

MEMOIRS

OF THE

REV. THOMAS HALYBURTON,

PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS.

WITH

AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

BY ROBERT BURNS, D. D., PAISLEY, SCOTLAND;

AND

A PREFACE

BY ARCHIBALD ALEXANDER, D. D.

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RECOMMENDATION.

THE Reverend THOMAS HALYBURTON, Professor of Divinity in the University of St. Andrews, North-Britain, was, undoubtedly, one of the greatest and best men of his day. For his talents, his learning, and his piety, he was equally eminent. His "Memoirs" have been considered, by competent judges, for more than a century, as one of the best specimens of religious biography extant. As an exhibition of Christian experience, simple, unaffected, scriptural, and richly instructive, we know not that we could mention a work, of the same extent, more adapted to be useful, and more worthy of patronage. The present edition has been carefully revised, and divested of a few obsolete words and phrases, while the utmost care has been taken not only to preserve every idea of the author, but to exhibit it faithfully in his own manner. The work is worthy of a place in every family; and we hope the enterprising publishers will have no reason to regret their undertaking. We would cordially recommend it to all with whom our opinion may have any weight.

**SAMUEL MILLER,
C. HODGE.**

Princeton, May 20, 1833.

P R E F A C E .

ALL the truths necessary to the illumination, sanctification, and consolation of Christians, are contained in the sacred scriptures, and are exhibited in divers ways, and under many different aspects. Divine truth is to the mind, what light is to the eye: it reveals to us all those objects with which it is important that we should be acquainted. It is impossible that error, however sincerely believed, should answer the end of truth. Right affections are so intimately associated with the belief of the truth, that there is an absurdity in supposing them to exist without this foundation. Every divine truth revealed in scripture is calculated, either singly, or in connexion with others, to make a salutary impression; but when any part of the system of divine truth is obscured by ignorance, or distorted by error; there will be a corresponding defect in the moral exercises of the individual. The relation of sound doctrine to pious feeling and moral character, may be compared to that between the types used in printing, and the impression on the paper. If there be any defect or disorder in the types, it will appear on the corresponding page. It may not be such as to destroy, or entirely obscure, the meaning of the whole passage; but still it is the cause of a defect, which mars the beauty of the impression; and often renders the sense uncertain. I am of opi-

nion, that no Christian can be in ignorance or error respecting any portion of revealed truth, without injury. The precise evil we may be unable to define; it may be imperceptible, yet it has its effect on the system. Obliquities in moral conduct, if we were capable of ascertaining their cause, might often be traced to errors in opinion. It is evident, therefore, that he who trifles with the truth, trifles with his own life. To be indifferent about truth, is a folly of the first magnitude. To be governed by mere inclination, taste or fashion, in the adoption of our religious opinions, is indicative of a diseased and dangerous state of mind. Truth is so vital, and so necessary to the existence and perfection of a pious character, that we cannot be too solicitous to acquire correct knowledge. Pride, prejudice, and partiality, should be laid aside, and the love of truth should be kept alive in our souls. Mere intellectual vigor, and extensive erudition, are no effectual security against error. Honesty and deep humility are essential prerequisites to the successful pursuit of truth.

As the truth makes an impression on the mind in accordance with its own nature, and modified by the various circumstances of individuals; and as these salutary effects taken together, constitute the Christian character, and furnish the only certain evidences of a work of grace on the heart, it is of immense importance to be able to delineate, and ascertain, with as much precision as possible, these characteristics; that we may know, in our own case, and that of others also, whether spiritual life has commenced, and is progressive.

in our souls. Now, as in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man. The impressions of truth on different minds will be substantially alike. There will indeed be varieties arising from the degree of knowledge, and the peculiar temperaments and habits of individuals; but these minor differences will not affect the general similarity. Though in one case the impression made by the seal is deeper and more distinct than in another; yet by comparing them, we may be able readily to conclude, that they have been produced by the same seal. Thus, when the truth of God is made effectual by the Holy Spirit, to regenerate and sanctify the hearts of men, there may be, and are, endless varieties in the minor traits, but the leading features are the same in all. It will be seen, as far as these effects can be made evident, that they are all the children of the same father, and all bear the family likeness. The great difficulty in this business, is to ascertain the precise nature of the effects produced. In regard to our own minds, this investigation is attended with no small perplexity; but in relation to others, the subject does not admit of absolute certainty. One man, however perspicacious and discriminating his intellect, and however well acquainted with the word of God, and with the genuine impression which it makes when it takes effect, cannot directly examine the sentiments and feelings of another. He can only form an opinion of what is in the hearts of others, by their words and actions: but the same words may be used, and the same external appearances exhibited, when the internal

exercises of the soul are specifically different. For example, a man may declare that his heart overflows with love and gratitude to God, or that he is full of the joy of the Holy Ghost, and godly sorrow for sin, and yet all this may be said in hypocrisy ; or what is more common, the person may be conscious of feelings, which, through ignorance, he calls by these names ; and yet the emotions which he experiences may be mere counterfeits of those graces, the names of which he appropriates to them.

The scriptures furnish us with many clear delineations of the exercises of the true believer. These are our safest guide, and only unerring standard of experimental religion. By meditating by day and night on the contents of the sacred pages, we may become so familiar with the characteristics of genuine piety, that we may find it easy to determine, that the same lineaments have, in some faint degree, been drawn on our own souls. But in examining into our true character, we may be much assisted by reading the memoirs of men of distinguished judgment and eminent piety. Many such works are now in circulation, and are adapted to promote, in a high degree, the edification of the reader ; but I am acquainted with no production of this kind, in which the exercises of the human heart, both before and after regeneration, are so distinctly described, as in the following biography of the Rev. Thomas Halyburton, written by himself. We have here the faithful narrative of the views, feelings, conflicts, temptations, victories, and consolations of a man of eminent piety, and uncom-

mon soundness of judgment, made at a period when he was most capable of forming an impartial opinion. He has portrayed the unregenerate heart in its deceitfulness and corruption, without disguise. From his own experience, he clearly testifies the inefficacy of a religious education, while unaccompanied by the grace of God. He, in the next place, teaches us, how powerfully the truth of God operates on the natural conscience, and how strongly it restrains even the unregenerate heart, from rushing into all the excesses of wickedness. Under the light of truth, and the lashes of a guilty conscience, the soul naturally seeks some refuge, some place where it may be sheltered from the thunderings of mount Sinai.

The distinct and satisfactory narrative which the author gives of the changed views and exercises of his mind, at the time of his conversion, and afterwards, ought to be deeply pondered by every professor; but especially, by all candidates for the sacred office. While, in our day, conversions are multiplied beyond all former precedent, there is much reason to fear, that many of them will not bear to be brought to the touch-stone of God's word. With many, conversion has become a slight and easy thing, the mere hasty purpose of an hour; and unaccompanied by those deep views of depravity, and those soul-comforting views of Jesus Christ, which are here described. The consequence is, that multitudes who profess conversion, do not exhibit, in any satisfactory degree, the spirit of Jesus Christ, in the meekness, humility, benevolence, and self-denial of their

character. There is much reason to suspect, that in the religion of many who now enter the church under a momentary excitement, Christ has no place. They speak nothing of the spiritual glory of the Mediator, in the account which they give of their experience. Their exercises would seem to have as little relation to the distinguishing doctrines of Christianity, as to those of the Koran. Of what account is it that multitudes cry, Lord, Lord, and yet do not evince, that they are truly born of God? Their zeal, their bustling activity, and their flaming profession of attachment to the cause of Christ, will answer no purpose, while they indulge a self-sufficient, self-righteous, censorious, and turbulent spirit. Between the fervors of fanaticism, and the glow of holy benevolence, the difference is immense. The one is the wild fire which consumes and desolates the church of God; the other is like the hallowed flame on the altar of God, which causes a sweet odor to ascend to heaven, with all the sacrifices which are offered.

In these memoirs, we have, also, a fuller and more particular description of the conflict between light and darkness, faith and unbelief, sin and holiness, than can readily be met with elsewhere. Many sincere believers have sad experience of the power of atheism, and the buffetings of Satan, and they often meet with but little sympathy or relief, from books or preachers. In consequence, they are tempted to think that their case is altogether peculiar, and are ready to sink into hopeless discouragement; believing, that their "spot is not the spot of God's children;" but

fearing, lest these temptations and conflicts are the mark of his reprobation. Let such take comfort when they here read, what dreadful conflicts with unbelief, pride, and atheism, were endured by this distinguished servant of Jesus Christ.

There are two kinds of knowledge displayed, in a remarkable degree, in this book: the one is the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, in their application to the various conditions and exigencies of believers; the other, an extraordinary insight into the deceitful windings, doublings, and complicated foldings, of the human heart. I see not how any one who is sincerely desirous of knowing what he is, and what the word of God requires him to be, can rise from the perusal of this little volume, without real and sensible benefit. There is a penetrating power in the words of a man who believes, in good earnest, all that the word of God relates, and speaks the sentiments of his inmost soul.

The circumstances attending the death of this distinguished man, are such as to attract the attention of every reader. His dying words were faithfully recorded at the time, and they serve to show, in the clearest manner, the power of the gospel, to inspire with confidence, the soul of the believer, in the last conflict. The triumphs of faith, in this case, were signal and glorious. Through all his sickness, his reason remained undisturbed. In the whole scene there seemed to be less than usual of an excited imagination; but the realities of the eternal world, were contemplated soberly, by a steady faith. When first seized, his evidences were clouded, and his conflict with his spiritual

enemies, tremendous; but in a short time, the storm passed over, the clouds were dissipated, and the clear sun-shine of divine favor dawned upon his soul. From that time, he enjoyed uninterrupted peace, and unwavering assurance, until he fell asleep in Jesus. I do not know that I have ever read a narrative of the last moments of any saint, which were to my mind more satisfactory; or of any death which was more in accordance with the exceeding great and precious promises of God. I have read of exercises of a more extatic and rapturous kind, but never of any, where the comfort and confidence of the person, seemed to depend more entirely on the simple, sober exercise of faith. Who will not exclaim upon perusing this narrative, "let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!"

As in the original Memoirs of Mr. Halyburton there are many Scotticisms; many obsolete expressions; and frequently, such a confused collocation of words, as to render the sense obscure, it has been judged expedient, to make such alterations in the style, as would remove these blemishes, without the least addition to the sentiment, or the least diminution from the ideas of the author. Indeed, the author's own words have been invariably retained, even when quaint and antiquated, if the sense was perspicuous. We like to see an old author in the dress and fashion of his own times, rather than decked in the finery of the moderns. It was also found, that the reader was rather obstructed than aided by the numerical subdivisions, which so much

abound in the work ; these therefore have been mostly omitted, as also the references to chapter and verse of Scripture ; especially, where the passage is not cited. These alterations have been made with care and diligence, by a young gentleman, a student in the Theological Seminary, who has been at the pains of re-writing the whole book ; and has thus prepared the work to be read with ease and pleasure, by those to whom the Scottish idiom and dialect are obscure and harsh. If this effort should prove successful, he will probably undertake to perform a similar service for "Halyburton's Great Concern." Having derived benefit myself from the work now presented to the public, I feel it to be a duty to recommend it to others ; and especially, to all young ministers of the gospel, and to all candidates for the holy ministry. Let our young Theologians be such as Halyburton was, and error will hide its head as ashamed ; and genuine piety will be inculcated and exemplified. That the blessing of God may accompany the reading of this little volume, to all into whose hands it may come, is the sincere prayer of

A. ALEXANDER,

Princeton, N. J.,
May, 1833.

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INTRODUCTORY ESSAY.

THERE are two extremes into which professing Christians of the present day are very apt to fall. While one class adopt a system of doctrinal sentiments without any practical regard to their influence on the heart and on the life; another satisfy themselves with the simple performance of social duties. Into the religious scheme of the former, there enter few, if any of those holy affections, and little of that sublime practical virtue which the gospel requires. Into the scheme of the latter, there enter few of the leading principles of the Christian revelation, and a very small portion of that spirituality of sentiment and of feeling, which constitutes the very essence of vital godliness. The religion of both is alike cold and inefficient. Doctrinal truth must indeed lie at the very foundation of all true piety; and no man can cultivate the spirit and practise the duties of religion, without a clear and scriptural knowledge of the truths of God. But it ought never to be forgotten, that the doctrines of the gospel are all highly practical in their tendency, and that we cannot be said to hold them at all, if we "hold them in unrighteousness." We lose sight of their great original design. We pervert them to our own selfish and unholy purposes; and in so doing, we evince an alienation from the love of the truth as it is in Jesus.

The religion which terminates in theory, and that

which satisfies itself with the performance of social duties, are alike remote from the holy system of the Bible. The one fills the mind with notions, and inflates it with intellectual pride; the other gratifies the selfish conceit of personal virtue, while it sets aside all the great principles of real godliness. The one lays hold of those truths which are designed and fitted to operate as incentives to holiness, but it fails to carry them out to their legitimate applications: the other satisfies itself with a part of religion in place of the whole, and separates the love of our neighbor from the love of God. In both, the grand features of true godliness are overlooked. Cold mental abstractions are substituted in place of vital practical principles; and the morality of a Seneca and an Epictetus is set forth as a counterpart to that of Christ and his apostles.

There is reason to fear lest the style of public instruction, which many preachers of the gospel have of late years adopted, should tend to encourage these low and defective views of real religion. We allude to that species of pulpit address which speaks to the understanding alone; which exhibits religious truth in the form of logical discussion and well arranged argument; and which sacrifices unction and pathetic appeal for the sake of minute accuracy and elegant diction. Popular discourses are thus made to assume the form of philosophical dissertations; and the aim of the preacher seems to be to convince rather than to persuade. Now, it is perfectly true, that the man whose province it is to plead for God and for the truth, ought to address the judgment and the rational powers; and if he fails to do so, he is in danger of substituting empty declamation in place of solid and scriptural instruction. Let it, however, be remembered, that in the present day we have more to

do with practical infidelity than with absolute ignorance, and that the reason why religion is at so low an ebb amongst us, may be traced rather to disinclination of heart than to sceptical heterodoxy. The preacher of truth must state, illustrate, and vindicate its claims on the understanding and the judgment; but he has only accomplished one half of his office if he seeks not to secure for it a safe and permanent lodgement in the conscience and the heart. With this twofold end in view, he must unite warmth of address with clearness of statement; impassioned appeals to the conscience, with sound arguments to the understanding; and the direct application of motives, with their perspicuous exhibition in theory. We cannot conceive a greater danger to which the souls of men are exposed, than when the hearers of the gospel are left to infer the safety of their state from the soundness of their creed. The doctrinal articles of a theological system are one thing; the vital principles of the same system applied to the heart and to the habits, are quite another. It is the part of abstract discussion to analyze and establish the doctrinal articles; it belongs to hortatory and pastoral theology to unfold and apply the practical principles. If we confine ourselves to the work of analysis and explanation, we are in extreme hazard of tempting men to measure their progress in the Christian life by the clearness of their apprehensions, rather than by the moral amelioration of their habits. Theory may thus take place of solid and steady principle. A barren orthodoxy of sentiment may thus be confounded with practical submission to the entire and undivided scheme of grace. The doctrine of regeneration may thus be readily embraced as scriptural and true, while the very men who thus embrace it as an article in their creed,

may practically shrink from the solemn decision of the Saviour—"Ye *must* be born again!"

We apprehend that the difference between evangelical preaching, and that which is called moderate or legal, does not, when fairly and fully brought out, resolve itself into the mere technical distinctions which are marked by the terms *orthodoxy* and *heterodoxy*. It is perfectly possible to construct a scheme of doctrine in all respects scriptural, while there may be nothing in it that is calculated to give offence to the carnal mind or to rouse the sleeping conscience. The fashion of the present day is rather favorable than otherwise to such orthodox exhibitions of Christianity; and hence it is, that few, comparatively, propound from our pulpits the dogmas of Pelagian or Socinian heresy. Only allow to religion the province of the understanding alone, and it makes little difference whether it shall be regaled with the realities of truth, or with the figments of error. If speculation is all that is aimed at, the love of it may be gratified by statements that are substantially sound, as well as by the creations of mere fancy. Abstracted from the practical tendency of the doctrines of evangelical truth, there is nothing in their theoretical exhibition that is peculiarly calculated to excite the determined opposition of the carnal mind; and so long as nothing is designed beyond a simple expose of them as materials of thinking, "the offence of the cross" will neither be very violent nor very long continued. The *real* cause of that enmity which the "natural man" cherishes and expresses towards the things of God, is to be found in the holy, humbling, heart-searching, and self-annihilating tendency of the gospel of the grace of God; and the essential difference between evangelical and modern preaching, consists in the prominence which is given

by the one to the scriptural doctrine of conversion, compared with the absolute reticence of the other on this cardinal principle of Christianity. Even the self-denying doctrine of imputed righteousness will not excite very virulent hostility on the part of corrupted men, so long as it is not exhibited in connexion with the absolute necessity of a radical and universal change of sentiment, and of character, before we can "enter into the kingdom of heaven." It is the doctrine of free, sovereign, and regenerating grace, enlightening the mental eye, and changing the current of the heart's affections, convincing the man of his absolute nothingness in the sight of God, and of his utter destitution of all godliness—awakening him to a sense of his sin and danger, and prompting him to cry out with holy anxiety of spirit, "what shall I do to be saved:" it is this spiritual and practical view of the Christian remedy for man's moral diseases, together with the tone of deep seriousness and impassioned fervor with which it is proclaimed, that rouses the hostility of men, and leads them to characterise evangelical preaching as wild and enthusiastic. We may preach orthodox doctrine according to our standards, as long and as clearly as we please; and provided we only discuss and reason with the calm composure of the intellectual philosopher, no offence will be given or taken. It is not so much the mere statement of truth that gives offence, as the manner in which the truth is applied. It is not the appeal to the understanding that will irritate; it is rather the attempt to probe the conscience. It is not the general exhibition of certain peculiar opinions that rouses indignation; it is rather the minute and searching application of principles to insulated individuals. This it is that constitutes the life and soul of practical experi-

mental preaching ; and to this the "hard" and "desperately wicked heart" of unrenewed man will ever be sternly opposed:

Bishop Maltby, a very learned, but very heterodox divine of the church of England, has told us in one of his sermons, that "the offence of the cross" is a thing totally unknown in these halcyon days. "Since," says he, "it is no longer discreditable to profess our faith in Christ, we cannot incur the hazard of opposing or offending our nearest and dearest connexions. A man no longer encounters foes among his own household : he is not obliged to renounce the regard and affection of his family because he believes in Christ ; and therefore the warning which our Lord found it necessary to give in those days and in that country, has *no meaning*, if applied literally in our own." The "warning" alluded to by the preacher is contained in these affecting words of him who "spake as never man spake :"—"Whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple." Of this warning the reverend divine has been pleased to affirm that "it has *no meaning*" if applied to modern times. In other words, the believer has in these days and in this beloved land, nothing in the way of a "cross" or trial to bear, arising out of the profession he makes as a follower of Jesus. It is worthy of remark, that the terms of the statement, even as made originally by our blessed Lord himself, were figurative. It was not *literally* true of every individual believer in those times, that he had to bear the *cross* in the same manner as his blessed Lord did bear it, when he went up to the scene of his ignominious and cruel death. The expression was obviously designed to forewarn the followers of Jesus of the trials they might be called to endure, in consequence

of their embracing the gospel; and the test of their sincerity is, the readiness with which they "denied themselves," and submitted to the persecutions which awaited them.

True it is, that the profession of the gospel does not now expose to trials of precisely the same kind, or the same degree of severity. The arm of secular prosecution is not now stretched out against the humble followers of the Lamb. We dwell under the fostering wing of a mild and tolerant administration. Christianity is "part and parcel" of the constitution of the country. Its institutes have been incorporated with the civil statutes of the realm; and while legal provision has been made for the due celebration of its ordinances throughout the length and the breadth of the land, every man, whether availing himself of that provision or not, is permitted "to sit under his vine and fig-tree, none daring to make him afraid."

Still we demur to the assertion, that the Christian believer has *now* "no cross" to bear. "The carnal mind" is still "enmity against God;" and "he that would be the friend of the world must be the enemy of God." A cold and formal profession of the faith of Christ may indeed consist with perfect immunity from every thing approaching to persecution; and the piety which never obtrudes itself on spectators, and which operates no change whatever on the customs and manners of its professors, may be allowed to pass along with perfect security. But what shall we say of the contempt and ridicule with which vital godliness is so frequently met, both in the higher and in the inferior walks of life? And what shall we say of the bitterness of that zeal which, in the bosom of a worldly minded family, is strenuously directed against the humble and modest but

ardent piety of one or more of its members, who, by the grace of God, may have begun to manifest "another spirit?" And what shall we say of the frigid indifference or the determined hostility with which any direct allusion to the God who made us, or the Saviour who redeemed us by his blood, is met in the senate house of our country, or in the high places of the land? And what shall we say of the spirit of reckless animosity, with which the public journals and the daily vehicles of intelligence are in the habit of assailing those worthy men, who stand up boldly for the purity of the Sabbath and the freedom of the slave? Is there no persecution here? nothing of the nature of a "cross" which the generous mind must bear? no practical demonstration of the fact that real godliness and strict morality are still the objects of scorn and ridicule to the men of this present world? The world knows and "loves *its own*;" and the religion which is pleased with things *as they are*, and which ventures not beyond the magic circle of this world's occupations, and pleasures, and interests, will run no very imminent risk of incurring the "world's dread laugh." Such a religion may suit the meridian of Dr. Maltby, and his accommodating followers; but such a religion will do little to make head against the growing vices of the age. It may be "peaceable," but is not "pure."

In such books as those of Professor Halyburton we meet with much of that which has been denominated, not unaptly, *experimental religion*. Enlightened and judicious Christians whose views have not been perverted by modern philosophy, and who have not yet forsaken the "old land-marks" nor the "old paths," know very well what is designated by the terms. *Experimental religion* they consider as the only true

practical religion—well grounded in principle, and sturdy in its opposition to all that is unholy ; and they are inclined to look upon whatever falls short of it in the light of frivolous speculation or concealed infidelity. There are others, however, and these, there is too good reason to believe, by far the majority amongst us, who confound experimental religion with fanaticism and mental delusions. Hence we need not be surprised at finding it made the butt of an unsparing and relentless ridicule. Those who venture to defend it, as well as those who are considered as its hapless subjects or victims, are held up to public scorn, either as designing hypocrites, or as beings removed by a very few degrees from the region of the fatuous. But as “ridicule is not” always “the test of truth,” and as the Almighty has been pleased to give us a perfect standard by which every opinion as well as every habit and practice may be tried, let us endeavor to ascertain what may be the claims of this phenomenon called experimental religion, to be held up to the cruelty and scorn of the “*rationalist*.”

I. We would inquire, then, in the outset—What may be meant by experimental religion? Is it not frequently misunderstood? Are not the terms often grievously misapplied? And is it not of vast moment in every such inquiry, to attempt at least a careful separation between the chaff and the wheat?

As there is no subject either in religion or in morals, on which erroneous ideas have not been held under the guise of truth, we need not be surprised if such ideas have been at different periods entertained with respect to the nature of experimental religion. Some there are who suppose it to consist in a certain supernatural intercourse with Deity ; the preception at the moment

of a celestial influx of grace into the soul; sensible illapses of the spirit; and spiritual exercises of soul, altogether inconsistent with the ordinary rules which regulate the government of heaven. Others suppose it to consist in certain agitations of the animal frame, hastily mistaken for the touches of seraphic influence; in the changes which take place in the state of the feelings and passions, occasioned it is supposed, by causes approaching to the miraculous; and in the observation of common occurrences, mistaken for extraordinary interpositions of Providence. Again, the terms have been applied to designate the feelings and habits which may have been acquired by profound speculations on matters which lie far beyond the range of the human intellect; and a peculiar species of sensations of which no one except the actual participant can form any idea. While such false conceptions as these are entertained on this subject, need we wonder that it should be made the butt of ridicule; and that the elevated experiences of enlightened Christian believers should be thus exposed to the imminent danger of ranking with the flights of Madame Guyon, and the dreams of Emanuel Swedenborg?

But what is *really* experimental religion? It is neither more nor less than the practical application of the *great truths* of religion to the particular *cases of individuals*. It is, in other words, the practical efficacy of Christian doctrine exemplified in the heart and on the life. It is Christianity brought home to "men's business and bosoms." For example, religion calls on us to acknowledge, as founded on plain matter of fact, the doctrine of human depravity in general: it becomes experimental religion, when this doctrine is felt to be true, from our own personal experience. We

may believe that there is salvation only through the merits of the Redeemer; and we may rejoice in the assurance that all who come unto God through him shall obtain everlasting life: we believe it *experimentally*, when we are individually humbled under a heartfelt sense of our utter inability to save ourselves; and when our own conviction of the absolute nothingness of our own resources respond to the dictates of God's infallible word. Christ hath promised the aid of his grace to renew, to sanctify, to comfort, and to guide; it is the province of experimental religion to cherish the sense of our need of grace, to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and to be earnest and persevering in prayer for the influences of the Holy Spirit. We descant on the infinite value of Christianity as a source of pure and satisfying spiritual comfort; experimental religion consists in the personal enjoyment of this spiritual comfort. The Scriptures describe the Christian life as a "race" in which we must run so as to obtain; as a "fight," in which we must strenuously contend against spiritual enemies; in short, as a course of unceasing moral and spiritual exertion: sincerely and perseveringly to "run the race set before us;" to enter on the spiritual combat and to continue in it; to discharge the duties of personal and relative obligation in the spirit of humble dependence on God, and ardent attachment to his service;—this is experimental religion. To speculate on religion as a system of sublime truths, and as a powerful means of intellectual and spiritual improvement, is to know it as a science: we reduce it to experiment, only when we bring it into contact with our habitual conceptions of things, and when we adopt it as the supreme guide of ordinary conduct. In one word; the principle on which ex-

perimental religion rests, is simply this, that Christianity should not only be known, and understood, and believed, but also felt, and enjoyed, and practically applied.

II. There is nothing in experimental religion, as thus viewed, which is at variance with the unbiassed dictates of right reason. If the doctrines and principles of Christianity be reasonable in themselves, their application to the great and salutary purposes of real life cannot surely be unreasonable. If human nature be really depraved, is it irrational to feel and to lament, that we, individually, and as forming part of the common corrupted mass, are indeed partakers of the common depravity, and that therefore we ought, in the language of the prophet, to "mourn, each family apart, and each soul apart?" If religious truth be indeed a source of consolation; is it unreasonable to expect, and actually to realize this consolation? If Christ permits and cordially invites us to hope in the mercy of his Father, through the atonement and gracious intercession of himself, as our great High Priest; is it unreasonable that we should "rejoice" in this hope; and that under its influence we should seek to "purify ourselves, even as he is pure?" If the life of the Christian be indeed a race—a pilgrimage journey through the wilderness of this world,—a moral campaign from which death only can release us—where is the absurdity of supposing that Christians may occasionally faint on their journey, or be wounded by their spiritual enemies; and that, in consequence of these casualties, much of what is known by the name of *Christian experience* should be acquired and treasured up for future and efficient service? The principles of a science are generally supposed to acquire

additional evidence and illustration, from their being able to stand the test of rigid and repeated experiment ; why should religion be the only science in which experiment shall be exploded ? Can it be on any ground irrational and unphilosophical to seek for proofs of the truth, and excellence, and suitableness of Christian doctrine, from the actual experience of men, and from its well authenticated results on human character and life ? The irrationality is all on the other side. The opponents of experimental religion do not avowedly explode the claims of religious truth to a cool and successful vindication ; they rather boast of their having taken it out of the hands of unskilful defenders. But then they defend its claims simply as truth, and they estimate its merits by a standard exclusively intellectual. They maintain the importance of religion ; but it is religion in the abstract sense ; religion considered as a matter of scientific discussion ; religion, as held to be too ethereal in its essence, and too recondite in its speculative researches, to be trusted for common and every day usage, in the hands of such creatures as the mass of mankind are found to be. They occasionally, and when the humour serves, introduce us into a paradise of delicious products ; but when we venture to put forth our hands to grasp the fascinating sweets, a voice of stern prohibition is heard—"touch not, taste not, handle not !" Can any thing be more unreasonable than thus to acknowledge and to applaud the general truths of religion, but to reject their practical efficiency and their personal application ? to defend religion as a science, but to deny to it all intercourse with the feelings, and the prospects, and the ordinary pursuits of men ? On this principle, the shadow is indeed retained, but the substance is irretrievably gone. An altar is reared,

and the sacrifice may be spread out upon its summit ; but where is the sacred fire, and where the hallowed incense that ascends in silent majesty to heaven ?

III. Is there any thing in experimental religion that is inconsistent with the holy, and gracious, and all perfect *character of Jehovah* ?

That Jehovah should reveal to his creatures, rational, immortal, and accountable, truths which possess a certain degree of moral efficacy ; which are intended to operate powerfully on the feelings and the affections of men ; to excite certain agreeable emotions ; and to produce certain valuable practical effects ;—is surely not inconsistent either with his natural or his moral attributes. Indeed, it would be far more difficult to vindicate the Divine character from the charge of inconsistency, on the supposition that truths had been revealed which possess no moral efficacy ; which address themselves exclusively to the intellect of men ; and which are designed to terminate in speculation. Truths of this abstract and refined character adapt themselves full well to beings endowed with intelligence alone, but they will not suit the nature of such a complex being as man. Where, on this supposition, would be the argument in favor of Christianity from its admirable adaptation to man's original constitution, and to the place which he holds in the universe of God ?

But it may be supposed not so easy to reconcile with our best conceptions of the Divine character, that acknowledged principle in experimental religion, which implies a certain kind of spiritual intercourse between God and the soul of the believer. The advocates of experimental religion do maintain, that God communicates his grace to men ; that he inspires them with

the enraptured feeling of spiritual consolation ; that he condescends to hold fellowship with them in the holy exercises of sanctified affection ; that believers are constantly under the gracious superintendance of Jehovah ; and are, by the discipline of his providence and grace, gradually attuned to the temper and the bliss of heaven. If any objection can be made to this view of the case, the force of the objection bears not against experimental religion in particular, but against the doctrine of divine influence in general. If, in the world of nature, a present Deity is "ever seen and ever felt," in conducting, by a mysterious but real efficiency, the hidden processes of vegetable and animal life, shall we deem it the part of reason and of wisdom to place the moral and the spiritual worlds beyond the range of an influence similar in power, but wisely adapted to the very different subjects on which it is found to operate ? And if we allow that a certain spiritual influence is exerted by God on the minds of men, through the medium of religious truth addressed to the understanding and the heart, shall we hesitate to allow that this influence is exerted for the purpose of implanting and cherishing holy principles, of animating virtuous feelings, and of inspiring spiritual joy ? It must be granted that the doctrine of divine influence in general, and this specific modification of it, do alike imply the doctrine of a special Providence. But is there any thing inconsistent with the moral character of God in the supposition, that, while he exercises a general and a particular Providence over the world, he should exercise a special Providence towards the church which he hath chosen as his "resting place ?" that while he confers temporal blessings on all men indiscriminately, in the course of his holy and gracious

Providence, he should confer spiritual blessings of a peculiar kind on his own people in particular? that while he holds a condescending intercourse with all creatures in the way of preservation and protection, he should hold with good men and with the denizens of immortality, an intercourse of a nobler and more heavenly character, for the purpose of preserving alive the spark of spiritual life, of administering consolation, and defending from invisible foes? It is of importance to remark, that prior to, and independent of, revelation and experience, it is quite beyond our power to tell what it may or may not be consistent with the Divine character to do, in regard to these modes of communication with our world and its inhabitants. We may traverse the wide fields of the intellectual world, but we shall not find one decisive argument to prove it inconsistent with the attributes of God, that he should hold special intercourse with good men, through the medium of the truths and ordinances of religion. The subject is confessedly one that lies far beyond our reach. All our information regarding it arises from the written word; and if the voice of nature, even among the blinded heathen, is for one moment to be listened to for a response, that response will be in perfect unison with the dictates of inspiration: for, by the teachers of virtue among the ancients, all real excellence of character was ascribed to the influence of the Deity, and the virtues which were inscribed on characters of ideal greatness were linked with the dignities and the bliss of a celestial fellowship.

