" (Ezek. xxxiv. 8, 11). I explain; I do not vindicate: I know that "want of *thought*" breaks perhaps as many hearts, as "want of *heart*." I explain, not defend: I know that "they CONSIDERED not" are very awful words in the mouth of God. Still I state a fact which every-day experience confirms. The poet writes out his "Song of the Shirt," or a noble woman sends out a pleading cry, "Haste to the Rescue," and the nation's heart is touched. Thousands and tens of thousands who never had dreamed, suspected such woes, respond with willing hands, and loving hearts, and sisterly words; and sunlight is carried into many an, erewhile, deep-shadowed home, and relief to hearts well-nigh broken (*h*). Oh, guilt lies on the church of Christ, in its ministers and membership, in letting so much power, waiting to be used, go unused, waste itself outside THE CHURCH! Think you, my friends, that with the POWER within the church of Christ to help, bless, ease, so much misery, anguish, outward and inward, physical and spiritual, ought to exist? Be it ours, my friends, within our several spheres, wider and narrower, to "search out," to *know* the help needed, that the fearful anomaly of power unused, unsought, may not cry to heaven. *It is possible to have power without knowledge (i).*

3. *It is possible to have both knowledge and power in vain.* I know not that I can better, and I feel that I cannot more

touchingly, illustrate this, than by a fact concerning that good and true soldier of Jesus Christ, Hedley Vicars. A friend of his told lately to an auditory in London, that his wound was not a mortal one. It was one well *known*, and over which the surgeon had perfect *power*. And yet "he died." Why? Because, in the hurry and tumult of that terrible morning, on the grey heights of the Crimea, the regiment of Hedley Vicars was carried far from the tents that held the supplies. There was no bandage with which to tie the bleeding artery; and, ere they reached the store-tents, the Christian soldier was no more. He bled to death. If, said his friend, with the pathos of true affection, "If there had been a bandage—if the tents of supplies had been half-a-mile nearer, Hedley Vicars might have been alive to-day." It needeth not, my friends, that I "adorn this tale" of war. I leave it alone in its beautiful simplicity. You have anticipated its application. Knowledge of the wound was of no avail: power over the wound was of no avail. Knowledge *and* power, in the absence of the bandage, in the distance from the supplies, were of no avail. So that you perceive it holds that it is possible *to have both knowledge and power in vain*.

I am thus brought to consider the next qualification of the Lord Jesus Christ as "mighty to save." He has omniscience in knowledge of man; He has omnipotence in power over man, and over all that in any way affects or influences him. I now affirm that the Lord Jesus is "mighty to save."

### III. FROM HIS SUPPLIES FOR MAN.

**I**HAD occasion, in a former discourse, my dear friends, to shew you, with fulness of illustration and enforcement, the infinite provision in Christ for every need of man.\* I will therefore be more brief *now*. And yet so in-

\* From 1 John iii. 8, which may be given in our third volume.



exhaustible are His supplies, so perfect is their adaptation to all our necessities before conversion, in conversion, after conversion, that I may find myself extending, though not repeating.

What then are the great NEEDS of man in relation to the Lord Jesus Christ? I think, regarding them broadly and generally, they may be classified under *outward* and *inward*.

(I.) OUTWARD: When a sinner is awakened to a sense of his condition as before God, he has an awful discovery of the law of his God "condemning" him. "The handwriting of *condemnation*" flashes out as of old did the mystic handwriting on the palace-wall of Babylon: and nor seer nor astrologer, nor any, can shut it out. What says the Lord Jesus? Has He no supply to still the tremors of conscience as it stares at that so terrible sentence and penalty? My fellow-man, behold the "*handwriting of condemnation*" a torn and tattered thing by the nails of the cross. Listen: "You, being DEAD in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He *quickened* together with Christ, having forgiven you [= *given for*] all trespasses; *BLOTTING OUT the handwriting of ordinances that WAS against us*, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, *NAILING it to His cross*" (Col. ii. 13, 14). Cheer thee then, brother, sister, *whoever* you be; turn eye of faith, heart of love, hand of hope, to the uplifted cross. Let the transfiguring and transforming vision in unto your soul: and, even as you gaze there will come peace. What! You are a miserable, perishing sinner! Well! The cross is for you, and you are for the cross. Christ is for you, and you are for Christ. "The handwriting" is *nailed* for you. Nay, look not down upon thyself—look away—look up—up—up. You know how serpent-bitten Israel were charged. "Whosoever" turned dimmest, faintest, dyingest eye to the "brazen serpent" lived. They were "bitten"—they were poison-stung—they were bleeding to death—it was true their very heart's-blood was welling out on

the fands. But still the command was, "Look and live." Had they kept looking down at their out-flowing blood, their out-paffing life, they had assuredly died. And fo, finner! man! woman! keep gazing upon yourself—your guilt—your fin—your defilement, and you will inevitably perifh. The "condemnation" of the "handwriting" will come upon you. But why fo look down when the cry is for very life, "Look up!"—"Handwriting of *condemnation*"! Tush! It is "nailed" to the crofs! There it is as impotent to condemn you as was the impaled, fanglefs, poifonlefs, dead ferpent of brafs to fling. Cheer thee, then, cheer thee. "There is therefore NOW no CONDEMNATION to them which are in Chrift Jefus, who walk not after the flefh but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Chrift Jefus hath made us free from the law of fin and death" (Rom. viii. 1) (*j*).

(2.) INWARD: After a finner has fled for "refuge" to "lay hold of the hope" fet before him in the gofpel, even to the very clofe of his pilgrimage, he is made to groan under the fad revelation within him of remaining fin. To the end we are finners. In glory we fhall ftill be "finners faved." Such has been the experience of the children of God in all ages. Abraham faw himfelf, after long years of holy walking with his covenant-God, to be only "duft," ay, lefs than duft, the very refufe of duft, "afhes" (Gen. xviii. 27). Of the meek and "faithful" Mofes, it "is written" he "fpake unadvisedly with his lips" (Ps. cvi. 33). Many and many is the dolorous cry of penitence of the "man according to God's own heart." It is no heart-hardened reprobate, but a man of whom the verdict of the Lord was, after fweeping with omnifcient eye over all the myriads of mankind—"There is not one like him in all the earth," who piteoufly abafes himfelf and exclaims, "I abhor myfelf, and repent in duft and afhes." Daniel, the moft flainlefs and "perfect" of all the worthies of the Bible, excludes

not himself in his "confessions before the Lord." We read: "I was speaking, and praying, and confessing *my* sins and the sin of my people" (Dan. ix. 20). And think of that cry of anguish, liker the wail of a lost spirit from the pit than a human cry from earth. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?"\* (Rom. vii. 24). It came from the white-haired Paul when, out of heaven, there was not a purer, holier faint below. It is no "strange thing," therefore, that has happened to us when, bowing at the all-revealing throne of light, confronting ourselves with the immaculate standard, we find sin still abiding within us, mingling its monotone of jar in the psalm of our life—flinging its dark shadow across our hope—fermenting with foetid leaven in the "grace" given us—balefully "growing up" in lusts and desires of the earth earthly, of the devil devilish. But are we to despair and go away from Christ because of remaining indwelling sin? Has Christ no supply for this so awful need? My fellow-man, behold! in the place of the "handwriting of condemnation"—in the stead of the blurred legend of the death-sentence, another: "THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD, CLEANSETH US FROM ALL SIN" (1 John i. 7). Cheer thee, then, brother, sister, again, whoever you be. Resist the accuser with these glorious words! He will make sin, your sin, to be *nothing* before you do it; and when you have done it, how he dilates and exaggerates it, "if it were possible," to drive you to despair! Fling his lie in his teeth: acknowledge your sin, but refuse to accredit his Christ-dishonouring whisper that you have sinned away the Spirit—sinned beyond God's mercy. To the blood, to the "shed blood," WHOEVER you be. There you will find a present Saviour.

\* This question, with its relieving answer in ver. 25, will form the text of one of the addresses in my fourth volume. As I quote it above, though perhaps it ought never to be quoted in disjunction from ver. 25, it might be a lost soul's wail: never, never in its source, nor in its answer.

Listen once more : "Come *now* [not an instant's delay !], and let *us* reason [God in Christ and thee, my brother, my sister ! not conscience and thee, not the devil and thee, else you will be reasoned to absolute hopelessness], let *us* reason *together* [mind that ! not apart—not alone—not away from God, but like a child at His knee], faith the Lord : Though your sins be as scarlet [weigh that word "scarlet," *murder-flains !*], they shall be as white as snow : *though they be* [mark ! God wishes you to come in your true character, as a sinner. You *are* a sinner : but though you be a sinner there is cleansing] red like crimson they shall be as wool." [*Without*, white as snow. But then, let snow melt in the hand, and it is found to be grey, blackish. Therefore, *within* white also, white as wool.] Even so, my dear friends, in all our discoveries of yet remaining sin, we must place ourselves in realising prayer beneath the sprinkling, flowing, overflowing blood. What ! Thou findest it so every day ! Well ! Every day turn to the "shed blood." You find "remaining sin" every day. Did you not expect that ? Think a moment. The Lord has made provision for the sad discovery. He who has told us "daily" to ask our "daily bread," immediately adds as another *daily* petition, "Forgive us our sins." Be it yours, therefore, my brethren, whether in *outward* or *inward* need, to turn for supply unto the Lord Jesus. In Him is infinite fulness.

Having thus glanced at the more broad and general aspects of the supply in the Lord Jesus for all our needs, I would now look at details.

I observe, then, that a sinner needs—1. Light ; 2. Revelation of God ; 3. Of the heart of God ; 4. Life ; 5. The Holy Spirit.

1. *Light*. When the great apostle of the Gentiles describes the "progress" of the "pilgrim" in his Second Epistle to the Corinthians, he starts with this ; and indeed the most cursory

reader must observe that Christ, as "Light," is a favourite figure with Paul. He seems ever to recall "the light above the brightness of the sun" (Acts xxvi. 13). "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give *the light* of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. iv. 6). That little world, the human heart, like the vaster globe we inhabit, when it is created (anew) emerges out of darkness. Now who so fitted as Jesus to supply this light? "I am the Light of the world," were His amazing words; "he that followeth Me shall not *walk in darkness*, but shall have the light of life" (John viii. 12). He was the Day-star, the "bright and morning Star" of a darkened world. He is the Sun of righteousness.