I should question much the title of that system of theology to be reckoned either philosophically just, or practically influential, which would go to destroy that beautiful analogy which obtains between the doctrine

of Divine influence, and the constitution and course of nature. God hath constructed the grand machine of the material universe ; hath arranged in beautiful harmony its varied parts ; and hath subjected the whole to the control of certain laws ; but God hath not seen meet to withdraw himself from the work of his hands, or to resign the beautiful machine of things to a general and undefined legislative control. *Our* God is not like the deity of Epicurus, or the Brahma of Hindooism ; removed at an awful distance from the productions of his own hand, and dwelling in a state of absolute quiescence and sublime indifference to all that is. "Our God is in the heavens ; and he doeth what pleaseth him in the heavens, and in the earth, and in all deep places." All is under his control. The revolutions of the seasons, and the rise and fall of empires, are alike the subjects of his regard ; and without him "not even a sparrow can fall to the ground." Analogy leads us to expect the same presence and the same agency in the operations of the spiritual kingdom ; and this analogy, the scheme, which excludes Divine influence on the soul of man, tends directly to interrupt and to destroy. It deprives man of the noblest of all motives to sacred diligence in duty, that, namely, which an apostle derives from God's ability and willingness to "work in us both to will and to do." It restrains us within the limits of a region comparatively cold and uninviting. It places an impassable barrier in the way of our access to that "temple of the living God" on earth, whose mansions are blest with the residence of the "eternal Spirit," and whose worshippers are gladdened with his hallowed inspirations.

IV. There is nothing in experimental religion that is inconsistent with the plain and real facts as

illustrative of the moral government of God in other instances.

Every pursuit, mental or moral, has a particular tendency. Every truth which the mind perceives, every event which happens in the course of Providence, has some influence, in a greater or in a less degree beneficial or hurtful. Is this analogy disturbed by supposing, that the truths of religion, the facts which Christianity records, and the holy views which it presents, should also possess and exercise a potent influence over the mind? The experience of all those who have been accustomed to intellectual and moral pursuits, bears witness to the same truth; and supports, by analogy, the reasonableness of experimental religion. In searching for truth, the philosopher enjoys a high mental satisfaction. Every new discovery gives delight to his mind; and the difficulties with which he is called to struggle, only quicken his ardor in pursuit. Who can tell the delight which the astronomer feels in counting the heavenly bodies, calculating their distances, exploring the orbits in which they move, and pointing out the laws by which they are regulated? What rapture, approaching to enthusiasm, on the discovery of a new star; on the observation of a comet in its first approach to our globe; or even on a fortunate conjecture respecting matter of which its shining train is composed? What emotions, think you, fill the soul of a mathematician, while occupied in solving a difficult problem, or in constructing a beautiful proposition? The feelings of all these men, if disclosed, would appear altogether ridiculous to those who cannot enter into them. Shall we then confine all mental and moral pleasures, all high wrought pulsations of soul, all enthusiastic ardor, (if enthusiasm must needs be supposed,) to the breasts of the speculative few? Is

there no portion to be dealt out to the humble Christian in the retired walks of life, whose secular views, perhaps, rise not above the village where his first breath was drawn, but whose spiritual prospects expand with the immensity of the universe? Shall Archimedes, when he had accidentally discovered the method of calculating the quantity of alloy in a golden crown, be permitted with impunity, and without any question as to his understanding, to run through the streets of Syracuse, exclaiming, in all the wantonness of philosophic joy *εὕρηκα, εὕρηκα*, "I have found it! I have found it!"—And shall the Christian be branded with the insignia of enthusiasm and madness, because he speaks of a "joy that is unspeakable and full of glory," because, for a season, he seems to be overpowered with the sublime raptures of a pure and an elevated devotion; and because he lays claim to a happiness with which a "stranger meddleth not." To change the scene. If there be particular occasions on which even the lover of science is filled with melancholy forebodings, when he beholds the clouds of ignorance and of error which encircle or surcharge the intellectual horizon; need we wonder, if, in the Christian life, there should be seasons when, amid the perplexing influences of an evil heart within, and the "abounding of iniquity" without, good men may walk in sadness, and go mourning without the sun? The truth is, those only oppose and ridicule experimental religion, who have no spiritual discernment, no spiritual taste, no spiritual desires. "The way of peace is *above* to the righteous." "The life of a believer is hid with Christ in God." "The world *knoweth not* the sons of God, because it knew not *him*," who is emphatically and in a distinctive and peculiar sense—"God's *own* son."

V. The reality of experimental religion is attested beyond all question, by the testimony and example of the greatest and best of men in all ages. Look to the character of the saints of God as exhibited in the unerring page of God's own word. Were they strangers to experimental religion? Did they rest satisfied with cold and barren abstraction? Were they kept at an awful distance from the region of *feeling*, because they trembled at the charge of enthusiasm, or were afraid of being "righteous overmuch?" What a variety of emotions agitated the soul of David! What elevation of spirit at one time, and oppression at another! What hallowed delight in communion with God! What earnest desires after loftier spiritual attainments! "There be many that say, Who will show us any good? Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me. 'Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased." "Why art thou cast down, O my soul! and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance." "O my God, my soul is cast down within me; therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, and from the hill Mizar. Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy water-spouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me. Yet the Lord will command his loving-kindness in the day time, and in the night his song shall be with me; and my prayer unto the God of my life." "O send out thy light and thy truth; let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles: then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy." As the heart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul

after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God!" "O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee; my soul thirsteth for thee; my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; to see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary." "My soul breaketh for the longing it hath for thy commandments at all times."—Is there nothing of the language and the feeling of experience in all this? and do the writers of the New Testament adopt a different strain? Read the history and the writings of the apostle Paul. Through these channels enter his breast, and contemplate the features of spiritual religion, as exemplified in him. Did *he* know nothing experimentally of the "peace which passeth all understanding," and the "joy which is unspeakable and full of glory?" Did *he* remain in the posture of a stoic, and the victim of all the apathy and deadness of "simple intellect," when he contemplated the "height and the depth, the breadth and the length," of the love of the Redeemer, "which passeth all knowledge?" And did the "great mystery of godliness," "God manifest in the flesh," excite no higher emotion in his soul than the examination of a problem in Mathematics, or a theory of pure abstraction? We have only to read his Epistles, and those of his fellow-apostles Peter and John, to mark the striking contrast betwixt their holy illustrations of divine truth, and the cold speculations and barren generalities of some modern theologians. Moreover, we might search the history of the church, and bring forward from its closely-studded pages a "great cloud of witnesses" to the reality and importance of experimental religion. Men of talents very various, and

of sentiments on lesser matters not less various, and men of very different temperament in regard to animal constitution, combine in asserting, that religion is an *internal* thing; that it is a matter of personal experience; that it is alike removed from the ravings of the visionary on the one hand, and the frigid speculations of the mere moralist on the other. We appeal to the Fathers of the Protestant churches, and we ask, if there was nothing experimental in that system of faith, of hope, and of holiness, which enabled them to brave death in its most awful forms, and to sing even in the midst of flames? We appeal to the Christian world, as it is even in these degenerate days, and we ask the really religious of every country and of every clime, if there be nothing experimental in that religion which enables its votaries to stand erect in the flood of tribulation, and to smile even in the vale of death? We appeal to the church-triumphant in heaven, and we ask, if there is nothing experimental in those feelings which express themselves in such ascriptions as these: "Worthy the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. Salvation to our God, who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever?"

That experimental religion is not at all inconsistent with the possession and the display of intellect, in its highest advances, may be inferred from the plain matter of fact, that the same man whose "Memoirs" have so frequently been charged with the rankest enthusiasm, was the author of a most learned and comprehensive reply to the deistical scheme of the celebrated Lord Herbert of Cherbury. Mr. Halyburton's book on the "Insufficiency of Natural Religion, and the Necessity of Revelation," was occasioned by

the publication of certain Treatises, written by that sceptical nobleman with the avowed object of setting aside the pretensions of all "particular religions," as he termed them; and, resting the claims of *religion at large* on the basis of nature alone. His lordship reduced all the essential articles of religion to five; the unity of God, the reasonableness of divine worship, the obligations of piety and virtue, the sufficiency of repentance for pardon, and a state of rewards and punishments after death. He attempted to show, that these doctrines had been recognized in every age and in every country as the common faith of mankind, and that any thing beyond the circle which bounds them is unnecessary, and even pernicious. It will be obvious to the most careless observer, that the above catalogue comprehends, with a single exception, the whole faith of the Socinian; and it is edifying just to notice the very near approximation which the faith of the deist and the followers of the *fratres Poloni* make to each other. The single exception we allude to is the article relative to the divine mission of Christ; and this, upon the principles of the rationalist, becomes a matter of very trivial importance the moment that the disciple of Lord Herbert conscientiously declares, that he has already acquired all that is essential to the system of *both parties*, from separate and independent sources; even from that light which comes directly to us from heaven, and which shines not through the contracted medium of any one "particular" religion.

In his reply to the scheme of Lord Herbert, Mr. Halyburton sets himself largely and distinctly to show, that the light of nature is extremely defective, even with respect to the discoveries of a Deity, and the worship that is to be rendered to him: with respect

to the question of man's true happiness, the rule of duty, and the motives to obedience; and that it is unable to discover the means of obtaining pardon for sin, or to eradicate inclinations to sin, and subdue its power. He appeals to reason, to testimony, to matter of fact, and to the general experience of the world. He afterwards considers distinctly the articles to which Lord Herbert reduces his catholic religion, and explodes the evidence which he advances in favor of their universality. He takes up the arguments of Mr. Blount and Mr. Gildon on the same subject, and gives to them in succession a fair and solid refutation.

It was in France and Italy that the new scheme of Deism, as it was then called, for the first time reared its head, about the beginning of the seventeenth century. The men who patronized it were, generally speaking, distinguished for learning, ingenuity, and sparkling wit. They wrote after the model of the new philosophers, who scorned the philosophical slavery which former ages had been under to Aristotle. Their appeal was to reason; and it is not to be wondered at, that their plain and plausible statements and arguments should have produced on thinking minds a powerfully-favorable impression, in countries where the dominant system was one of priestcraft, superstition, and folly. Nearly about the same time, some novel opinions began to be entertained and published in Holland, a country which has ever been considered as pretty safely removed from the region of religious Quixotism and romance. These novelties were rapidly thrown into a form very near akin to Socinianism, "which," says Mr. Halyburton, "is but a remove from Deism." It was not long before these new opinions took footing in England, and, to use the language of

the Professor, "they began to be embraced and countenanced by some topping churchmen; who, forgetful of their own articles, homilies, and subscriptions, carefully maintained and zealously propagated this new divinity." It appears that at the period in question, the Jesuits of Rome were suspected of having had a deep concern in disseminating those opinions. Rushworth, in his "Collections," repeatedly notices the boasting of the Jesuits, "that they had planted such a drug in England as would soon purge out the northern heresy."* "Once make men Atheists," it has been shrewdly and solidly remarked, "and it will be easy to turn them into Papists." Those who observe what is passing around us in the present day, will not fail to notice a striking parallel with the above case in our own experience. The unnatural and monstrous alliance betwixt infidelity and Romanism; betwixt the men who plead for the most extravagant licentiousness of opinion, on the one hand, and the men who would subjugate every mind and every sentiment to the Procrustes' sway of the Vatican, on the other; is one of the most ominous peculiarities of the present times. The phenomenon as it appears *now* may be explained on the same principle which the Jesuit avowed two centuries ago. Any thing that will crush the "northern heresy" of Protestantism, or sap its foundations, must be acceptable to that church which has never been wanting in its practical application of the principle, that "the end sanctifies the means."

Dr. Leland, in noticing the work of Mr. Halyburton, whom he properly terms "a learned and pious author," remarks, that "the narrowness of his notions

*Vol. i. p. 475, and Letter by a Jesuit, p. 62, ib.

on some points hath prejudiced some persons against his work, and hindered them from regarding and considering it so much as it deserves." The author of that invaluable work, the "View of Deistical Writers," was, like our author, "a learned and pious divine;" but, while the "learning" of the two was alike profound and extensive, the "piety" of the one was of a different cast, and nurtured in a different school, from that of the other. The "piety" of Halyburton was that of a heart deeply exercised, and of a conscience ever tenderly alive to the sensibilities of spiritual feeling. Leland was a man of powerful and commanding intellect, and the bulwarks of Zion may well boast of having such a defender; but his feelings were not deeply interested in the cause which he so ably maintained, and his practical contexture and habits wanted exceedingly the seasoning of an evangelical spirit. It need not surprise us, then, to find, that, in the estimate of a liberal Protestant, Halyburton should have been considered as a man of rather "narrow notions." He flourished at a time when his country had been, for a succession of years, tutored in the school of libertinism and Popery combined, and when his much-loved church had learned, from sad experience, what her children might expect from the sad union of a low standard of doctrine with the high and persecuting claims of a dominant hierarchy. He appreciated aright the vast importance of a strict and unbending adherence to the grand peculiarities of "the faith once delivered unto the saints;" while he practically denounced, as anti-christian, the modish speculations of "philosophical Christians." He justly attached far more importance than Dr. Leland would have done to the points at issue betwixt the Episcopa-

lians and Presbyterians of the period, though no man was more ready to do honor to the conscientious and consistent adherent of any form of ecclesiastical sway. He had not learned as yet that Episcopacy had any peculiar claims on Scotland and on Scotsmen for the *choice blessings* she had conferred; nor had he learned, that "Presbyterianism was a religion unfit for a gentleman." That style of preaching, then so much in vogue in England, which substituted heathen mortality in place of the gospel of Christ, had no charms for him; and if this learned defender of the faith was really a man of "narrow notions," it must, at any rate, be allowed to him, that he wanted not capacity to "give a reason" for adopting and maintaining them. "After men," says he, "once were taught that the controverted doctrines of religion were not necessary to salvation, and that all that was necessary thereto, was to be referred to, and comprehended under, morality, and that there was no need of regeneration, or the sanctifying influence of the Spirit of Christ, in order to the performance of our duty; it is easy to see how slight the difference was to be accounted between a Christian and an honest moral heathen. And if any small temptation offered, how natural was it for men to judge, that the hazard was not great to step over from Christianity to Deism, which is Paganism *à la mode*!"

The learned and pious clergymen of the church of Scotland, whose testimonials in favor of Mr. Halyburton's work are so creditable to themselves and to him, were not men of "narrow notions," and yet they were not the patrons of a cold and generalized theology. After stating their high sense of the importance and necessity of the work, they thus expressed themselves "We, therefore, wishing and hoping that these posthu-

mous labors of the reverend author may, through the blessing of God, prove useful and profitable for promoting and confirming the serious and unbiassed reader in the true Christian faith, do earnestly recommend to him the diligent perusal of them, and him, in using of them, to the grace of God for that effect." Here the grace of God is recognised as specially necessary to produce a conviction of the truth, and the design of the evidences of Christianity is clearly recognised as of a practical and experimental character. The men who thus recommend the work were among the truest and best of the members of the church of Scotland in the beginning of last century; and no man whose opinion is worth a straw will feel himself disgraced by standing on the same platform with the three principles, Carstairs, Wisheart, and Haddow, or with Professor Hamilton of Edinburgh. A late eminent minister among the Dissenters in England, Dr. Edward Williams, in his "Christian Preacher," has concurred with these able men in attesting the work as "one of great solidity and worth."

The late excellent Mr. Newton of London, in writing to Mr. Scott, the distinguished author of the Commentary on the Holy Scriptures and the "Force of Truth," thus expresses himself in regard to the work on Natural and Revealed Religion, and generally with respect to the other writings of the same author. "I set a high value," says he, "on this book of Halyburton's, so that, unless I could replace it with another, I know not if I would part with it for its weight in gold. The first and largest treatise is, in my judgment, a masterpiece; but I would chiefly wish you to peruse the essay "Concerning Faith," towards the close of the book. I need not beg of you to read it carefully, and

to read it all. The importance of the subject, its immediate connexion with your inquiries, and the accuracy of the reasoning, will render my request unnecessary. I cannot style him a very elegant writer; and, being a Scotsman, he abounds in the Scottish idiom. But you will prefer truth to ornament. I long to hear your opinion of it. It seems to me so adapted to some things that have passed between us, as if written on purpose.* The same excellent author, in writing to another friend, the Rev. Mr. R——, regarding the Supralapsarian and the Sublapsarian schemes, thus remarks: "At the close of Halyburton's 'Insufficiency of Natural Religion,' he has an inquiry into the nature of Regeneration and Justification, wherein he proposes a scheme in which, if I mistake not, the moderate of both parties might safely unite."† The late Dr. Thomas Gibbons, of London, author of the "Memoirs of Eminently Pious Women," and other useful works, has recorded his opinion of our author, in a few lines, not remarkable, indeed, for their harmonious versification, but containing an important statement of fact:

"Sheathed in celestial armor, and lifting high
The sword, invincible, of truth divine,
See HALYBURTON on the mounds, the camp
Of Deism rush, and triumph o'er its powers!"‡

But there are men—of learning and piety too—who limit not their approbation of Halyburton's works to the learning and the talent which his work against the Deists displays. Mr. Bridges, in his most excellent

* Cardiphonia, Vol. I, Letter II. to Mr. Scott.

† Ibid. Vol. II.

‡ "The Christian Minister," a poem, by Gibbons.

work on the "Christian Ministry," refers to the "Memoirs" of Halyburton, as giving the most graphical delineations of the diversified desires of the mind in conviction of sin; and Mr. Jones, in his "Christian Biography," has said of Mr. Halyburton, that his "last words are among the richest treasures which piety ever bequeathed to the church; and the letters which he dictated on his dying bed, are specimens of his unparalleled devotion and concern for the welfare of others." Dr. Isaac Watts—no mean man, certainly—has written prefaces to most of Mr. Halyburton's works, and he thus expresses his sentiments regarding him: "Besides his solid learning, his clear and penetrating judgment, his acute reasoning, his eminent piety, and other excellent endowments, there was one thing I could not but highly value in his converse, that, according to the Apostles advice, Eph. iv. 29, what 'proceeded out of his mouth was good, to the use of edifying, which might minister grace to the hearers: so that I may truly say, I was seldom in his company, but it was mine own fault if I was not edified.'" "The author and subject of this narrative," says he, speaking of his Memoirs, "was a man of great piety, bright natural parts, studious learning, and uncommon penetration and judgment, as sufficiently appears in his other writings; yet there is such a vein of humility and honesty, that runs through every page, that you may see the secret workings of his thoughts through his holy language." "Here we find reason and learning giving their testimony to the gospel, and to the power of godliness, with a living pen and with dying lips." Of the Memoirs it has been justly said, "that scarcely a position which was ever taken up by the enmity of man against the mercy of his Maker, but

was occupied by him, and resolutely maintained, till it was driven from under him; and scarcely, we should think, can a 'refuge of lies' be entered by those who came after him, but was previously entered by him, and made his resting place, till he found it to be no shelter. In short, the history of his advance towards Christianity, solely in its direction, so full of incident, and so frequently obstructed by relapses, with the repose which he tasted on his arrival at it, and the growth of character in his after-years, all opening upon us so graphically, so richly interwoven with scriptural references, and coming in so aptly on our past or present experience, is a treasury of instruction which ought by no means to be shut up from the present generation."*

It is not an unpromising symptom of the theological taste of the present age, that the writings of such men as Owen, and Baxter, and Howe, and Halyburton, and Edwards, are rising in demand. These are the masters in our Israel. They wield the sword of the Spirit with masculine skill; and just in proportion as we tread in their footsteps, and plead the same cause with them, may we expect the blessing of heaven to shine upon our efforts. It is *not* necessary that we imitate them in their peculiarities of a style and phraseology which belong to an age that is gone by; but *it is* necessary that we imitate them in adherence to those eternal truths, which no age can antiquate, and which no revolutions in the church can change. Amid the diversities of opinion, truth remains the same; and a church which is built on the

* Young's Essay, introductory to Halyburton's Memoirs, p. 39.

“foundation of apostles and prophets,” with Jesus Christ as its “chief corner-stone,” has the pledge of heaven in its favor. If it falls, it must be because “Ichabod” has been previously inscribed on its ruined battlements. If its standards and its discipline are doomed to rank among the things which *have been*, it will be because the “spirit of the fathers” has not “turned to the children.” If our heavens shall become as brass, and our earth hard as iron, it is because we have grieved the Holy Spirit; “and therefore he hath turned to be our enemy, and fought against us.”

Mr. Halyburton flourished at a period when the church of Scotland had just emerged from the darkness of that gloomy night of persecution which had settled around her for the long space of nearly thirty years. He was not properly one of the Covenanters; but he had drunk deeply into their spirit—a spirit of uncompromising adherence to the cause of truth, and unflinching fidelity to the league of the faithful. His parents had shared of the cup of suffering. His earliest and strongest attachments were formed in the school of adversity; and he entered on the service of the church with all the ardor of a mind tutored by experience. The labors in which he engaged as a pastoral superintendent of one of the parishes of his native district, together with his known learning, his commanding talents, and his decided piety, recommended him as a fit person to be the instructor of the “sons of the prophets,” in one of the seminaries of the Scottish Israel; and he began his career in the theological chair at St. Andrews, under the most promising auspices. It pleased the great Head of the church to spare him only a short time to

edify the church in that important station. In the lapse of two years, he was called from the labors and anxieties of the church-militant on earth, to the rest and the glories of the church-triumphant in heaven. His life, though short, spoke volumes; and his death-bed scene addressed survivors in language more solemn, and with an energy more pungent, than the living voice could command.

R. B.

PAISLY, October 17, 1832,

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SHORT ACCOUNT

OF THE

REV. THOMAS HALYBURTON.

Mr. THOMAS HALYBURTON, Professor of Divinity in the New College at St. Andrews, was born at Duplin, in the parish of Aberdalgy, Dec. 25th, 1674, of worthy and godly parents, Mr. George Halyburton and Margaret Playfair. His father was descended from the family of Pitcar, in the county of Angus; and was minister of the parish of Aberdalgy, in the presbytery of Perth; from which he was ejected by the then Government, in the year 1662; as were also about three hundred more ministers, summarily and without any legal process, simply, for non-conformity to Prelacy.

Mr. George Halyburton, who was then bishop of Dunkeld, and who had been a zealous covenanter, suddenly became so forward in the national defection, and so cruel a persecutor of his once fellow-presbyters, that he would not spare him more than others, though he was his near kinsman, but turned him out of his charge. And that prelate was scarcely well warm in his nest, when the Lord smote him with sore sickness, of which he died and went to his place.

Immediately after the father of Mr. Halyburton was thus persecuted, a choice and pious gentleman, the sole heritor of the said parish, who was one among a thousand in such an evil time, and who afterward suffered much for non-conformity, gave him a house to dwell in at Duplin, near to himself—was his ordinary

hearer—and while he lived showed no small kindness to him: which treatment deserves a thankful remembrance from his relations.

His father never repented his faithfulness in adhering to the covenanted work of reformation, but rejoiced that he had been honored to suffer on that account; and when he fell asleep in the Lord, in the year 1682, he died in the full belief, that God would deliver the church from the same persecution it was then under.

His mother was the daughter of Mr. Andrew Playfair, the first minister of Aberdalgy parish, after the reformation from Popery, to whom her husband succeeded a little before the restoration of prelacy. She was allied, on the mother's side, to some of the best families of the kingdom, of whom I shall here forbear a particular account. But what was their far greater glory, both of them from their youth up were truly religious.

His mother excelled many of her own sex, in the knowledge of the principles of religion and in an uncommon memory, so that she could exactly repeat many of the choicest chapters of the Bible.

They had a numerous family; no less than eleven children, and these very sickly. All of them died young, except their eldest daughter Janet, and this, their son Thomas. But to sweeten these trials they had peculiar comfort in the death of their children. Some, even of the youngest of them, gave singular evidence of their dying in the Lord, as some yet alive can well remember.

When Mr. Halyburton's father died, he was fortunate in being under the care of such a mother. The episcopal persecution for non-conformity daily increasing, she, with her son-in-law, and daughter, was forced to withdraw to Holland for safety, and took him along with her, while yet he was very young. He quickly learned the Dutch, and went to a school, founded by Erasmus, to learn Latin. They sojourned in Holland till 1687, when they returned home, narrowly escaping shipwreck.

At their return he went to school, and afterwards to the University, where he made great proficiency, beyond many of his equals. When he had finished his course there, he entered a noble family as chaplain, where one that had been his school-fellow, and had imbibed the principles of the Deists, began to attack him on that side, which obliged him, in the beginning of his studies, to read that controversy carefully. What progress he made in this study will appear from his book against the Deists. He could not attend lessons of divinity in any of the colleges, while in that family; and though he had read divinity only two years, the presbytery of Kirkaldy importuned him to enter on trials for the ministry, and he was licensed by them to preach, June 22d, 1699.

He was settled as minister, in Ceres parish, May 1st, 1700.

In 1701 he married Janet Watson, a virtuous and pious gentlewoman, daughter of Mr. David Watson, an heritor in the parish of St. Andrews, a zealous, good man, and one that suffered much in the late times, for non-conformity. His relict survives with six children, one son and five daughters, besides two sons and a daughter who died.

Some years after his settlement at Ceres, his health broke, and his indisposition daily increased, so that he was hardly able to go through his ministerial work in that large parish.

In April, 1710, having received a patent from her Majesty, and an invitation from the presbytery, he was transferred by the Synod of Fife, to the professorship of Divinity in the new College of St. Andrews.

In April, 1711, a dangerous sickness seized him, which obliged the physicians, at several times, to take from him about four-score ounces of blood. He recovered, and went abroad again; but his wasted body never attained the small strength he had before his sickness. Shortly afterwards, his arms and legs became a little benumbed and insensible; they also swelled, which at his death increased greatly.

On the 23d of September, 1712, at seven in the morning, he slept in Jesus: "and him will the Lord bring with him."

He was of low stature, his body thin and small, his hair black, but his complexion pretty clear and fair. But O! how noble a spirit, how great a soul dwelt in his weak and frail body!

He was naturally of a very pleasant and desirable disposition. He had an equal temper, which he retained under surprising vicissitudes.

This evenness of temper appeared much in his frequent and dangerous sickness. He had a calm, peaceable, healing disposition, and yet he was as bold as a lion in his Master's cause. He had a peculiar talent for reconciling differences. How afflicting the prospect of division was to him, the following sheets will testify. And had some others been blessed with more of this spirit, his, and our fears would have been utterly disappointed.

He was master of a considerable stock of prudence; he studied to walk in wisdom toward them that are without and them that are within, and to become all things to all men.

He was dexterous in observing tempers, and in addressing and managing persons. How wisely he carried himself in those Church Judicatories, of which he was a member, others can witness.

He abhorred that unedifying conversation, which is spent in frequent and unseasonable jesting and drollery, so common with many; though he was abundantly facetious in company, when and where he saw it expedient; and in this way he has sometimes dropped what tended to edify. Those who conversed most with him will own, that they seldom enjoyed his company without some profit from it. He often was uneasy after much conversation with others, if he was not edified himself, or thought he did not edify them. How circumspect and tender was his walk in this respect! He often regretted the difficulty there was in retaining one's integrity in the most of company, in this degenerate age. He reckoned such company a great

hardship, and loth would he have been to let any thing offensive in conversation go without a check.

The following Memoirs will witness his walking with God, in his family and in his closet. But some things I cannot pass here without remark. It was his ordinary custom, except when necessarily hindered, to come from his closet to family worship, especially if the Lord had given him enlargement of heart, and if his spirit was in a proper frame. He would then have been very uneasy, if any interruption fell in betwixt closet and family duties. He also commonly expounded the word of God, at least once a day, in his family. The night before family fasts, which he kept, or national fasts, he always directed his servants how to conduct, and on the fast days, discoursed to them about their souls' conditions and concerns.

He was an affectionate and dutiful husband, a conscientious and kind parent, a faithful and easy master.

Such as knew him will own, that he had a clear head, a very ready and rare invention, and an uncommon memory. He read little after his health broke; and often owned that his greatest improvement was more by thinking than reading.

He had a very ready way of expressing his thoughts, though he was very far from a vain, airy affectation of language in preaching—a prevailing evil in his time. He had studied an even, neat and scriptural style, and this became natural to him: though some thought, that in the end, his deep thinking made it a little more abstruse than formerly.

He had choice pulpit gifts. He was an accurate and pathetic preacher, a great textuary, close in handling any truth he discussed, and, in the application, he was home, warm and searching. And here he showed himself a skilful casuist. He often complained that some worthy men were too general in the application of their doctrines.

He ordinarily wrote his sermons very exactly, when health and business would allow. He used to say, "A lazy minister in his younger years would make a

poor old man." It were to be wished that this example were more followed than it is. He often ventured to preach under great indisposition, when he was not able to write so much as the heads of his sermon. And this he did on sacramental occasions, and has been singularly assisted, as was manifest to all who heard him. In his last years, his health was so low, he wrote very little. His own experience of the power of godliness, together with the other gifts we have mentioned, made him very skilful in dealing with wounded spirits, according to the variety of their cases. And this conversation, he owned, was extremely useful to him. Few ministers have taken a more cautious and confirming way of dealing with people, than he did before admitting them to the sacrament. And, while in health, he was diligent in all the other parts of his ministerial work.

He was no less singularly fitted for the schools. He spoke Latin elegantly and promptly, though he had been long in the disuse of it, and was at scarcely any pains to recover it; which was quite wonderful. He was very expert at the Greek; but his sickness broke his design of accomplishing himself in the oriental languages.

In controversies, especially those of the time, he excelled many. It was strange to see how quickly he would understand the state of a controversy, and the strength of an adversary; see through his deceitful sophistry and pretences; and how close and nervous his reasoning usually was.

On the whole, what a loss, especially at this juncture, may we justly reckon the death of this great man, to the poor wrestling church of Scotland, to the place in which he lived, and to his family. Alas! what shall we say? What great thoughts of heart may it cause, when such a green olive tree, fair, and of goodly fruit, is cut down; when such bright stars, yea, even constellations of them, set in our day? May we not justly fear, when such wrestlers with God are taken away—as Mr. Halyburton on his death-bed foreboded—that “the consumption decreed shall overflow with righteousness.”

MEMOIRS

OF THE

REV. THOMAS HALYBURTON.

CHAPTER I.

Narrating the state of matters with me from the time of my birth till I was about ten years of age.

THE common occurrences of the life of one, in all respects so inconsiderable, are not worth recording; and, if recorded, could be of little use either to myself or others. Wherefore, it is none of my design to waste time or paper with these. But if I can recount the Lord's gracious conduct towards me, and the state of matters both before and under the Lord's special dealings with me, in a way that shall tend to the conviction, illumination, conversion, consolation, and edification of the reader; and so arrange these topics as not only to illustrate the different parts of this work of grace, the several advances it made, the opposition made to it, its victory over this opposition of my own heart, of Satan and the world, but also to present the work in the several stages of its advancement, and in its final results; it may, at least, be of great use to my own confirmation. And should the book ever fall into the hands of any other Christian, it may not prove unuseful to him, considering that the work of the Lord, in substance, is uniform and the same in all; and "as face answereth to face in a glass," so does one Christian's experience answer to another's, and both to the word of God.

This being the design of this narrative, namely, to give some account of the Lord's work with me, and of my own way towards him, as far as I remember it, from my birth to the present time; I shall proceed in it.

I came into the world, not only under the guilt of that offence, whereby many, nay, "all were made sinners," and on account of which "judgment came upon all men to condemnation;" but I brought, moreover, with me a nature wholly corrupted, a heart wholly set in me to do evil. Of this the testimony of God in his word satisfies me. And herein I am strongly confirmed by undoubted experience, which fully convinceth me, that from the morning of my days, although under the advantage of gospel light, the inspection of godly parents, and not yet corrupted by custom, the imaginations of my heart, and the tenor of my life were evil, and "only evil continually."

It cannot be expected that, at so great a distance, I should remember the particulars of the first three or four years of my life; yet I may on the justest grounds presume that they were filled up with those sins which cleave to children in their infancy. And many of these are not only evil, as they flow from a poisonous root, for "a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit;" but they do also bear the impress of their corrupt source, and an evident congruity to it, and taste strong of that root of bitterness whereon they grew. While we are yet on the breast, inbred corruption breaks forth, and before we give any tolerable evidence that we are rational, we give full evidence that we are corrupted. We show that we are inclined to evil, by pressing with impatience and eagerness after what is hurtful; we manifest our aversion to good, by refusing, with the greatest obstinacy, what is proper and useful for us. At first we are only employed about sensible objects, and it is respecting these that we give the first evidences that our nature is corrupt. And with the first appearances of reason, the corruption of our spirit discovers itself. How early do our actions show that

passion, pride, revenge, dissimulation and sensuality are inlaid, as it were, in our very constitution. Any ordinary observer may discern, very early, innumerable instances of this sort in children. With these and the like evils, were the first years of my life, whereof I remember little, no doubt filled up. "Folly is bound up in the heart of a child;" and we "go astray as soon as we are born, speaking lies."

In this first period of my life, I had advantages above most children. My parents were eminently religious, and I was, for the most part, trained up under their eyes and inspection. I continually heard the sound of divine truth in their instructions, ringing in my ears; and I had the beauty of the practice of religion continually represented to mine eyes, in their walk. I was, by their care, kept from ill company which might infect me. By these means I was restrained from those grosser out-breakings that children often run into, was habituated to a form of religion, and put upon the performing of such outward religious duties as my years were capable of. Hence it appears, that the sin in which I am now fully convinced I wallowed, during this period, is not to be imputed, either as to my inclinations or my actions, merely to a contracted custom, or to occasional temptations; but was really the genuine fruit and result of that lamentable bias with which man, since the fall, is born. Surely the spring must be within, when, notwithstanding all the care taken to keep me from them, I impetuously went on in sinful courses. The holy God hedged up my way with precepts, example and discipline; but I broke through them all. Surely the spring must be within. And surely it must be very strong that was able to bear down such mounds as were set in its way, by the providence of God; and when it could run with so full a stream, notwithstanding, as much as could be, all outward occasions of its increase were cut off. Herein I have full evidence of a heart naturally estranged from the Lord, nay, opposed to him; and this, moreover, deeply aggravates my guilt. "And they have turned unto me the

back and not the face : though I taught them, rising up early and teaching them, yet they have not hearkened to receive instruction."

The care of my father during his life, which ended October, 1682, and of my mother, after his death, did not change but only hide nature ; which is indeed often hidden, sometimes overcome, seldom extinguished. Although I cannot remember all the particulars from the fourth or fifth year of my life, yet so far as I do remember what was the general bent of my heart from that time, I must confess that it was wholly set against the Lord. "The carnal mind is enmity against God ; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." To confirm this assertion ; when I now examine the decalogue, and review this portion of my life, notwithstanding the great distance of time, I do distinctly remember, and, were it to edification, could relate, particular instances of the opposition of my heart to each of its precepts. Whatever influence education may have in moulding the outward appearance, yet surely "the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth."

True it is, through the influence of the means before mentioned, I did all this while abominate the more gross breaches of all the commandments, and I disliked open sin. But, meanwhile, my heart was set upon the less discernible violations of the same holy law. My quarrel was not with sin, but with the consequences of it ; and the main thing I regarded was the world's opinion of it. Fear of punishment, pride that dislikes to be thought ill of, or, at best, a natural conscience enlightened by education, were my only reasons for performing duty or abstaining from sin. I was all this while, in secret, and when I could say "no eye shall see me," prone to sins of all sorts, such as childhood is liable to. They who for credit's sake, or from such like inducements, may seem averse to sin, will yet make bold in the dark with the worst sins. "Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of

his imagery? for they say, the Lord seeth us not; the Lord hath forsaken the earth."

Even those things which, in my way, seemed good and promising, such as detestation of gross sins, performance of duties, &c., were either purely the effects of habit, a bribe to the natural conscience to hold its peace, a sacrifice to self, a slavish performance, of what I took no delight in, to avoid the whip; or else a charm to keep me from danger, which I thought would befall me, and which I greatly dreaded, if I neglected prayer. Thus my best things awfully increased my guilt; being like the apples of Sodom, fair to look at, promising while untried, but within, full of ashes and noisome matter. "When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh month, even those seventy years, did ye at all fast unto me, even to me. And when ye did eat, and when ye did drink, did ye not eat for yourselves and drink for yourselves?" "Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with: it is an iniquity, even the solemn meeting."

Thus the spring of corruption, damned in on the one side—I mean as to open profanity—by the mounds of education, breaks out on the other side, in a form of religion which has none of its power, nay, which is plainly its opposite. But this is no less hateful to the holy God. The prayer of the wicked is sin, his sacrifice is an abomination. Sin, in the one case, has a little varnish that hides its deformity somewhat from the eyes of men; in the other, it is seen in its native hue and colors. In the one case it runs under ground; in the other, it openly follows its course. Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment: and some men they follow after." The difference between the two is not great. The tree is known by its fruits. "A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit." Sometimes it may bring forth good-like fruit.

But yet, after all, I must confess, that such was the strength of corruption, it drove me to the commission of several of the more plain and gross sins incident to this

age, of which, though they are by some counted pardonable follies in children, the Lord makes a very different estimate: and some of them have been made bitter to me. Such as lying, to avoid punishment, Sabbath-breaking, revenge, hatred of my reprovers, and others of a like nature. Some particular sins committed in my childhood, which I had quite forgot, as being attended with no remarkable circumstances that should make them remain in my memory rather than other occurrences, and being of an older date than any thing else I can remember, were brought fresh to my recollection, when the Lord began closely to convince me of sin. And being presented in their native colors, in the light of the Lord's word, and in all the circumstances of time, place, partners in sin, &c., were made matter of deep humiliation, loathing, and self-abhorrence; as not only full of wickedness in themselves, but pregnant evidences of the deepest natural depravity. Three things made me see to whom it was owing, that I went not to all the heights in wickedness, and into the grossest abominations that ever any were carried into; and to which a haughty heart, had it not been seasonably restrained, partly by a secret power, and partly by outward means, would inevitably have carried me. "Folly is bound up in the heart of a child;" deeply rooted and fastened there. And no thanks to the best that they are kept from the worst things. "And David said to Abigail, blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me; and blessed be thy advice, and blessed be thou, which hast kept me this day from coming to shed blood, and from avenging myself with mine own hand. For in very deed, as the Lord God of Israel liveth, which hath kept me back from hurting thee, except thou hadst hastened and come to meet me, surely there had not been left unto Nabal, by the morning light, a single male." What a monster I had been, if left to myself, and not seasonably restrained by outward means and inward power! Blessed be the invisible hand, and the outward instruments of this restraint, that kept me back from sinning.

These are but a very few of the innumerable evils which cleaved to me in this sinful period of my life, for "who can understand his errors?" This period was altogether sinful and vain; nay, sin and vanity in the abstract. "Childhood is vanity." All these my sins, too, were deeply aggravated by my stupid unconcern about them, all the while. Yet, notwithstanding all of them, "I was pure in mine own eyes and yet not washed from my filthiness." I was whole in my own opinion, though the plague sore was on me. While I thought I stood in need of nothing, I was "poor, miserable, wretched, blind, naked." "How canst thou say, I am not polluted, I have not gone after Baalim? See thy way in the valley, know what thou hast done." "I have not found it by secret search, but upon all these. Yet thou sayest, because I am innocent, surely his anger shall turn from me; behold I will plead with thee, because thou sayest, I have not sinned."

When I consider how many sins which had been long since forgotten, many of them of an older date than any thing else I remember, and which in their commission were attended with no such remarkable circumstances, as can rationally be supposed to have made any deep impression on the memory, and thus have had any influence in restoring them to my recollection, after they had been so long forgotten; when, I say, I consider how many such sins were now by the Lord brought to mind with unusual distinctness; I cannot but thence take occasion to observe what exact notice the holy God takes, and how deeply he resents those things which men generally will scarcely allow to be faults; or, at most, but small ones—pardonable follies, rather than sins. God truly saw that man's imaginations are evil from his youth; and he will have us recollect and be humbled for the sins which have cleaved to us from our youth. "This hath been thy manner from thy youth, that thou obeyedst not my voice," is an aggravation of other sins which God charges on his people, and which, in itself, is a heavy

accusation. How much reason is there for reckoning it as one great part of the misery of the wicked, that they lie down in their graves with bones full of the sins of their youth. How much reason is there for David's prayer, that God would not remember against him the sins of his youth. What reason have we often, with Job, to suspect, that in the strokes which fall upon us in riper years, God is making us to possess the iniquities of our youth. How much reason have we, with holy Augustine, to confess and mourn over the sins of childhood, and track original sin, in its first out-breakings, even up to infancy. I here observe what an exact register, conscience, which is God's deputy, keeps! How early it begins to mark, how accurate it is, even when it seems to take no notice, and to what a length it will go in justifying God's severity against sinners at the last day. How distinctively and clearly it will then speak out its charges, and how far back it will fetch its accounts of those evils which we recollect nothing of, when God shall open its eyes to read what is written and to discern those prints, which, as Job says, God "sets upon the heels of our feet," and shall give it a commission to tell us of them; when the books shall be "opened, and the dead, small and great, be judged out of them."

When I review this first period of my life, what reason do I see to be ashamed and even confounded, to think that I have spent ten years of a short life, with scarcely a rational thought, and undoubtedly without one that was not sinful.—"After that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth."

The whole of what I have set down above, being matter of undoubted experience, of which I can no more doubt than of what I now see and feel; I have herein a strong confirmation of my faith, as to the guilt of Adam's sin, its imputation to his posterity, and of my concernment therein in particular. For the bent of my soul from a child was set against the Lord. Nor was this the effect of custom and education; for there

was a harmonious conspiracy of precept, discipline, and the example of those with whom I was conversant, during this first part of my life, to carry me another way. Nor can I charge the fault of this on my constitution of body, or any such thing, which might be alleged to proceed from my parents in a natural way. For those lusts which are of the mind, and are not influenced by any constitution of body, were as strong, as perceptible, active and prevalent as any other; nay, more so than those which may be supposed to depend on the frame of the body. And as my soul in its accursed inclinations, was thus opposed to the Lord, so the opposition was of such strength and force as could not be suppressed, much less be overcome and subdued, by the utmost care of my parents, and the best outward means. This is undoubted fact. I cannot, at all, conceive it consistent with the wisdom, goodness, or equity of God, to send me thus into the world without any fault on my part. To say I was thus originally framed, without respect to any sin chargeable on me, is a position so full of contrariety to all the notions which I can entertain of the Deity, that I cannot think of it without horror: much less can I believe it. Penal, then, this corruption must be, as, in fact, death and diseases are. And of what can it be a punishment, if not of Adam's sin? While these things are so plain in fact, and the deduction from them so easy, I have no reason to be much shaken, or call this truth in question, whatever subtle arguments any may use to overthrow it. If once I am sure God hath done a thing, there is no room left for disputing its equity. I am sure I was corrupt from my infancy. I am sure God would not have made me so without a cause, or sent me into the world in such a condition, if it had not been for some fault in which I am concerned. If there is any attempt to charge God on this score, I look upon it as highly injurious. There is nothing left for me in this case, but humbly to clear God of imposing any seeming hardship. If we cannot easily do this; then I would much rather own my ignorance,

and stoop under his incomprehensibility, than bring any charge of injustice against him. This has staid my soul against the most subtle arguings of men of perverse minds, and even of Satan, who hath often assaulted me on this point. Be their arguments what they will, "Behold, in this thou art not just: I will answer thee, that God is greater than man. Why dost thou strive against him? for he giveth not account of any of his matters."—"That he may withdraw man from this his evil purpose," of measuring God by his short line, "and hide pride from his eye."

Hence, also, I am taught what estimate to make of the pretendedly good and virtuous inclinations, wherewith, as the Deists and Pelagians allege, some persons are born. Except in some few and rare instances of the early efficacy of sanctifying grace, all that which, in the cases under consideration, is looked upon as good, is really nothing more than the result of education, custom, occasional restraints and freedom from temptation. Or, perhaps, it flows from a natural temper, which, being influenced by these causes and by the constitution of the body, makes something of an opposition to the grosser actings of sin. Nevertheless, whatever there is of this, save in the rare instances before mentioned, is but sin under disguise. The difference is not great. The one sort of sinners seem to promise good fruit, but deceive us; whereas the openly profane give a plain refusal, and forbid all expectation. And yet of this sort more receive the gospel than the former. "But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work in the vineyard. He answered and said, I will not; but afterwards he repented, and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir; and went not. Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him the first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you."

CHAPTER II.

Containing an account of the first rise of my concern about religion, its results, and other occurrences relating thereto, during the space of two years.

IN the month of May, 1683, my mother being by the heat of the persecution obliged to retire into Holland, I went along with her. While we were at sea, being in some real or apprehended danger, my conscience, which, as far as I can now remember, during all the ten past years, had been fast asleep, began to awaken. I was convicted of sin; terrified with apprehensions of death and hell and the wrath of God, about which I had never thought, before I was brought into this distress:—"They have turned their back unto me and not their face; but in the time of their trouble they will say, Arise and save us."

All this concern was nothing more than a sad mixture of natural fear, and a selfish desire of preservation from the danger I supposed imminent. Peace and acceptance and communion with God, came not much into my thoughts. I was afraid and unwilling to die, and would gladly have been out of danger of hell. This was all my exercise at that time. It was not sin, but death and its consequences, which I was anxious to be rid of. "Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron in haste; and he said, I have sinned against the Lord your God, and against you. Now, therefore, forgive I pray thee, my sin only this once, and entreat the Lord your God, that he may take away from me this death only." As this exercise was wholly selfish and without any concern for the Lord's glory; so it led me to selfish courses for relief. I promised that if I arrived at land I would live better than formerly. I engaged to keep all God's commandments. My mother told me I was in a mistake, and should not hold

to that resolution. But there was no persuading one of this, who was as ignorant of his own heart, as at that time, I was of mine. I multiplied engagements; and doubted not that I should perform them: "And the people answered, God forbid that we should forsake the Lord to serve other Gods. And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the Lord: for he is an holy God. And the people said unto Joshua, Nay, but we will serve the Lord."

No sooner was I come to land, and fixed at Rotterdam, than I verified what had been foretold. I forgot all my promises and resolutions. The unrenewed and corrupt heart, being freed from the restraint put upon it by the natural conscience, under the appearance of danger, took its course. I returned to former evils and grew worse. Corruption, that had been repressed for a little time, having easily forced down all those mounds which were raised to hold it in, ran out with the greater violence. It is true, that, through the mercy of God, I was still restrained from open, scandalous sins. To which result the awe I felt for my godly and prudent mother, as well as the principles of my education, did not a little contribute. But to secret evils of all sorts, I had no aversion. Nay, to many of them I was strongly inclined, and in many instances I followed my own inclinations. Notwithstanding all my promises, I was a ready and easy prey to every temptation: "And thou saidst, I will not transgress; when upon every high hill, and under every green tree thou wanderest."

My sins in this place, had this grievous aggravation, that they were against greater light and under more of the means of grace than I had formerly enjoyed. On the Lord's day we had three sermons and two lectures in the Scots' church, and on Thursday a sermon there also. On Tuesday the ejected ministers preached by turns. Then was a meeting for prayer on Wednesday. On Monday and Friday nights Mr. James Kirkton commonly lectured in his family. On Saturday he catechise such children of the ejected Scots as came

to him. My mother took care to have me attend on most of these occasions, was particular in keeping me to my duty, and was not wanting in advice, correction, and prayer with and for me. She also obliged me to read the scriptures and other edifying books. But so far were all these things from producing a good effect upon me, that I grew weary of them, and went on in my sins. "What could have been done more" (as it respects outward means) "to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?" "Ye said, also, Behold, what a weariness is it! and ye have snuffed at it, saith the Lord of hosts: and ye brought that which was torn, and the lame, and the sick; thus ye brought an offering; should I accept this of your hand? saith the Lord."

At this time I was not without frequent convictions, occasioned sometimes by the preaching of the gospel, and at others by the influence of my education, which still clung to me, and was a check upon me. But all this was only like the starts of a sleeping man, occasioned by some sudden noise—up he gets, but presently he is down again, and faster asleep than before. I found means to get rid of these convictions. When they were uneasy I would promise them a hearing at another time. "And as Paul reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." At other times I looked to the tendency of these convictions, that they aimed at engaging me to be holy; and then I reflected upon the difficulties of such a course, till I not only got the edge of my convictions blunted, but frightened myself from a compliance with their suggestions. "The sluggard saith, There is a lion in the way, and I shall be slain in the streets." When my convictions were light, I got rid of them by withdrawing myself from the use of the means of grace. "For if a man be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass; for he beholdeth him-

self, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was." Sometimes I promised them fair, and so put them off at that time, but remembered not my promise afterwards. "And he came to the second and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir; and went not." Sometimes, my convictions resulted in fruitless, unactive, and slothful wishes. "The soul of the sluggard desireth and hath nothing." The desire of the slothful killeth him; for his hands refuse to labor." At other times, when they were troublesome, I turned my eye to something which, in my way, I thought good; though, the Lord knows, there was little which had so much as even the appearance of any tolerable good. Yet so foolish was I that I rested here, as if this was not only sufficient to atone for my past conduct, but would also procure me the favor of God. "Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself: God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican." Sometimes I endeavored to extenuate my sins as much as I could. "In all my labors they shall find none iniquity in me that were sin." When these expedients failed, and my convictions still made me uneasy, I then betook myself to diversions, and there effectually choked the word and the convictions springing from it. "And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares, and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection."

About this time, I met with some things that crossed me. Whereupon I became thoughtful, seeking what way I should get rid of my difficulties. I seemed more than ordinarily troubled; and yet this difficulty did not really lead me to God. But my mind was employed in nourishing resentments against the real, or supposed authors of my uneasiness; and in proud, selfish, and vain contrivances for mine own ease and relief. "The wicked through the pride of his countenance, will not

seek after God : God is not in all his thoughts." "They cry out by reason of the arm of the mighty. But none saith, Where is God my Maker, who giveth songs in the night ?"

About the month of December, 1686, at the earnest request of my father's sister, who was married to John Glass, provost of Perth, I was sent home. While I staid in this family I saw nothing of religion, though my aunt was a very moral woman. Here I was much indulged. I was offered liberty, and I took it. I saw little of the worship of God in others, and I readily accommodated myself to such circumstances, and became remiss too. What farther advances I made in this place, towards an open rejection of the very form of religion, I do not now, at this distance of time, distinctly remember ; but I doubt not they were very great. This, however, I do remember, that I found my aversion to those sins, which, through the influence of education, I had before abominated, sensibly weakened. Yea, I found a secret hankering after some of them, a delight in the company of such persons as were guilty of them, and a sort of approbation of them in my heart. Nevertheless, I was, in a great measure, restrained from an open and avowed compliance with their example, by the reverential impressions which early instruction had left on my mind, and which were not, as yet, wholly worn off. Yet they were greatly obliterated, considering the shortness of my time here ; whence I may easily discern what would have become of them, if I had stayed there longer. Further, I recollect, that at that time I had a great aversion to learning ; which was the only good thing, in that place, urged upon me. I looked upon it as a burden and drudgery, to which the basest employments were to be preferred ; and therefore I did not, in the least, apply myself unto it, but trifled my time away. And many a sinful expedient did I resort to, that I might shuffle the time off my hands. Thus I hated instruction and cast God's word behind my back : "When thou sawest a thief, then

thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers." "These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest I was altogether such an one as thyself."

Thus I spent the winter. In the spring of 1687, my mother, fearing I might be ensnared by the company amongst which I now was, came home for me; recollecting the wise man's observation: "The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame." But so great was my wickedness, that in spite of my natural affection, I was grieved at her return, and when first I heard her voice, it damped my feelings—I cared not to see her. Nothing I disliked more, than a godly and affectionate mother's conversation. I feared I should have to be questioned about my past conduct, I feared she would carry me back to Holland, in which case I should be put under uneasy restraints: "But thou saidst, There is no hope. No, for I have loved strangers, and after them will I go."

In the spring, or rather towards summer, my mother carried me with her, much against my will, and put me to the Erasmus' school. I staid but a short time there. Yet the advantageous method of teaching which was there practiced, pleased me; I began to delight in learning and quickly became proud of my success. Otherwise, I lived as I had done before, growing still worse and worse under all the means God made use of to bring me near to him and keep me there: "For as the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel, and the whole house of Judah, saith the Lord; that they might be unto me for a people, and for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory; but they would not hear."

CHAPTER III.

Containing an account of the renewal of my convictions, their effects, progress, results, and interruptions; from the close of the year 1687 to 1690 or 1691; when I went from Perth to reside at Edinburg.

IN the month of February, 1687, king James issued his proclamation, granting toleration in religion; whereupon most of those who had fled ventured home; and, among the rest, my mother came back in August or September of that year. It would have doubtless been to my advantage, as it respected my education, to stay in Holland, and this consideration made me unwilling to return. On our return passage we were in imminent danger of being shipwrecked upon the Scars of England; but through the mercy of God we escaped. The danger came upon us suddenly and was suddenly over, and so left little or no impression on my mind. When we came home we settled at Perth, and abode there till the autumn of 1690 or 1691, I cannot certainly remember which. The state of my soul during all this time, I will now, as far as I can remember, relate.

Soon after our settlement in this place, I was entered at school, where I made a somewhat better proficiency than formerly. But as to sin, I remained as unconcerned as ever; as intent upon sin, as averse to duty as before. However I might behave when under my mother's eye; when with my comrades, I took my liberty, and joined them in all the follies and extravagancies they went into; but in my case there was this aggravation above most of them, that what I did I knew very often to be a fault, whereas they, at least many of them, did not. Yea, I not only went along with them but was foremost amongst them, and enticed others into folly. Still, the mercy of God kept me from open and scandalous sins; except in one

instance that I recollect, where I along with some others, was seized in a garden taking some fruit. Of this I was much ashamed, and never again attempted the like; not from any real dislike to the sin, but through fears of a discovery. And thus I continued till towards the close of King James' reign, when fears of a public massacre from the papists, concerning which there was then a great noise, every where, revived my concern about religion: "When he slew them, then they sought him; and they returned and inquired early after God: And they remembered that God was their Rock, and the high God their Redeemer."

This concern of mind to which I now refer, being somewhat deeper, and the effects of it more remarkable and lasting than any previous, I shall endeavor to give a distinct account of it. About this time, the Lord, by means of the preached word, and public and private catechising, enlightened my mind farther, respecting the doctrines of the law and the gospel. My capacity, and ~~knowledge of what sin was, and what was duty,~~ increasing with my years; sin was left open and naked, without the excuse of ignorance. Conscience, too, had this farther advantage, that it was armed with more knowledge than heretofore; for which cause the checks it gave me, now that by the Lord's providences it was in some measure awakened, were more frequent and not so easily evaded. "If I had not come and spoken to them, they had not had sin, but now they have no cloak for their sin." Some touches of sickness riveted on me the impressions of frailty and mortality, and of the tendency of each of that numerous train of diseases, through which we are daily exposed to death. But that which affected me more than all, and gave an edge to my convictions, was the continued fears we were in, of being suddenly destroyed by the papists. This kept death in its most terrible shape, ever in my eyes and thoughts. And, to my great terror, I saw wrath and judgment following it. "The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites; who among us shall dwell with devouring

fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?"

Hereupon I was cast into grievous disquiet. "I took counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily." I was in a dreadful strait between two things. On the one hand my convictions of sin were pungent, because fears of a present death quickened them. This made me attend more to the word of God. The more I attended to that the more my convictions increased, and I was daily, more and more persuaded, that there was no way to get rid of them, but by embracing religion. On the other hand, if I should in earnest engage in religion, I saw the hazard I should run of suffering on account of it, and knew not but I might be immediately called to die for it. And this I could not think of doing. Between the two I was dreadfully tossed in my own mind, some nights' sleep went from me, and I was full of trouble. I set my imagination to work, and did, sometimes, strongly impress my mind with the fancy of an Irish cut-throat holding a dagger to my breast, and offering me these terms: "Quit your religion, turn papist, and you shall live—hold it and you are dead." This imagination was sometimes so strong, that I have almost fainted under it, and I was still completely unresolved what to do. Sometimes I would determine to let him give the fatal stroke, and then my spirits would shrink and my heart fail at the approach of death. At other times, I would resolve to quit my religion, but with the resolution to take it up again, when the danger was over. But here I could get no rest. What, thought I, if the treacherous enemy destroy me after I have done so, and so I lose both life and religion? And what if I die before the danger is over, and so have no time allowed me to repent? "Ephraim also is like a silly dove without heart: they call to Egypt, they go to Assyria."

This sort of exercise frequently recurred; and I continued in this way, at times, until after the battle of Killiecrankie, which was fought, July 27th, 1689. My fears had some interruptions, and then I was remiss

as before ; but for nearly a year, few weeks, and even few days passed over me without some such feelings. But the dread of the papists being quickly over, my remaining difficulty was only with my convictions. And as to these, I endeavored to relieve myself by promises of abstaining from those sins which were, in my view, most clearly wrong, and for which I was most evidently rebuked. "And Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron and said, Entreat the Lord for me—and I will let the people go." I took refuge in resolutions of enquiring into the Lord's mind, and complying with his will. But when I consulted any practical book, or the ministers of the gospel, and found that they did not give such instructions as were agreeable to my unrenewed heart, I was offended and went no farther. "And behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?—Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven ; and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful ; for he had great possessions."—I tried to find peace in a more careful attendance upon duties. Thus "being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish my own righteousness, I submitted not myself to the righteousness of God ;" nor did I shew any regard for Christ, who is "the end of the law for righteousness to every man that believeth."

Though my foolish heart ran after these devices, yet, really, they afforded no solid repose. For the first sin against light, and the first omission of duty—which very speedily ensued upon the intermission of present convictions—shook all my confidence. And I was confounded at the thoughts of appearing before God in a righteousness so plainly ragged, that where it had one piece it wanted two. Though these contrivances gave me some ease when trials were at a distance, yet when the thoughts of death came near, I could find no quiet in them. There were not gold tried in the fire,

nor would they abide so much as a near view of trials; but at the very appearance of a storm, this sandy foundation shook. Whenever convictions on account of new sins were awakened, remorse for my old ones recurred; which showed that the cure was imperfect: "Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks; walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow."

The effects of these exercises of mind, which continued and afterwards increased, were principally as follow. I was hereby brought into doubt about the truths of religion, the being of God, and eternal things. This doubt did not arise from any arguments which offered themselves against these truths, nor yet from any suspicion I had of ministers, parents or others, from whom I had received them. But, whenever in danger or difficulties, I sought for security in these religious truths, a secret suspicion haunted me; "What if these things are not?" And then I was made to think that I had not certainty and evidence concerning them, equal to the weight that was to be laid on them. I thought death and the troubles attending it, were certain and evident things; but I could not get my mind satisfied and fully assured about the truths of religion. And when, under apprehension of death, I would fain have rested upon them, my confidence failed me, and my mind began to waver, though I could give no reason for it: "The way of the wicked is as darkness; they know not at what they stumble." I was hereby persuaded, and this persuasion ever after increased in strength, that I could never have peace till I came to another sort of evidence and certainty about the truths of religion, than any I was yet acquainted with. Death I saw inevitable—it might be very sudden. I was impressed with apprehensions of it, and could not banish them. Therefore I concluded, that unless I could obtain such a conviction of the truth of religion, and such an interest in it, as would not only enable

me to look on death without fear, but also to go through it with comfort, it would have been better for me that I had never been born. But how or where these were to be obtained, I was utterly ignorant. Here I remained, in great perplexity, under the melancholy impressions that I had hitherto "spent my money for that which is not bread, and my labor for that which profiteth not." This perplexity was somewhat relieved, while, one day, I was reading in the close of the "Fulfilling of the Scriptures," how Mr. Robert Bruce was shaken in his belief concerning the being of a God, and how at length he came to the fullest satisfaction. Hereby a hope secretly sprung up, that one time or other, in one way or other, the like might happen to me also, and that the Lord might satisfy me in this thing. Here was the dawning of a light which, though it did not shine perfectly clear, was never again wholly put out. Though it was far from satisfying me, yet it kept me from despair. "And he took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the town; and when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw aught. And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking." But notwithstanding all this, the veil was still not taken away.

About this time, one Mr. Donaldson, a reverend old minister, preached at Perth, and came to visit my mother. He called me to him, and among other questions, he asked me if I sought a blessing on my learning; to which I ingenuously answered, No. He replied with an austere look, "Sirrah, unsanctified learning has done much mischief to the kirk of God." This saying made a deep impression on my mind, and remained with me ever afterward; so that whenever I was in any way distressed, I applied to God, by prayer, for help in my learning, and for pardon that I did not sooner seek his blessing. But this was only when I was more than ordinarily perplexed. But as to the main point, all these exercises left me just where I was before, afar off from God, and an enemy to him in my mind; which I manifested by wicked works.

CHAPTER IV.

Giving an account of the increase of my convictions, during my stay in Edinburg, from the autumn of 1690 or 1691, till May 1693, and the vain refuges to which I betook myself for relief.

My mother, designing to have me well educated, for the sake of having better schools removed to Edinburg, in the autumn of 1690 or 1691, and placed me at Mr. Gavin Weir's School: Here, with the exception of some months that I abode in Carlop's family, and learned with his children and some others, under the instruction of one who had been an usher of Mr. Weir's, I staid till November, 1692, when I entered college, under Mr. Alexander Cunningham. Here it was my good fortune to fall in with sober companions, and such as were studiously inclined. But I design not to speak of this, and therefore proceed to narrate the progress of the Lord's work upon my soul.

During my abode in college, the Lord gave not over his dealings with me. "And about the time of forty years suffered he their manners in the wilderness." Long also did he bear with my manners. In this place also the work went on. For, as knowledge increased, so convictions of sin increased; if not in force, yet in number. And still as knowledge of the law grew, as it daily did under the means of grace, the knowledge of sin also grew. For "the law is the knowledge of sin." The Lord daily let me see that he was wroth on account of sins which formerly I had not noticed. "These things thou hast done, and I kept silence: thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself; but I will reprove thee and set them in order before thine eyes." By new afflictions, the impressions of my mortality were riveted upon me, and I was brought still farther into bondage, through my growing fears of death. The gospel being daily

preached, and daily coming in contact with my conscience, forced me, however unwilling, to make some inquiry about the sincerity of my religion; of which I now made some profession. A searching question will at length bring a Judas to say: "Master, is it I?" The means of grace made me engage, Herod-like, and in order that I might save some bosom idols, "to do many things, and hear him gladly."

The means by which these effects were produced, were as follow: By the preaching of the word, the "two-edged sword that goeth out of his mouth," the Lord did often wound me, and the secrets of my heart were made manifest. I found the "word of God a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart." The Lord also made use of the rod. He laid his hand upon me. When I was in health and prosperity the truth did not affect me so much, nor did I attend to it so carefully. "I spake unto thee in thy prosperity; but thou saidst, I will not hear; this hath been thy manner from thy youth, that thou obeyedst not my voice." "In their affliction they will seek me early." "And if they be bound in fetters, and be holden in cords of affliction; then he showeth them their work, and their transgressions that they have exceeded." I read Shepherd's Treatise called, "The Sincere Convert," which galled me and cut me to the quick. It came close home to me, and affected me very much, and put me to questioning, very seriously, my sincerity.

By these means I was sometimes driven to a great extremity, and went great lengths in a form of religion. I not only prayed morning and evening, but at times I would retire and weep plentifully in secret, and read and pray, and resolve to live otherwise than I had done. "His goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the morning dew it goeth away." It kept pace with my convictions. It was force, not nature; and this strictness in the performance of duty lasted no longer than the force that occasioned it. "And Joash did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, all the days of Jehoiada the priest." "But Jeho-

iada waxed old, and died." "Now after the death of Jehoiada came the princes of Judah and made obeisance to the king : then the king hearkened unto them. And they left the house of the Lord God of their fathers, and served groves and idols."