2. *Revelation of God.* Light is a metaphorical term. It symbolises discoveries made to the soul. It expresses the imparting of knowledge, revelation, and bestowment of purity, of favour, of joy, of glory, and these in relation to God. We need to know God, we need to be "like God." Now again, who so fitted as the Lord Jesus to give us knowledge, and specially knowledge of our God? He could and did say, "As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father" (John x. 13). And you remember that cry wrung from His heart, as He thought of the misconstructions and ignorance of His Father, "O righteous Father, the world hath not *known* Thee, but I have known Thee" (John xvii. 25). Take any attribute, any grace of God, and Christ is the Revealer of it.

"Thy thoughts are love, and Jesus is  
The living voice they find;  
His love LIGHTS UP THE VAST ABYSS  
OF THE ETERNAL MIND."\*

3. *Revelation of the heart of God.* I could conceive no more

\* James D. Burns, as before, p. 275.

terrible thing for a poor sinner, than to have God discovered to him as infinitely holy, pure, just, righteous—as a revelation of character merely. For example, what a tremendous text were ours without the last two words. Read—"Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in His apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, MIGHTY ——" How should we cower and tremble before so dread a Being; how should the very knowledge of His attributes appal us. A sinner, therefore, needs to know what His feeling towards sinful creatures such as himself is. And blessed, blessed be God, the grace of God, the love of God, the mercy of God, the longsuffering patience of God, the yearning pity of God, have been revealed. By whom? By Jesus. "The grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men" (Tit. ii. 11). Who so fitted as Jesus to "reveal" that grace? Lying in the bosom of His Father from all eternity, He has felt the throbbings of His heart of love toward a perishing world.

4. *Life.* If anything be plain in the word of God it is this, that to conversion every one of us needs life. We are all dead—twice dead. Unconverted man! Christless woman! I tell you, you are dead. To the eye of God, to the pitying eye of angels, to the dreadful exultation of devils, your soul lies dead, putrid in your body: your body a fair coffin for your dead soul. Oh if God were to hurry you to your burial, as we must our best-beloved dead to the grave, how long since had you been gone! And yet a dead soul sends up an effluvium toward God, compared with which that of a plague-stricken corpse is incense. My fellow-man, be awakened! be alarmed! Dead! dead! dead! You stand in awful need of life. And who so fitted as Jesus to supply this life? What "is written?" "As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given the Son life in Himself"

(John v. 26). And you remember how Peter hurled on the Pentecostal multitude the thrilling accusation, "Ye killed the Prince of *life*." And yet again, men ask, "What is eternal life?" and God points to His Son, and answers, "There is the eternal life manifested" (Cf. 1 John i. 3).

5. *The Holy Spirit*. I need not to prove this need of man. Neither do I need to prove that He is the "gift" of Christ. Without THE SPIRIT, all is vain.\*

I have thus indicated in detail a few of those things that man requires, and all of which, in infinite and absolute possession, the Lord Jesus holds. Mark the expression—in infinite and absolute possession. The saints on earth and in glory have fulness of all these blessings; ascending higher, angel and archangel have inexpressible fulness of wisdom, strength, holiness. But they have all, as derived from Christ. "That which He giveth them, they gather." They cannot bestow, cannot impart it. Very different, stupendously different, is it with Jesus. All is His own, to communicate to whomsoever and as soever he pleaseth. Light, wisdom, grace, life, the Holy Spirit,—to shadow out the distinction by a figure,—fill the bosom of Jesus, as the ocean fills its majestic bed—self-containing, self-contained. They fill all creatures, the loftiest, as the water fills the rivers. River-like, all must flow back to the eternal Source.

Thus from HIS SUPPLIES FOR MAN the Lord Jesus Christ is infinitely qualified to be "mighty to save." Oh, once more, how delightful to know that before one sinner need go unsupplied, the resources of God must be exhausted! What a glorious message that is for the servant of Christ to press upon his fellow-men! How does it warrant my watchword—CHRIST FOR ALL THE WORLD; ALL THE WORLD FOR CHRIST! Oh why, why, why, men and brethren, will you turn to broken cisterns

\* See footnote, page 52.

which can *hold* no water, while the "Fountain" is opened, freely opened to you? Why furround yourselves with "sparks of your own kindling," that will go out black in your forest need, when the very Light of heaven is streaming in blinding radiance around you? Why drudge and moil in the service of the "world, the flesh, and the devil," when the Lord Jesus waiteth to give you the welcome of sons and daughters? Up from thy husks! up from thy grovelling! up from the dust! "Awake, arise! and Christ shall give *thee* light."

My dear friends, the spiritual supplies of the Lord Jesus, as they are possessed by Him absolutely, so they are bestowed absolutely. For things concerning this life, God has entered into no absolute covenant. He imparts the wondrous dower of life, but He recalls it. All die. He imparts health; but how often He withdraws it. How often is he "whom He loveth *ack!*" He imparts riches; but they take wings, and fly away. He imparts honours; but they are "laid in the dust." All these He may or may not continue,—may take from us, or us from them. But Oh, my dear friends, hear me! For everything touching the salvation of the soul, your soul and mine, God in Christ has given an absolute promise, has entered into an inviolable covenant. Christ is a gift. Salvation is a gift. Even among men, a gift is never withdrawn, never recalled, never cancelled. Much less with God. "Thanks," then, "be to God for His unspeakable gift" (2 Cor. ix. 15).

And now, my brethren beloved, be entreated to let no speciality of your individual experience shut out the personal consolation of my message,—the personal application to *you* of the "good news" now brought nigh to you. Oh the perverse ingenuity, the morbid modesty, the false-witness against God-given grace, that "refuses to be comforted!" For your very soul's sake, "take heed." Is any one saying, as I speak, "Ah, but I am a great sinner;" "I am a poor sinner;" "I am an old



finner;" "I am a backsliding finner;" "I am a peculiar finner"? Have I put into words the passing thought of any one of you? Then, as you would go away cheered, not "cast down,"—free, not bound,—hope-filled, not despairing,—believe me, I have a message to every one of you—a message of blessing, whoever you be. Great finner! I have from my Lord a great salvation to offer *you*. Poor finner! I have a rich and FREE salvation to press upon *you*; ay, and remember the word of the Lord, "To this man will I look, even to him that is POOR." Oh will you not take the joy of that, and say, "*I am poor*, YET the Lord thinketh upon me"? (Ps. xl. 17). Old finner! the salvation I am commanded to proclaim is an old, old, yea, an "everlasting" salvation for *you*. Backsliding finner! I tell you, the tenderest words in all the Bible are to "heal" the backslider.

"O foul, O foul, rejoice,  
Thou art God's child, indeed, for all thy finning,  
A trembling child, yet His, and worth the winning  
With gentle eyes and voice." \*

Peculiar finner! I have a peculiar salvation for *you*. So yet again I lift up my watchword—CHRIST FOR ALL THE WORLD: ALL THE WORLD FOR CHRIST. Be you great finner—poor finner—old finner—backsliding finner—peculiar finner—be you what you may, there is present salvation for *you*. Tell me your case, and I answer for it I will shew you the Lord Jesus magnifying His redeeming love—the fulness of His grace—the affluence of His righteousness—the prodigality of His pardoning mercy in saving just such a finner as *you* are.

But I would fain come closer still. I would seek to anticipate and relieve the doubts and harassments of souls before me, interpreting your needs by my own, and by those of anxious ones who have come to me as their minister.

Is there then any one before me who trembleth as often as

\* George Macdonald. Poems. 1857.

he turneth to the Word of God—trembleth before the awful holiness of the Book, and the God of the Book? My brother, my sister! I have good news for you—and you—and you. "To this man will I look, even to him . . . that TREMBLETH at my word" (Isa. lxvi. 2).

Is there any one before me who feels as though his faith had died out of him, so that he cannot read, or think of Jesus without an awful "if" of doubt? Again, brother, sister, I have good news for you, and you. I ask you if that poor, distracted father, who came to Christ for the healing of his "possessed" child—came to Christ with your very "if"—"IF thou CANST DO ANYTHING, have compassion on us, and help us"—I ask if the Lord frowned him away—I ask if that doubting "if" drew forth so much as a hard word? Nay, verily. HE HAD COME TO CHRIST: and that blotted out the "if." Immediately there went forth from the Lord quickening power—the spring of tears was touched—He "drew him with the cords of a man." "Straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe;" and added—mark the truthfulness of the man—"help thou mine unbelief;" and the full, pitying, delivering, saving answer came (Mark ix. 22, *seq.*\*). My brother, my sister, try that. Get thee in all thy unbelief, with all thy unbelief, using, if thou must, the "if," and I tell thee the relief will be given. "Wait, I say, upon the Lord" (k).

Is there any one before me in weariness and dependency, because of restraint and constraint in prayer? Is the complaint that no words will come, just the old same words, nothing else? To you, too, my fellow-believer, my fellow-sufferer, for I also have known that—have known what it is to lie at the footstool, and have only piteous repetitions to offer, while at the very moment one's heart was gasping for articulate utterance of felt

\* Let the reader note how Christ returns his "if" upon the man. Compare ver. 22 with ver. 23.

needs—I bring good news. Our Lord and Master knew this trial also. I turn to Mat. xxvi. 44 : "And Jesus left them, and went away *again*, and prayed the THIRD TIME, saying the SAME WORDS."\* "We have NOT an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was IN ALL POINTS tempted (tried) like as we are" (Heb. iv. 15). "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Rom. viii. 26).

Is there any one before me "walking in darknes"—any one to whom the vision of Christ, the Sun of righteousness, is dim—

"As when the sun, a crescent of eclipse,  
Dreams over lake and lawn, and isles and capes." †

—any one in *lunefes* dark, labouring on "weary and heavy-laden?" Listen, listen brother, sister: "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of His servant, *that walketh in darknes, and hath no light?* let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon God" (Isa. l. 10). And yet again: "Come unto me, ALL ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mat. xi. 28).

Is there any one before me who, spite of himself, herself, finds it hard in all the services of the sanctuary and of the closet to be other than Doeg was, merely "DETAINED BEFORE THE LORD?" (1 Sam. xxi. 7). What then? I give the answer of a venerable faint, long in glory—"By maintaining the services out of a respect to God, I will yet serve Him. Though I find reasons to humble me, yet I will not so as to keep me off my duties. Though I do want spirit, yet I find an heart to pray and read. If I cannot serve God with smiles, yet I will with tears. If my

\* "In prayer we should not so much affect expression, as express affection, Prov. xxiii. 26, Ps. xxv. 1, Isa. xxix. 13."—*Church*, p. 46.

† Tennyson. "The Vision of Sin."

body will not carry my soul to duty, yet my soul shall hale my body unto it" (I).\*

Is there any one before me "mourning" in secret sorrow that his soul is as a "barren wilderness," saying, I am a dry and dead tree; yea, twice dead (albeit not yet plucked up by the root); and asking, Is there any, Oh! any, hope that such a tree should live or ever be recovered? The Lord hath consolation, my brother, for *you*. It is written, "Let not the eunuch say, I am a dry tree" (Isa. lvi. 3, 4). Let none therefore say, who is sensible of his own unworthiness, "Behold, I am not meet to receive grace from God." For thus saith the Lord to such eunuchs, to such self-dejected souls, who yet desire to be approved of Him in fulfilling what He hath ordained, "Even to them will I give within my house and within my walls a place and a name better than sons or daughters." Sweet encouragement! The Lord will honour even such in His vineyard, the church; will take away their reproach, and supply them with those blessings they so bewail. And, my friends, has not God made good His promise to others in all ages? Why then should you despond? "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures NOR THE POWER OF GOD" (Mat. xxii. 29).†

Is there any one before me, any child of God, constrained to cry out with Isaiah, "Woe is me!" and with Paul, under the agony of felt remaining sin? My brother, my sister, it must be even so until glory. "For it is with man," says Bishop Reynolds, "as it was with the house wherein was the fretting and spreading leprosy, mentioned in Lev. xiv. 41. For though that house might be scraped round about, and much rubbish

\* From "The Anatomy of Secret Sins, Presumptuous Sins, Sins in Dominion and Uprightness," &c. By Obadiah Sedgwick, B.D. (1660, 4to, page 244).

† Cf. Nehemiah Rogers' "Figless Fig-tree" (1659, 4to, pp. 439, 440).

and corrupt materials be removed, yet the leprosy did not cease till the house, with the stones, and timber, and mortar of it, was all broken down. So 'tis with man. Grace may do much, and alter many things that were amiss in him, and make him leave many sins to which he formerly was given ; but to have sin wholly cast out and left, that is not to be expected till this earthly tabernacle of his body be by death pulled down and dissolved."\*

Is there any one before me, very desolate and very sad because of bereavements and afflictions ; any saying in mournful bitterness, "It looks as if God's hand, and a heavy rod in His hand, were never to be off me?" Comfort, cheer, my brother, my sister. Think a moment. No "strange thing" happeneth unto thee. The apostle does not say, "There is now *no affliction* or no correction to them who are in Christ," but (I speak in the words of good Dr Jacomb) "There is *no condemnation* to them who are in Christ." It is one thing to be *afflicted*, another thing to be *condemned*. God may and will afflict His children, but He will never condemn them. It may be *much affliction*, yet 'tis no "condemnation." Indeed, God afflicts here that He may not condemn hereafter. 1 Cor. xi. 32, "When we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world." God is so gracious that He will not condemn ; yet withal so wise, so just, so holy, that He will afflict. Grace in the heart secures from eternal, not from temporal, evils. God cannot condemn and yet love ; but He can chasten and yet love ; nay, therefore He chastens because He loves. "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten." "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." The nearer a person is to Christ, and the dearer he is to God, the surer he is to be punished if he sin. "You have I known of all the families of

\* "Sermon of the Sinfulness of Sin," page 144.

the earth, therefore I will punish you for your iniquities" (Amos iii. 2).\* My dear friends, draw nearer to the hand that holds the rod. It will lighten the blow. Ay, and you may yet come to find the rod budding, and blooming, and bearing fruit for you, and to lay it up in the ark of your memory beside the sweetest pot of manna you have ever got.

Is there any one before me wounded as in the "apple of the eye," through wrong from one loved and trusted? My brother, my sister, call to mind the sweet finger's" plaint: "It was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I should have hid myself from him: but it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked from the house of God in company" (Ps. lv. 12-14). Nay, I admit the aggravation! "The wounds we receive from bad men, deserved or undeserved, are soon healed again; but when a good man strikes, and there is no cause, the wound is poisoned."† True, most true, but "cast thy burden upon the Lord: He will sustain thee."

Is there any one before me to whom there cometh "fiery darts" of very blasphemy; any one oppressed with thoughts too horrible for confession even in His ear. My tempted, assailed, fearfully beset brother, sister, for very life to the throne with thy temptation. There is pardon for blasphemy and blasphemers. "ALL MANNER OF SIN AND BLASPHEMY shall be forgiven to men" (Mat. xii. 31). Even "to the uttermost" He has mercy and grace. Let thy case be a case of very despair, there is yet hope. Listen to the upholding counsels of a departed worthy—"Yours is a sad case, and not easily admitting remedy. Yet let me say this case of despair is NOT altogether without

\* From his treatise on Rom. viii. 1-4, page 7.

† Froude. "Shadows of the Clouds," page 7.

hope. If at any time they repent, they may be recovered out of the snares and power of the devil, though taken captives by him at his will. If he fly to Christ, He *'is able to save to the utmost.'* Believe it, there is not so much malignity in all the sin of the world, or malice in Satan, as there is mercy in God and merit in Jesus Christ, unless we shall say finite is more than infinite, and the creature stronger than the Creator. Add not therefore final impenitency to all former impiety, and obdurate unbelief to former disobedience, and desperation to thy long presumption, and thou mayest yet be safe. For first it is said, Heb. vii. 25, Christ is *'able to save to the utmost all that come to God by Him.'* Therefore there is no doubting of His power. *'Save to the utmost.'* Not to such or such a degree, no further. but further and further than ever thou hast sinned. Many men have often sinned to *their* utmost, doing evil with both hands as they could. But Christ never yet shewed mercy or saved to His utmost: but He is able to outdo all that we have done or can do, yea, to outdo all that Himself hath done, pardoning yet greater sins to penitents than ever yet were pardoned, if greater could be committed. Then, secondly, consider further, that thou mightst not make question of His will, He hath said, *'I desire not the death of a sinner'* (Ezek. xviii. 23, and xxxiii. 11). *'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out'* (John vi. 37). There is, you see, power and will both engaged to serve thee. So that it is not His *'will not,'* but thy *'will not,'* hinders thy salvation. *'Why will ye die?'* saith He; *'I would, ye would not'* (Ezek. xviii. 31, and Mat. xxiii. 37). Nor is it God's *'shall not'* but thy *'care not'* excludes thee heaven."\*

Is there any one before me conscious of being still "DEAD in trespasses and sins"—and now in remorseful alarm and distress? My brother, my sister, bless God for that alarm, for that dis-

\* John Sheffield, as before, pp. 90-92.

trefs. It is the trembling of the needle as it seeks to point to the pole-star. Yea, He has willed this fear. What are His own words? "*Fear Him who after He hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, fear Him*" (Luke xii. 5). There is hope for you, O DEAD soul! Look at this Bible-picture and accredit me. I pass into the woodland. I stand on a hill-side, tawny-opaline with moss. I mark a felled tree. The saw shore sharp through it—the gleaming axe was "lifted up" against it—and there it lies. You look upon it: from base to upmost bough it has been barked. Through long months it has lain under a blinding sun—winnowing. It is "very dry." Take up that lopped "branch." The twigs—leaves—buds—are all gone. Cut from the living tree, it is long dead: bared, peeled, it is "twice dead." It is a "brand" for the "fire." Ha! a priest has lifted it up—moved, removed it. And now it lies upon the altar. A moment, and it crackles—roars in the flame of the altar-fire. Watch the red tongues playing, flickering, fluttering, ruddying in the creamy-white smoke. The "brand" is a-blaze—is going to ashes. What is this? Again the priest lifts it up—lifts it out. The flame—the smoke—the charring—the ashen-waste forbid you to think he can be doing what he seems to do; and yet it is not seeming. He is taking that not merely felled, but felled and barked, branch; not barked merely, but winnowed, dried; not winnowed, dried merely, but shapened "brand" fire-log; not fire-log "brand" merely, but a-blaze, half-consumed; and he is planting it, as if a rooted tree, in the green earth. Return a few months hence, a year, and you will see it tossing out-flung boughs and rustling leaves, in the golden sunlight, a very living tree again. I speak in parable. Behold in that "burning brand," God's own symbol of how far a sinner may have gone in spiritual death, and yet be planted in His vineyard. Listen, as I read: Zech. iii. 1, 2, "And he shewed me Joshua the high priest



standing before the Angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: IS NOT THIS A BRAND PLUCKED OUT OF THE FIRE?"\* Even so. Wherefore, sirs! be your case hopeless apparently as was the cut, barked, peeled, winnowed, dried, blazing "brand," of ever being again a living tree, there is yet a hand to "pluck you out of the fire," and save you "as by fire." Let your cry ascend—

"Leave me not, God, until—nay, until when?

Not till I have with Thee one heart, one mind;

Not till the life is light in me; and then

Leaving is left behind."†

Is there any one before me—in conclusion here, for were I to pursue the multitude of experiences within even my own knowledge and reading, "I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written" (John xxi. 25) to meet the individual specialty of the myriads of men—saying, "But I am a *mean* sinner; it is only my misery that drives me to Christ?" My brother, sister, your idea is one the servant of Christ often meets with. I have to answer, that sense of 'meanness,' of "fear," is equally God's gift with faith. He knows best how to draw His creatures to Himself; and if He has used the scourge of misery, the scorpion-whip of fear of hell—so be it. Be grateful that the grand question is not, "*Why* have you come?" but HAVE YOU COME? Give the Lord Jesus Christ the glory of transmuting your meanness into humility, your terror into "godly fear," that "by any means your soul may be saved" (*m*).

Thus, my dear friends, every want and every wanter has

\* This, I apprehend, too little regarded passage will form the subject of another of the addresses in my fourth volume.

† George Macdonald. Poems. 1857.

supply in the Lord Jesus. I care not who comes to me, I care not what necessity is confided, I care not how peculiar the experience be, I have provision for it in the gospel. I ring out, therefore, my watchword once again—CHRIST FOR ALL THE WORLD; ALL THE WORLD FOR CHRIST. He is "mighty to save," FROM HIS SUPPLIES FOR MAN.