While I was under these distresses, many a wicked expedient did I betake myself to for relief ; but without success. "When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah saw his wound, then went Ephraim to the Assyrian, and sent to king Jareb : yet he could not heal you, nor cure you of your wound." When I found any thing in the word of God, or in other books calculated to make known to myself the wickedness of my heart, then, if any thing was spoken that did in appearance, make for me, I eagerly clung to that. For I was very unwilling to see my own hypocrisy, and, therefore, if the least pretence for laying claim to religion appeared, I laid hold of it ; like the young man in the gospel who, being unacquainted with the spiritual extent of the law, when Christ spoke of keeping the commandments, answered—"All these things have I kept from my youth up, what lack I yet?" So said I. When I found something required, which I neither had performed, nor could resolve to perform, because, perhaps, it was, for some reason or other against my wishes, then I resolved to compromise the matter and make amends some other way, and, like Naaman, beg a license for that sin. "Thy servant will henceforth offer neither burnt-offering nor sacrifice, unto other gods but unto the Lord. In this thing the Lord pardon thy servant, that when my master goeth into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leaneth on my hand, and I bow myself in the house of Rimmon ; when I bow down myself in the house of Rimmon, the Lord pardon thy servant in this thing." When any mark of a Christian was presented to me, to which I could not pretend, then I was ready to question whether he that offered it was not mistaken, and secretly doubted the truth, following the method Satan took with Eve. "Yea, hath God said, ye shall not eat of the

fruit of every tree in the garden." "Ye shall not surely die." When I could not see, not from want of sufficient light, but through my unwillingness to admit it, I was ready to quarrel that ministers and books did not tell me more plainly. "Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you and ye believed not." Sometimes, when I was embarrassed with a truth, I promised it a hearing at a more convenient season, and so, like Felix, got rid of the trouble for that time. Sometimes I would slip over those things which made against me: "He that doeth evil, cometh not to the light, lest his deeds should be re-proved." I carefully sought for the lowest standard of religion, and for the least degrees of such grace as should be saving. I designed to get only as much religion as would carry me safe to heaven; and therefore I still inquired, with the young man, "What good thing shall I do, that I may inherit eternal life?" I desired no more than would serve this my turn, and, provided my beloved lusts were spared, any thing which would effect this, I was, with him, ready to resolve upon doing. When none of these expedients would avail, I would then make the general resolution of doing whatsoever the Lord required; like him who said, "Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest." But, like him, I still drew back when the Lord, as was often the case, told me of particular duties he would have me perform, and which were contrary to my inclination. When I saw I must quit all these vain pretences, as the Lord often convinced me I must, then I begged for a little respite or delay, when I would comply. Augustine-like, "I was content to be holy, but not yet." "And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell—which are home at my house. And Jesus said unto him, No man having put his hand unto the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." An excuse, a delay, in God's account, is a

plain refusal; for all commands and invitations require present obedience: "*Now* is the accepted time. *Now* is the day of salvation." "To day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." When all these ways had been tried, and I found no relief, I blamed my education. I knew there was some change; the question was if it were the right one. Now, thought I, if I had not been religiously educated, but had turned Christian all at once, the change would have been more easily to be discerned. Thus was I entangled in my own ways. "We wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness. We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no eyes; we stumble at noon-day as in the night; we are in desolate places as dead men." And the true reason of my being in difficulty was, I scorned the light and did not desire it, unless it should be such as would please me. "They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness." "The scorner seeketh wisdom, and findeth it not." Many other deceits and subterfuges my heart used, which, at this distance of time, I cannot remember. But the above are the principal ones that, on reflection, recur to my mind; and how evident do they make it appear that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"

Though now I sometimes seemed to have gone far in religion, yet in reality, I was wholly wrong. For, all this while, being convinced of the necessity of a righteousness, and being ignorant of Christ's righteousness, I sought it by the works of the law. That carnal mind, "which is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God," still continued with me. All my exercises of mind were no more than a hesitating between duty and a love of sin; and sin still gained the victory, because I would, by no means, part with my bosom idols. Self was the animating principle of all the religion I had. I desired as much of it as would save me from hell and take me to heaven, and no more. All

this religion came and went with the occasions of it—it was not abiding.

About this time, Clark's Martyrology was, providentially, cast into my hands. I loved history, and read this book greedily. And it left some impressions upon me, which were not without use to me, both then and afterwards. The patience, joy and courage of the martyrs, convinced me that there was a power, a reality in religion, beyond what nature could supply. 'Tis such a religion I was persuaded I was, as yet, a stranger, because I could not think of suffering. And I was brought to have some faint desires for an acquaintance with this power of religion. "Then Nebuchadnezzar spake and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshech and Abednego." "There is no other God that can deliver after this sort." Often, in reading this book, did I have Balaam's wish, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." But, like him, I loved not their life.

I observe here, that at this time, God restrained me from many follies into which others run, and to which I was much inclined. He did this through a bodily infirmity, a weakness in my joints, which rendered me unable to walk. "Thus he hedged in my way, that I should not find my lovers." The Lord, also, in mercy provided me with comrades, who were tender of me and took care of me. He fed me, and led me, though I knew him not. So far was I from being thankful, that my proud heart fretted, because I was kept from those things which others followed. I wished to have been rejoicing in my strength; and vexed enough I was that an occasion of glorying was taken from me. Neither was I thankful that the Lord did, by this means, cut off many opportunities of sin; nor for his mercy in providing persons to take care of me. O what reason have I to say, The Lord "is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil."

CHAPTER V.

Containing an account of the progress of the Lord's work, the straits to which I was reduced, and the methods I took for relief; from the time I left Edinburg, May, 1693, till I went into the family of Wemyss, August, 1696.

THE air of Edinburg agreeing neither with my mother nor with me, she at length determined, agreeably to the advice she received, to leave it. She, therefore, took me with her to St. Andrews; a place more healthy, and affording greater facilities for my education, and for which she always had a special regard. And here I cannot but notice the remarkable kindness of the Lord in guiding me, though at the time, I took no notice of it. "I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God besides me: I girded thee though thou hast not known me." At a time when my heart inclined me most to folly, and when, by entering college, I was most exposed to its temptations, the Lord seasonably laid his hand upon me, and sobered me with trouble. This was a means of restraining me, and of keeping me from contracting any intimacy with those whose conversation might have proved prejudicial to me—and it also induced me to choose sober companions. "Thou shalt also consider in thy heart, that as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee." And again; this indisposition, during the first two months of my stay at college, being only in my joints, did not hinder, but rather advanced my studies; and the Lord provided one who, though a stranger, and under no special obligations, yet attended me as closely as if he had been my servant, and was as tender of me as if I had been his brother. During this time I made a greater proficiency in the Latin tongue than I had ever done before—the tutor I was under being very skilful in teaching it, and attending to me very care-

fully. At the end of this period, he fell ill, and was not capable of giving instructions, and I also fell ill, and was thereby, as I have said, obliged to remove to St. Andrews—which proved to be much to my advantage. For I came under the care of Mr. Thomas Taylor, a very capable man, very kind, and very careful of me; whereas the class I left at Edinburg, was quite broken up; the tutor continuing that year quite indisposed, and the next year falling into a phrenzy. Thus the Lord chased me from place to place for my good, and every where provided me friends. “He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye.” But God’s kindness in guiding me to places for my good, and keeping me from inconveniences, snares and dangers, into which others fell, had no effect upon me, nor did I even notice it. “Neither said they, where is the Lord that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, and led us through the wilderness, through a land of deserts and of pits; through a land of drought, and of the shadow of death; through a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt? And I brought you into a plentiful country, to eat the fruit thereof and the goodness thereof: but when ye entered ye defiled my land, and made mine heritage an abomination.”

When I had settled at St. Andrews, the Lord left not striving with me; but the same Sovereign Grace that had begun still went on with me. “I lifted up mine hand unto them to bring them forth of the land of Egypt. But they rebelled against me, and would not hearken unto me—then I said, I will pour out my fury upon them—but I wrought for my name’s sake.” “Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God, be it known unto you; be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel.”

In St. Andrews, the Lord cast my lot under choice means of Grace—the ministry of worthy Mr. Thomas Forrester. Under his searching ministry, the Lord began to give me some small discoveries of the more secret and spiritual evils of my heart, and carried me

"into the secret chambers of imagery," to let me see what my heart did in the dark. He opened my eyes to discover something of that world of pride, and the wickedness of it, which was in my heart. Though I was, in some measure, convinced of my own weakness, and, when I had any more than ordinary difficulty, would seek help from God; yet when I got through I valued myself upon my success. The Lord, in some measure, convinced me of the wickedness and injustice of this. "What hast thou, that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" He convinced me of the wickedness of my heart's straying after idols, especially in the time of worship. "But as for these, whose heart walked after the heart of their detestable things and their abominations, I will recompense their way upon their own heads, saith the Lord God." "Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up idols in his heart, and putteth the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet" (to enquire of the prophet concerning the Lord) "I the Lord will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols." I was made to see, in some measure, the danger of offering such duties to him, who requireth us to "set our hearts" to what he speaks, and to "keep our foot when we come to the house of God." I was likewise made to see that it would not do to trust in the bare performance of duties; since my conscience did not, for the most part, rebuke me for performing them unsuitably, but for entirely omitting them. With the Pharisee, I thought it enough, if I could say that I did the duty. But now the Lord made me see that more was required. Though with the Pharisee, I could say, "I fast twice a week," the Lord convinced me that he might answer, "When ye fasted, did ye at all fast unto me, even unto me?"

These things, when added to my former discoveries of my guilt, frequently gave me much disturbance, and cast me into great perplexity and disquiet. But the darkness and enmity of my mind remaining, I still had recourse to vain and wicked methods to obtain peace—

such as those I have formerly mentioned—but they afforded me little quiet. Pharaoh-like, I engaged to amend in those things, wherein I had formerly done wrong, but, like him, I quickly forgot my promise, when the pressure that drove me to it, was removed. At length, having no peace in any of these courses, I resolved to enter into a solemn covenant with the Lord. Accordingly, I wrote and subscribed a solemn covenant, whereby I bound myself to be for God. Like Israel, when under the awful impression of Sinai, and the dreadful appearance of God there, I said, “All that the Lord our God shall say unto us, we will hear and do it.” And like the scribe that came to Christ, I said, “Master, I will follow thee, whithersoever thou goest.”

When I had once done this, I concluded all was right. For I found a sort of present peace. Amendment I thought sufficient atonement, and such an engagement as I had made, I looked on as good as performance. I now said, “I have peace offerings with me; this day I have paid my vows.” At this time I frequently found an unusual sweetness in the hearing of the preached word; especially at one time in hearing Mr. Forrester lecture on Acts 13: 59, one Sabbath night. Here as I received most piercing convictions, so I received tastes of “the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come.” Thus, like the stony ground, I heard “the word, and anon with joy received it.” Common gifts increasing as light grew, I took them for special grace; and thus, like the foolish virgins, I took up the *lamp* of a profession without *oil*. I began to set up for a virgin too; and by some I began to be esteemed for what I really was not, but only what I appeared to be.

But the merciful and good God, would not suffer me to rest here. “Yet thou sayest, Because I am innocent, surely his anger shall turn from me. Behold, I will plead with thee, because thou sayest, I have not sinned. Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way? Thou also shalt be ashamed of Egypt, as thou wast of Assyria. Yea, thou shalt go forth from him, and thine

hands upon thine head ; for the Lord hath rejected thy confidences, and thou shalt not prosper in them." The Lord soon let me see my mistake. For the imaginary peace which I had obtained by making this covenant, was soon quickly lost by breaking it. Corruption still retained its power, its locks were not yet cut ; and whenever a temptation offered, like Sampson when the cry was that the Philistines were upon him, it broke all those ties with which I, like his foolish mistress, thought it bound. Like the children of Israel at Sinai, I engaged fairly ; and so far thought all was right ; but like them when they had arrived at their very next station in the wilderness, upon the first temptation that came in my way, I fell a murmuring, loathing the manna, and lusting after flesh : and this spoilt all. I was hereby threatened afresh with the wrath of the Lord, as were the Israelites. I was not only rebuked for such breaches of the law, but old sins were revived in my mind ; and hereby I found that former accounts were standing against me, which filled me with confusion, and distrust of the ways in which I had been. "For though thou wash thee with nitre and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord God." The Lord, in some measure, discovered to me my treachery in keeping my engagements, let me see that my heart was not sincere, and that there were in my engagements, some secret reserves in favor of those sins, from which my heart was not divorced. Though I remember that, at the time I made those engagements, when my heart plead that these sins might be spared, my conscience forced me as it were, for the present, though not without great reluctance, to give them up. This I did, in words, but not in reality. Now the Lord gave me some further intimations of this heart-treachery, concerning which, when further discovered by the event, my covenant could not make me quiet. "They have well said all that they have spoken. O that there were such an heart in them." The Lord let loose some corruptions, like the Canaanites, to try me ; took off restraints upon

them, and then, like water dammed in, they became more and more violent and troublesome, and at length bore down all that I had set in their way. By this means, the Lord let me see the fruitlessness and vanity of this covenant, which however specious it appeared, was in fact but a covenant with death. And by this discovery, I was put into the utmost confusion, while the evil for which I thought I had provided came upon me. "From the time that it goeth forth, it shall take you; for morning by morning shall it pass over, by day and by night; and it shall be a vexation only to understand the report. For the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it." This, to my sad experience, I found verified.

Notwithstanding I felt the vanity of these legal, selfish, anti-evangelical courses, I still cleaved unto them. For the peace I lost by breaking my covenant, I still endeavored to recover by renewing it, trusting myself to the goodness of my cause, and laboring in the fire. When I was defeated, my heart gave me such advice as the king of Syria got from his servants, when he was defeated by Israel. "Number thee an army like the army that thou hast lost, horse for horse, and chariot for chariot: and we will fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they." I still laid the blame on some accidental defect in the former management, and thought, if that were provided for, all would be well. And when I yet found that something was wanting, I cast about in my own mind, and contrived to make it up with something extraordinary of my own—the multiplication of outward duties, or some such thing or other. "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the most high God? shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"

But still these vain refuges failed me and my heart was truly wretched while I rested in them. "Wo to

the rebellious children, saith the Lord, that take counsel but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin: That walk to go down into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt. Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt your confusion." Now as I was really miserable in following these courses, so, if the Lord, in infinite mercy, had not prevented me, I should have come to one of four sad results, in which such courses and exercises oftentimes terminate. If I had been freed from convictions, or if the Lord had ceased striving with me and carrying on his work of conviction, I should, after my convictions had carried me the length of a form of religion, and notwithstanding all my disappointments, have set down satisfied with that. I should have thought I had found the "life of my hand," or at least, by the labors of my hand had obtained that which would give me a sort of life, "Thou art wearied in the greatness of thy way; yet thou saidst not, There is no hope: thou hast found the life of thine hand; therefore thou wast not grieved." Or, if my convictions had been continued and the Lord had left me to follow the courses I took, I should have "labored in the very fire" all my days, "and wearied myself for very vanity," spending my money for that which is not bread, and my labor for that which would not satisfy. I should have been in a continual vicissitude of vows, covenants, engagements, and resolutions; disquietude and a false peace, breaches of my covenant and agonizing convictions, would have alternately taken place. And thus I should have spent my days, "and at the end thereof been a fool." Or, after I had wearied myself for a while in those vain ways, I should utterly have given up religion, and said, with those persons mentioned by the prophet, "It is vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts!" And

so, with them, I should have gone over to plain atheism and profanity. Or, being forced to seek shelter from my convictions, and being so often and sadly disappointed in all the ways I tried, I should at last, like Judas, have ended in despair, and said, "This evil is of the Lord; what should I want for the Lord any longer?" And, in very deed, I had some experience of such feelings. Sometimes I sat down with the form of religion, and judged I "was rich and increased in goods, and stood in need of nothing." Sometimes I wearied myself in running from one of these vain courses to another. At other seasons, I became careless, as finding no profit in religion, and was very near throwing up all care about it. And often indeed, I was upon the very brink of despair—almost quite distracted.

When I was thus disappointed, especially after making and frequently repeating, my vows and engagements, I was cast into the utmost perplexity, to find where the fault lay. I found this way of covenanting with God mentioned in the scriptures, and recommended by ministers—and the people of God declared they had found the benefit of it. I was not conscious to myself, at least sometimes, of deceit in making it. What I engaged to do, I was, for the time, resolved upon doing. I made the engagement with much concern and solemnity, and for sometime afterwards I walked with much strictness. But though I could not discern where the blame lay, I have since been made to see it. "Being ignorant of the righteousness of God," I still went about "to establish a righteousness of my own." And though, in words, I renounced all such hope, yet in fact I sought righteousness and peace, not in the Lord Jesus Christ, "who is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," but in my own covenants and engagements; so that I really put them in Christ's room and stead. Besides, whatever credit I gave to Christ, as it respected forgiveness for past sins, yet all my expectations and my trust for the future, were in the correctness of my own

walk. I obtained not righteousness, because I sought it, as it were, "by works of the law." This neglect of Christ, and shuffling in my own covenant of works in his stead, was evident; because, whenever my conscience smote me on account of sin, I still sought for peace only by renewing my vows. The consent I gave to the law was not from my heart's being reconciled to its holiness, but merely in compliance with the constraint put upon me by my convictions. But in very deed, the enmity against it still continued. And I would not have made it my choice, if my conscience had not forced me to it. I engaged to live a new life with my old heart; not being made yet to see that unless the tree is made good the fruit cannot be good. The eye was not single. All I aimed at was self: to be relieved from my convictions and to obtain peace in the midst of my racking disquietudes. Provided I was safe, I had not the least concern for the Lord's glory. In a word, I engaged before the Lord had thoroughly engaged me. We may be willing *in some sort*, before the Lord has made us truly willing. The first real kindness begins on his side; and we are never really engaged to love, until the Lord's goodness draws us. The power of convictions may drive us into some pretension of kindness—thus it was with me. I was willing to be saved from hell and to go to heaven, under the general notion that this last was a good place; but not to be saved in God's way, on his terms, and for the ends which he proposes, in the salvation of sinners.

Nor were these things my only trouble, at the time. I was engaged in the study of metaphysics and natural theology, accustomed to subtle notions and tickled with them; whereupon Satan, in conjunction with the natural atheism of my heart, took occasion to cast me into agonizing doubts concerning the great truths of religion, more especially the being of a God. Thus, by the justice of God, that in which I was delighted—I mean subtle and abstract notions—proved the occasion of much perplexing difficulty to me. For, some seeming success in my studies, during the first years in which I

engaged in the study of philosophy, fostered the natural conceit which we all have of our abilities, and emboldened me to proceed further than was proper. So true is that saying of the word, "Knowledge puffeth up." Hereupon the natural curiosity of my vain mind, took the liberty to inquire, without fear, into things too high for me, and made me promise myself satisfaction concerning them, through my own inquiries. "Vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass's colt." Thus he intrudes into those things which he hath not seen, "vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind."

And when I had here failed of success and suffered the disappointment, the natural atheism and enmity of my heart, that inclines to reject the things of God rather than our own darkness, began, now that my understanding was puzzled, to inquire, "How can these things be?" Thus professing myself to be wise, "I became a fool." Satan, who is on the watch for all advantages, finding me thus caught in the thicket of doubts, plunged me farther in, by throwing out "fiery darts" of subtle arguings against the being of a God; whereby all was set on a flame, and I sometimes cast into violent convulsions. This exercise of mind about the being of a God, was much more disquieting than the one formerly mentioned. Then there was only an unsettled state of mind, proceeding from the want of evidence which I felt, sufficient to quiet the mind, by giving it that assurance of the truth, which was necessary to embolden it without fear to have recourse to God. Now there were opposing arguments which disquieted me. Then I was in the case of the disciples who said, "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us;" but now I was disturbed with the working of the ruler of darkness, and with "high imaginations exalting themselves against God."

Though the atheism and enmity of my heart against God were great and still unremoved, yet the Lord suffered me not to yield to the conclusion aimed at by such arguings; but made me recoil from it with dread. For

there remained so much of that natural knowledge of a Deity, which God hath made manifest even in the heathen, that is, in their consciences; and there was so much light added to this by the external evidence of the truth, as seen in the works of creation and Providence, that I could not but recoil at the thoughts of that horrible conclusion of the Atheist—*There is no God.* Being at the same time, deeply affected with apprehensions of the shortness and uncertainty of life, I dreaded to admit a conclusion, which I saw would shake all my hopes of relief in the future world. “If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do !”

In this strait, between light that would not admit of a flat denial of the being of God, and atheism strengthened and inflamed by the arts of Satan, I still betook myself to vain and selfish courses. My difficulties arose from reasonings, and I expected to relieve myself by my own reasonings. Nothing more—did I foolishly think—can be necessary to establish my mind concerning this truth, and to fix it in a firm assent to it, than to obtain demonstrative arguments of the being of God. Thus I expected “by searching to find out God.” And, like the Psalmist, when in doubt about the providence of God, “I thought to know it.” Thus I expected, by my own reasonings, to establish myself in the truth, and to be able to answer all objections urged against it.

For this cause I set myself seriously to search out such arguments; and I found them, but found not such relief as I expected. “When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me.” For the most forcible of those arguments, proceeded on the absurdity of any contrary conclusion, and would not allow any thing to be said to the argument; and so extorted assent. But as they did not enlighten the mind with any satisfying notions and discoveries of the true God, whom they obliged me to own as existing, my mind was not quieted. For, in things of any practical influence, without some competent measure of light respecting the nature of those things, the soul cannot rest satisfied; since it requires not only a proof of their reality but of their fitness to

answer the purposes to which it wishes to apply them. "Thomas said unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?" The arguments to which I allude, did indeed force my assent for the time; but they did not remove objections to the contrary. So that whenever the light of them was removed and the objections came up to view, I was completely shaken in my belief. I was like the inquirer, mentioned by Cicero, who had read Plato's arguments for the immortality of the soul, and who said; "When I read, I give my assent, but, I know not how it is, as soon as I lay down the book, my assent is gone." It is faith alone, as the Bible saith, which reproves contrary arguments and infuses into the soul an abiding light, that keeps it firm in its adherence to the truth. Thus, like the philosophers of old, "in the wisdom of God, by wisdom I knew not God."

Though I was thus entangled, rather than extricated by these selfish expedients, yet my vain mind still had recourse to them. For I expected that by some further progress in learning, I might find that which I had hitherto failed of; and therefore I applied myself vigorously in that way. But any progress which I achieved, made me still more sensible how much I was disappointed, and caused me to experience the truth of the declaration, "He that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow." The farther I proceeded, the more difficulties, and less satisfaction, I found. When I became convinced this course could not avail, then I spent my weary hours in vain wishes for some extraordinary discoveries. "Nay, but if one went unto these from the dead, they will repent."

Though I attained not the satisfaction at which I aimed, yet I cannot say this exercise was wholly without some useful effects. It let me see that I had need of some farther evidence of the truths of religion, than any I had hitherto acquired, or knew how to acquire. Of this fact I had before had some view, and now I was confirmed in it. My mind being more quieted, as it respects these truths, by hearing the preached word, than

by all my arguments, I was inclined to hope that the evidence I wanted might come from the Lord. I was driven, somewhat, from that towering opinion of my own knowledge and abilities, which my first apparent success in philosophy gave me. I was brought to have a useful diffidence of my ability to obtain satisfaction, even about natural things, and to resolve objections which lay against truths that, upon clear argumentative evidence, I was forced to admit. This was afterwards of considerable use to me.

But, during all this period of time, and under all these wrestlings and strugglings betwixt sin and increasing light, my corruptions, as I grew in years, grew stronger and stronger, and took deeper root in the heart. They received an increase of strength from occasional temptations, and new force because of the weak resistance made to them, while I remained in these vain courses. As the law came nearer, in its spiritual meaning and extent, sin revived, and appeared more discernible in its strength, and "taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence." Being fretted, and not subdued, it grew stronger and stronger, till at length it slew me. In this perplexity, I still betook myself to one or the other of the above mentioned foolish courses. "I gadded about" to change my way, "sent to Egypt, went to Assyria," yet could not they help me. Yet these exercises and perplexities had some intermissions, and then I became remiss and careless. My goodness, like the "morning cloud and the early dew," soon passed away.

However, by these means, I was brought to have a specious form of religion. For, now I took some care to avoid those sins, whether secret or open, which went most directly against the dictates of my conscience. I not only abstained from those evils, which most students, even of the soberer sort, frequently indulged in; but with a sort of resolution, I kept at a distance from the occasions of them. Thus I began to "escape the pollutions of the world," through a knowledge of the truth. I was more exact than heretofore, in attending to duties,

public, private and secret, and that too, not without some concern, at least sometimes, as to my inward frame in the performance of them. Thus I thought "I kept his ordinances." When I was ensnared either to the commission of sin, or the omission of duty, I was brought into deep sorrow, and for sometime walked mournfully before God. And as I always had a sort of reverential regard for such as feared God, from the time I began to be awakened; I now began to have a sort of liking and kindness towards them, and pleasure in their company and conversation, even when this latter turned upon religious subjects. Thus my convictions forced upon me an approbation of them, and so made me give glory to God; their light so shining before me, that I could not but take notice of them. I had frequent tastes of the "word of God and the power of the world to come," which made me delight in approaching to God. And I obtained some things that looked like an answer to prayer, when, under a sense of my own helplessness, I went to God in prayer. In difficulties I found such remarkable help, I could not but take notice of it. The Lord hereby drew me gradually along to expect good from him in his own way, and, though I was wrong in the main, did, as it were, encourage the smallest beginnings that looked like a return to him. "And the word of the Lord came to Elijah, the Fishbite, saying, Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? Because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days; but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house."

Now, though by these things I got a name to live, yet really I was dead. For the natural darkness remained uncured. Some dawnings of light were indeed discernible, and some discoveries made of what I formerly had not known; yet the power of darkness still remained, and the vail was not yet taken away, nor were spiritual things seen in a true light. The enmity of my mind against the law, especially in some instances, remained in full force—there was not a res-

pect to all God's commandments. I had not yet a sight of the beauty of holiness. Nor did I in my heart approve of Christ's precepts, as good and desirable. It was not because I delighted in holiness and in conformity to the law—at least in some cases—but because I was undone without it, which made me aim at any sort of compliance. I yet sought righteousness, as it were, by the works of the law. I was wholly legal in all I did, not seeing the necessity, the security, the glory of the gospel method of salvation—namely, by the righteousness of Christ alone. Self was the spring of all I did. My only aim was to be saved, without any regard to the glory of the Lord, or any concern how it could be consistent with that, to save one who had so deeply offended. In a word, all my religion was constrained, violent, selfish, legal, and anti-evangelical. These things, not to mention others, were all wrong.

It will not be improper to review the preceding narrative, and offer two or three observations upon it.

The above mentioned exercises of my mind afford me full confirmation of many of the truths contested by the Pelagians and others, concerning man's inability to do good, and the corruption of his nature. When I read and hear their high swelling words of vanity, in commendation of man, and in praise of his free will to do good, and his good inclinations, and when I hear specious arguments offered for proof of these notions, I have no reason to be shaken in my opinions. Will they dispute me out of my senses? May I not believe the word of God? Or must I wrest and distort the scriptures, to make places which appear unfavorable to free will, accord with those notions of it which some persons advance? Sure I am, if they will not allow scripture to be its own interpreters, that it is safer, at least in those things that relate to our own natural state, and concerning which conscience may know, to admit experience to comment, rather than reason proceeding upon abstract notions. And when scripture and experience join, then we have the fullest confirmation of

the truths which are established in the mouth of two such witnesses—the last not only confirming, but illustrating the testimony of the former. If they say that their hearts are not so perverse and ill inclined, and that they find in them inclinations to good; I cannot say so of mine. Yet, by the way, I must observe, that in their practice they seldom go further, (in doing good) if they do so far, than others who agree with me, in owning their hearts to be so wicked, their corruptions so strong, their wills so depraved and set upon evil, that they can do nothing well pleasing to God. Now, surely, if matters are as they represent them, they are much to blame. As for me, I find more solid truth in that one scripture which tells us that “the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked,” than in many volumes of idle, anti-scriptural notions founded on the subtle arguments of men, whose eyes have never yet been opened to see the plague of their own hearts; and who, therefore, persist in asserting such an ability and power, and inclination to do good, in man, as neither scripture, nor the experience of such as have their eyes in the least measure opened, admits of. However, if others will think that there are such good inclinations in themselves, I am obliged to acknowledge my own want of them. Woful experience convinces me, and, to my shame obliges me to acknowledge, that I never looked towards the Lord, except when he drew me. “I was as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke;” I never went longer under it than the force lasted. I had an inclination to sit down, and in fact, did sit down at every step—no great sign that I was fond of the way in which I was. I never got up again except when the Lord’s power was anew put forth. I never, all this while, went one step without a grudge. I frequently looked back to Sodom. I have been “as a backsliding heifer.” I was grieved for what I left behind; my heart cleave to what my conscience most directly opposed. Thus I was of them who rebel against the light; I often refused when the command was plainest. When I was brought into any difficulty, I betook my;

self to any expedient, rather than to Christ. Sin bit me, and yet I loved it. My heart often deceived me and yet I trusted in it, rather than in God. God dealt with me in a way of kindness, but when he spoke to me in my prosperity, I would not hear. "He smote me, and I went on frowardly." I never parted with any sin, till God beat and drove me from it, and hedged up my way. Surely, this looks like the heart's being "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked."

The foregoing exercises of my mind, show clearly what a depth of deceitfulness there is in the heart of man. How many expedients has my heart used, to elude the design of all these strivings of the Lord's Spirit with me. What strange shifts has the heart of man, and how many are they! I have mentioned a good many, but the half is not told. All these expedients had relation to but one point in religion. If one would undertake to give an account only of those deceits which are the most prominent, in respect to his whole experience, how many volumes might be written! There is much true divinity contained in that short passage from scripture: "The heart is deceitful above all things; who can know it?"—Who can understand his errors? When, upon a review, I recollect so many, how many more might I have noticed, if I had regarded them at the time, or soon afterwards? And if so many may be seen, how many secret, undiscernible, or at least, undiscerned, deceits are there?

How far may we go in religion, and yet come short! Many things I seemed to have and to do. I "did many things gladly." I was "almost persuaded" to be a Christian. I seemed to escape the "pollutions that are in the world by the knowledge of truth." I seemed enlightened, and a partaker of the "heavenly gift," and obtained some taste of "the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come." I underwent many changes, and yet all the while was wanting—defective in the main thing. "Many shall seek to enter in and shall not be able." Not, every one that says, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of God."

I cannot but look back with wonder at the astonishing patience of God, which bore with me so long, and the steadiness he showed in advancing his work, notwithstanding the many provocations given him to desist. Still he worked for his name's sake. All creation could not have manifested such patience. The disciples of Christ would have called for "fire from heaven." Yea, Moses, the meekest man on earth, would have found more to irritate him here, than at Meribah. Glory to God, that we have to do with him, and not with man. His ways are not as our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts. But "as the heavens are high above the earth, so are his ways and thoughts (of mercy) above ours."

I must bear testimony to the rationality of God's ways of dealing with men. Those things concerning which he caused me to feel anxiety—deliverance from wrath, eternal salvation, and security as to my own state—were such as my own reason, upon the most mature attention, could not but own to be worthy of the utmost care and attention. He did not lead me to vex myself about vanity and things of no importance. The way in which he dealt with me, was not destructive to my natural faculties, but improved them. He enlightened my eyes to see what he would have me to do; and he forced not my will, but swayed in a way suitable to its nature, to a compliance with his comrades. This was not to prove, but gently to bend, the will to those things which were really proper for it to be attracted by. He always observed the true order of the faculties. He swayed the will, so far as it went in compliance with his work, by sending light into the mind, which light, in the true order of things, should guide the understanding. He carried me on to consideration. He did not seek, as it were, to entangle the affections, and with their aid carry away the mind in haste, as sin and Satan are wont to do. They guide sinners as the Philistines did Sampson—they first put out their eyes, and then make them grind in their mill. The Lord never obliged me to part with any

sin or expedient, till he had let me see, that it was not only against my duty, but my true interest. So far as I complied with his call, I cannot say that his way was unpleasant, or that he was a "barren wilderness, or a land of drought." The meanest and most undeserving compliance was not without its reward. "Who is there even among you that would shut the door for nought? neither do ye kindle fires on mine altar for nought." Thus the Lord's work was power, not force. He drew, but it was with "cords of a man, with bonds of love." He bid me quit many things, but they were vain things, which were no bread. "Remember this, and show yourselves men: bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors." "O house of Israel, are not my ways equal? Are not your ways unequal? Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal."

Though the work of which I speak was consonant to reason, yet it was far above nature. I cannot ascribe its rise or progress to myself; for it was what I sought not; I thought not of it, I liked it not; yea I hated, I feared it, I avoided it, I tried to get rid of it, and when all would not do, I directly opposed it. For I was one of those who rebel against the light. I cannot ascribe it to any outward means. There are parts of it which they did not reach. What were, apparently, the strongest means, failed; the weakest produced the effect. Neither strong nor weak motives had always the same effect. But the work was carried on by the secret undiscernible power of him, who is like the wind, blowing where it listeth. The work bears an impress of God in all its stages. The word which awakened me was the voice of him who makes the "dead to hear," who calleth all things that are not as if they were." The light which shone, was the candle of the Lord, searching, yea, piercing into "the hidden parts of the belly," and tracing a deceitful heart through all its turnings and windings. The work was that of one who is every where, and

who knows every thing; "who is of one mind" and therefore not to be turned; who will not faint, nor be discouraged, "till he have brought forth judgment into victory." The work was uniform, though variously carried on, through many interruptions and much opposition—during a long period of time, by means seemingly weak, improper and ill-adapted, and suitable only for him whose "ways are in the sea, whose paths are in the great waters, and whose footsteps are not known." In a word, it was a bush burning, and kept from being consumed only by the presence of God. It was a spark in the midst of an ocean; kept alive, notwithstanding the floods were continually poured on it to extinguish it. This flame was maintained by oil secretly conveyed into it. "This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes."

CHAPTER VI.

Containing an account of the progress of the Lord's work on my mind, for the space of about three years, from August, 1696, to June, 1699; the dreadful state into which I was brought at last, with my relief from it, and the state of matters with me for some time after this.

WHEN I had studied philosophy three years, being tickled with it, and somewhat puffed up with the progress I had made, and which I designed and expected yet to make—though I must own that still as knowledge increased, self-conceit decreased; and I thought I knew more the first year, than I ever thought I knew afterwards—I designed to go abroad, to which I was also advised, and improve myself farther in my studies. But two things broke this project; my mother

would not consent, and the former exercises of my mind having brought me into bondage, through fear of death, I was afraid, so long as the state of my soul was so unsettled, to encounter the risk of my life, to which my voyage would expose me. Wherefore, upon the advice of some friends, I consented, instead, to engage as chaplain for some time, in a family.

Accordingly, in August, 1696, I went to Weymiss' house. When I came here, a stranger among strangers, and they, too, persons of considerable quality; on account of my natural bashfulness, - the censoriousness of my auditors, the public appearance I was obliged to make, and to which I had not been accustomed, my want of polite breeding, and the like, I was for a time, in a very great strait. I was forced to keep myself retired, and to petition for help to carry me through. And though it was my own, and not the Lord's honor to which I had respect, and for which I was concerned, yet, he who hears the cry of the ravens, and would not overlook Ahab's humiliation, or the Ninevites' repentance, did not fail me in my straits; but helped as far as was necessary to maintain the respect due to the station in which I was placed, and to obtain kindness.

During the first half of the year that I was in this place, I was somewhat diverted from my main employment; being obliged to study what was necessary for my accomplishment in the intercourse of the world. But still I held on; and the more difficulty I met with, the closer did I keep to the form of religion which I had taken up. And besides, my station now obliged me to make high pretensions. But, passing by these introductory remarks, I proceed to the main design of this narrative.

I had not been long in my new situation, when I was often necessarily, and frequently without sufficient necessity, engaged about the truth of religion, the divine origin of the scriptures, as well as the most important doctrines contained in them. By this means I was induced to read the writings of deists and other enemies of religion, that I might make myself ac-

quainted with the arguments by which those with whom I had occasion to dispute, opposed the truth. As to the result of those arguings with respect to others, I shall say nothing about it, because others are concerned; but I may say, I found it true that, "foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law, are unprofitable and vain." For "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." And "profane and vain babblings increase unto more ungodliness." And to my sad experience I found, that "their word will eat as doth a canker," or gangrene. It is of an infectious and contagious nature; and therefore it is safest to shun and avoid them, and follow the wise man's advice, to "forsake the foolish and live;" and to "depart from the presence of a foolish man when we perceive not in him the lips of knowledge," and "cease to hear the instruction that causes to err from the words of knowledge."

This was of very dangerous consequence to me; and could not prove otherwise to one in my case. For, I was not "rooted and grounded" in the truth, being neither doctrinally instructed in the grounds whereon the scripture is received, nor practically acquainted with its power; and so was without that "armour of light," which is necessary for a conflict with such enemies. The power of that enmity and darkness, which inclines the vain wind of man to reject and carp at the truths of God as "foolishness," still remained unsubdued; and so I was as the "children," who are "tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine." The objections I found started were many, struck at the foundations of my belief, were new and surprising to one who was so unsettled, and were dressed up "by the sleight and cunning craftiness" of them who lie in wait to deceive. I was not acquainted with that watchfulness, vigilance, and humble sobriety, that were necessary to prevent Satan's gaining any advantage. Hereupon Satan finding so fair an occasion, let it not slip; for he goes about seeking such seasons. And finding things thus, he improved it to my great disquietude.

The adversary finding all things thus prepared, set on me furiously, and employed many of them against me. He wrought up the natural atheism, darkness, and enmity of my heart, to vent themselves against the truths of religion, in foolish inquiries, "Is it so? How can these things be?" "And what authority hast thou, since thou requirest such things?" He employed individuals who had all advantages, and were the most likely to prevail; persons, smooth, sober, and who opposed the truth with rational argument: such the devil sometimes makes use of, who seem themselves to be not far from the kingdom of God. They are like the scribe who answered and questioned our Lord civilly. Their "words are smoother than butter," while "war is in their heart." And such persons are usually more prevalent: for with their "fair speeches they deceive the hearts of the simple." He himself sometimes acted the subtile serpent, putting and suggesting subtile queries—"Hath God said so?" And sometimes he threw in fiery darts to inflame and disorder me. Thus I found, when I was alone, when I was in prayer, and when in my most serious frames of mind, hellish oaths, and grievously blasphemous suggestions cast forcibly into my mind, which made me tremble. No wonder he should deal so with me, when he impudently suggested to "him in whom he had nothing," such blasphemous proposals, as that of falling down to worship him.

By all these ways he assaulted me, and I was grievously perplexed about all the truths of religion. The being of God was again brought in question. The enemy said daily, "Where is thy God?" And the atheism of my heart said also, "There is no God; and who is the Lord?" I was assaulted about his providence, and all the disorders of the world were urged against it, to my disturbance. "As for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped. The ungodly prosper in the world, they increase in riches, and therefore his people return hither. Waters of a full cup are wrung out to them, And they say,

How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the Most High?" I was assaulted as to the truth of the Bible, and many ways troubled about it: when I read it, when I thought about it, I was plied hard with grievous suggestions. Sometimes the want of sufficient evidence was complained of. "What sign showest thou then, that we may see and believe thee? what dost thou work?" At other times it was blamed for its obscurity; "How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly;" and anon another suggestion was made against some passages as hard; "This is an hard saying, who can bear it?" When this succeeded not, it was accused in some places of plain blasphemy—"He hath spoken blasphemy—Ye have heard his blasphemy." It was blamed as contradictory to itself. "We heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever; and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up?" Its promises were called in question. "Where is the promise of his coming?" As were also its threats, "Every vision faileth." "Behold they say unto me, Where is the word of the Lord? Let it come now." Thus was I daily perplexed, in so much that it was a terror sometimes, for fear of these suggestions, to look into the Bible. The mystery of the gospel was particularly attacked, and represented as foolishness, as setting up new gods, and oft was I made to say, "How can these things be?"

The subtle enemy who had often solicited me to indulge in high thoughts of myself, now, when he found it for his purpose, urged upon me mean thoughts of myself, and pressed to a spurious sort of humility. He often whispered me in the ear, "Tis vain for you to expect to rid yourself of these difficulties, when so many learned men, who have studied the point with so much care, and who were far more capable than you to discern the truth, cannot obtain satisfaction, but have rejected the Bible as untrue. "Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed."

By these means I was brought into grievous per-

plexity, and had many sad tossings. "My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God?" But still I tried wrong courses. I attempted by my own reasoning to relieve myself; "I thought to know this." When this method failed, I bought and read books written about the truth of religion. This indeed, had it been kept in its own place, was allowable and useful. But I expected more than I had reason to look for, and, as I used it, this was only the fruit of unbelief, and a vain course; a running to Ashur, a sending to Egypt. I wished for visions, voices, or some extraordinary revelation; "Nay, but if one rise from the dead they will believe." When these failed, with the sluggard, I sat down discouraged; "The fool foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own flesh." I sometimes betook myself to prayer; but herein I desired success, not seeking in the right way, nor to right ends.

But all these ways failed me. "I took counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily. I said I will be wise, but it was far from me. That which is far off and exceeding deep, who can find it out?" As to my own reasonings, they availed not against him who esteems "iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood." "When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me"—it was labor in mine eyes. As for books, besides that they satisfied not as to the things they mentioned, many of my scruples were overlooked by them, so that they proved physicians of no value. "How forcible are right words! But what doth your arguing reprove?" As to extraordinary expectations, God justly disappointed them. "They have Moses and the prophets, and if they hear not them, neither would they believe though one rose from the dead." My sloth still increased my trouble; my foolish inquires fretted my spirit and slew me. "The desire of the slothful killeth him; for his hands refuse to labor."

I should have quite sunk under the weight of this trouble, and been swallowed up by sorrow, and landed in despair, if its force had not been somewhat abated

by occasional considerations, that, by the good hand of God, were, sometimes in one way, and sometimes in another, brought to my mind. When the hellish conclusions at which all these temptations aimed, the renouncing of religion, rejecting the scriptures, &c., were urged, it was often seasonably suggested to me, "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." The Lord powerfully convinced me, and kept the conviction strong on my mind, that whenever I parted with revelation, I must also give up all prospect of certainty or satisfaction about eternal life. What deists told me, of the demonstrations of a future state of happiness built only upon nature's light, had no weight with me; because I had tried all such arguments long ago, and found them, to my apprehension, inconclusive: and had they been conclusive, I was never a whit the nearer satisfaction. To tell me of such a state, without any account of its nature, or the terms whereon it was attainable, was all one as if nothing had been said about it: this thought created still a dread of the conclusion in my mind; and still, when I was solicited to forsake the scriptures, I returned, saying, "To whom shall I go to find the words of eternal life?" Upon a due observation of those who were truly religious, I could not but look on them (though their real worth I did not yet discern) as the better part of mankind; and the Lord created a dread in my soul of conclusions, that imported the charge of a lie, in a matter of the greatest importance, against the better part of mankind. "If I should speak thus, behold I should offend against the generation of thy children." The Lord opened mine eyes to see the remarkable folly of those who abandoned revealed religion. Not to mention the impious lives of the generality, I saw the soberer sort guilty of unaccountable folly. The scripture tells them plainly, that if they have a mind to be satisfied as to the truth of its pretensions, they must walk in the way of its precepts to find it; "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." But they walk in a direct contra-

diction to its precepts, and yet complain of the want of evidence ; while they refuse to try that way wherein only it is to be found. Again, some sober and learned, and otherwise inquisitive persons own, that if we are either cut off from hopes, or left to uncertainty, about a future state of happiness, we are miserable, and that they themselves are yet uncertain. But after all this has been by them confessed, and by some to myself, I have seen them take little or no pains to be satisfied. "A scorner seeketh wisdom and findeth it not." Yea, I have found this sort of persons much more eager in searching after what might strengthen their doubts, than what might satisfy their hopes. This smelled rank of a hatred of light. Now I thought it was not safe to follow those whom I saw so evidently foolish, and who did so plainly proclaim their folly. "Evil men understand not judgment : but they that seek the Lord understand all things." This had so much weight with me, that I now ceased to wonder that such persons were unsatisfied about the truth of religion, and perceived that there was no ground of doubting its truth because they were not satisfied. When I was driven from all other strong holds, the shining evidence of the power of religion in the lives, and especially the deaths, of the martyrs, gave me confidence in the reality of religion. "They were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection." Here it behooved me to own the finger of God, especially when I considered their numbers, their quality, and all the circumstances. The known instances of the power of religion in children in their tender years, were sometimes of great use to me, and appeared of great weight. They checked the force of temptations that drove me to doubt the reality of religion. "Thus out of the mouth of the babes and sucklings, the Lord ordained strength," and in some measure "stilled the enemy and the avenger." The sensible and violent opposition I found Satan making to the scriptures, in all the fore-mentioned ways, often assured, and in some measure persuaded me that there must be a reality in religion.

I could not see what should induce him thus to oppose it, if it were a cheat. Is Satan divided? I was frequently strongly convicted of sin, and thus finding the power and piercing virtue of the word, making manifest the secrets of my heart, I was forced to fall down and own God to be in it of a truth. Satan sometimes departed and left me for a season, and then I had some intermission of my sore trouble. I found at some seasons, a secret hope begun and cherished, I could not tell how, even amidst the violence of temptation, that I should be satisfied, that I should yet have good cause to praise God, and that what I knew not then I should know hereafter. This hope was strengthened by the consideration of what others had met with, who had been troubled with temptations somewhat like mine. Although I doubted, if in all respects, any man had been so molested as I, and if there was "any sorrow like unto mine." Yea, sometimes I was made to hope that Satan's raging foreboded that his time was but short.

As by these and the like means, the force of the temptation was somewhat broken, so I was encouraged to the performance of several things, in which I have reason to own God was kind in helping me to perform them. Hereby I was engaged to hold on, in a more careful attendance upon the duties of religion, public, private, and secret; and so to wait at wisdom's door post; of which I afterwards found the advantage. I was enabled to conceal all my straits from others, who might thereby have either been stumbled or hardened in their evil way. I was unwilling others should know any thing that might disgust them with religion. "Tell it not in Gath,——lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph." In conversation with such as were in doubt, I still endeavored to stand for the truth, as if I had been under no doubt about it; and I must own that while I did so, the Lord often countenanced me, and satisfied me respecting those things about which I had formerly been disquieted. *How good a master is God!* A word spoken for him is not lost;

nor will he suffer the least service to pass unrewarded. A heathen Cyrus must have his hire; and so must Nebuchadnezzar.

Before I leave this point, I must observe some things which the Lord taught me by this exercise of mind. Hereby I learned the danger and vanity of reasoning with Satan. When I began to answer him with my own reasonings, he had still great advantage; he easily evaded all my arguments, and easily repelled my answers, and enforced his suggestions; and when his suggestions were to be maintained by force of argument, he obtruded them with such impudent violence, that I was not able to stand against them. Our safest course is to resist, and to hold ourselves at a distance; to avoid communing with him. I must observe likewise the wise providence of God, that the greatest difficulties which lie against religion are hid from Atheists. All the objections with which I met in their writings, were not near as subtle, as those which were often suggested to me. The reason of it is obvious, from the nature of the case. Such persons take not a near-hand view of religion; and while persons stand at a distance, neither the difficulties nor the advantages that attend it, are discerned. Again, Satan finding all things quiet with them, keeps them so; and finding that they are ensnared, he uses not force. It is when he is in danger of losing a person, that he uses his utmost efforts: when Christ is ready to cast him out, then he rages and tears poor souls. Besides, the Lord in his infinite wisdom permits not all these hellish subtleties to be published, out of tenderness to the faith of the weak. He that sets bounds to the raging of the sea, and says, "Hitherto shalt come, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed," keeps Satan under chains; and he cannot step beyond his permission.

This exercise had sundry effects upon me. The fears under which I was brought, fixed within me a deeper sense of my frailty in general, and the conviction that I was but a man. "Put them in fear, O

Lord, that the nations may know themselves to be but men." Hereby the Lord withheld me from my vain projects about learning. Now I was so far from expecting, as for some time I had done, to excel in acquirements, that I feared I should fall short of what was absolutely needful to my own well being. "I said I will be wise; but it was far from me." Whereas I was educated with an eye to the ministry, and had directed my aims that way; now I came to see the difficulty of the undertaking, and to repent my rash intentions. And I laid down a resolution to look no more that way, unless the Lord satisfied me fully about those truths whereof I now doubted. I could not, without horror, think of speaking to others what I believed not myself. My bondage through fear of death, was made heavier and grew stronger. I was urged to somewhat more strictness in the performance of duty; and though I was often tempted to give it over as vain, yet I still resolved to hold on to that point. I was still more and more confirmed, in the necessity of further evidence for the truth of religion, than I either had attained or knew how to attain.

All this while I was exposed to sundry inconveniences that increased my trouble, and gave advantage to my corrupt affections. Most of the conversation I had, was with such persons as helped forward my trouble. I was a companion of fools, and therefore nigh to destruction. "For he that walketh with wise men shall be wise, but a companion of fools shall be destroyed." Again, I had no friend to whom I could, with freedom and with any prospect of satisfaction, impart my feelings; "Wo to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up." My endeavors to conceal entirely my concern and trouble, broke me down. "When I kept silence, my bones waxed old." I was unfitted for my studies, but had no diversion, nor could I follow any. I had heart for nothing, and could not even read, except that sometimes I read the scriptures, or some other practical book. Except when there was an intermission of my trouble,

for near a year and a half I read very little; and this slothful posture laid me open to temptations, and made my corruptions grow stronger. "I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; and lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down."

Hereupon my corrupt affections vented themselves in several ways. First, in vain and slothful desires; "I desired and had not." In foolish contrivances and searches, how to ease my smart. "I communed with mine own heart upon my bed, and my spirit made diligent search," but without a due eye to the Lord. I spent my time in foolish complaints that dispirited me: I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed. I was sometimes ready to curse the day of my birth, wishing that I had never been born, or that I had died as soon as born: "Why died I not from the womb?" I often wished that I had been placed in other circumstances, and that I had been bred to the plough, or some such employment, and that I might have a cottage in the desert, "a place of way-faring men," where I might give myself to continual grief. My spirit sometimes rose in quarrellings against God: "I remembered God and was troubled." I said, "wherefore do I cry, and thou dost not hear me?" And frequently I was not far from adopting the words, "Wilt thou be altogether unto me as a liar, and as waters that fail?"

When I had thus wearied myself, after the edge and violence of the above mentioned temptations were, by the considerations just related, blunted and somewhat broken, rather than removed, and I was relieved by Satan's departure for a season; I inclined to rest, and Satan hereupon finding matters prepared for an assault, made fresh attempts in another, and no less disquieting manner. "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man he walketh through dry places, seeking rest and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house, from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept and garnished. Then

goeth he and taketh with himself seven other spirits, more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first."

The devil cannot be at rest, when he hath no mischief to do to men. The devil leaves none in such a way but that he will attempt to come unto them again; and he ordinarily succeeds, where Christ hath not prepossessed the soul. All other reformation proves but a sweeping and a garnishing, while the soul is empty of Christ. It may be swept from the filth of flagitious sins, and garnished with the paint of religion, or some habits of moral virtue; but none of these will keep out the devil. Thus I found it to my cost. For Satan finding my soul, after all my sad tossings, empty of Christ, returned. And my soul being like the vineyard of the sluggard, defenceless through sloth, and without its stone wall, he easily found opportunity to sow tares, and, while I slept, to cultivate the thorns and nettles, which naturally grow there. It was no hard matter to persuade one so wearied as I was, that rest was good; and that there was "a lion in the way." And Satan having thus possession and a quiet abode in my heart; with his seven other spirits, my own corruptions, he quickly made my last state worse than my first. My enemies grew strong and lively, and my corruptions began vigorously to exert themselves.

Hereupon the Lord, having regard to his own work, did, by the ministry of the word, bring the law in its spiritual meaning nearer unto me. And then "sin revived and I died." I perceived more clearly the stirrings of corruptions within me. Yea, "sin, taking occasion from the commandment," and being fretted by the light let into my soul from the word of God, "wrought in me all manner of concupiscence." Lusts of all sorts, self, sloth, formality, &c. strove to maintain their place in the heart. Hereby I was plunged into deeper guilt; by this means "mine iniquities went over my head," my convictions were sharpened, and I found no rest in my bones, for sins that I had done.

Under this distress, I still, as formerly, sought to other physicians, rather than to the Lord. For having now, by the knowledge of the truth, escaped the pollutions of the world, my mind was much employed about the secret actings of sin, and its working in the heart; and as to these, I sometimes used extenuations and excuses, taken from the strength of the temptations under which I lay, and other considerations of that sort: and sometimes this was done not without indulging secret reflections against God. This was Adam's way,—“The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree and I did eat.” Sometimes, after making engagements and vows, and breaking them, when I found conscience disturb me, I began to inquire whether the things were sin, and endeavored to persuade myself, that some which most disquieted me were not. Thus, “after vows I made inquiry.” At last, when all these courses failed, I again said, I will not transgress; I made new vows and resolutions, accompanied with sorrow for my former unfaithfulness, and solemnly bound myself against my predominating sins. “Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron in haste: and he said, I have sinned against the Lord your God, and against you. Now therefore forgive I pray thee my sin only this once.” I set apart times for fasting and prayer in secret; and on November 23, 1697, a time set apart for prayer, I drew up a short account of my treacherous dealings with God, from my youth up, and solemnly bound myself to God, to walk in his ways; and when my own heart told me, that I could not serve the Lord, I said “Nay, but I will serve the Lord.”

But all these expedients proved physicians of no value. For I found, that they were not able to keep me longer than until a temptation to sin came in my way. Whenever this appeared, corruption, which had been so far from being really weakened by these inventions, that it really grew in strength, broke down all which I had set in its way. “Of old time I have broken thy yoke, and burst thy bands; and thou saidst, I will not transgress; when upon every green tree thou wander-

est, playing the harlot." I found the vain attempts I made to smother conviction, were not able to procure me peace, but really increased my inward disquietude, and wasted my spirit. "When I kept silence (that is, when I sinfully endeavored to suppress my guilt and trouble) my bones waxed old, through my roaring all the day long." The Lord in mercy gave me no satisfaction in any of these inventions, but suffered me to weary myself in seeking my lovers, that I might at length betake myself to him. For as long as I followed these ways, "day and night his hand lay heavy upon me. My moisture was turned into the drought of summer."

Though as yet I failed of arriving at a right result, yet I was carried a great length, in compliance with my convictions. I kept myself from open pollutions, I was careful in the duties of public worship, yea, further, I was much in secret duties; I received the word with joy. I was often rebuked on account of secret pride, unbelief, and other spiritual evils of the heart, and respecting the knowledge of them was considerably enlightened. I fasted, prayed, mourned in secret. I resolved and strove against sin; even my peculiar sins which I loved best. Thus I had, with others, a name to live, and took up a form of religion.

Yet for all this, I was a stranger to the power of religion; as the following evidences sufficiently manifest. For, whatever length I went, I was nevertheless a stranger to the glorious and blessed relief, which is to be obtained through the imputation of the righteousness of Christ. Not that I had not some notions of this, for I professed to embrace it; but really I was in the dark, as to its glorious efficacy, tendency, and design. I was ignorant of the righteousness of God all the while. And moreover, in all my endeavors the eye was not single. I designed only the saving of myself, without any eye to the Lord's glory. It was still by some righteousness of my own, in whole or in part, that I sought relief. No wonder the peace that stood on so weak a foundation was unstable. Though I was, by

the force of my convictions, brought to part with my beloved sins, or consent to their destruction ; yet it was not without reluctancy, and some secret reserve. It was like Pharaoh's consent in the like case, when his servants persuaded him of the danger of his persisting in his sin. Moses and Aaron were brought back again to Pharaoh, and he said unto them, "Go serve the Lord your God ; but who are they that shall go ?" My heart was utterly averse to spirituality. Sometimes, through the force of my convictions, I was indeed brought, for a considerable time, to aim at getting my mind fixed upon heavenly things, and kept on the thoughts of them. But my heart being yet carnal, I soon grew weary of such a course, and of this forcible religion. And it was intolerable to think of being always spiritual. "The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

By these means I was at last brought to an extremity ; for my "sins were set in order before me." "Innumerable evils have compassed me about ; mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up : they are more than the hairs of mine head ; therefore my heart faileth me." They were set in order in the dreadfulfulness of their nature and aggravations ; pleas and defences, were rejected, and "my mouth stopped before God." All the vain ways to which I had taken for relief, baffled my expectations, and increased my pain. They were "the staff of a broken reed ;" they pierced my arm when I essayed to lean on them, and I was ashamed, and even confounded, that I had hoped. The wrath of God was dropped into my soul, and "the poison of his arrows drank up my spirits." I was as yet unsatisfied as to the truths of religion, and mine enemies often told me, that even "in God there was no succor for me." Yea, sometimes Satan, to entangle me the more, assaulted all the truths of religion at once, and then I was dreadfully confounded, when the Lord commanded that mine enemies should be round about me. And "they compassed

me about like bees." All the methods I took to bear down my corruptions, proved of no avail. For "sin revived and I died;" yea, "taking occasion by the commandment, it slew me."

By the the extremity of this anguish I was, for some time about the close of the year 1697, and beginning of 1698, dreadfully cast down. I was weary of my life. Often did I use Job's words; "I loath it, I would not live alway." And yet I was afraid to die. I had no rest; "my sore ran in the night," and it ceased not in the day. At night I wished for day; and in the day I wished for night. I said, "My couch shall ease my complaint." But then darkness was as the "shadow of death." While I was in this condition, I was often brought to the brink of despair. "He filled me with bitterness, he made me drunk with wormwood. He hath also broken all my teeth with gravel stones, he hath covered me with ashes. And thou hast removed my soul far off from peace. I forgot prosperity. And I said, My strength and my hope is perished from the Lord; remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall." Now I was made to think it a wonder, that I was not consumed; and though I dreaded destruction from the Almighty, yet I could not but justify him, if he had destroyed me!—"Righteous is the Lord, for I have rebelled." I was made to fear that the Lord would make me a Magor-missabib, a terror to myself, and all round about; and that he would cause some dreadful discovery of my wickedness, which would make me a reproach to religion, and give the enemies advantage. This put me upon the psalmist's prayer: "Deliver me from all my transgressions; make me not the reproach of the foolish." I was made to wonder that I was not already cut off. And indeed this thought was sometimes reviving. "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. This I recal to my mind, therefore have I hope." But this hope was easily clouded. It amounted to no more than this; "Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me?" And

in reply to this my fearful heart suggested the greatness of my sins, as placing them above the reach of pardoning mercy. And Satan daily urged me to give over, and take some desperate course; to say, "There is no hope." Thus I walked about, dejected, weary, and heavy laden; weary of my disease, and weary of the vain courses I had taken for relief, and uncertain what to do, or what course to take. "I took counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily."

CHAPTER VII.

Containing an account of the relief I obtained, about the close of January, 1693, and the state of matters thereon.

If this extremity had lasted much longer, my soul would have sunk under the weight of it, and even as it was, it would have ruined me, if the Lord had not timely supported me in the period of the greatest extremity; and as it were held me by the hand, even while I conducted most wickedly. "So foolish was I, and ignorant; I was as a beast before thee. Nevertheless, thou hast holden me by my right hand."—And at this extremity, the Lord stepped in; when I destroyed myself, he let me see help in him. He found me lying wallowing in my blood, in a helpless and hopeless condition. I had none that would or could save me. I was forsaken of all my lovers. I was caught in the thicket. I was quite overcome; neither was I in condition to fight, or flee. And then the Lord passed by me, cast his skirt over me, and made this a time of love. "And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen."

I cannot be very positive about the day or hour of

this deliverance, nor can I satisfy many other questions about the way and manner of it. But this is of no consequence, if the work is in substance sound. For "the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth : so is every one that is born of the spirit," Many things about the way and manner we may be ignorant of, while we are sufficiently sure of the effects. As to these things, I must say with the blind man, "I know not : one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see."

However, it was toward the close of January, or the beginning of February, 1698, that this seasonable relief came ; and so far as I can remember, I was at secret prayer, in very great extremity, not far from despair, when the Lord seasonably stepped in, and gave this merciful turn to affairs ; "When I said, my foot slippeth ; thy mercy, O Lord, held me up." And when there was none to save, then his own arm brought salvation. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shined into my mind, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

That which yielded me this relief, was a discovery of the Lord, as manifested in his word. He said to me, *Thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thy help.* Now the Lord discovered, in the manner hereafter to be mentioned, several things, which I shall here take notice of. He let me see, that there are forgivenesses with him, that with him there is mercy, and plenteous redemption. He made all his goodness pass before me ; he proclaimed his name, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth ; keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, who will be gracious to whom he will be gracious, and will show mercy to whom he will show mercy." This was a strange sight to one, who before looked on God only as a *consuming fire*, which I could not see and live. He brought me from Sinai and

its thunderings, "to mount Zion,—and to the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that cleanseth from all sin, and speaketh better things than the blood of Abel." He revealed Christ in his glory. I now with wonder "beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." And I was by this sight made to say "Thou art fairer than the sons of men." Hereupon he let me see, that he who had before rejected all that I could offer, was "well pleased in the Beloved." "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire, mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offerings and sin offerings hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book, it is written of me; I delight to do thy will, O my God." And I was hereby further fully satisfied, that not only there was forgiveness of sins, and justification by free grace, "through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God"—but I saw moreover with wonder and delight, in some measure, how God by this means might be just in justifying even the ungodly, who believe in Jesus. How was I ravished with delight, when made to see that the God, in whom a little before I thought there was no help for me, or any sinner in my case, if indeed there were any such; notwithstanding his spotless purity, his deep hatred of sin, his inflexible justice and righteousness, and his unimpeached faithfulness, pledged in the threatenings of the law; might not only pardon, but without prejudice to his justice, or his other attributes, might be just in justifying even the ungodly! The reconciliation of these seemingly inconsistent attributes with one another, and the consequent salvation of the sinner quite surprised and astonished me. And the Lord further opened the gospel call to me, and let me see, that to me, even to me, was "the word of this salvation sent." All this was offered to me, and I was invited secretly to come, and "take of the water of life

freely ;” and to come in my distress unto this blessed rest. “Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” He, to my great satisfaction, gave me a pleasant discovery of his design in the whole, that it was “that no flesh might glory in his sight,” but that he who glories, should have occasion only “to glory in the Lord,” that he might manifest the riches of his grace, and be exalted in showing mercy; and that we in the end might be saved, “to the praise of the glory of his grace, who made us accepted in the Beloved.” The Lord revealed to my soul, the full and suitable provision made in this way against the power of sin; that as there is righteousness in him, so there is strength, even “everlasting strength in the Lord Jehovah,” to secure us against all enemies; and that in him there is sweet provision made against the guilt of sin, into which, through the power of temptation, his people may be inveigled. “These things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And 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 our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” When this strange discovery was made of a relief, wherein full provisions were made for all the concerns of God’s glory, and my salvation in subordination thereto, my soul was, by a sweet and glorious power, carried out to rest in it, as worthy of God, and every way suitable and satisfying in my case. “They that know thy name will put their trust in thee.”

All these discoveries were conveyed to me only by the scriptures. It was not indeed by one particular testimony, or promise of the scriptures, but by the concurring light of a great many of their promises and testimonies seasonably set home, and most plainly expressing the truths above mentioned. The promises and truths of the Bible, in great abundance and variety, were brought to remembrance, and the wonders contained in them, were set before mine eyes in the light of the word. “He sent his word, and healed me.” This was the rod of his strength, that

made me willing. And it was the plain word of salvation, that I found to be the power of God. I cannot positively say, that the particular places above mentioned, were the words whereby these discoveries were conveyed to my soul. But by these or such like passages, and, I believe, by many even of these very promises and truths, were the discoveries above named made to me.

But it was not the Bible alone that conveyed the discovery; for most of these passages whereby I was relieved, I had formerly in my distress, read and thought upon, without finding any relief in them. But now the Lord "shined into my mind" by them. Formerly I was acquainted only with the letter, which profits not; but now the Lord's words were spirit and life, and "in his light I saw light." God opened mine eyes to see wonders out of his law. There was light in his words; a burning light by them shone into my mind, to give me, not merely some doctrinal knowledge, but "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ." And many differences I found betwixt the discoveries now made, and the notions I formerly entertained of the same truths. The light I now had "shone from heaven." It was not a spark kindled by my own endeavors, but it shone suddenly about me; it came by the word of God, a heavenly means; it opened heaven, and discovered heavenly things, even the glory of God; and it led me up as it were to heaven. Its whole tendency was heaven-ward. It was a true light, giving true manifestations of God, even the one true God, and the one Mediator between God and man; and giving a true view of my state with respect to God; not according to the foolish conceits I had formerly entertained, but as they are represented in the Scriptures. It was a pleasant and sweet light. "Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun." It had a heavenly satisfaction in God attending it. It led to a pleasure in the fountain whence it came. It was a distinct and clear light, not only representing spiritual things, but

manifesting them in their glory, and in their comely order. It put all things in their due place of subordination to God, and gave distinct and sweet views of their genuine tendency. It was a satisfying light. The soul rested in the discoveries it made, and was satisfied; it could not doubt it saw, nor if the things were so, as they were represented. It was a quickening, refreshing, healing light: when this sun of righteousness arose, there was "healing under his wings." It was like the summer's sun, warming. In a word, it was "the light of life." It was a great light. It made great and clear discoveries, whereby it easily distinguished itself from any former knowledge of these things to which I had attained. And it was a powerful light.

It dissipated that thick darkness which overspread my mind, and made all those frightful temptations, which had formerly disturbed me, fly before it. When the Lord arose, his enemies were scattered, and fled before his face. It was composing. It did not, like a flash of lightning, suddenly appear, and fill the soul only with amazement and fear; but it composed and quieted my soul, and put all my faculties in a due posture as it were, and gave me the exercise of them. It destroyed not, but improved, my former knowledge. These particulars might be explained and further amplified. But the nature of this narrative, and the brevity designed in it, will not allow me to enlarge; and I the more willingly stop here, and forbear to give any larger account of my small experience of this light, because I know that no words can express the conception, which the weakest Christian, who has his eyes opened, really has of its glory. The true idea of light is not conveyed by the ear. The ear tries words, the mouth tastes meat; but it is the eye that beholds the sun. No words can convey a true notion of light to the blind. And he who has eyes, at least while he sees it, will need no words to describe it. It manifested itself and other things also. It is like the new name, that none knows save he who has it. And they who really see, although their light may be weak, and Satan raises mists to

obscure it, will be more capable of judging of it by its effects than by any accounts of its nature. I shall, therefore, forbear to speak any more of its character, and proceed to account for the effects, whereby its reality and difference from former light, will more obviously and convincingly appear. However, at least while this shining brightness lasted, of this one thing it fully convinced me, and made me certainly know; "that whereas I was blind, now I see."