I observe, finally, that the Lord Jesus is "mighty to save,"—

#### IV. FROM HIS RELATIONS TO MAN.



ALL the other qualifications and attributes were in vain, in so far as man, needing the salvation of his soul, is concerned, if the "mighty" One—who in His KNOWLEDGE is OMNISCIENT, in His POWER is OMNIPOTENT, in His SUPPLIES is infinitely full,—had not related Himself to us. Of this we have a dread monumental evidence in the angels "who kept not their first estate." But, indeed, this is so self-evidencing, that it demands the briefest elucidation and enforcement. Observe summarily then, my friends, that the Lord Jesus, as very Man as well as very God, has brought Himself into the closest, as into the tenderest, relations to man. The proclamation of the angels over the fields of Bethlehem was, "Unto you is BORN a Saviour" (Luke ii. 11). With all things else there is birth-relationship. He took unto Himself "a body," became man, "God manifested in the flesh," the "fulness of the Godhead embodied" (1 Tim. iii. 16, Col. ii. 9). Thus, Son of God and Son of Man, He took His place as the "first-born" of God and the Head of the great human family. It was, therefore, His divinely-human and humanly-divine prerogative to be the Redeemer of man. This is dimly represented in the office sustained by the FIRST-BORN in the families of Israel. It was his part to redeem his brethren from bondage, debt, and from whatever other difficulty they might have fallen into. *They could appeal to him.* Even so—though merely human "shadows"

must ever be shadowy and faint representations of "the good things to come"—our blessed Lord assumed the office of Redeemer of the lost human family, not by arbitrary decree, not by self-appointment, but, as I have said, through the profoundest and tenderest relationship to man. Listen to the argument of Paul: "No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ GLORIFIED NOT HIMSELF to be made an high priest, but HE that said unto Him, 'Thou art my Son; to-day have I begotten Thee' (Heb. v. 5). You remember, too, Peter's glowing words (Acts v. 21), "Him hath God exalted with His right hand, TO BE a Prince and a Saviour, FOR TO GIVE repentance unto Israel, and forgiveness of sin." The Lord Jesus Christ, then, is related to man, and in that relationship worked out THE ATONEMENT, while the gospel is one grand invitation addressed TO EVERY MAN, to accept the relation, and the salvation accruing. God in Christ stoops; man in Christ ascends. Master that, and you have mastered the very gospel. O my fellow-man, it will avail you nothing to have that omniscience, that omnipotence, that infinite supply, that relation of Redeemer, kinsman-Redeemer, OUTSIDE OF YOU. You must get into Christ, lay hold of Christ, stretch out weak hand of faith to His mighty hand.

But here, my brethren, mistake not; go not away making a favour out of your faith, as though *it* were to save you. I tell you CHRIST, AND CHRIST ONLY, SAVES YOU.

Take a familiar illustration, familiar to all of you. Look at that locomotive, as it snorts like a giant war-horse to its place in the station at the head of the train. You have in that engine, power of amplest capacity to drag at swiftest pace the far-stretching carriages. Boiler, tubes, pistons, fire, steam—all are in perfect order; and that broad-browed, lamping-eyed, a-dust man gives assurance of tried ability to guide the charge committed to him. You look: carriage after carriage is filled, the hour has

struck, the bell rung, and yet there is no departure, no movement, nor would be till "crack of doom," if one thing remained as it now is. Aha ! the lack is discovered : the uniting hooks that bind engine and train together were wanting. They have been supplied. Like two great hands they have clasped, and a screw has so riveted engine and carriage, that they form, as it were, one thing, one whole ; and away through the dark sweeps the heavy-laden train, with its freight of immortals. Mark, NO ONE EVER SUPPOSES THAT IT IS THE UNITING-HOOK, OR LINK, OR COUPLING, THAT DRAWS THE TRAIN. A child knows that it is the engine that draws it. Nevertheless, without that hook, or link, or coupling, all the power of the engine were of no avail ; the train should stand still for ever. Exactly so, my brethren, is it in the relation of faith to Christ. IT IS NOT OUR FAITH THAT SAVES US, BUT CHRIST THAT SAVES US. Yet must faith lay hold of Christ, else Christ avails nothing. It is a wonder and a sorrow, that what is so palpable in ordinary affairs, should be so darkened and confused in the momentous matter of the salvation of the soul. Blessed be our God, this so needed hand, this "grace" that appropriates Christ is, with Christ Himself, "the gift of God."

I do not suppose it can be needful to dwell longer upon THE RELATIONS OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, as qualifying Him to be "mighty to save." It needeth not that I now set forth the blessed commonplaces of His being our Prophet, Priest, and King. It needeth not that I expatiate upon His appointment and anointment. It needeth not that I unfold the lustrous "doctrines" of divine ordination, divine qualification, divine investiture, divine acceptance. It needeth not that I recur to His glorious attributes for the outworking of the great errand. It needeth not that I call upon you to mark how, if any one was fitted to make men sons of God, it was the Lord Jesus, the Son of God. It needeth not that I press the overwhelming truth, that not only was He the Holy One, but the One Holy,

the only one who could have been sent to accomplish the needed redemption. These, and kindred trains of thought, I have had many occasions to put before you. The one thing that now I would have you carry away is this, that this divine Saviour, in all His omniscience, omnipotence, and infinite supplies, is RELATED TO US, and thus is still further "mighty to save."

Fix, therefore, eye of faith, heart of love, upon this assuring relationship and this unchallengeable authority.\*

Yes! Eighteen hundred years ago, He who is "mighty to save" came down to our earth, took unto Himself a "body prepared," in our nature lived, obeyed, suffered, died; and when His awful work was done, when, amid the preternatural gloom of Calvary, He poured out His soul "unto death" as the Surety of FALLEN MAN, He "made an end of sin," "finished transgression," "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 now returned from His awful exile unto THE THRONE, grasping in His hand, not reed of mockery, but the sceptre of the universe, wearing again the flashing crown of heaven, no longer the thorn-

\* *Authority.* Had not my time (and now space) been more than filled up, I might have enlarged upon the *authority* of Christ to be the Saviour of sinners. Emphasis must be laid upon this. I may have (every jailor indeed has) a key that would open every cell-gate, and let out every prisoner; but I, as the jailor does, need authority from the law. Christ has the great key. He beareth it upon His shoulder. For I read, Rev. iii. 7, "These things saith He that is true, He that hath the key of David; He that openeth, and none shutteth; and shutteth, and none openeth," even as Isaiah had proclaimed, "The key of the house of David will I lay upon His shoulder; so He shall open, and none shall shut; and He shall shut, and none shall open" (xxii. 22).

The relations of the Lord Jesus to God the Father is another aspect of our inquiry that contains precious comfort in it; but it falls not now to be considered, as neither does His equivalent knowledge of God, power with God, supplies as God, and relations to God.

circlet, worshipped again by the adoring hosts of angel and archangel, and the multitude of the "redeemed," He still remembers US, even US, as we tread life's dusty highway as "followers of Him." My brethren, by faith look up. Yonder stands our ever-living High Priest. Yonder is our kinsman-Redeemer. Yonder is our Dayman, laying a gentle human hand upon man, and a divine hand upon God, and so "mediating" between both. Friendless ones, you have a Friend on the throne. And so again, and still again, I blow my silver trumpet of "good news," CHRIST FOR ALL THE WORLD ; ALL THE WORLD FOR CHRIST. "If ANY MAN sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous ; and He is the propitiation for our sins, AND NOT FOR OURS ONLY, BUT ALSO FOR THE WHOLE WORLD" (1 John ii. 1, 2). Surely, as you remember the "glad tidings" concerning Him who is "mighty to save," which have thus been brought nigh to you, you will join with me in presenting on this side, the adoring song, "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power to Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto THE LAMB, for ever and ever" (Rev. v. 13). "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah ? this that is glorious in His apparel, travelling in the greatness of His strength ? I that speak in righteousness, MIGHTY TO SAVE."

To my fellow-believers I have only one glad word. Let us "rejoice" in our Saviour. Let us "stand fast" against all adversaries. For "greater, stronger is He who is in us, than he who is in the world." Let us go out and in in humble thankfulness that our Father's eye is ever upon us—that underneath are the everlasting arms—that we have infinite supply to draw upon—and that "we have not an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities ; but One in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may

obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. iv. 15, 16).

To my fellow-men who never have experienced their need of One "mighty to save," never have felt their sin, never have realied the END, I have a solemn message of warning—a message of affectionate and anxious entreaty in my Master's name.

Sirs, I would discharge my office. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; *and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.* NOW THEN WE ARE AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST, AS THOUGH GOD DID BESEECH YOU BY US; WE PRAY YOU IN CHRIST'S STEAD, BE YE RECONCILED TO GOD" (2 Cor. v. 19, 20). "*Now,*" "To-day," is the accepted time. Men—finners—have refused, delayed, neglected, and been LOST—LOST—LOST. I gaze wistfully around me. Is it, Oh, is it to be so with any of you? Hush, heart of mine. "WHO AMONG US shall dwell with the devouring fire? WHO AMONG US shall dwell with everlasting burning" (Isa. xxxiii. 14).

Recently a resident in India was seated under the verandah of his garden. That morning his little girl had lost a pet lamb. He heard a stirring among the furze at the foot of his garden. Joyfully he heard it: for he remembered his Mary's tears, and was glad in the thought of restoring her lamb. He left his seat, crossed the lawn, crossed a dingle, followed a winding path, passed through a wicket-gate, passed among the furze, saw the lamb, went forward, lightly, gaily forward—a moment, and he was in the jaws of a *lion*. Alas! alas! he thought to find a lamb and he found a lion—found himself carried off into the jungle, and in an instant was DEAD. Even so, my fellow-men, He who is now the "Lamb of God" who "taketh away the sins of the world" will one day be the "Lion of the tribe of Judah" to rend you—you—you—you—to pieces. "Those

mine enemies which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither and SLAY THEM before me" \* (Luke xix. 27).

No. I would not, cannot, end with words of terror. I would not exhibit the dark pillar of cloud, but the guiding pillar of fire. I would win, woo, melt, if the Lord will. I pray God to give my message a baptism of His Spirit: and as I began, so would I read out and out to all my watch-word,

CHRIST FOR ALL THE WORLD: ALL THE WORLD FOR CHRIST.

"Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in His apparel, travelling in the greatness of His strength? I that speak in righteousness, MIGHTY TO SAVE." Amen and Amen (*n*).

\* "The *giving* of the law was terrible. Oh, what shall the day of accounts be?"—*Church*, as before, p. 30.







## NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

*Man's ignorance of his fellow-man.—(a) Page 27.*



WOULD note here a recent remarkable *historic* example of our ignorance of the mind and motives of those we are swift to judge. When the present Emperor of the French assumed the style of Napoleon III., the press of France and of Europe saw in it profound statecraft—interpreted it as an assertion, spite of “universal suffrage,” of unbroken inheritance from Napoleon the Great. It turns out to have been a mere clerical error. Kinglake in-

forms us, on what he seems to regard as well-authenticated grounds, that in the course of the preparation for constituting the Empire, the Home Office wished the country to take up a word which should be intermediate between “President” and “Emperor;” so the minister determined to order that France should suddenly burst into a cry of “Vive Napoleon!” and he wrote, they say, the following order, “Que le mot d’ordre soit Vive Napoleon!!!” The clerk mistaking the three notes of admiration for Roman numerals, in a few hours the forty thousand communes of France had cried out so obediently for “Napoleon III.,” that the government was obliged to adopt the clerk’s blunder. (*Invasion of the Crimea*, Vol. I. p. 320.)

*The God of the Word rather than the Word of God.—(b) Page 28.*

This is hardly the place, perhaps, for criticism of the original, yet I would ask any scholar who may read my pages, if the *ἱερωγος* of Hebrews

iv. 12 be not the *ῥηγος* of John? I would further query if the same remark does not hold of Ephesians vi. 17? I cannot allow myself to think that the apostle can intend to send the tried and troubled believer to the Bible rather than to Christ. I interpret the counsel to inculcate a perpetual “taking hold” of Christ. Compare also John v. 39, 40. “Ye search the scriptures, for IN THEM ye think ye have eternal life: and *they* are they which testify of ME: and ye will not come TO ME that ye might have life.” If I do not strangely mistake, the Lord warned here against letting even the Bible come between Him and the soul. Not “in *them*,” but in Him is “eternal life.” They but tell of, guide to, Him. It is to mistake a finger-post for the cross, to so stop short at the Bible. Bibliolatry, orthodoxy without spirituality, must not be mistaken for Christianity.

*Intentions.*—(c) Page 28.

The original expresses “intention, purpose, thought,” with the element of *longing*, which our translators have excellently, indeed felicitously, caught by “intents,” = stretching toward. We have an amazing Old Testament text delineative of God’s anticipatory knowledge of man’s thoughts. I can only for the present quote it. The Lord is telling Moses of the future apostasy of His people—Deut. xxxi. 16–21. In the end of the last verse we read, “For I know their imaginations which they go about, EVEN NOW, BEFORE I HAVE BROUGHT THEM INTO THE LAND WHICH I SWARE.” Combine the Old Testament and New Testament references, and what a view have we of the Divine knowledge!

*Omniscience of God.*—(d) Page 36.

Omniscience. I feel strongly tempted to confirm my own words with many choice quotations from the Puritans that crowd upon me for a place. I must content myself with one, pretty lengthy, from the rich folio of Obadiah Sedgwick, B.D., entitled, “The Bowels of Tender Mercy Sealed in the Everlasting Covenant” (1661), which is full as the honeycomb is of honey, with the sweetest and most alluring truths of the gospel, all put with a loving earnestness and pathos that seem irresistible. I am sure every reader will thank me for these unctiōned pleadings with the soul for God.

“God is an OMNISCIENT God. He knows all things whatsoever, and all persons, and all conditions, and all the hearts, and all the counsels and thoughts and words and ways of all men, at all times and in all places; and that most clearly and perfectly by His own infinite light. He knows all that is past and all that is present, and all that is future and all that is possi-

ble. Heb. iv. 13, 'There is not any creature that is not manifest in His fight : but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.' Consider this place seriously, which declares God's OMNISCIENCE. 'There is not any creature that is not manifest in His fight.' There be many millions of millions of creatures, and they be far and near over all the world ; but whatsoever they are, and wheresoever they are, they are 'manifest in His fight.' Though they be hid from us, yet they are known to God ; and though they be out of our sight, yet are they 'manifest in His fight.' They are before His eyes which 'run to and fro throughout the world.' 'And all things are naked and open to His eyes.' There is no darkness 'twixt Him and them ; no curtain is drawn over His eye. They are as naked to Him as the child which is newly born is unto our eye ; or as every pile of grafs is discovered by the sun at noon-day ; or as the parts of a diseased body, &c. Psa. cxxxix. 2, 'Thou knowest my down-lying and my up-rising ! Thou understandest my thoughts afar off,' ver. 3. 'Thou art acquainted with all my ways,' ver. 4. 'There is not a word in my tongue, but lo ! O Lord, Thou knowest it altogether.'

"*Quest.* You will say this is granted : it is very unquestionable that God is omniscient, that He knows all things. But what is this for the comfort and good of His people ? What good have they by being interested in an all-knowing God ?

"*Sol.* 1. The good and comfort thereby is exceeding great ; for God's omniscience is, as it were, the key to open all His other attributes. It is the spring which sets them all to work, and without which they could not work at all for your good. Though the Lord be an all-sufficiency, yet, unless He were omniscient, unless He did know all your wants, what good could His all-sufficiency do you ? And though the Lord be of a very merciful nature, ready to pity and help, yet, unless He did know your miseries, He could not help you in your miseries. It is His omniscience which doth, if I may be so bold to express it, acquaint and inform all His other glorious attributes, and put them on and draw them out to work for our good.

"*Sol.* 2. That the omniscient God is your God, this is an unspeakable comfort unto you, whether you consider *what* He knows, or *how* He knows, as concerning yourselves. *For what He knows* as concerning yourselves and your conditions, 'The Lord knoweth who are His' (2 Tim. ii. 19). He knows *the integrity of your hearts*, notwithstanding all your weakness and failings. 'But the high places were not taken away, *nevertheless* the heart of Afa was perfect all his days' (2 Chron. xv. 17 ; 2 Sam. vii. 20). 'Thou, Lord, knowest Thy servant' (John xxi. 17). 'Lord, Thou knowest all things ; Thou knowest that I love Thee.' He knows all your

wants and all your distresses. 'I know thy works and tribulations and poverty,' saith Christ to the church of Smyrna (Rev. ii. 9). Your heavenly Father knoweth 'that you have need of all these things' (Matt. vi. 32). He knows all your *desires* and prayers and tears (Rom. viii. 27). 'He that searcheth the heart knows what is the mind of the spirit' (Pf. xxxviii. 9). 'Lord, all my desire is before Thee, and my groaning is not hid from Thee' (Psa. lvi. 8). 'Put Thou my tears into Thy bottle: are they not in Thy book?' He knows all your *active and passive service* in His cause for His glory; all the good that ever you have done, and all the evil that ever you have suffered" (Rev. ii).

"How He knows you and all your conditions.

"He doth know all the conditions of His people with a knowledge—

"1. *Of approbation.* The Lord 'knoweth the way of the righteous' (Pf. i. 6); that is, He likes their way, He approves of their way; fo Rev. ii. 9, 'I know thy works,' that is, I like them exceeding well, I am pleased to see them.

"2. *Of compassion.* The Lord saith, 'I have surely seen the afflictions of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows' (Exod. iii. 7). If one loved us much, but did not know our wants and conditions; if one did know all our conditions, but did not love us, it were sad; but God knows and loves, &c. As a father knows the distresses and wants of his child, and pities the child in that condition, his bowels are troubled for him, and if he can he will relieve him; fo, &c.

"3. *Of condescension*; that is, He knows your wants and desires, and He will help you, and He will supply you. 'Your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things' (Matt. vi. 32). What is that? That is, He will supply your need according to His riches and glory; fo Exod. iii. 7, 'I know their sorrows.' This is explained in ver. 8, 'And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land; fo Nahum i. 7, 'The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, and He knoweth them that trust in Him;' that is, He will do them good: they shall find Him to be as good as His word, and He will help and deliver them.

"Sol. 3. The omniscience of God is a comfort unto you against all your enemies' counsels, plots, reproaches, injuries. Jer. viii. 23, 'Lord, Thou knowest all their counsels against me to slay me.' Psa. lxxix. 19, 'Thou hast known my reproach and my shame and my dishonour: mine adversaries are all before Thee.' Isa. xxxvii. 28, 'I know thy abode, and thy going out and thy coming in, and thy rage against Me.' And how doth the Lord

know your enemies and their plots? &c. Even with detestation, and derision, and opposition, and judgment, and destruction.

"*Sol.* 4. The omniscience of God is a comfort unto you in this respect, that it is a foundation and fountain of all saving knowledge in you. God knows you, and you shall know Him. 'I will betroth thee unto Me in faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord' (Hos. ii. 20). 'They shall all know Me' (Jer. xxxi. 34). 'He knows you for his people, and you shall know the Lord for your God' (2 Tim. ii. 19). 'The Lord knoweth who are His;' 'They shall know that I am the Lord their God' (Ezek. xxviii. 26; fo Ezek. xxxix. 22). He perfectly knows you; and the time shall be that you shall perfectly know Him: you shall 'know, even as you are known' (1 Cor. xiii. 12)."—Pp. 35, 36.

For very remarkable *thinking* on the *omniscience* and *omnipotence* of God in relation to the freedom of the will, and especially for profound presentation of truth on the universal acting of these attributes of Divine Love (*especially* adhering to that name of God), I cannot too earnestly recommend the thin folio of Peter Sterry, entitled, "A Discourse of the Freedom of the Will" (1675). The massive Calvinism of this extraordinary book of an extraordinary thinker is informed by a subdued *glow* of Mysticism or Neo-Platonism, which imparts a strange fascination to his style.

*Reprobation.*—(c) Page 47.

Reprobation. I gladly introduce here the following well-put expostulations from an old writer, whose too little known books for fulness of truth and vivacity and passionateness of style stand almost alone—John Sheffield, one of the "ejected" of 1662. The passage is taken from his "Sinfulness of Evil Thoughts" (1659).

"But if thou shalt yet persist in thy wilful rejecting the mercy, and putting away the kingdom of God from thee, with that foul cavil and blackest objection in all the Bible, '*Oh, but I am a reprobate!*' and if our transgressions and sins be upon us (Ezek. xxviii. 10), and we pine away in them, how can we then live? say they. And Job once, 'If I be wicked, why labour I in vain?' (Job. ix. 29) *q. d.*, I may as well sit still; all endeavours are in vain.

"I answer, 1. *God hath nowhere declared of this, that, or any man, that he is a reprobate*; no man can say it of himself, no man may say it of another; nor doth Satan or any angel know who is a reprobate. *Election* may at length come to be known, and thence *assurance*, but *REPROBATION NEVER*. So long as there is life there is hope; for though he that is in

state of grace to-day shall be to-morrow, yet you cannot say he that is in state of wrath to-day shall be to-morrow. Who can tell how long and how far one may go in a way of sin ere he come to be past grace never to return.

"I answer, 2. Doth not the Lord say, 'As I live, I desire not the death of a sinner?' (Ezek. xxxiii. 2). Turn and live, repent; sin shall not be your ruin. It is not God's eternal decree of reprobation, therefore, doth make thee incapable of salvation, but thy own wilful sin, and persisting in it. Cast away thy sin; thou shalt never be a castaway! **THY SIN IS THE BAR, NOT GOD'S DECREE** (Ezek. xviii. 31; 1 Sam. xv. 23). None are rejected by God, but such as with Saul have first rejected the word of the Lord. In a word, it is thy election and love of sin that thou hast more cause to fear than God's reprobation and hatred of thee.