The first discernible effect of this discovery was, an approbation of God's way of saving sinners by Jesus Christ, to the praise of the glory of his grace. And this I take to be the true scriptural notion of justifying faith, for it not only answers the scripture descriptions of it, by receiving, coming to him, looking to him, trusting and believing in him, &c.; but it really gives him that glory which he designed by all this contrivance—the glory of his wisdom, grace, mercy, and truth. Now this discovery of the Lord's name brought me to trust in him, and glory only in the Lord. I found my soul fully satisfied in these discoveries, as pointing out a way of relief, altogether, and in all respects, suitable to the need of a poor, guilty, self-condemned, self-destroyed sinner, driven from all other reliefs; and who has his mouth stopped before God, after he has spent all his substance to no purpose, upon other physicians. In this I rested, as in a way full of peace, comfort, security, and satisfaction; as providing abundantly for all those ends I desired to have secured. And this approbation was not merely for a time; but ever after, in all temptations, it discovered itself. By keeping me in a fixed assent, and adherence of mind to this truth, and full persuasion of it; "that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." When, afterwards, I was, under temptations, solicited to go and seek relief in other ways, it still kept me constant in a firm, resolute rejection of all other ways of relief; and renunciation of all proposals that led to them. Even when I found not the present comfort of this way, I ever held with Ephraim, "What have I to do any

more with idols?" And with the disciples, I said, "To whom shall I go? thou hast the words of eternal life." In all my subsequent exercises about guilt, my soul counted all things but loss that I might win Christ, and get a new discovery of him. When conscience disturbed, when thoughts of an appearance to judgment were suggested, whenever I was in a strait, this was the only sanctuary in which I took relief. Let me "be found in him not having mine own righteousness," but his. If this be obtained, I am safe; and nothing besides this could make me think myself so. Whenever by a beam of fresh light, the Lord did anew discover the glory of this way, whatever my distress was before, this still composed all, commanded a calm, answered upbraidings of conscience, and gave me boldness and access to God with good hope, as to all other things, through grace. Then "I rejoiced in Christ Jesus," and nothing was able to disturb me while this view lasted. Whenever I was wrong, yet I still rested satisfied, that a discovery of the Lord in his own light, would set all right again. And therefore I was ever saying "O that I knew where I might find him." I knew, though he might make sin bitter, yet that a manifestation of him "would put strength in me," as formerly, by sweet experience I had found. I was then only pleased, and I could never approve myself, but when I found my soul, in some measure, moulded into a compliance with the design of the gospel, emptied of self, subjected to the Lord, and careful to have him alone exalted.

The next remarkable effect of this discovery was, that it set me right as to my chief end, in some measure, and made me look to the glory of God, for which formerly, I had no real concern. Now mine eye was made in some measure single, in eyeing the Lord's honor, which in this light was seen to be consistent with my own happiness; and my regard to that, wherein consists the evangelical self-denial which the Lord every where calls for, discovered itself amid all the subsequent strugglings of that detestable idol, self,

for obtaining its former ascendancy. It manifested itself in frequent desires, that the Lord alone might be exalted and glorified, in my life or by my death. It kept my soul fixed in the persuasion, that it was every way meet that I should take shame and confusion to myself, as what truly and only belonged to me, and that the glory of my salvation was only and entirely the Lord's due. In a watchful observance of the stirrings and the most secret actings of self, seeking to advance itself upon the ruin of the Lord's honor, and to the prejudice of it; and when I was not able to bear it down, I yet still cried against it, "Not unto us," &c. Yea, I redoubled my cries in opposition to its impudent endeavors, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name give glory." I was brought to look upon it as the principal enemy, on which I was always to have an eye; and therefore, where the least occasion offered, I had, at least when not otherwise out of order, still a *Not I* ready as a caution against it. Still, the remaining power and activity of this idol, has been one of my greatest grievances. I never was satisfied, nor found comfort, except when this idol was discernibly kept under; and no victory is so refreshing, as that which at any time is, more or less, completely obtained over this. As the apostles, by the shining of "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God" into their minds, were made to "preach not themselves, but Jesus Christ the Lord;" so whenever this light shone, according to the measure of its clearness, and its continuance, the interest of self was weakened in my soul, and I was made to "seek not myself but Christ Jesus the Lord."

The evidence of this change was for some time, frequently darkened; by which means, whenever by the prevalency of sin, consequent convictions, or by the Lord's hiding himself, I was again brought under any fears of my own salvation, I found my thoughts were engrossed, and as it were wholly and only taken up about my own safety; and my concern for the Lord's glory not then appearing, I was thereby cast under fears that I was altogether selfish. But the Lord, at

length, cleared up this case unto me. Our minds are weak ; they have many concerns, some whereof they value more, some less ; they cannot, through their weakness and limited nature, be intent in their thoughts about all, or even many of them, at once. And therefore, when any one, though the least of them, is in hazard, their care must be mainly taken up about that only. Even the good shepherd, though really he values the ninety and nine, more than the one lost sheep, yet when this is lost, he seems to leave all the rest, and employ all his thoughts as it were about that. But when all are equally safe, and none of our concerns are in any visible hazard, then is the only proper time to judge what is really uppermost in the soul : that which then it is most frequently with, delights most in, and can least think of parting with, that is uppermost. That which has the heart, is the treasure. And the Lord let me see that my soul was, when all was safe, almost wholly taken up in viewing with delight, the manifestations of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

Before I proceed to take notice of any other effects of this discovery, I shall represent, in a few particulars, the pleasant way whereby the Lord carried on this change as to the chief end. When the Lord came to work this change, I was sunk under the oppressive sense of the fear, that I had destroyed myself, and was deeply concerned to know how I might be saved. The Lord made me first look up, by a discovery of salvation and help which answered my concern about my own case. When I looked to this salvation, I found it in him. When, by this means, I came to see his glory shining in the contrivance, by the lustre of it I was so affected, that I began to value it above all things, and to look on it as of such importance, that, provided it were secured, all other things, the highest concerns of the creature not excepted, were of small moment. And when I saw the glory of his goodness, in his ordering it, that creatures, in aiming at his glory, should find their own salvation, this view exceedingly endeared the Lord and his ways unto me. Thus the Lord sweetly

led me, by a view of help suited to my case, to a discovery of his glory in my salvation; and helped me to place things, in some measure, at least in wish and design, in their own order, and give his glory the pre-eminency that was its due. But this is only by the bye. Now I go on.

A third discernible effect of this discovery was, that with respect unto the Lord's yoke, his precepts and beholding his glory, I was changed into his image, and made to look on his yoke as easy, and his burden as light; and to count that his commandments were not grievous, but "right concerning all things." This was very far contrary to my former temper. Now the reality of this change appeared and evidenced itself several ways, even amidst all temptations, slips, yea, and relapses into the same sins. I now came to a fixed persuasion, that the law was not only just, such as I could make no reasonable exception against; but holy, and such as became God; and good, such as was every way suited to my true interest, and peace, and advantage—which I could never think before. Though I found sin that dwells in me opposing it still, yet I delighted, after the inward man, in the law, as holy, just, spiritual, and good. I saw the commandment to be "exceeding broad," spiritual, and extensive, and was delighted with it. The duties to which my heart had formerly the greatest aversion, were now made easy, pleasant, and refreshing. Formerly, I could not think spiritual mindedness could be easy to me, or any other person. But now, when in some measure I attained it, and for some time, as first after this discovery I did, I found it life and peace: on the contrary, carnal mindedness was as death. I was made to see a peculiar beauty in those laws in particular, that crossed those sins which had the firmest footing in my temper, and the greatest advantage from my circumstances, and occasional temptations. And though all these advantages still continued, and rather grew, yet my heart was so strangely altered, that no sins were so hateful, upon the account of none did I loath myself so much, and

over none was I so glad of victory. There were none whose ruin I so much desired, against none did I cry so much, or complain so frequently of, to the Lord, or set myself more against. My mind was continually engaged in contrivances for their ruin, although formerly I still sought to have them spared. And if the Lord would have given me my choice, to have the laws that crossed them razed, or to let them stand, he knows I would have thought the law less pleasant, less perfect, if these had been wanting. Thus "what things were gain, I now counted loss," and endeavored to "keep myself from mine iniquity." And I could never think myself happy till these were plucked out, which were before as the right eye. I took delight in others, or in myself, only so far as there appeared any thing of a self-denying, humble conformity to the law of the Lord; such I counted as the "excellent of the earth," and was glad when I got near them in any manner. My soul frequently spent itself in such breathings after conformity to the law of God, as the 119th Psalm is filled with, throughout. "O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes. My soul breaketh, for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times. Incline my heart that I may keep them always unto the end,"—and the like. This appeared further, in a fixed dislike of the least want of conformity to the law, either in myself or others. Now, although I was not always suitably affected with my own or others' transgressions, yet this was my burden. I wished always that rivers of tears might "run down my eyes," because I or other transgressors kept not God's law. Even when sin prevailed, and I was afraid of being ruined, when that which was ordained for life proved death to me, even then my liking to the law, and value for conformity to it continued. Notwithstanding all my lapses I consented to the law, that it was "holy just and good." The sins into which, through the force of temptation, I frequently relapsed, yet were, and I durst appeal to the Searcher of hearts as to the truth of this, what I would not do;

that is, what the constant bent of my will (when not under the immediate force of a temptation, when I was not myself) was set against. Now, nothing appeared more satisfactory in heaven, than a prospect of being there "satisfied with his likeness." I looked on the remainder of sin, as my greatest misery and burden, and that which made me truly a wretched man. It caused me daily to cry for deliverance. In a word, I saw that if I could reach conformity to God's law, I should have pleasure, and peace, and liberty. All wisdom's ways are ways of peace, her paths pleasantness, her commandments not grievous, her yoke light, and nothing is uneasy, but that remaining unsubdued corruption, which would not stoop to put its neck under the yoke. This effect was the most discernible of any under temptations; and it has stood me in the best stead.

A fourth discernible effect of this discovery was the exercise of evangelical repentance, which was very different, in many respects, from that sorrow with which I was before acquainted. It differed in its rise. Sorrow formerly flowed from discoveries of sin, as it brings on wrath, now it flowed from a sense of sin, as containing wretched unkindness to One, who was himself astonishingly kind to an unworthy wretch. I looked upon him "whom I had pierced, and mourned." O! what an unkind wretch am I, to provoke such a God, who has followed me with so much mercy, and yet offers kindness. Sorrow formerly wrought death, alienated my heart from God, and thus dispirited me for duty, and made me fear hurt from him; but this sorrow filled my heart with kindness to God and to his ways, sweetened my soul, and endeared God to it. It flowed from a sense of his favor to an unworthy wretch that deserved none, and was thus a godly sorrow leading to kindness to God, and a drawing near to him, but with much humble sense of my own unworthiness; like the returning prodigal. The more God manifested of his kindness, the more this feeling still increased; when he was pacified, I was ashamed and confounded. "After that I was turned, I repented, I smote upon my

thigh, and was ashamed and confounded" for my strayings. The sorrow I had before, I looked on as a burden; it was nothing but selfish concern for my own safety, and a fear of being made to feel the effects of the righteous resentment of God. But this sorrow was sweet and pleasant, as being the exercise of filial gratitude; and I took pleasure in the surprising manifestations of God's favor to one so unworthy, and in acknowledging my own unworthiness. A sense of my ingratitude, when kept within, covered me with blushes, and I was relieved when the Lord allowed me to vent my sense of it, and pour it as it were into his bosom. This sorrow was a spring of activity in the way of duty, and I was glad to be employed in the meanest errand, that might give opportunity to evidence how deeply I resented my former disobedience. "Make me as one of thy hired servants." In a word, it had all the marks, in some measure, which the apostle gives of the exercise of this grace. It was a godly sorrow; coming from God, it led to God; as what comes from him in a way of grace, always leads to him in a way of duty. It wrought "repentance unto life not to be repented of." It resulted in a return to the way of life, and to such a course, as upon a review I did not repent of, but delighted in, and desired to be carried further in. And still, as far as this sorrow obtained, there was a liveliness in following this way, that leads to salvation or life. It wrought carefulness to avoid sin, anxiety to please God, indignation against sin, fear of offending God again, vehement desire of having sin removed, the Lord glorified, and obedience promoted. It wrought zeal for God, and revenge against myself and sin. It was not as former sorrow, pregnant with pride, stiffness and unwillingness to undergo any chastisement; but it humbled and softened the soul, and wrought a willingness to bear the indignation of the Lord, when I had sinned against him. In a word, I was glad when the Lord allowed me any measure of it, and grieved when I found it wanting, and cried to the "Prince exalted" for it; because of the

good effects it had, and the real advantage I found by it, with respect to the whole of that obedience which the Lord requires.

A fifth discernible effect of this discovery was a humble, but sweet and comfortable hope, and persuasion of my own salvation, answerable to the clearness of this discovery; that is, rising in strength, or growing more weak and less discernible, as the discoveries of the way of salvation were more or less clear and strong. Now, because this is what—with the worthy Dr. Owen—I take for gospel assurance, I shall take some further account of it, as I found it then and since. When the Lord gave me this discovery of his way of salvation, he satisfied me, that it was a way full of peace and security, the only way whereon I might safely venture. And hereby, as I have formerly said, I was fully persuaded, “that this was the way wherein I should walk.” Hereby I was freed from the disquieting fear, that in trusting to it, I was trusting to that which would fail. I was satisfied I could not fail, otherwise than by missing this way. I doubted of myself, but not of the way. The Lord, by the discovery above mentioned, did powerfully draw my soul to close with it. And so far as I cleaved to this way and closed with it; in so far, considering the former discovery of its safety, I could not doubt of the issue, but was sweetly satisfied, that my “expectation should not be cut off,” nor my labor be in vain in pursuing this course. While I held fast, and reposed with satisfaction on what I was convinced was safe, I could not, in so far as I did this, but be quiet and composed about the result. This shows how nearly allied faith and assurance are, though they are not the same, and therefore no wonder the one should be taken for the other. Hereby I was animated to walk on in this way, and follow duty; and finding, as I went on in duty, that so far as I proceeded, my expectation was not disappointed, still according to success, this hope insensibly and secretly grew. “This God is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us.” This discovery

manifesting that salvation was in a way of self-denial, and trust in the Lord alone, nothing so soon marred this hope, as the least appearance of self, and the stirring of pride. Whenever the glory of the Lord was revealed and he spake peace, I was filled with shame; and the deeper this humiliation was, the more the humble confidence of my safety increased. Now these two last remarks show, how far this assurance is from any consistency with negligence, much less does it foster it. For it grows only upon an adherence to the Lord's way, and is strengthened by a successful pursuit of salvation in the Lord's way. To intermit or neglect duty, razes the foundation; or at least, lays an insurmountable barrier in the way of its progress and growth. And further, it is widely different from that untroubled confidence some pretend to; which is a fruit of pride, and fosters it, as the above remark makes clear.

In a word, the case is plainly thus. The way the Lord discovers, is safe for a self-condemned sinner. I am safe in a practical adherence to it. The further I go, and the closer I cleave to this way, in practice, the more my hope of this salvation increases. Here is on place for sloth, but a spur to diligence, as what would not be in vain in the issue, and is attended with this comfort in every step, that it is carrying us still nearer the desired salvation. And this safety arising from a renunciation of all confidence in the flesh, and a trust only in the sovereign grace of God through Christ, there is no place for confidence in ourselves, or pride in any degree; the least degree of pride being a step out of this way of peace and safety.

A sixth discernible difference, was with respect to the ordinances of the Lord's appointment. This discovery drew me to follow them as the Lord's institutions, and his appointed means of our obtaining discoveries of his beauty. It made me follow after discoveries of the Lord's glory in them, and discoveries from him of myself, my case, my sin, my duty. I desired to behold the "beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." It sent me to the Lord to seek these discoveries from

him, and to pray, with respect both to myself and those concerned in the dispensation of the gospel; "one thing have I desired of the Lord." This was now more constant; I desired and *sought after it*. I was brought to exercise more liveliness, when the Lord discovered himself; "my soul then followed hard" after him, when he drew, I ran. When the Lord enlarged me and caused me to approach to him, and see his glory, he still humbled me, discovered self, and put me in opposition to it; "I have seen him, and therefore I loathed myself." I was now acquainted, in some measure, with that boldness and freedom of access, with humble confidence, to God as on a throne of grace, manifesting himself in Christ. In a word, I was, in some measure, sensible of the Lord's hiding or manifesting himself, according as I performed my duty; and of the necessity of the exercise of grace, particularly of faith, in all approaches to God; and thereby I was put upon frequent complaints, dejections for the want of it, cries to God for it, and the like.

Many other effects followed upon this discovery, too long to repeat at large. I found a new, and formerly unknown, love to all who seemed to have any thing of the Lord's image, however different in principles as to lesser things, tempers, &c., and though distant and unknown, otherwise than by report. And this evidenced itself in prayer for them, and sympathy with them in their afflictions; which, as all the other graces, was more or less lively, according as I was otherwise in worse or better case. By this do "we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Again, I found my care of all the Lord's concerns enlarged, and I began to be desirous to have the Lord exalted, on the earth, to have Zion prosper, and all that love her. I was fearful of danger, that threatened any of his interests, and affected with the sufferings of his people, or any loss which his interest sustained. And I began to be more concerned for any affronts offered to the Lord's glory by others. "I saw transgressors and was grieved," because they kept not

God's law, and was often made to weep, and pray for them in secret. I found it easy and delightful to suppress resentments, and oppose them, and even to pray for those whom I apprehended to have injured me. Yea, with delight I could seek their real good, and pray earnestly for it. Other consequences of this discovery will be mentioned hereafter, in their proper places.

To conclude this chapter; I found this discovery sweetly drawing me to a willing, cheerful endeavor after holiness, in all manner of conversation; whereas, all former courses I took only drove me forcibly to a feigned submission. And this often made me admire the folly of Socinians and Arminians, and other Pelagian enemies, who pretend that free justification leads to security and carelessness. I could not but say, and think often, What! shall I believe such wild and wicked reproaches, against my clear experience? Do not I find quite the contrary, while the love of Christ constrains to judge thus, "that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they who live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them." They err, "not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God."

Thus all things were, in some measure, made new; and I, who a little before, with the jailor, had fallen down trembling, was now raised up and set down to feast with the disciples of the Lord, rejoicing and believing. But alas! I was like the disciples on the mount, I dreamed not of what was awaiting me, as the sequel will show. This I desire to recount, however, with thankfulness, not to my own commendation, but to the praise of the glory of his grace. How far I was from having "attained," or being "already perfect," the following pages will show

CHAPTER VIII.

Containing an account of the pleasure of my case, at this time, the mistakes I was still under, the sad effects of them, and the way of their discovery.

THIS glorious discovery was very surprising, and filled me with wonder; often was I made to stand and wonder what this strange sight meant, and whereto it would turn. Things that I had not heard were told me. Often did I say, "What hath the Lord wrought! When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dreamed. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them. The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad." The greatness of the things God had done surpassed belief; and yet the great and clear light wherein they were discovered, and the discernible effects, would not allow me to doubt.

Although the effects of this discovery above mentioned, were most discernible at first, yet I did not then, nor till after that light was gone, distinctly observe them. For the glory of the Lord was so great, that for a time I only fixed my eyes upon that, and I was less intent, though much pleased with it, upon the change which was thereby wrought on me. All this while I was still crying, "Whence is this to me?" And "what am I, and what is my father's house," that the Lord has visited me, and brought me hitherto? Again, I was the less sensible of these things, or at least, was the less distinct in observing them, because of the remaining darkness within me, as to the many and great things contained in the covenant of grace. This light clearly revealed the mystery of free justification through Christ, and peace by his blood. But I was afterwards to learn other things belonging to the mystery of re-

demption. This was what I at present needed, and this the Lord gave abundantly, in so far as the present case required it. But yet, after this glorious light had staid some considerable time with me, I was sadly ignorant of many of the most important things relating even unto the mystery of forgiveness, the daily use of this atonement, and the special use of the Lord Christ with respect to sanctification. Well might Christ say to me, many a day after this, as to Philip; "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?" What, therefore, the Lord had done at this time, I knew not then, but afterwards; when the Comforter had further instructed me in the nature of the gospel discovery, as I was able to bear it, and as my daily exigencies required it. And when with Peter, being come to myself, recovered out of the strange surprise, and put to consider the thing, then I knew with him, more distinctly, what concerned the Lord's work, and what he had done for me.

This discovery, while it lasted, was full of ravishing sweetness; and many things contributed very much to make it so. First, the case wherein it found me. I was condemned by God and by my own conscience; and was like to sink under the pressure of the fear of a present execution of the sentence. When the usual labors of the day required that I should sleep, and my body, wearied and wasted with the disquiet of my mind, made me heavy, and urged it the more; yet I was afraid to close mine eyes, lest I should wake in hell, and durst not let myself sleep, till my weary body beguiled me into it; lest I should drop into the pit before I was aware. Was it any wonder, that the news of pardon and forgiveness was sweet to one in such a case; whereby I was made to lie down in safety, and take quiet rest, while there was none to make me afraid? "For so he giveth his beloved sleep." A little before, I was like Jonah in the whale's belly. "The waters compassed me about even to the soul; the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapt about my head. I went down to the bottom of the

mountains, the earth with her bars was about me for ever. Then I said I am cast out of thy sight." Now, was it any wonder that such an one was delighted, when brought into a garden of delights, placed out of all view of trouble, save a reflection on it as past, which is refreshing; and set down to sun himself, and dry himself, under the refreshing rays of the Sun of Righteousness? The things that the Lord discovered, were in themselves glorious; the glory of the Lord shone about me. I saw such things as eye hath not seen, O God, besides thee. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." In a word, what I saw was the mystery of godliness, the wonders of God's love which the angels, stooping, earnestly look into, and that with wonder. They were new things, with which I was utterly unacquainted before; and this made them the more affecting. "He shall sprinkle many nations, the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see, and that, which they had not heard shall they consider." "As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country." Again, the light wherein these things were discovered, was a clear, sparkling light, that had a warming force, and reviving influence, to which I was altogether a stranger before. And one that was a stranger to light, at least to this light of the Lord, could not but with pleasure enjoy it; for truly "light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun."

This discovery and manifestation was of a much longer continuance, and far more bright, than any I have ever since obtained; for it shone in its brightness about ten days time, and long after that it was not quite gone. And while it lasted, many things made it observable. New discoveries were daily made; the Lord carried me from one thing to another, and in this short time, taught me more than by all my study I had learned before. Yea, he taught me the things I had learned before, in another and quite a different manner;

what I knew before from the light of nature, and in a doctrinal manner, in that I corrupted myself; but now the Lord "instructed me with a strong hand that I should not walk in this way." Every day I was surprised, with some new and before unthought of discovery of the Lord's. This was as "the shining light, shining more and more unto the perfect day." All this time, my mind was almost wholly taken up about spiritual things; my "conversation was in heaven." I saw those with whom I conversed turn every thing (even what was not only innocently, but piously, said and meant) into perverted meanings; whereas now, whatever occurred in reading, in meditation, in conversation, or in daily observation, was by my mind spiritualised. I reflected with wonder on this difference, and often, during this while, was made to look on the mind as a mould, that casts whatever is brought into it into its own shape. "Unto the pure all things are pure, unto them that are defiled, and unbelieving, is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled." Hereupon, I was not only joyful, but I found the joy of the Lord my strength; for all this while I was carried out in extraordinary pleasure and diligence in duty. It was not now, as formerly, a burden to go to my duty; but I rejoiced when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of God." And my soul answered, I will go to God my chief joy, "unto God that performeth all things for me." My heart was enlarged, and I ran in the way of God's commandments with delight. Willingly I engaged in duty; and when I was engaged in it, "my soul often made me like the chariots of Amminadib." I was not easily stopped, and failed sometimes as to the just bounds of joy, whereby others, who felt not that ravishing sweetness I enjoyed, were sometimes disgusted. Yet this was not the case with all; for as near as I can remember, it was about this time, that the Lord began to commend himself and his worship to lady Anne Elcho, which made her, at death, bless the Lord for family worship. The Lord daily instructed me all this while, out of the scriptures, and my heart

burned within me while he talked and walked with me by the way, "and opened the scriptures," which before were as a sealed book, wherein whatever I read was dark. Even that whereof I had some notion, I was ready to say of it, "I cannot read it, for it is sealed." The design, and intent, and mystery were hid from me; and of the rest of it, I was forced to say, I know nothing of it: I was not learned. Again, mine enemies received a stunning stroke; and all of a sudden, by the appearance of the sun, those frightful things that disturbed me in the dark, disappeared. He graciously, for a time restrained them, and bore down corruption, chained up Satan, and kept me from any disturbance by these enemies, with whom I before had, and have since likewise had, many sad wrestlings. "At the brightness that was before him, his thick clouds passed." When the Lord arose, his enemies were scattered. "Yea, he sent out his arrows and scattered them; and he shot out lightnings and discomfitted them." Thus "he delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me: for they were too strong for me." And what was the life of all my joys, the Lord, by keeping his glory continually in mine eye, kept me all this while, more humble and self-denied than ever. Seeing him, I loathed and detested self. Beholding his glory, I was in mine own eyes as a "grasshopper, as nothing, less than nothing and vanity," and gloried only in the Lord, "rejoicing in Christ Jesus," and had "no confidence in the flesh."

The Lord had many gracious designs in this, of which I was then ignorant, as what I shall speedily narrate will show; but the Lord has in some measure since taught me them, some of which I shall here relate. I was sore broken and wounded before, and the Lord did this in tenderness. He "bound up my wound." "He poured in oil." He made a bed in my sickness. He watched me, and kept me free from disturbance, till I was somewhat strengthened. I had been plunged into grievous and hard thoughts of him, as one who had "in anger shut up his tender mercies, and forgotten

to be gracious," and I was not easily induced to believe good tidings, for I had "forgot prosperity." And though it was told me, I could not believe it, partly for joy, and partly for fear, till I got a clear sight of the wagons and provisions, and then my spirit revived. And the Lord satisfied me in deep condescension, that he was really in earnest, and had "no pleasure in my death," and that the wound was not incurable, that it was not the wound of an enemy, or the stroke of "a cruel one," but the wound of a friend, in order to healing. He was now determined to make me sell all for the pearl. And, like a fair merchant that means not to cheat, he let me see both what I was to leave, and what I was to choose, that I might be satisfied I had made a good bargain. And though many a day since, I have seen "neither sun, nor moon, nor stars," and have been in the deep day and night; yet so far did this go, that I durst never once, in wish, retract my choice. He knew what a wilderness I was to go through, and therefore led me not into that long and weary journey, till he had made me eat once and again, as he did by Elijah. The Lord did not at first plunge me into war, lest I should have repented my engagement. "And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt." The Lord hereby undeceived me as to my hard thoughts of his ways, and reproved me for them; often was I made to say, Lord, "I was as a beast before thee." And how brutish was I, to think that spirituality was a burden, and that with it, it was impossible to bring one day to an end, without weariness! Thus he let me see, that "I uttered what I understood not;" and though once I had so spoken, yet now I durst not proceed. For I saw that what "with men is impossible, with God is possible" and easy; who can change the heart, and then the thoughts change. Finally, the Lord designed to give me something that might support me in all after

trials; and often has the remembrance of this season been sweet when present sense failed. I called to mind "the years of the right hand of the most High," and was still supported by it.

But, alas! I understood not this; and by my ignorance I was cast into sad mistakes. I fancied this world would last always. I ravingly talked of tabernacles, with the disciples on the mount. I knew not that I was to come down again, and that my dearest Lord was to depart from me again. "In my prosperity, I said, My mountain stands strong by thy favor, and I shall never be moved." I dreamed no more of fighting with corruptions; but thought that the enemies which appeared not, were dead, and that the Egyptians were all drowned in the sea, and that I should never learn, nor have occasion for learning war. I projected to tie myself up to such a purpose, and confine myself to such a course of walking, as neither our circumstances, temptations, nor our duty in this world allow. Here I remember, I could not endure to read those books which were really proper and necessary to be read; and all time employed in them I reckoned as lost. This was the old legal temper beginning to work again, and secretly inclining me to seek righteousness, not directly as before, "but as it were by the works of the law," and aiming to entangle me in a yoke of bondage. Yea, I began to grudge and feel compunction about the time spent in necessary refreshment of the body, by meat and sleep, and endeavored to abridge myself in the use of them. The devil secretly drove me from one extreme to another, and he knew full well that I would not hold here; and that he would easily cast me into another extreme, to assume a latitude beyond what was due. Thus I was well nigh entangled in that yoke of bondage, which the Lord had so lately broken; and deceived into a voluntary humility and mortification, being vainly puffed up to it by my fleshy mind. I began to reckon upon enlargement and success in duty, as what was not only my due, but what I should always have, and to think that it was more

mine own than really it was. I began to speak of it with delight; like the disciples, I said, "Lord, even the devils are subject to us." I looked upon this stock of grace I had gotten, as what would be sufficient to carry me through all my difficulties; and saw not that the grace which was sufficient, was yet in the Lord's hand.

But now the Lord quickly undeceived me. For after a little he began to hide himself. He gave "me a thorn in the flesh to humble me." My corruptions began to stir again, and like giants refreshed by wine, to make furious assaults. A "messenger of Satan" was sent to buffet me; and I began to feel the fury of his temptations.

Hereupon I was cast into great perplexity. I fell into deep sorrow: "Thou didst hide thy face and I was troubled." I began to question the truth of former manifestations, and to say with the disciples, "We trusted that it had been he that should have redeemed Israel." I began to doubt of my steadfast continuance, and to say, "I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul." And I began to quarrel secretly with the Lord, as if he had beguiled me, and to say, Why hast thou not delivered me? Why is my bondage increased, since thou hast begun to appear for my deliverance?

Under this case I tried all means, but often ran to wrong ways. I complained, and then my soul was "overwhelmed." I thought upon God; but not finding the discoveries as before, I was troubled. I inquired into the causes of this; "wherefore hidest thou thy face? why art thou far from helping?" But here my spirit often began to go too far, and even to say, "Wilt thou be altogether unto me as a liar, and as waters that fail?" And then I took myself to task, and was sunk deeper for my wickedness in chiding with God. I essayed to shake myself, and to go to duty as before. "I wist not that the Lord was departed," that my locks were cut, and that the enemy which lay in my bosom had discovered my strength, and got between me and it.

On this I was exceeding melancholy, and so much the more, that now I remembered all my goodly pleasant things, which I enjoyed before I fell into the enemies hand. But yet, when after the violence of the conflict, I recovered myself, I could not but see that things were better at my worst case, than formerly in my best. For the Lord gave me frequent glimpses of his countenance. He "looked forth at the windows, and showed himself through the lattice;" and sometimes he put in his finger by the hole of the door, and spoke kindly, "and my bowels were moved for him. He frequently let me see somewhat of his "power and glory in the sanctuary," opened a scripture and made my heart burn, or unfolded my case, and "told me all that was in my heart." Or he let me see the end of my enemies. Sometimes he allowed me access to him, and made me "come even to his seat," and pour out my soul to him. When I was at my lowest state, I was differently affected towards Christ than formerly. Though I could not run after him, yet I unwillingly strayed away. "My soul longed" after him; "when wilt thou come?" I frequently breathed after being drawn to him. "Draw me, and I will run after thee." Sometimes I essayed to stretch out the withered hand, and wished for the command that would empower me to lay hold on him. I still adhered to the belief, that salvation is to be found in him alone. I refused to go any where else; but resolved to wait on, and though he should "slay me, yet trust in him" I would. As to the law of the Lord, though I could not run as when my heart was enlarged, yet my will was still bent that way. I longed to walk, and run; and for that enlargement that would make me run. I breathed after conformity. I had no quarrel with the law, but myself; "I delighted in the law after the inward man." As to sin, there was a great difference; for though I could not delight in duty as before, I abhorred the thoughts of delighting in sin. I was, sometimes, by the power of temptation, driven to consent to its embraces, but that was just such a forced consent, as through the power

of conviction, I before gave to the law; whenever I was myself, I retracted it; "my repentings were kindled" within me. And even though it prevailed, my heart was not with it as before. I found another sort of opposition made to it; it was dead in purpose and design; and if it gained a victory, I was the more enraged against it. In a word, as to the law of God, I was as a sick man, with his friends sitting at his bed side. He has no aversion to them, though he cannot delight in them as before; he reflects with as much pleasure, as his present case allows, upon the satisfaction he has had in their conversation, and wishes to be in the same case again. But I was quite contrary with respect to sin. Finally, this deadness was now an unnatural state: I did not rest in it, but cried daily, When wilt thou revive me? I loathed myself for it. I wearied myself in attempts to break my prison; I looked back to former seasons when it had been otherwise, and often said, "O that it were with me as in months past."