"Again, I say, consider of it; doth not the Lord call **ALL MEN** everywhere to repent? and say, He is not willing any should perish, but **ALL** come to repent? (Acts xvii. 30; 2 Pet. 3, 9; 1 John v. 10). And wilt thou exclude thyself, and make God a liar; setting His secret decree against His revealed will? He hath **COMMANDED** the gospel to be preached 'to every creature' (Mark xvi. 15, 16); and said, 'He that believeth shall be saved: he that believeth not shall be damned.' And, therefore, as I would not fear to say to an elect, as to Solomon, If thou forsake the Lord, He will cast thee off for ever (1 Chron. xxviii. 9): so to a Cain, if thou do well or repent of evil, shalt thou not be accepted? (Gen. iv. 7). As the most righteous hath no cause to hope, notwithstanding his election, if he repent of his repentance, and turn from his righteousness; so the unbeliever and unrighteous, notwithstanding any decree of reprobation feared, hath no cause to despair if he break off his sin (Ezek. xviii. 24 and 27 compared).

"Further, I say the pit hath not yet shut her mouth upon thee; nor is the gulf fixed. There is a possibility of salvation to any yet living. While there is life there is hope. Out of the hell of despair there is redemption; though out of the despair of hell there is no redemption. . . . Therefore say, 'I will look up to His holy temple, I will look up to the mercy-seat; and if I perish, I will not perish with my hands in my bosom, but I will repent, mourn, pray; and when I have done my part, the Lord do with me what He will.'

"I have read of one in despair whom Satan persuaded it was in vain to pray or serve God, for he must certainly go to hell; who yet went to prayer, and begged of God that if he must go to hell when he died, yet He would please to give him leave to serve Him while he lived, upon which his terrors vanished; being clearly convinced none could pray that prayer that had sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost.

"Still again let me fay to thee as Tamar to Ammon in another cafe : This later evil in turning mercy out of doors is worfe than the former in abufing it, and forcing it to ferve thy lufts. Both are nought [= naught, wicked], this worfe. The fin of Cain defpairing was worfe than the killing his brother. There he wronged juftice, here mercy ; thereby he violated the law, hereby he difparaged the gofpel ; thereby he fet light by the blood of his brother, hereby of the blood of a Saviour, which crieth louder for better things than the blood of Abel for vengeance. We fay the like of Judas's defpair ; it was a greater fin than the betraying of his Mafter.

"Laftly, If thou muft have examples to encourage thee, who fayeft none was ever fuch a one as myfelf, and pardoned, confider what is written in Scripture. Manaffeh was a man given over to all wickednefs ; an idolater, corrupter of God's worship ; a man of blood ; a confulter with familiar fpirits ; the greateft contemner of the prophets and commands of God that could be (2 Chron. xxxiii. 3-7), yet found mercy when he was humbled. And Paul, who had been before a perfecutor and a blafphemer, and injurious in the higheft degree to make him the greateft of finners, yet found mercy (1 Tim. i. 13-15). We could inftance in fome others of our own knowledge having many gracious experiences of that truth, 'Where fin hath abounded grace hath more than abounded, fuperabounded ; and where fin hath reigned as a tyrant unto death and condemnation, grace hath reigned as a gracious king, unto eternal life, in afts of pardon and mercy through Jefus Chrift.'

"But I fhall content myfelf to give thee one as fad an example as you fhall ordinarily meet with out of Aretius [in Matt. xii. 32] ; a godly and eminent author fpeaking of the fin againft the Holy Ghoft, 'I faw,' faith he, 'and knew the man myfelf, and it is no feigned ftory. There was,' faith he, 'a merchant in Strasburg, whose whole life was abominable for whoredom, ufury, drunkennefs, contempt of God's word ; he fpent his life in gaming and whoring to his old age. At laft he came to reflect on himfelf, and be fenfible of the dreadful judgments of God hanging over his head. Then did his confcience fo affright, and the devil accufe and terrify him, that he fell into open and downright defperation. He confefsed and yielded himfelf to the devil as being his. He faid, the mercy and grace of God could not be fo great as to pardon fins fo great as his. Then what horror was upon him, gnafhing of teeth, weeping, wailing ; yea, he would challenge Satan, and with the devil would fetch him away to his deftined torments. He threw himfelf all along upon the ground ; refufed both meat and drink. Had you feen him you could never have forgot him while you had lived ; you had feen the fulleft pattern of a defpairing perfon. Yet,'

faith he,’ ‘after the many pains of godly and learned men who came to him, watched with him, reasoned with him, laid open the word and will of God, and after many prayers, public and private, put up for him, at length he recovered, and became truly penitent ; and having lived piously for certain years, after he died peaceably.’ Wherefore, he concluded, it is not an easy matter to determine of any man sinning against the Holy Ghost, and incapable of mercy so long as he live.”—(Pp. 92–98.) My copy of this priceless book bears the marks of apparently long-shed tears, and on one of the margins is written here, “Glory to God.”

I add a kindredly urgent and Scriptural appeal from Nehemiah Rogers :—  
 “Is this so, that God is ready to forgive every true penitent ? Then *let none lay the fault upon God* if they perish in their sins ; for God is ready and desirous to forgive, and doth often call upon us to turn from our evil ways, that so we might not perish. But if the Lord would not the destruction of the wicked, it could not be. This is well answered by one of the fathers. God willeth, and willeth not, the destruction of a sinner in a diverse sense. He willeth not their destruction as concerning the desert ; for in that respect He saith, ‘Thy destruction is of thyself, O Israel’ (Hos. xiii. 9). But as it is the punishment of sin and manifestation of the glory of His justice, so He willeth it. Accuse not, then, God at any time, if any destruction happen unto you, but lay the whole blame thereof where it should be laid, viz., upon yourselves, whose hearts are hard and will not repent. Seeing this is so, that God is ready to shew mercy to EVERY ONE that seeks it, let this be as a spur and goad in our sides to make us turn unto Him, and seek for mercy at His hands. He will not be wanting to thee, if thou beest not wanting to thyself. If there be not wanting one to ask, there will not be wanting one to hear. Let there be a repentant offender, and there will be a gracious forgiver. Say but with David in the truth of thy heart, ‘I have sinned,’ and thou shalt soon hear the Lord make answer, ‘The Lord hath done away thy sin.’” [“True Convert.”—Exposition of the Parable of the Lost Son, pp. 235, 236 ; but the whole context will abundantly reward perusal.]

*Election and Predestination.*—(f) Page 49.

**Election—Predestination.** I add here some choice passages from the elder worthies, that may be accepted as enforcing my teaching as to how we ought to deal with these “fecret things.”

(1.) Dr Richard Sibbes.—On 2d Cor. ii. 9 he says : “For them that love Him.” Why not for those that God hath elected ? Why doth he not



go to the root of all the great things that God hath prepared for those that He hath chosen to salvation? No; that is out of our reach. He would not have us go to heaven, but rather go to our own hearts. We must search for our election, not above ourselves, but within ourselves" (p. 20).

Again:—"Satan abuseth many poor Christians. Oh, I am not elected; I am not the child of God. Whither goest thou, man? Dost thou break into heaven, when thou carriest a foul in thy breast, and in that foul the affection of *love*? How is that set? Whither is thy love carried, and thy delight and joy, those affections that spring from love? Thy evidence is in thine own heart" (pp. 131, 132).

Further:—"Therefore, dark disputes of election and predestination, at the first especially, let them go. How standest thou affected to God and to good things? Look to thy heart, whether God have taught it to love or no, and to relish heavenly things. If He hath, thy state is good. And then thou mayest ascend to those great matters of predestination and election. But begin not with those, but go first to thine own heart, and then to those deep mysteries afterwards. If a man love God, he may look back to election and forward to glorification, to the things that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard." But see first what God hath wrought in thy heart, what affection to heavenly things; and thence from thy affections to go backward to election and forward to glorification, there is no danger in it" (pp. 159, 160). ["Glance of Heaven; or, A Precious Taste of a Glorious Feast." 18mo. 1638.]

(2.) George Swinnocke, M.A.:—"The decree of God is a sealed book, and the names in it are secret; therefore thy part is to look to God's revealed will—namely, to make thine election sure, by making thy regeneration sure. Dost thou not know that secret things belong to God, but revealed things to us and our children? Oh 'tis dangerous to meddle with the secrets of princes."

Again:—"This opinion is not believed by thee, but is only pretended, as a cloak for thy wickedness and idleness; for if thou dost believe that, if God hath elected, He will save thee, however thou livest, why are not thy practices answerable to such principles? why dost thou not leave thy ground unfowed, and thy calling unfollowed, and say, If God hath decreed me a crop of corn, I shall have it, whether I sow my ground or no; and if God hath decreed me an estate, I shall have it, though I never mind my calling? Why dost thou not neglect and refuse eating, and drinking, and sleeping, and say, If God hath decreed that I shall live longer, I shall do it, though I never eat, or drink, or sleep? For God hath decreed these things concerning thy ground, estate, and natural life, as well as concerning thine eternal

condition in the other world. When I see that thou throwest off all care and means of preserving thy life on earth, and expectest, notwithstanding, to continue alive, then I may believe that thy forementioned thoughts are really such in regard of eternal life ; but till then I shall be confident that this conclusion is only a feigned plea in the behalf of the devil and thy carnal corruptions." ["The Door of Salvation Opened by the Key of Regeneration." 3d Edition. 4to. 1671. Pp. 240, 241.]

(3.) Samuel Rutherford :—"Suppose a rope cast down into the sea for the relief of a company of poor shipwrecked men ready to perish, and that the people in the ship or on the shore should cry out unto them to lay hold on the rope that they may be saved, were it not unseasonable and foolish curiosity for any of these poor distressed creatures now at the point of death to dispute whether the man that cast the rope did intend and purpose to save me or not, and so minding that which helpeth, not neglect the means of safety offered. . . Thus it is that Christ holdeth forth, as it were, a rope of mercy to poor drowned and lost sinners. It is our part, then, without any further dispute, to look upon it as a principle afterwards to be made good, that Christ hath gracious thoughts towards us ; but for the *present* to lay hold on the rope. And as the condemned man believeth first the king's favour to all humble suppliants, before he believes it to himself, so the order is, being humbled for sin, to adhere to the goodness of the promise, not to look to God's intention in a personal way, but to His complacency and tenderness of heart to all repentant sinners. This was St Paul's method, embracing by all means that good and faithful saying, 'Jesus Christ came to save sinners,' before he ranked himself in the front of those sinners. 1 Tim. i. 15." [Sermon before House of Commons. 1643. 4to.]

(4.) Thomas Fuller, B.D.—"Cardinal Pole, a good man though a Papist, being desired by one to tell him how he might come to understand the former part of St Paul's Epistles, which are, for the most part, doctrinal positions, made this answer : by a careful practising of the latter part of the same epistles, which consist much in precepts and directions, how to lead a life in all godliness and holiness of *conversation*. And thus if any man desire to know the former part of predestination, whether his name be written in the Book of Life ; whether he be of the election of grace ; whether he be predestinated to life eternal, let him but look into the latter part of predestination, the means as well as the end of predestination ; whether his conversation be in heaven ; whether his life be suitable to the profession of the gospel of Christ : and though he meet with many rubs in the way, and through frailty stumble and fall, yet riseth again and presseth on to the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Thus if a man do, he may con-

clude himself to be within the number of the elect ; and this is the right use that is to be made of the doctrine of predestination ; but it is otherwise with too too many in these all-questioning days of ours. For whereas St Paul presents us with a chain let down from heaven (Rom. viii.), election and predestination at one end of the chain, and glorification at the other end thereof ; both which ends God keepeth fast in His hand : as for the middle links of the chain, calling and justification, those He leaves for them to lay hold on ; but they cannot be quiet, but must be tugging and labouring to wrest those parts out of God's hands, and so miss of the right use and comfort that is to be found in the abstruse yet sweet doctrine of predestination." ["Sermon at St Clements, London," one of many "Notes" from Fuller's unpublished "Sermons," contained in Spencer's *KAINA KAI ΠΑΛΑΙΑ*, folio, 1658, page 603.]

(5.) Thomas Adams.—"A senator relating to his son the great honours decreed to a number of soldiers, whose names were written in a book, the son was importunate to see that book. The father shews him the outside. It seemed so glorious that he desired him to open it. No. By no means ; it was sealed by the council. Then, says the son, tell me if my name be there ? The father replied, the names are secreted to the senate. The son, studying how he might get some satisfaction, desired him to deliver the merits of those inscribed soldiers. The father relates to him their noble achievements and worthy acts of valour wherewith they had eternised their names. 'Such are written,' said he, 'and none but such must be written in this book.' The son, consulting with his own heart that he had no such trophies to shew, but had spent his time in courting ladies rather than encountering knights ; that he was better for a dance than a march ; that he knew no drum but the tabret ; no courage but to be drunk. Hereupon he presently retired himself, repented, entered into a combat with his own affections, subdued them, became temperate, continent, valiant, virtuous. When the soldiers came to receive their wreaths, he steps in to challenge one for himself. Being asked upon what title, he answered, 'If honours be given to conquerors, I have gotten the noblest conquest of all.' 'Wherein ?' 'These have subdued strange foes, but I have conquered myself.' Now, whosoever thou art that desirest to know whose names are written in heaven, who is elected to life eternal, it shall not be told thee this or that individual person ; but generally thus, men so qualified, faithful in Christ and to Christ, obedient to the truth and for the truth ; that have subjected their own affections, and resigned themselves to the guidance of the heavenly will. These men have made noble conquests, and shall have princely crowns. Find but in thyself this *sanctimony*, and thou art sure of

thy election. In Rome the *patres conscripti* were distinguished by their robes, as the liveries of London from the rest of the company ; so thy name is enrolled in the legend of God's saints, if thy livery witness it, that thy 'conversat[i]on is in heaven,' I John iii. 16." ["Happiness of the Church."]

(6.) Obadiah Sedgwick, B.D. One of his many melting appeals may fitly close these citations :—

"God hath not only fitted a Saviour for thee, but He comes near unto thee with Him. He deals mightily with thy soul to believe on Him.

"Thou hast the *word of revelation* to this very day, wherein the mystery of thy salvation is made known and clear unto thee. Thou needest not to say in thine heart, 'Who shall ascend into heaven to bring Christ down from above ; or who shall descend into the deeps to bring up Christ again from the dead ?' But the word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart ; that is the word of faith which we preach, that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved, Rom. vi. 7-9.

"Thou hast the *word of gracious proposition*. God hath offered Christ with all His plentiful redemption, with His strong salvation unto thee ; yea, He hath assured thee by His word of truth, which cannot lie nor deceive, that 'If thou believest on Him thou shalt be saved by Him,' John iii. 16.

"Thou hast the *word of injunction*, which lays a bond of duty upon thee. 'This is the COMMANDMENT, that we believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ,' John iii. 23.

"Nay, thou hast the *word of penalty and correction*. God hath said that He will judge thee for not believing, and that in the sharpest method of expression, 'He that believes not shall be damned.'

"Nay, thou hast the *word of obsecration and gentle entreaty*. God stoops infinitely below Himself. He doth strain courtesy with thee. God doth 'beseech you by us, and we pray you in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God.'

"Nay, thou hast the *word of expostulation*. Why will you not believe ? Why will ye die in your sins ? Why will ye not come to me that you may be saved ? How often would I have gathered thee ? All the day long have I stretched forth my hands.

"Nay, thy unbelief grieves the very heart of Christ. 'He grieved at their unbelief.' He complains of that slowness in the heart to believe. 'O, slow of heart to believe.' Nay, and He sheds tears because thou dost not believe and receive Him. 'When He came near the city He wept

over it. O Jerufalem ! thou that, &c. How often would I, &c.'" ["The Humbled Sinner Refolved what he fhould do to be Saved." 4to. 1660. Pp. 165, 166.]

I add a faying of a pre-eminent layman, John Selden:—"They that talk nothing but predefination, and will not proceed in the way of heaven till they be fatisfied in that point, do as a man that would not come to London unlefs at his firft ftep he might fet his foot upon the top of St Paul's." ["Table Talk." Edit. by Singer. 1847. P. 175.]

My readers will find it worth while to confult Yarrow's "Soveraigne Comforts for a Troubled Confcience" (1634. 18mo.), efpecially cxxviii.-xxxi. on "Election;" and alfo Gove's "Saints' Honeycomb" (12mo. 1652); Roger's "True Convert" (4to. 1632), pp. 235-241; and Plaifere's *Appello Evangelium* (1652. 12mo).

*Power of Chrift.*—(g) Page 49.

The power of the Lord Jefus. Speaking of the faith of Abraham in the power of God, Dr Spurftowe thus addreffes the believer:—"And thus fhould every believer, as a true child of Abraham, endeavour to do, in looking from themfelves unto the power of God for the making good of any promife which they in prayer do earneftly feek; in faith, do really believe; in hope, do patiently wait for and expect. And though difficulties and temptations fhould arife, which their reafon cannot anfwer, their ftrength cannot repell; yet not to caft away their confidence, but to caft themfelves upon Him who is both the ftrength and wifdom of His people; with whom things that are utterly impoffible with men, are not only poffible, but eafy for Him to bring to pafs and to effect. Oh, the happy peace and ferenity that a believer enjoys in every eftate and condition which befalls him, that can thus reft and ftay himfelf upon the promife and power of God! No valley of trouble will be to him without a 'door of hope;' no barren wildernefs without manna; no dry rock without water; no dungeon without light; no fiery trial without comfort, becaufe he hath the fame Word and the fame God to truft unto, whofe power opened the fea as a door to be a paffage from Egypt to Canaan; who fed Ifrael in the defert with bread from heaven, and water from the rock; who filled Peter's prifon with a fhining light; who made the three children to walk to and fro amidft the fiery furnance with joy and fafety." ["The Wells of Salvation Opened" (1655. 12mo), pp. 56, 57.] Thus quaintly alfo does Robert Dingley fet forth Chrift as "mighty to fave" from His power:—"Strong; He rejoiceth as a ftrong man to run his race" (Ps. xix. 5); and 'He goeth

forth in His might,' faith Deborah (Judges ii. 21). The motions of Christ are strong and powerful, especially when He comes to convert souls, to help His people and avenge Himself on His enemies. 'He travels in the greatness of His strength, and is mighty to save' (Isa. lxiii. 1). This is plainly spoken of Christ and His motions toward His church. He travels in His strength, and who shall let or hinder Him? Now, Sampson was herein a type of Christ, and that both in his name and arm. 1. In his name, Sampson, whether with Jerome you interpret it 'their fun,' or with Mercerus 'a little fun.' Sampson cheered the hearts of men in those dark and sad times of idolatry and oppression; yet he was but a little fun in respect of Christ, whom he did typify, 'the Sun of righteousness,' who is so exceeding great and glorious that God thought fit to inure the people's eyes by looking first on a lesser light, John the Baptist, who is presently foretold after my text, and was before Christ arose, 'a burning and shining light.' 2. As Sampson was a type of Christ in his name, so in his arm, in his strength; for Sampson grew, 'and the Spirit waxed strong in him,' so as he became a saviour of incomparable strength. Thus Jesus Christ grew 'in stature and in favour with God and man;' and the Spirit was so strong in Him, because unmeasured, that He became a Saviour too strong for infernal powers: He slew that roaring lion the devil, and subdues our hearts. He laid heaps upon heaps, and destroyed more enemies by His death than His life." ["Messiah's Splendour; or, the Glimpsed Glory of a Beauteous Christ" (1649, 12mo), pp. 198, 199.]

*The Neglected.*—(h) Page 51.

As I pass this through the press, a noble article in the *Times* reaches me. Thus wisely and thrillingly does the writer commence:—"When Henry IV. wished he could know there was a fowl stewing in every poor man's pot throughout France, he spoke the very essence of that optative philanthropy which is ripe, and sympathizing, and amiable, and popular, and commonly *useless* in all ages and in all countries. We all wish the world was much better than it is. We all wish that every one had at least enough to eat and drink, and a good roof and warm clothing. What could be more horrible than the story we published yesterday of the poor old seamstress, more than seventy years old, dying of sheer want, and sitting up in bed, attempting, as her eyes glazed, to make shirts at three-halfpence a-piece! This was not in Lancashire, but in London, close to hundreds of thousands of rich people who will read these lines. Of course if any of us had KNOWN of that particular case, *it would not have happened*. There is no one who would not

have gone or sent and put the poor old creature in comfort."—(*March* 20. 1863.)

*Comparisons.*—(i) Page 51.