CHAPTER IX.

Containing an account of my strugglings with indwelling sin; its victories; the causes of them on my part; and God's goodness with respect to this trial.

I had not been long in this pleasant case, before I found out my mistake, and learned that my enemies were not foiled; and that I must go down into the valley, and "wrestle with principalities and powers," and fight with no less enemies than the Anakims. My corruptions, self, passions, &c., and especially those "sins which easily beset me," and which formerly I was so careful to have spared, and which I refused to deliver

up to justice, attacked me. And finding that I was now no more theirs as formerly, they gave me frequent defeats. I often fell before them and made many relapses. "When I would do good, evil was present with me, and the good I would do," through their power, I did not, and the evil I would not do, that I did. Thus I learned that the difference betwixt the Lord's people and others, is not simply, that the one falls and the other stands, but that there is a difference also in the final result. "The just man falleth seven times, but the wicked shall fall into mischief."

Now, though I was unwilling to fight, I put on my armor at the appearance of these enemies, who received great advantages by that security into which I had fallen. And before I was aware they obtained an advantage, which I could not easily get from them again. But, however, since fight I must, I tried what weapons would be most successful. And first I objected to them, that now I had no more to do with them—I had engaged for the Lord. Secondly, I tried to reason against them, as Joseph did; but without his faith—"Shall I do this great evil and sin against God?" When they still persisted, I attempted to flee from them, and avoid occasions of sin; but the enemy was in my bosom. I prayed against them, that the Lord would rebuke them. I complained of them as his enemies. I protested against them. And many other ways did I try.

But after all, they still persisted, and I was often defeated, and thereupon fell into grievous discouragement. I began to doubt if I was sincere, or if the Lord was really with me. "If the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us?" I began to doubt of the result, and to conclude I should *one day perish* by their hand. My conscience being defiled, I was damped in spirit, and could not look up to God. And, upon the whole, I was in very great distress, and often disposed to give up.

Though at the time, I often searched, I could not discover whence it was that I failed. For, scarcely

any means, that I then thought of, did I leave untried. But the Lord has since graciously discovered to me several reasons for the prevalency of sin, and the unsuccessfulness of my attempts against it. And though I am far from expecting to hit upon them all, or even from pretending to remember all, that the Lord made known to me, yet such of them, as now occur, I will mention.

At the commencement of this warfare, I was too confident in grace which I had already received, laid too much stress upon it; and, like Peter, promised too much on my own strength; and no wonder I met with his fate, and was left to make discoveries of my own weakness.

The subtle enemies with whom I had to do, took me betwixt the straits, and I was not watchful against them, nor aware of the seasons when they had special advantage. The thief knew his time, when the good man was from home, and all was quiet. And I did not watch; and therefore he *came in an hour* when I looked not for him.

My enemies entangled me in needless difficulties as to where the sin lay, not in the thing itself, but in the degree of it; there my subtle enemies put me up to appear against, and to seek to eradicate, what was in itself really lawful. Of this I had many instances with respect to passions, worldly employments, and converse with sinful people. I did not reflect that, if we were prohibited altogether from intercourse with idolators, the covetous, &c., "we must needs go out of the world." And as anger was to be avoided, so there was an anger that was allowable, and even duty required that we should be angry; yet so as to avoid sin. Thus Satan tempted me to provoke God by aiming at things which were neither given of God, and which I had no reason to expect; and thus to tempt God by seeking *stones* to be made bread, or attempting things not meet to be done. Like the stoics, I was not content to have the passions kept in their own order, but would have had them eradicated. Thus the Devil drives to ex-

tremes, and when we fail of success, he thence takes occasion to discourage us.

I neglected some means of God's appointment, under pretence of inconveniences and difficulties, and, sometimes, because they were irksome to the flesh; whereas, those, which were omitted, were oftentimes, the only proper, or at least, the principal, means in the case. The omission of one thing ruins much, and our apologies and excuses will not do. Some sins require particular remedies; and where God has appointed the use of these, and they are neglected, no wonder all others fail. When the disciples asked why they could not cast the devil out; our Lord told them there were some kinds, that went not out but by fasting and prayer. Whenever the case occurs for which it was designed, we must use the remedy of God's appointment, if we would obtain the desired result. If there are supposed or real difficulties, yet while these difficulties are not our sin, we have reason to trust him as to these, and try the means.

I was often slothful, and by *drowsiness a man is clothed with rags*; and enemies may easily sow tares when men are asleep. Above all, I was little acquainted with the way of Faith's improvement of Christ for sanctification, and had little intercourse with a throne of grace, for supplies to help in time of need.

Lastly, I was sometimes not single in my aims; I designed to have a victory that would rid me of the trouble of watchfulness. I was weary of a fighting life, and would have fain been at ease, and had too much of an eye unto this and such like aims. And, probably, if I had got leave to rest, I should have been too proud of my success. "Thus we ask and receive not, because we ask amiss, that we may consume it on our lusts." When I was not presently heard, I did not persevere in prayer for the supplies of grace that I sought. Thus I often found, that so long as I was with the Lord, he was with me. "They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength." But I was too

soon over with it. And from these and the like causes, did my want of success proceed.

Yet notwithstanding all these dreadful miscarriages on my part, the Lord, in the heat of this conflict, and even while I was in many ways faulty, was very kind. He kept me from giving entirely over; though I fell, yet I was not quite cast down. When I had many times gone farthest with temptations, he came in with seasonable help; and, overlooking all my miscarriages, he helped me up, let me see that he kept me from being quite overcome, and gave me some assurances for the future. "Thus foolish was I and ignorant, I was as a beast before thee. Nevertheless, I am continually with thee; thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." I had gracious experiences of the Lord's helping in the time of need, and of his hearing my cries. The Lord sometimes stepped in when I was overcome, and sent, as it were, an Abigail, to keep me from executing my wicked purposes. Sometimes he gave me a complete victory, and strengthened me to repel temptations. And in many other ways, did he help and deliver. He sometimes, when I was hard put to it, gave me such clear views of my own sincerity, as emboldened me to appeal to him; and this would free me from that temptation, and leave me at liberty, under the advantage of this new encouragement, to oppose more vigorously. "Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? I hate them with perfect hatred; I count them mine enemies." And hereby I was not emboldened to sin; I durst not take encouragement to sin because grace abounded, though motions were made that way by my naughty heart; on the contrary, I was made more afraid of offending. In these, and many other ways, was the Lord kind in the conflict. He frequently said unto me, "Fear not, surely there is an end; and thine expectation shall not be cut off."

The Lord has since let me see what gracious designs

he carried on by this trial, and what need there was of it, in order both to his glory and my own good. Hereby he taught me the nature of that state in which we are here; that it is a wilderness, a warfare, and that we must all be soldiers, if we mean to be Christians. He taught me hereby, that the grace which is sufficient for us, is not in our own hands, but in the Lord's; and, therefore, that our security with respect to future temptation, is not in grace already received; but in this, that there is enough in the promise, and that the way is open to a throne of grace for it. He taught me that God is a sovereign Disposer, and gives out his own grace as he sees meet, in time of need; and that he is the only judge of the proper season for giving it out. He led me to discern somewhat more of the covenant of grace, viz: that in it there are no promises made of absolute freedom from sin while we are here; "if any man say he has no sin, he is a liar;" and that we have no promise of freedom from gross sins, and from those sins wherein we have been formerly entangled, but in the use, and diligent use, of the means of the Lord's appointment. "If these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." He taught me that great lesson, that when I am weak in myself, then I am strong in the Lord, and in *the power of his might*. Whenever I was diffident of myself, I was then always victorious, or at least came off without injury. But this is very different from what men generally think, viz: that when a man is diffident, and distrusts himself, that then he is not meet for managing any undertaking. This is, indeed, true when he is carnally diffident. But where there is distrust of self, with an eye to the Lord, it is very far otherwise. He taught me hereby, the use, and necessity, and glory of that provision which is made for guilt, by the covenant of grace; it is exactly fitted to dissuade from, and strengthen us against sin; but if any man sin, through the power of temptation, it lets us see "an Advocate with the Father," and "blood that cleanseth from all sin."

He let me see his holy jealousy, and how displeased he was with me for my cleaving to sin so long, and my sinful compliances. Because I would not slay my sins as the Lord appointed me, and when he required it; therefore he left them, like the nations of Canaan, to tempt and try me. The sins which now molested me, and frequently cast me down, were those which I sought before to spare. God spake often to me to part with them, and I would not hear, and now God would not hear when I cried to be rid of them: "Thou wast a God that forgavest them, but thou tookest vengeance of their inventions." The Lord by this did humble and prove me, and let me see what was in my heart, even a great deal more wickedness than I suspected. He instructed me that this is not my rest, and made me value heaven more than I otherwise should have done. He made known the riches and extent of that forgiveness which is with him, that it reaches to "iniquity, transgression and sin;" that is, to sins of all sorts, multiplied relapses not excepted. He that requires us to forgive to "seventy times seven" in a day, will not do less himself. Yea, he tells us, that in this respect, his thoughts are as far above ours, as the heavens are above the earth. Finally, the Lord hereby fitted me to compassionate others who are tempted, and comfort them. Thus I was made a gainer by my losses and falls, to the praise of his grace.

After some years struggling, the Lord made me lay by all prejudices against proper means, and wait on him in the use of them all, with some eye to him; and then he gave me, in some measure, a victory. "Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory."

CHAPTER X.

Containing an account of my exercise about the guilt of sin, the means of obtaining pardon, and the intimations thereof.

THE power of indwelling sin being still great; and through its own activity, occasional temptations, more fixed advantages, and my own mistakes and negligence, frequently prevalent; I was cast into frequent perplexities, about its guilt. There was no "soundness in my bones," no rest in my conscience for sins that I had done.

Besides sins of infirmity, my corruptions did sometimes, through my sloth, neglect of proper means, and the advantages they otherwise had from temptations, and from their being rooted in my nature, bear me down, and not only carry me captive into the commission of grosser evils, at least in heart, and the omission of duties, but even into frequently repeated relapses into these sins of commission and omission. These being sins against light, engagements, obligations and intimations of love, the guilt of them was heavy upon my conscience, and I was much perplexed about them. My bones were broken, my conscience defiled exceedingly, and wounded for them.

Sometimes when I fell into such sins, when self and pride, or the like evils, against which I was more deeply engaged, obtained any notable advantage, I was, by "the deceitfulness of sin," for a time hardened; and, like David after his foul fall, became insensible. But then, while it was so, grace languished; "the things that remained were ready to die." The Lord hid himself; I had no encouragement in duty. While this regard to sin continued, all was out of order.

At other times, I had no sooner complied with temptation, than my heart smote me, and I was presently, like Peter after his fall, called and stirred up to the

exercise of repentance, and inquiries after forgiveness. But sooner or later, the Lord awakened me out of this security, and set my sins in order before mine eyes, sometimes by one means, and sometimes by another. Sometimes he tried me with some outward affliction, and hid himself; and then I was put under the blessed necessity of seeking after him, and inquiring into the reason of his withdrawing, and laying his hand on me. When I was "bound in the cords of affliction," he showed to me my "transgressions that I had exceeded." "I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early." He sometimes remarkably punished me, and wrote my sin upon my punishment. Because when I knew God, I glorified him not as God, neither was thankful, but became vain in my imaginations; therefore God, though he gave me not up (glory to his name) to vile affections, yet he let them loose to molest me. He, as it were, gave a commission to the king of Egypt, Assyria, or Babylon, some of my powerful neighboring enemies, evils to which I had formerly been in bondage, with which I had been in friendship, and on whom, to my wounding, I had doated, and therefore now hated above all others; to some one or other of these, I say, he gave a commission or permission to invade me. And then I began to consider what I had done, and open mine eyes when I was in the strait, and closely assaulted by them. Sometimes again, and most frequently, by his word and Spirit in his ordinances, he roused me, and laying as it were, his finger on the sore, he told me all that I had done. He sent a Nathan, who said to me, "Thou art the man." Whoever wanders into sin, his own corruption will not get leave to lie still, though he may lie long quiet. "You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities."

When the Lord discovered sin to me, then was my soul troubled. A sense of the wrath of God was let into my conscience, which sometimes was very terrible.

I had no rest, because his indignation went forth against me. "The poison of his arrows drank up my spirits." My soul was filled with shame; while a sense of innumerable evils, and especially such as imported ingratitude and wretched unkindness, lay heavy on my conscience, and I could not look up for blushing. I lay down in my shame, and my confusion covered me. I was cast into dreadful fears, lest the Lord in anger should "shut up his tender mercies," and be gracious no more. I feared that I should not get pardon, or at least a sense of it, any more.

Satan, who waited for my halting, finding me in this case, did frequently tempt me to give over duty. He told over to me all the mark's of God's displeasure, and put the worst construction on every thing; as he did with Cain. By this he tempted me to draw the conclusion, that my sin was greater than could be forgiven, and that there was no succour in God for me. He told me, there was no more forgiveness; God's mercy was at an end; he had forgotten to be gracious; and this he attempted to prove by the unsuccessfulness of my endeavors, and therefore would have me infer that it was to no purpose to wait any longer.

But the Lord graciously broke the force of this temptation. Sometimes he did it by distant discoveries of forgiveness; "Who can tell but he may be gracious?" By reminding me of former kindness, of the "years of the right hand of the most High," and of the discoveries of the sovereignty of his grace, at first, when he first manifested himself. By letting me see the desperate issue of this course; that ruin was inevitable in it. If I sat still, I saw I was gone; if I went into the city, and again followed the course of the world, I saw inevitable ruin there, and therefore I resolved to throw myself upon him, and if he saved me alive, I lived; and if otherwise, I should but die. When this temptation was urged most violently, and I was hard put to it, then I thought it no time to dispute, whether ever the Lord had savingly manifested himself to me, but yielded the worst as to my case, that the

temper could pretend; and then I compared my case, in all its aggravations, with the extensive promises of the covenant. Be it granted, said I, that I am the chief of sinners, that my sins have such aggravations as attend no other man's; yet "the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin," and he "came to save the chief of sinners." This way often proved relieving.

When I escaped from these temptations, then I got up as well as I could, and resolved to seek him in the use of all the means of his appointment; meditation, prayer, reading, hearing. These duties I followed with various success. For, sometimes when I attempted to confess my sins, the Lord closed my lips, and I had not a word to say. Sometimes I got leave to run the round of duties; but with no better success than the spouse; "I sought him, but I found him not." At other times I met with new strokes; "The watchmen that went about the city found me and smote me, and took away my vail." Even the faithful servants of Christ made my wound deeper, by setting home sin more closely.

Sometimes being wearied out, and sense wearing off, through the weakness of our nature, diversions, and the deceitfulness of sin, I attempted to speak peace to myself; I got a sort of quietness and relief. But this was easily discernible. For it left me in my former deadness, and I was not as before, when God spake peace. I was easily induced to "return again to folly." When I said, "Peace, peace, sudden destruction followed it." For the Lord was wroth, and one way or other discovered his displeasure against me; and finally my own peace did not heal the sore; for the wrath of God, shame, and confusion hovered over my head.

When the Lord let me see my mistake, then he set me at work again to inquire after him, and to pursue the former course; and when I had gone a little further, I found him, and he relieved me. And the way whereby he relieved me was the same with that whereby he did at first deliver me; whereof I have before given account, and therefore I shall here state it more briefly.

The Lord set my sin, in all its aggravations, especially as it offended against him, before mine eyes. "Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight." The Lord led me up even to the fountain, and discovered original sin as the source, and by the same light whereby he discovered this one, he showed me all, or at least many, of the bitter waters that flowed from that bitter fountain. As it was with the woman of Samaria he told me all that ever I did in my life. "Behold I was shapen in iniquity: and in sin did my mother conceive me." Very often "the iniquities of my fathers" he laid before me, and brought me under an afflicting sense of them. He cut off all excuses, and made me self-convicted, and so quite stopped my mouth; that I could neither deny nor excuse my sin. And so I was "guilty before God;" being stripped of all my ornaments. He made me to see what in justice he might do; that he might cast me off, and drive me out of his sight, like Cain, and brought me to own, that he would be righteous, holy, and clear in judging thus; and that any punishment on this side hell, would be mercy. In this case I lay, waiting to see what he would do with me, convinced that whatever he should do, though I could not but dread wrath and separation from him, and cry against it, would be just. To the Lord "belongeth righteousness," and to me shame and "confusion of face." Then in mercy he stepped in, and made a gracious discovery of the "fountain opened for sin and uncleanness," and of that blood of atonement, which, in the sight of the Lord, cleanses the conscience from all sin. Hereby he drew my soul to close with the provisions of the atonement and trembling to lay my hopes upon it. "Iniquities prevail against me," I must confess. "But as for our transgressions, thou wilt purge them away." Having by this view drawn my eyes to look at him again, while I looked my ~~self~~ melted into tears, and my heart that was formerly bound up was loosed; and my lips, formerly sometimes quite closed, were opened. When I looked on him whom I had

pierced, I mourned ; and often, like Peter, I wept bitterly. And whereas formerly, when I was lying self-condemned, guilty, and my mouth stopped, I sometimes could scarcely look up. or give a sigh or groan, now I flowed in tears. While he thus answered me ; and I seemed loath to believe the news that was so good, and so unexpected, he created peace, by the fruit of his lips, and by his word ; and as it were forced it upon my soul, and shed abroad his love in my heart. I remembered all my former ways, which the Lord had formerly discovered to me, and was ashamed on account of them, and even confounded, now that the Lord was pacified. When he told me, he would blot out and forget, then I had the most distinct and affecting remembrance. Like Ephraim, when "I was turned I repented ; I smote on my breast, I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth," and of my former ways. But this shame was not that dispiriting shame accompanied with distrust, and inclining to hang down the hands ; but an ingenuous concern, and blushing for wretched unkindness, like that of the prodigal when his father met him. Hereby my spirit was made tender, and I was put upon a resolution of walking mournfully before him "in the bitterness of my soul." Afterwards, while this discovery of forgiveness and the peace which followed it, continued, I was made in some measure, watchful against returning again to folly. I was quickened in duty ; "then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be turned unto thee." While this lasted, and was not again marred by sin, I could mourn over the sins of others, and every transgression, by whomsoever done. "Rivers" of tears were ready to run down mine eyes, because transgressors kept not God's law. And now, the conscience being purged, I recovered filial boldness of entering into the Lord's presence, by the blood of Jesus Christ. Yet I went with much tenderness and awe upon my soul. Finally, hereby my soul was much weaned from all things else, and endeared to the Lord. To this case

the Lord frequently brought me. And now, alas! while I more rarely attain unto this exercise of repentance and faith in such liveliness, as then I often did, I am made many times to wish, as it regards this repentance, that it were with me as in months past; though I dare not wish for the occasion of it again. At that time, when I was assaulted with boisterous lusts, and soiled by them, and my conscience defiled with guilt, the Lord did frequently lift me up; yea, he did lift me sweetly up.

To prevent mistakes I shall subjoin a few observations concerning this exercise. Though at times the Lord carried on this work gradually, even as to time; yet at other seasons, all this was done, as it were at once, and in a moment. The Lord, as he did to David, in one breathing, convinced of sin and spoke peace. There was a very great difference as to the degrees of this work; sometimes convictions and humiliation were deeper, and discoveries of forgiveness clearer, and the exercise of faith and repentance more lively; and sometimes less so. But whenever God did thoroughly recover me from any greivous fall, all these things in substance were sound. This was not always of a like continuance; sometimes through my own fault, I quickly lost the jewel. Though God, to punish me for my wickedness, sometimes let me long seek peace before I got it; yet at some seasons to show the sovereignty of his grace, and that I might not pretend, that it was my seeking which moved him to show mercy, he surprised me immediately upon the commission of my sin, before ever I had thought in the least what I had done; and gave me such a look, as made me weep bitterly. And when I was thus, it deeply affected my soul, and filled me with the most deep self-loathing and detestation, and the highest wonder at the riches, freedom, and astonishing sovereignty of grace. There is one thing I may observe with grief of heart, that the most terrible enemies are not the most dangerous. At that time I was attacked with sins that were easily known to be sins, my conscience was easily convinced

of them, and alarmed by them, and thereby was more deeply exercised and sought more after those distinct discoveries of forgiveness, which were attended with all pleasant effects. But since the Lord in some measure broke these lusts, I have been assaulted with less discernible evils, sins under the mask of duties; and these secretly devour my strength, and rarely are they discovered, and then with difficulty, in the exceeding sinfulness; and so when it is much needed, I am more a stranger to that state of repentance. But as I see I need it, so the Lord knows I long to be brought into it, and to be humbled; especially for secret and hidden sins that wasted the strength. Often have I been made to think of the fact, that all the excuses mentioned in the parable of the supper, which kept them that were invited from closing with the offer, were taken from occasions in themselves lawful. And no doubt, the excuses whereby the Lord's own people are kept from that nearness, which it is their duty and interest to seek after, flow from the same things. I have found them far the most dangerous and hurtful hindrances.

The Lord, by such exercises, instructed me since, and at the time, in several useful lessons. He taught me this way how to walk with him. He dealt with me as we are wont to do with children, he held me by the hand, he let me well nigh slip, and sometimes fall, and this to let me know I was not able to go alone; and then he graciously raised me up, and comforted me, that I should not by this be altogether discouraged from walking in his way. "I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by their arms, but they knew not that I healed them. I drew them with cords of a man, and with bands of love; and I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws, and I laid meat unto them." As the Lord, by the prevalency of sin, taught the necessity of an extensive remedy, so by the experience of forgiveness, in such cases as I have mentioned, he taught the certainty that his forgiveness, is really as extensive, rich and free, as the case requires. By the experience

of this, he enabled me to understand better and speak more feelingly of these truths, than otherwise I could have done; and to comfort others with comforts, not only real, but experienced, even such wherewith I myself had been "comforted of God." Thus what I "have heard and seen, and handled, of the word of life," that declared I to others. The Lord gave me some acquaintance with the nature, exercise, and effects of the most useful and necessary graces of his Spirit; such as faith, repentance, &c. And finally, The Lord beat down self very much by this exercise. Of this design the Lord, of late, while I was reading in my family in the ninth chapter of Deuteronomy, gave me a pleasant view; which I shall represent in the following remarks from that chapter.

God's great design upon Israel, is to manifest the glory of his grace, mercy, patience, and faithfulness, in their salvation, their deliverance from Egypt, in putting them in possession of Canaan.

By nature sinners, and all his people are such, are, and appear very much opposed to this design, being deeply selfish, as the whole of this chapter, and all the scriptures manifest. And this self has two branches, which are like its two eyes; self-strength, and self-righteousness.

Self in these two branches is very strong. We are ready to pretend, when once we have overcome them, that our own strength carried us through difficulties; which we are so far from being able of ourselves to grapple with, that the very thoughts of them frightened us. And we are ready to ascribe to our own righteousness what we get, when we, meanwhile, are not worthy of the least of God's mercies.

Yet how strong soever these branches are, they must be subdued. In order thereto, the Lord, after he begins to manifest himself to his people, does not lead them immediately into Canaan; but carries them through the wilderness, where a variety of temptations draw out

discoveries of their secret corruptions, their weakness and wickedness.

The discoveries of God's patience, mercy and grace, and of his people's weakness and wickedness, especially after remarkable manifestations of the Lord, are means of which the Lord makes use, and remarkably blesses, to cure them of these distempers, and put out these two eyes of the wicked idol.

The Lord, for this end, whenever he is about to complete, or carry on the begun deliverance and mercy which he has begun, revives the impression of these things.

Many other gracious designs did the Lord in this way carry on. He let me see the bitterness of sin, and discovered it to be exceeding sinful. He let me see much of the hellish ingratitude of my heart. He let me see the necessity of coming daily to the throne of grace, for mercy and forgiveness, as well as for grace to help in time of need. He made me see with wonder, how one view of forgiveness and pardoning mercy alienates the soul more from sin, than twenty sights, nay tastes of hell. This Pelagians cannot understand.

Besides the more gross evils into which I fell, through the violence of temptation, I was exercised about the guilt of sins of daily occurrence and infirmity, deadness, wandering in duty, and innumerable others. When I began to be first exercised about forgiveness, I was much perplexed about these; and I shall in the following particulars, relate my feelings about them. When the Lord manifested himself, his enemies fled before him, and received a stunning stroke; as has been showed. It was sometime before any of the stronger enemies discovered themselves again: presumptuous sins for a time, as has been represented, kept quiet. The first discovery which I got of the remaining power of indwelling sin, was the invasions of sin of daily infirmity. "For in many things we offend all." Hereupon I began to be much discouraged; not well understanding our state here, that if any man say

he has no sin, he deceives himself, nor the gracious provision made for this case in the covenant of grace, the daily sacrifice, that is, the daily application of the blood of atonement. And so I was under a foolish and groundless expectation of entire freedom from sin. My foolish expectations being quickly disappointed by the outbreking of these sins, I wist not what to do. I thought it hard to trouble him who had been so kind, in seeking new favors. The pride of my heart could not stoop to be continually, daily, hourly beholden for new favors. I would fain have been a lord, and come no more to Christ. This pride was so marked, that at that time I did not discern it; but the Lord has since made it manifest. But necessity has no law. My sins grew numerous; "for who can understand his errors?" and the light of the Lord daily discovered more and more of them. Wherefore I essayed to humble myself distinctly for every one of them, and to make a distinct application to the throne of grace about each; but when I began to observe them, I found them so many, that if I followed this course, my whole time would not have sufficed. Hereupon the Lord led me to that course, which a worthy friend, to whom I owe much for a distinct understanding of the Lord's work with me, told me, Franciscus De Sales, a popish casuist, advises in such a case—I was fain to take them all in the lump, or rather to go with them all on me at once, and plunge myself into the fountain that is opened for sin and for uncleanness. That is, I took a view of myself as defiled by innumerable evils of this sort, and under a sense of them, cast myself upon the glorious atonement, and endeavored to place my hopes of being cleansed from them all, whether such as I discerned distinctly, or such as I had not yet discovered, on that blood that "cleanseth from all sin." This, I think, was the Psalmist's way in the like case. "Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins, let them not have dominion over me. Then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression."

That popish writer before mentioned, as my worthy friend told me, illustrates this by a very elegant similitude. "If a man see one or two filthy creatures on him, he shakes or washes them off: but if he look and see himself all overspread with such, then he must bethink himself of some general course; he goes to some bridge, and leaps into a deep pool, and drowns them all, and leaves them behind him." If any one of the grosser sins overtake us, we must endeavor after a distinct recovery and intimation of pardon, by a distinct application to the blood of sprinkling. But when we look upon those sins which cannot be numbered and searched out, and which are still growing; then we must betake ourselves with the man to the bridge, and leap into the pool. To clear this matter yet further, I observe, that the light wherein that plenteous redemption which is with God, was first discovered, though variously clouded and darkened, yet still in some measure continued with me. A child of light continues "light in the Lord;" he may walk in darkness, and to his sense have no light; while yet it is the remainder of light which makes him discern his darkness: but he really is not in darkness as before. He has his summer's sun, that shines long, bright and warm: and his winter's sun, that shines less, is more frequently clouded, and has less heat. He has his fair days and foul and rainy days, and a changeable intercourse of day and night, wherein he has only the moon and stars; but light more or less there is still. When no extraordinary indisposition, no extraordinary darkness was on me, this habitual discovery of forgiveness, and the way to it, had its own use. The winter's sun was not able to revive me when I was cast into any of those distempers above-mentioned; and therefore, as has been above-narrated, in that case, I waited a glimpse of the sun in its strength. But for ordinary occasions, by the direction of that light I did endeavor daily, as to sins of infirmity, to betake myself in prayer to the blood of atonement, according as the Lord has taught us by the daily morning and evening sacrifice under the law. As

for particular cases and pollutions, there were other institutions with respect to them. This application by prayer to the redemption that is in Christ, even "the forgiveness of sin through faith in his blood," according to this discovery of it, in and by prayer, especially when the Lord quickened me by any new glimpse (for the winter sun has his warm and refreshing glimpses, even in the coldest season) this application, I say, especially when the Lord, as he frequently did, gave me any new desires, did relieve me, and help to quiet my conscience, respecting those sins of daily incursion. When he helped me to pray for cleansing from "secret sins," and to be kept back "from presumptuous sins," I was satisfied as to my uprightness and freedom from "the great transgression," and my acceptance with him in preparing any duty of my station, "through the beloved." As the case was not so urgent, so neither was the relief so discernible. But it was sufficient to answer in some measure the end above mentioned, in giving me freedom from dispiriting discouragement, and some measure of comfort and quiet as to my acceptance with God through Christ.

I conclude with four observations as to the whole. Though we may sometimes heal our own wound lightly, yet it is God's prerogative to speak solid peace. Yea, and the speaking of it is a work of the greatest power, where the conscience is really exercised; it is a creating peace, and where he creates it, he can make it take effect. "When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? and when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? whether it be done against a nation, or against a man only." The Lord let me see, that considering the pride and unbelief of our hearts, and the greatness of our guilt, it is not easy to obtain a belief that the forgiveness which is with God is able to answer all we need, and so to engage a sinner to betake himself unto it at all times, when once he comes to see his case thoroughly. And when his unbelief is in some measure mastered, and the soul satisfied of the fulness of the fountain, and the extensive, nay,

infinite reach of the forgiveness that is with God, and the pride of heart so far broken, that the soul is willing to be daily beholden to grace and mercy; it is not easy to keep up either a due detestation of sin, or to keep our carnal hearts from a common use, or rather an abuse of this free mercy. Here, in my opinion, lies one of the greatest secrets of practical godliness, and the highest attainment in close walking with God; that we come daily and wash, and yet keep as great a value for this discovery of forgiveness, as if it were to be obtained only once and no more. Indeed the more we see of it, the more we should value it; but our carnal hearts on the contrary, become formal, and count it a common thing. That which is our daily allowance we value little; and we are fond of novelties and dainties. Bread is more precious than most, nay, than any of the rarities which men purchase at so dear a rate; but because God has provided it in plenty, and we daily use it, therefore we make a light account of it. Blessed are they with whom it is otherwise in the case now under consideration. I observe, that the joy of the Lord is then only to be retained when we walk tenderly and circumspectly; it is inconsistent not only with the entertainment of any gross sin, but with a careless walk. "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria, and were edified, walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost." I observe that when I had the least hopes of forgiveness, doubting if the Lord would pardon me; after many duties had been attempted without finding the Lord, or any sense of his love, I often found him when engaged in the duty of giving thanks. And whereas one will say, What had I then to be thankful for? I answer, I reasoned thus, "What a mercy is it that I am out of hell? It is of the Lord's mercies I am not consumed; blessed be the Lord for this." Again, "What a mercy is it, that the Lord has not only helped me to notice his mercy in keeping me out of hell, but to be thankful for it?" Again, "Blessed be the Lord that has kept

me out of hell, blessed be the Lord that has made me observe it with thankfulness, and blessed be the Lord that has made me observe his mercy in helping me to thankfulness." Thus I have gone on till the Lord has led me to a sense of his love, and restored comfort to my soul. They that will praise the Lord for little, shall have more. "Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. Then shall the earth yield her increase, and God, even our own God, shall bless us."

Upon a further observation of this variety of cases wherewith I was exercised, the Lord's management of them, and what I have felt in myself, besides the fruits before-mentioned, I see many others. The Lord hereby rebuked me for my fondness of enlargement, and my thinking to live a life of sense, and trained me somewhat up to a life of faith; the faith of adherence, which cleaves to God as he is revealed in his word, and refuses to quit the Bible even when it finds not the Lord in it, in a sensible and refreshing way. Such faith is certainly more strong than that which cleaves to the Scriptures when it feels sensible refreshment and power. To trust in God when he hides himself and threatens to slay us, is to "hope against hope." He taught me not to judge of my state by my frames; besides many other lessons which I do not now think of.

CHAPTER XI.

Recounting my exercise about the being of God, and showing the way of my relief from this temptation.

I have before mentioned, and given some account of, my trials about the being of God. Being now to give an account of the relief I obtained, it will be proper briefly to recapitulate my whole exercise with respect to this head, and so set the temptation and the relief together.