I am sure my readers will thank me for subjoining Miss Procter's tender and, alas! too true Lay of the "Homeless." Its sad farcasm cuts to the very heart:—

- "It is cold dark midnight, yet listen  
To that patter of tiny feet!  
Is it one of your dogs, fair lady,  
Who whines in the bleak, cold street?  
Is it one of your silken spaniels  
Shut out in the snow and the sleet
- "My dogs sleep warm in their baskets,  
Safe from the darkness and snow;  
All the beasts in our Christian England  
Find pity wherever they go.  
Those are only the homeless children  
Who are wandering to and fro.
- "Look out in the gusty darkness—  
I have seen it again and again,  
That shadow that flits so slowly  
Up and down past the window pane,—  
It is surely some criminal lurking  
Out there in the frozen rain?
- "Nay, our criminals all are sheltered,  
They are pitied, and taught, and fed;  
That is only a sister-woman  
Who has got neither food nor bed—  
And the night cries 'Sin to the living,  
And the river cries 'Sin to the dead.'
- "Look out at that farthest corner,  
Where the wall stands blank and bare;  
Can that be a pack which a pedlar  
Has left and forgotten there?  
His goods lying out unsheltered  
Will be spoilt by the damp night air.
- "Nay; goods in our thrifty England  
Are not left to lie and grow rotten,  
For each man knows the market value  
Of silk, or woollen, or cotton,  
But in counting the riches of England  
I think our poor are forgotten.

"Our beasts, and our thieves, and our chattels,  
Have weight for good or for ill ;  
But the poor are only His image,  
His presence, His word, His will ;  
And so Lazarus lies at our door-step,  
And Dives neglects him still."

From *A Chaplet of Verses*, by ADELAIDE A. PROCTER. 1862.

Take thy cry, reader, over these passionate words. It may do thee good.  
Impart thy good.

*Serpent-bitten Israelites.*—(j) Page 54.

The unrestricted, unexcepting, proclamation addressed to all Israel to look to the uplifted serpent, received new meaning and new preciousness when the Lord Himself took it as a specimen of how He was to be "preached" of to a perishing world. I refer to His memorable words to Nicodemus, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that WHOSOEVER believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John iii. 14, 15). Very mournful is it that men should pervert this grace of God, and act as if because ALL are invited to look and live, they will live whether they look or no ; as if because the broad warrant runs, "*whosoever* believeth," they will be saved, whether they believe or disbelieve. It is not without profound significance that the doctrines of grace are pronounced in such instances to be a "SAVOUR of death unto death." Their very graciousness is perverted, as the subtlest poisons have been given in scents. The more an unconverted man takes encouragement and licence to abide unconverted because of the fulness of the Divine mercy and grace, holding that simply as a doctrine, *i. e.*, without personally accepting the Lord Jesus as his Saviour, the more does he turn what is a "favour of life unto life," into a favour carrying death with it. What a mournful reversal of the Divine intention to thus turn a "favour" sweeter than the typical incense, into a deadly thing : worse, by the measure of the interests involved, than distilling the fair asphodel into the drunkard's draught.

*Doubt.*—(k) Page 62.

Perhaps nowhere in any literature has the "if" spoken of been so forcefully, and all too faithfully uttered, as in the remarkable poem below entitled, "The Doubter's Prayer."



"Eternal Power of earth and air! unseen, yet seen in all around,  
Remote, but dwelling everywhere; though silent, heard in every sound.  
If e'er Thine ear in mercy bent, when wretched mortals cried to Thee,  
And if, indeed, Thy Son was sent to save lost sinners such as me:  
Then hear me now, while kneeling here, I lift to Thee my heart and eye,  
And all my soul ascends in prayer, *Oh, give me—give me faith!* I cry.  
Without some glimmerings in my heart, I could not raise this fervent prayer;  
But, Oh! a stronger light impart, and in Thy mercy fix it there;  
While faith is with me I am blest; it turns my darkest night to day;  
But while I clasp it to my breast, I often feel it slide away.  
Then, cold and dark, my spirit sinks, to see my light of life depart;  
And every fiend of hell, methinks, enjoys the anguish of my heart:  
What shall I do if all my love, my hopes, my toil, are cast away,  
And if there be no God above to hear and bless me when I pray?  
If this be vain delusion all, if death be an eternal sleep,  
And none can hear my secret call, or see the silent tears I weep!  
Oh help me, God! for Thou alone canst my distracted soul relieve;  
Forsake it not; it is Thine own; though weak, yet longing to believe.  
Oh drive these cruel doubts away, and make me know that Thou art God!  
A faith that shines by night and day will lighten every earthly load.  
If I believe that Jesus died, and, waking, rose to reign above,  
Then surely sorrow, sin, and pride, must yield to peace, and hope, and love.  
And all the blessed words He said will strength and holy joy impart;  
A shield of safety o'er my head, a spring of comfort in my heart."

From "Poems by Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell" [The Brontës], 1846,  
pp. 97-99. The above is by Acton.

*Duty of the Unconverted.*—(I) Page 64.

John Sheffield has put the duty even more strongly and universally. He says even of *wicked men*—"They are yet to pray, and to perform duty. 'Pray Magus,' (Acts viii. 22). Let wicked men pray, let them sing psalms, let them hear; I do not say, let them be wicked. It is their sin if they do not pray, is not their sin to pray. Say not, my children shall not pray, nor be taught to pray till they be holy and sanctified. As some pray by the Spirit, so others pray for the Spirit first. Refuse not to join such who are no faints, in singing, praying, &c., which are the proper works of faints. Let wicked ones pray, I say, but let them repent as well as pray. 'Repent of this thy wickedness, and pray' (as before, p. 13). Surely we have a very important principle enforced here and above. Our duty is plain, *whatever our state be*. Moreover, in using the appointed means, in discharging the appointed obligations, we are placing ourselves in contact with the God of the means and of the obligations. We, so long as we are unchanged, un-

converted, can think no right or good thought, or do any right or good action *spiritually*; but let us perform them, and in the very performance, the 'dry bones,' the putrid Lazarus, will sooner or later hear the Divine quickening word, 'Live.' We cannot explain how the intercession of the ever-living High Priest touches us and our services; but this we know, He does intercede, and is in ever-present, omniscient contact with us. When will men learn *that it is Christ who saves alone*, not our prayers or services; and that all that reaches Him, from converted and unconverted alike, receives its value from Him only.—(See *Prefatory Note*.)

*Fear—Meaneffs.*—(m) Page 69.

I cannot withhold a very admirable answer to the above—very common objection—which is found in what Milly says to Nina in Mrs Stowe's "Dred" [end of c. xii.]. "I 'member once, when you was a little weety thing, that you toddles down dem steps dere, and you flips away from dem dat was watching you, and you toddles away off into de grove yonder, and dere you got picking flowers, and one thing and another, mighty tickled and peart. You was down dere 'joying yourself, till, by-and-by, your pa missed you; and den fuch another hunt as dere was. Dere was a hurrying here and a looking dere; and finally your pa run down in the woods, and dere you'd got stuck fast in de mud, both your shoes off, and well scratched with briars; and dere you stood a-crying and calling your pa. I tell you, he said, dat ar was de sweetest music he ever heard in his life. I 'member he picked you up, and came to de house kissing you. Now, dere 'twas, honey! You did'nt call on your pa till you got into trouble. And laws, laws, chile, dat's de way with us all. We never does call on de Father till we gets into trouble; and it takes heaps and heaps of trouble sometimes to bring us round. Some time, chile, I'll tell you my 'sperience. I's got a 'sperience on this point. But now, honey, don't trouble yourself no more; but just ask your Father to take care of your 'fairs, and turn over and go to sleep. And He'll do it. Now you mind."

For a singularly able and exhaustive handling of the whole question of Fear as a means of driving to God, consult Sedgwick's *Anatomy* (as before), pp. 232-237.

*Books.*—(n) Page 76.

(n.) The old Divines contain wealth of invaluable thought, with every variety of ingenious elucidation and illustration on the qualifications of Christ

for His office of Saviour, especially as Prophet, Priest and King, a three-fold exhibition of the Lord which they never weary in making. I regret that I cannot here give many golden passages that rife up in my memory. I must content myself with a few references, intentionally confining myself to less known worthies. The following will scarcely ever be consulted in vain on any of the points brought up in my book :—

- (1.) The Humbled Sinner Resolved what he should do to be Saved ; or, Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ the only way of Salvation, &c. By Obadiah Sedgwick, B.D. 4to. 1660.
- (2.) Thirty-One select Sermons preached on special Occasions. By William Strong. 4to. 1656. (See especially xxvii. "Christ's instrumental fitness for his Father's ends.")
- (3.) The Crown and Glory of Christianity ; or, Holiness the only way to Happiness. By Thomas Brooks. 4to. 1662.
- (4.) A Treatise of the Incomparableness of God in His Being, Attributes, Works, and Word, opened and applied. By George Swinnocke, M.A. 12mo. 1672.
- (5.) God's Drawing and Man's Coming to Christ. By Richard Vines. 4to. 1662.
- (6.) Refreshing Streams flowing from the Fulness of Jesus Christ. By William Colvill. 4to. 1655.
- (7.) Several Discourses tending to promote Peace and Holiness among Christians. By Thomas Manton, D.D. 1685. Cr. 8vo. (See especially "No Excuse against a speedy obeying Christ's call.")
- (8.) The Mystical Brazen Serpent, with the Magnetical Virtue thereof ; or, Christ exalted upon the Cross, &c. By John Brinsley. 1653. Cr. 8vo. (All Brinsley's books are good, and all "testify of Christ," as do specially those of the next Author.)
- (9.) A Discovery of Glorious Love ; or, the Love of Christ to Believers opened in the Truth, Transcendancy, and Sweetness thereof, &c, &c. By John Durant. 1655. 12mo.

None of these works—a few out of many now before me—are readily met with, but let my readers snatch up any one whenever it turns up, and I am sure they will never regret paying even a goodly price for it.





*L' ENVOY. DEO DATA.*

“ The heart that seeks for happiness in grandeur, beauty, lore,  
Must leave them all in turn, like one that begs from door to door.  
Oh, but he walks a weary round, and follows a sad dance !  
I reach my home a nearer road, *and go to God at once.*

“ Though grateful for the Hermon-drops earth’s humbler sky may shed,  
I bear the flagons of my soul to the great Fountain-head ;  
Care, stalking o’er our hearts, may leave full many a deep footprint,  
But with His over-flowing grace my Lord fills every dint.

“ He gives us—what He finds our souls too poor in prayer to ask—  
He gives us, lest we sink in sloth, some gracious over-task ;  
He takes away the boons He gave, and why, I know not yet,  
But this I know, when most He takes, I’m deepest in His debt.”

From “ Brooklyn Parsonage : a Metrical Tale. By EARNEST WARMLEY,  
M.A.” [=J. B. MANSON, Esq., of Edinburgh] 1857.



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