I have stated above, that I was early, even almost as soon as I began to have any particular concern about religion, exercised with temptations in reference to this great and fundamental truth. But at first I had no arguments injected into my mind against this truth. Only, being made to see that this was the hinge whereon the whole of religion turns, all hopes depend, and by which all practices were to be regulated; I found myself at a loss for want of evidence, sufficiently clear and strong, and convincing, with respect to a truth whereon so much weight was to be laid. In a word, I was at Pharaoh's pass, "Who is the Lord that I should obey him, and let Israel go?" Plainly very great things are demanded of me, and I am called to hope for great things, and before I trust so far, I would be satisfied to know more of that God, in whom I am to trust as to so great things.

But afterwards Satan attacked me by subtile suggestions, as I have showed before; took me at a disadvantage, when I was estranged from God, and my head intent upon abstract subtilties, and while I followed such vain speculations, intruding into things I had not seen, he took his opportunity, and said daily, "Where is thy God?" And when he had got me down, he triumphed; Where is now that mouth, with which thou didst all along reproach atheists? Such are their

arguments, try your strength with them, and fight them.

A sharp conflict now began in my breast. On the one hand, Satan in conjunction with the natural atheism of my heart, plied me hard with fiery darts, and subtle sophistry; arguments sometimes astonishing, so far were they above my reach. On the other hand was I, a poor apostate creature, sadly darkened, but yet retaining some remains of light, which God had made manifest in my conscience, as in those of other men. I was also somewhat confirmed in those notions of God by education, the outward dispensation of the gospel, and it may be, by some common work of the Spirit, riveting all the former, and keeping alive these impressions, or at least preventing Satan and my corruptions from blotting them out. Against that formidable confederacy, I, such a one as I have now represented myself, appeared and made head too.

In this conflict I used various methods. I sometimes rejected the suggestions, and refused them a hearing, "Who art thou that repliest," or disputest against God? It shocks nature's light to say, "There is no God." Even the fool scarcely dare say it out. Sometimes I prevented them as it were, and not only refused them a hearing, but represented in my own soul how deep resentment such a provocation, such a motion deserved. If any man will plead against God, or for Baal, none should entreat for him, but he should early be put to death. When the impudent enemy would not thus be put off, I endeavored to maintain the truth, and answer his arguments. But his instances were so many and so subtle, that I could not prevail this way; but the longer I stood arguing the case, the greater the loss to which I was put. When he comes in speaking terms, he is too hard for us; and no wonder, for he worsted our first parents in a state of innocence. When I found this, then I would often wish for a discovery of God himself. O that he would appear, and "O that I knew where I might find him," when my wishes took no effect. The devil upon this took the advantage to

tell me, that he did not appear, and that surely, if there was a God, he would help one that was standing up for him in such a strait. In this case, I sometimes hoped that he would arise, and then mine enemies would be made to flee before him. Though the truth is, I could but give little reason for this hope. Sometimes I prayed. Satan urged upon me the unreasonableness of praying, till I was sure there was a God. And I confess I was sometimes hardly put to it, to defend the practice; yet I always inclined to believe it proper, and thought, that if there was a God, as I durst not say but I had reason to think there was, he could best satisfy me as to his own being. I was sometimes obliged to flee from the tempter, and seek sanctuary in diversions. Sometimes the Lord mercifully restrained him, and he left me for a season.

While this trial was lengthened out, the Lord frequently gave some checks to it, and to Satan. I had clear discoveries of the horrible tendency of the temptations, that they tended to destroy all the foundations of all human happiness, and cast reproach upon all the best and wisest of the world; and account and set up proud fools, as the only happy and wise men. "If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?" Then are the proud happy, and they that hate God are exalted. I was relieved by the consideration of the comfortable result others had obtained, who had been in like manner exercised. "Our fathers trusted in thee, they trusted and thou didst deliver them." God sometimes let me see some glimpses of his glory, even in the works of creation; "The heavens declare his glory." Sometimes the Lord relieved me by some beams of his glory from his word. And I remember I was oftener than once helped by the Lord's suggesting with unusual power, the three children's answer to the king of Babylon, with the glorious result. "O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve, is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace; and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it

known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship thy golden image which thou hast set up." There was something indeed here, that I could not reach; but my heart was affected with the noble resolution, and encouraged to attempt, as well as I could, to write after their copy; and the issue was encouraging. The devil in these temptations acted so visible a part, that I could not but discern that there was a devil. And when I saw him so deeply engaged in this quarrel, I was strongly induced to think he was not come out against a straw, or to hunt a shadow. When the Lord began to deal with me closely about sin, the edge of this temptation was much blunted. Satan could not easily prevail in persuading me there was no God, while I found his arrows sticking fast in me, and the poison of them drinking up my spirits.

But yet I was not fully relieved. Nothing but a discovery of God could give a full defeat to Satan. Wherefore the Lord at length pitied me; not in the way that I could have desired, for I would have had it then. But considering I was then an unhumiliated enemy, God could not have appeared otherwise than as an enemy, and I could not have seen him as such and lived. Such an appearance would indeed have made me "believe and tremble." But this would have cast me into new trouble. Wherefore the Lord led me to obtain satisfaction another way. He discovered sin to me in the way above-mentioned; and by this discovery, as I have now hinted, diverted the violence of this temptation, and broke its force. For "he stays his rough wind in the day of his east wind." And having thus humbled me, he gave me the above-named discovery of himself in his glory in Christ Jesus.

That which then brought me to a soul-satisfying assent, and which repelled all temptations against the being of a God, was the above-mentioned view of him in his glory. While "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, by his word and Spirit shined also into my mind, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus

Christ." I could not desire any more satisfying evidence of his being. And while that light did shine, or when at any time it does shine, Satan then dares not oppose. All the mountains of opposition, the bulky arguments, that appeared like rocks and hills, shook at the presence of the Lord, and were carried into the midst of the sea. And now the light being come, and the Lord being seen in his own light, I had manifold and satisfying evidences of this glorious truth.

I had the evidence of sight, not by the eye of the body, but by that of faith. I saw the glory of God as represented in the Bible, shining with the clearest lustre, which satisfied me it was truth, and no lie. The glory was so great, that it not only made me see, and convinced me of its reality, but really, in some measure, convinced me that nothing else is real. This sight gave me more consistent, and becoming notions of God, his nature and attributes, than I ever before attained. And this shook the foundation of many of my former scruples, which proceeded only from my ignorance and darkness about the nature of God.

I had the evidence of the ear; for I heard him speak not to my bodily ears, but to my soul; and his voice did sufficiently distinguish itself from the voice of any creature. For, first, he spoke terror to me from Sinai; and then when my soul was as the troubled sea, he said, "Peace, be still." And with authority commanded he "the winds and the sea," and they obeyed, and presently there was a calm. His word enlightened mine eyes, and converted my soul. It was a powerful voice that came from the Lord most high. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul. The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart. The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes."

I had likewise a feeling of his power. I not only heard his voice, but I felt his power casting me down, and raising me up again, and saying to one who was weak, "Be strong," and commanding strength. Thus

my faith stood not "in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God." I have before told what I felt of his power, and what effects were wrought; and so I here forbear any further account.

I was now made to "taste and see that the Lord is good, and that the soul that trusts in him is blessed." "I sat down under his shadow, and the fruits above-mentioned were sweet to my taste."

I was made to feel the savor, and relish a fragrant sweetness in his word, works, and ways. His name was "as ointment poured forth, and therefore I loved him."

By these means all my objections were solved. "Faith is the evidence of things not seen." It not only satisfies the soul about them by the clearest evidence, but it reproves contrary objections. "At the brightness that was before him," the dark clouds passed away. My objections now were like those kings mentioned by the Psalmist, who had come in a combination to ruin the church, but were frightened by God's appearing. "Lo the kings were assembled, they passed together. They saw it, and so they marvelled; they were troubled, and hasted away. Fear took hold upon them there, and pain, as of a woman in travail." Just so was it with my adversaries. Faith (as the word rendered evidence, in Heb. xi. 1, signifies) reproved them; and at this rebuke they fled. For, if they should now say, "Where is thy God?" I was ready to reply, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." If they should now object the seeming inconsistency of his attributes, which was often made use of to trouble me, I had an answer given, a word put into my mouth. At the same time that God condescended to show me his "back-parts," he satisfied me, that no man could behold his face. By this discovery he gave me a view of his incomprehensibility, sufficient to silence all these objections. "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?"

Our short line cannot measure God. When the seeming confusion and disorders in his government were urged, I now had wherewith to answer all these. He gives an account of none of his matters. "His way is in the sea, and his path in the great waters, and his footsteps are not known." Yet though "clouds and darkness are round about him, righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne." The Lord also really cleared up many particular objections as to all these heads, and by this discovery of himself in the sanctuary, he satisfied me in a way rational, yet above reason, letting me see rational answers, in the light of his word and Spirit. He laughs at the prosperity of the wicked, because he sees their day coming. Thus were mine enemies foiled, and "so let all thine enemies perish, O Lord."

This light, thus kindled, he daily increased, and confirmed me every day more and more by new discoveries of himself from his word. And now I could look with satisfaction upon the heavens and the earth, and see the print of his hand upon them.

CHAPTER XII.

Containing an account how I came to be satisfied that the scriptures are the word of God, and how temptations in reference to them were repelled.

To give a clear account of the issue of my temptation, it will be necessary that I briefly recapitulate what has formerly been spoken concerning the trial, and my conduct under it.

This temptation did not attack me so early as the former, but it was managed much in the same way. Sometimes my mind only hung in suspense, and hovered in uncertainty, for want of evidence, on which

my faith might fix, proportioned to the importance of the truth. At other times, I was strangely harassed with violent temptations, multiplied and subtile objections which daily thronged into my mind, from reading books full of them, by converse with enemies to the word, and by Satan's suggestions. These last were by far the most subtile and troublesome to me.

This exercise was in some measure more perplexing than the former, because it was no less ruining to all satisfying religion. The objections were much more plausible, they were far more in number, and entertained by persons of a better character; and the evidence of the truth lay farther from the reach of an unenlightened mind.

Before relief came, the Lord, by means of considerations formerly mentioned, sometimes gave a merciful check unto the temptations, and kept them from overwhelming me quite; of which I have formerly given some account.

I tried many ways besides prayer and attendance upon ordinances. I bought, borrowed, and read many books, written in defence of religion. This was not without its own solid use. For by this means I got a deep, rational conviction of the truth, and so was emboldened to plead for it against its enemies, and often to beat them at their own weapons. And I got many particular objections fully answered, and was hereby encouraged to wait, without despairing, for full satisfaction. One book especially had this effect: After I had, without the satisfaction I desired, though not without the results above-mentioned, perused many later writings, the Lord led me to look into a book called the Fulfilling of the Scriptures, which had been lying by me neglected. And I found this more convincing than any I had read; because it brought me nearer than any of the rest, to the proper evidence whereon faith should fix. It discovered more of the intrinsic worth of the Bible than the others, and pleaded strongly in point of reason.

Yet, after all this, my mind remained unsatisfied.

These arguments, being but the wisdom of men, had none of them authority to repel temptations. Nor, for the same reason, did they lay a foundation for divine faith, or enlighten a darkened mind to see the evidence of God in his word. Nor were they able to rectify a vicious palate, and convey a taste and savor of the word of God to the soul, which should be able to satisfy me that it was such bread as a man might live by.

Thus it continued with me until the Lord came, and let in the fore-mentioned discovery of his glory into my soul; and by this I was relieved and satisfied as to this doubt also. The Lord had before, when I was under the convincing work of his Spirit, affected my conscience with some sense of his authority in the word, which showed itself by that convincing and condemning light and power, which I discerned and felt. And by this means the force of the foregoing temptation was usually in some measure broken, when the Lord by his word did fasten on my soul a sense of my guilt. But this discovery of sin through the scriptures being terrible to me, rather extorted an assent, than induced to a willing and cheerful acquiescence in the Bible as coming from God. But the Lord, when he gave the above-named relief by his word, conveying a sense of his authority in it, by a light and power that relieved my soul, repelled temptations, revived, composed, comforted, and strongly bore up a soul before depressed and bowed down. This made me not only give an assent, but with much pleasure acquiesce in this word as the word of life. Then I found his words, "and did eat them," and I rejoiced as they that find great treasure, and they were to me "the joy and rejoicing of my heart." And by this means I was sweetly satisfied as to the scriptures being his word; for they did in many ways show that they were from him.

All discoveries of guilt were conveyed by them, before and since my relief. God by them revealed to me sins, which none save God that searches the heart could know. They made those sins manifest which I

knew not, and which no creature else knew. By them the secrets of my heart were made manifest; and therefore I could not but fall down, and own that God was in them of a truth, and that they were indeed a beam from the fountain of light. "For whatever maketh manifest is light." And I was convinced that it was from him who tries the reins, and "sets our secret sins in the light of his countenance." It discerned "the thoughts and intents of my heart," in such a quick and powerful way, and with such authority as made me own it the word of God. And now I was ready to say, Come see a book that has told me all that ever I did in my life. Is not this the book of God?

All the discoveries that the Lord made of his wrath were conveyed by the scriptures. It was by them that his wrath was dropped into my soul, and revealed from heaven against me. The word, as the "arrow of the Almighty," thrown by an omnipotent arm, pierced and stuck in my soul, and the poison of it drank up my spirit. It was the rod of God's strength, whereby he broke and crushed me while his enemy.

It was by the same word that he afterwards let in upon my soul that glorious discovery of his being, attributes, purposes, and his whole will in reference to my salvation by Jesus Christ; as he had before conveyed into my soul sweet and satisfying evidences as to his being, and satisfying, consistent, and becoming ideas of his nature. Herein it was that he proclaimed his name; the "Lord God merciful and gracious" unto sinners in Christ; as I have before showed.

It was by his word that he conveyed to me all those converting, transforming, quickening, supporting, reviving and composing influences above-mentioned. It was his word which converted my soul, while I lay in sin; quickened me when I was dead; changed me, in some measure, into his image; revived and watered me when again I was weary; supported and stayed me when I was ready to faint; and composed me when I was like the troubled sea.

It was by the same word that he let in glorious discoveries of all the truths of religion, with which I was now made acquainted, and made me see the wonders of his law, even "excellent things in counsel and knowledge." By it he was pleased to discover the craft, the power, the actings and designs of my enemies; and by it he satisfied me of my doubts, let me see his secret designs in my trials, and somewhat of his designs in many of his public administrations, at which I had before taken exception.

As all these discoveries and influences were conveyed by the Bible, so he now in the conveyance of them affected my conscience with its authority, and evidenced that his name was in it, by that light and power peculiar to God, which went along with it. It spake not in all these things as the scribes and Pharisees, nor as the wisest, the greatest, or the best of men; but with another sort of authority and weight, it spake as "never man spake." Whatever it said, either with respect to God, or my case, or regarding others, my conscience was made to submit to it. When he rebuked me by his word, for things which I knew not to be faults, and which men notice not, conscience obeyed, and took the hint; and armed with this authority, accused, arraigned, condemned, and, as it were, executed the sentence too. Nor would it listen to, or regard defences or pleas from any other source. When God spake wrath, he kindled a flame in my soul, by the breath of his word, that many waters could not quench; he raised a storm in it, that I could neither quiet, nor row against, so as to go to land. The heart that before was as unconcerned as a stone at reading or hearing the gospel, now trembled and quaked. In like manner, when he spoke peace, he created it. He made the "dead to hear," and the hearer to live. He sent his word and healed me. And immediately there was a calm. "The winds and seas obeyed him;" at his rebuke they fled. Temptations spoke not again. When I was self-destroyed, self-condemned, and by the power of the law beaten from all pleas, so that I durst neither deny, nor excuse, or

extenuate my guilt, nor quarrel with the hardest sentence, which I dreaded most; when I was cast into the greatest agony of trouble, when I was ready to say with Job, "If I had called, and he had answered me; yet would I not believe that he had hearkened to my voice"—when with him I refused to be comforted, and scarce did think comfort possible; yet, whenever he sent his word, it healed me, and my soul was commanded to be at peace. A glorious calm always ensued. Whereas, on the other hand, when I endeavored to speak peace to myself, or when others attempted it, mine enemies boldly repelled all, and flew on me, as the devil (Acts xix. 16.) did on the exorcists.

The Lord now sweetly relieved me as to my doubts about the scriptures. Whereas mine enemies had often pushed me with this, that there were many pretenders to revelation; and thereupon to perplex me, asked, how I would or could distinguish the word of God from these pretenders; the Lord himself now gave a satisfactory reply. "The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream: and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat, saith the Lord? Is not my word like as a fire, saith the Lord? and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" He was pleased particularly to manifest those things to my soul, at which I had stumbled; and often to evidence his authority in and by those passages, at which I took exception. And this condescension was of manifold use. It satisfied me as to those passages; it reprov'd and humbled me for my unbelief and ignorance in quarreling with them. It rendered me jealous of the like temptations with respect to other passages. It put me to plead for light from the Lord as to what was dark. It gave me hope as to the issue. "These things understood not his disciples, at the first.—They said, therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? We cannot tell what he saith. But when he had risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them. And they believed the scrip-

ture, and the word which Jesus had said." Then was I made to say with the disciples, "Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb." When I was not presently satisfied, the Lord gave me, as it were, something to live on till light came. He satisfied me from his word, of the reasons of his expressing himself in the scriptures in parables to the multitude; and he told me that what he did and said, I knew not now, but encouraged me to hope, that I should "know hereafter," when my need required it. He was as good as his word; for when I was alone with him, he explained what before was spoken in parables; and while "he opened the scripture," and discovered my ignorance, he often made my heart "burn within me." He satisfied me, as to many things, that I was not yet able to bear them; as to others, that it was not for me to know them at present; that the proper season of light respecting them would come, when he would show me plainly regarding them, and then should I know them. He let me see his wisdom and goodness, in training me up to dependence upon him for the opening of "my eyes to see the wonders of his law," and in leading me to importune him, that what I knew not he would teach. By this means he caused me to learn that I knew but in part, and stood in need of the Spirit to guide me unto all truth, to bring all to remembrance; and that it was my duty to "meditate in God's law day and night," and to search the scriptures, and that with much humility; since "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him," and he shows them his covenant, and he guides the meek in judgment, and clearly teaches them his way.

When after this, I read the scriptures and found not that powerful light shining with that warming, quickening and sparkling glory; yet I found mine eyes opened, and an habitual light planted in my soul, by which I was enabled almost every where to discern in some measure the glory of the Lord. By these means my conscience was secretly overawed, and brought even then to regard the scriptures as his word. Being

translated out of darkness into light, and in some measure illuminated in the knowledge of God, his nature, purposes, and the tendency of his whole dealings with men ; there was thereby a light reflected on the whole scripture, and I was ordinarily enabled to discern the congruity of all that I there read with those discoveries of God which I had obtained, and how worthy of him, and like himself every thing was. And by this abiding light, I was capable of discerning, in the Bible, discoveries of the acting of sin in grace, a penetration and exactness beyond the reach of any, save the omniscient and only-wise God.

And being in this way once quieted as to the truth, by the same and other ways of a like nature, I was daily confirmed.

CHAPTER XIII.

Containing a short account of some other temptations with which I had been exercised, and the relief I obtained with respect to them, from the Lord.

I have formerly showed, that Satan, who had often tempted me to pride ; when he found it for his interest, turned himself another way, and made it his work to drive me to a spurious sort of humility. When I was caught in the thicket of his temptations about the truth of the scriptures, and other things of a like nature, and was using means to get my mind relieved ; he often with much importunity, urged me with this thought, "To what purpose do you seek for satisfaction, or how can you be so vain, as to expect it about these things, wherein men of incomparably greater reach, abilities, diligence and opportunities, have been obliged to remain unsatisfied; and upon that account,

have given them up?" This temptation was often urged with such hellish violence, that I had no spirit left in me by it. I was ready to let my hands hang down; my knees turned feeble, and my mouth was often ready to speak it out, that there was no hope; and I went about to make myself despair of any good, or of any fruit of my labor under the sun.

When the Lord made the foregoing discovery of himself to me, the force of this temptation was quite broken, by seeing the truths of God in his own light. But I obtained not a particular discovery of the weakness of this temptation then, till some time afterwards, reading in my usual course, the first three chapters of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, the Lord was pleased to open mine eyes, and make me understand the weakness of this temptation. The light which then shined upon my soul from this portion of scripture; and the satisfaction of soul it gave, as to this temptation, no words can express. Nor can I, at this distance of time, narrate all which at that time the Lord made convincingly clear to me from his word. Yet the substance I do remember, and will relate in the following remarks.

God here represented to me, that his great design in the method of salvation, made choice of by Infinite Wisdom, was to stain the pride of all glory; that "no flesh might glory in his sight;" but that he that glories, should glory only in the Lord.

The Lord discovered, that a vain ambition to be wise above what God allowed, was the spring and principal part of our apostacy from God; and that ever since Satan first dropped that poison into our natures, it has wrought strongly. "Vain man would be wise." "The Jews ask a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom."

He showed me also that in order to the attainment of the foregoing design, and indeed for the recovery of man, it was plainly necessary, that man's ambition in this matter should be effectually checked. This being a principal branch of our corruption; if it were not

cured we could be completely recovered. This lying in a plain opposition to the design of God ; if it were not levelled, the design could not be reached. For this purpose it became necessary that God should "destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent."

God, to vindicate his own wisdom, which was reproached by this vain ambition of man, to fix an eternal blot on this wisdom of man, set up in opposition to it, and effectually to discover its vanity in the depth of his wisdom, and to make known his holy severity in punishing this ambition, and other wickedness of vain man, suffered, for many ages, "all nations to walk in their own ways," and to try them, whether they were better than God's way—that they might see if they could supply the defects with which they fondly imagined God at first had made them, or could relieve themselves from the misery under which their apostacy had brought them. "He said I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be; for they are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith." And the event was every way answerable to the expectation and design of divine wisdom and justice, and to the desert of the wickedness and folly of men, who made the attempt. For, after near four thousand years spent in fruitless endeavors, through the wise forbearance of God, "the world by wisdom knew not God." They in the wisdom of God, quite missed the mark; their foolish minds were darkened; seeking to be wise, they became fools. And instead of getting their eyes opened to see and know more than God allowed them, they could see nothing but their own nakedness; and so imperfect were their discoveries, that their wisdom suggested to them that fig-leaves would cover that.

After that, in the wisdom of God, "the world by wisdom knew not God;" after they had spent the time allotted to them for the trial and discovery of the vanity of their own wisdom, with a success answerable to the vanity of the attempt; God, in the depth of his com-

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passion, stepped in for the relief of mankind. And for a furtherance of the glorious design above mentioned, he was pleased to pitch upon a method quite opposite to all that the foolish man aimed at. The means he made use of were not such as man's wisdom would or could expect, prescribe, or approve of. He did not make choice of the "enticing words of man's wisdom," or of human eloquence. It was no way suitable to the majesty, truth and sincerity of God, to make choice of that mean art, whereby the affections of weak men are inveigled, and their judgments are biassed, and led blindfold in a subjection to those passions which they could govern. He made no choice of artificial reasonings, that other eye of human wisdom. It did not become the majesty of God to dispute men into their duty, or into a compliance with his will. And albeit he wrought signs to awaken the attention of a world asleep in security, to conciliate respect to his ambassadors, to strengthen the faith of his own children, and to cut off all seemingly rational pleas for unbelief; yet he chose not them, nor did he principally insist on them, as the means of converting and recovering the world. He was not willing to derogate so far from his word, as to encourage an opinion which the devil would, and has eagerly propagated; that God's word is not, upon its own evidence, and without miracles, worthy of the acceptation of rational creatures. Nor would he gratify the unbelieving curiosity of men, who would put God to the drudgery of altering the course of nature, and pleasing their humor at every turn.

God having rejected all these, made choice of the foolishness of preaching; that is, a plain declaration of his mind and will in his name, in the "demonstration of the Spirit and power, and not in the enticing words of man's wisdom," made by persons commissioned by him for that purpose. After that, in "the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." Now this was every way worthy of God. Man injured God, by crediting the devil rather than

God. The devil seemed to have gained a considerable advantage, in persuading man in his integrity to credit him, and to discredit God. God on the other hand brought shame on the devil, by engaging fallen man to reject him, and credit himself on his bare word ; and upon this, to forsake Satan, and all that adhered to him.

God, yet further to manifest his design, as he made use of the foolishness of preaching—that means which though really it is the wisdom and power of God, yet men consider as foolish and weak, made choice, not of the Scribes, the learned, wise disputers, to be his ambassadors; but of foolish, weak, illiterate men, that by things, which in appearance “are not, he might bring to nought those that are.”

In further consistency with this design, God saw it meet to disappoint men's expectation and wisdom, with respect to the Saviour whom he raised up, as far as respected the means of discovering him. He made choice of a crucified Christ, “a man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs,” and passed by all the great and high potentates of the earth, and the worldly pomp and grandeur, which men respect and upon which they dote.

To lay man yet lower, “that the Lord alone might be exalted,” he chose not such persons as the world would have thought stood fairest for mercy ; but he chose the most miserable and contemptible. “Not many wise, not many noble, not many mighty are called : but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of this world to confound the things which are mighty ; and base things of this world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen ; yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are.”

The Lord by this let me see, that it was to be expected, and was indeed inevitable, that a great opposition should be made to the gospel, and to the whole revelation of himself in his word. That this opposition was principally to be by pretenders to wisdom,

learned men. That their objections should be against all the institutions of the gospel; matter, manner, means, all being opposite to their expectations. And that therefore, it was no wonder to see some stumble at the cross: some at preaching, some at preachers. That their pleas would be different and various, the Jews seeking signs, and the Greeks wisdom; according as their different principles and inclinations led them. That it was to be expected, that their objections should be specious, they being suited to the wisdom and the natural apprehensions of all unrenewed men, and men not brought to a compliance with the grand design of God. That it was impossible for any man who was not brought to be a fool in his own eyes, to be wise in the matters of God, or to discern and approve of the wisdom of God in this whole matter.

Upon this discovery, I was fully satisfied that though these things were in the wisdom of God, "hid from the wise and prudent," yet babes might have a satisfying discovery of them; because it has "pleased the Father to reveal these things to them."

I was made to see, that this opposition of learned men, and their want of success in their inquiries, were so far from being a just cause of prejudice against the truth of God, that on the contrary, it was a strong confirmation of the truth of religion. Thus "out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness." "When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me." Then went I to the sanctuary, and there I saw their end. Hence I was made to hope that, though "my heart and my flesh should, and did fail me, God would be the strength of my heart, and portion forever;" that he would "guide me by his counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory." And therefore, surely it is good for me to draw near to God, who has not said to the seed of Jacob, "Seek ye in vain." "The Lord is good to them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him." "In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen."

I frequently found that common and much noised.

objection against the most important truths of the scripture, especially against those which are controverted by Pelagians, Arminians, and Socinians, viz. that they are contrary to reason, making considerable impression upon my mind. But this being rather by fits and starts, than for any fixed period of time, I shall briefly refer to the springs of my relief from temptations of this sort.

God had, long before I obtained a full relief, fixed in me a deep, rational conviction of the shortness of human knowledge, and that there is no truth we receive, whether upon the evidence of metaphysical, mathematical, or moral principles, or even on the evidence of our senses, against which there does not lie insoluble objections. But no man has therefore thought it reasonable to question such truths. Nor if we should try ever so much, could we bring our minds, on account of these objections, to hesitate about many of them. I was fully satisfied of this, on the clearest conviction of reason and experience. And as this was one of the most considerable benefits of my studies in philosophy, so it was many ways useful to me. For it made me see through the vanity of that pretence against divine truths, viz. that there lie unanswerable arguments against them. This I thought would not shake me, if once I saw sufficient evidence for them. I was by this means brought under a conviction, that it was reasonable to expect more inextricable difficulties about truths supernaturally revealed, than about others; because they lie farther out of our reach. When difficulties occurred, I was led rather to suspect my self-ignorance, than the truths of God.

When the Lord gave me the foregoing discovery of himself, he fixed me in the faith of his incomprehensibility. While he let me see his "back parts," he convinced me that I could not see his face. He let me see, that his "ways are not our ways." And therefore I durst not any more attempt to measure him, or his ways, by my short line.

By this I was likewise brought to rest quietly in the

decision of the Bible. I took all "to the law and to the testimony." And where they clearly interposed their testimony, my soul was now in some measure taught to acquiesce, and, to stand by their decision,

When I found the subtile endeavors of adversaries prevent any particular testimony, and felt myself unable at first to disapprove their evasions, I was much relieved by a view of the multiplied testimonies of the Bible, all running the same way, and declaring as it were with one mouth for the truth.

When by consulting interpreters, especially critics, I found myself rather darkened than enlightened about the meaning of particular passages, I had recourse to the scope of the words, and to the plain meaning as it offered itself to view, with a humble dependence upon God for light as to his mind. And hereby I found my soul much more satisfied about the meaning of the scriptures, than by the subtile hypotheses of bold critics; which are often injurious to truth.

When for a time, by the subtile perversions of Scripture testimonies, I could not find the use of them, the analogy of faith stayed my mind as to the truth, till I was in condition to recover the particular testimonies out of the enemies hand. When the Lord manifested himself from the word to me, he gave me a sweet view of himself, and of the design principally aimed at, in the whole revelation he has made of himself, and of the sweet and harmonious consent and concurrence of the principal doctrines of the gospel, in promoting that design. And he let me see that the end and the means were so closely linked together, that one of these truths could not be overturned, but almost all the rest must follow its fate. Therefore, whenever any of these truths were controverted, its connexion with other truths, uniformly and plainly attested by the current of the scriptures, presented itself; and my mind was satisfied I could not fall without they all fell. This I take to be the analogy of faith; and in this I often took sanctuary.

My mind was often stayed by the concurrent suffrage of the pious in all churches, and nations, and ages, witnessed in their particular writings and confessions of faith. I loved to walk in "the footsteps of the flock," that is, those of whose piety we have the best evidence.

The direct opposition, especially of the Pelagian nations, to my own experience and that of all the fearers of God with whom I conversed, as well as to the scriptures, was a very great relief.

One thing that made me always read Arminian and Socinian writers with a just jealousy, was a clear view of their scandalous disingenuousness in misrepresenting the opinions they opposed.

When I seriously viewed the difficulties which they urged against the truth, I often found them caught in the thicket, and as deeply fastened and entangled in the same inconveniences, or others full as great.

The fore-mentioned view of the design of the Gospel, as represented from the First Epistle to the Corinthians, was of great use.

God very often, when I was perplexed about particular scriptures, gave me a view of their meaning in his own light, and opened them to me. And after his temptations spoke not again.

Many other things and considerations of a like nature, have been relieving to me; which, because they are too many and too long, to be here narrated, I shall pass over. These which I have mentioned, may serve for a specimen.

I now come to give some account of my relief from another temptation, with which I have been continually exercised from my youth, and still sometimes am. It respects death. I have above narrated what a continual bondage I was in through fears of death, and how early these fears began. I shall now give some account of my relief.

I found the Lord's mercy, manifested in Christ, free me from the spirit of bondage, and in some measure

acquainted me with that liberty which is the attendant of the "Spirit of adoption;" and hereby all my fears were much weakened.

The Lord by the discovery he made of himself in Christ, removed, in a great measure, the reasons for which I had heretofore most feared death, viz. the want of evidence about the reality of things not seen, and sin, the sting of death. Wherefore my mind was much relieved, because I was now, in some measure, secured against both these fears.

The strong power of sin which I found still remaining, and the disturbance thence arising, made life not desirable. And a prospect of deliverance by death, and a more satisfying discovery of the Lord, made death appear more desirable.

As a natural aversion to death still continued, and I found still more fear upon a close prospect of it, arising in my mind; I was much relieved by the promise of the Lord's helping against temptation, and engaging for his people, that they should not be tempted "above what they are able to bear," but that, when the trial comes, he "will provide a way to escape."

My faith as to this promise was often strengthened by former experience. Particularly, I remember one day, travelling from Edinburgh to Leith, and meditating upon death, I was oppressed with fear, when the Lord mercifully suggested this scriptural thought, though not in the scripture words. Have you not shrunk formerly from the remote prospect of other trials? and have you not been carried honorably and safely through them? What reason have you to distrust God as to future trials, who has hitherto given grace to help in time of need? This quieted my mind at the time.

With respect to this subject, it has always been very satisfying to consider, that it is no way meet that God should give us grace before trials come; but that he should keep us humble and dependent, by reserving that in his own hand, and thus teach us to submit to his judgment, as it regards the measure and

time of performing his own promises, and giving the necessary supplies of grace.

My soul was, in some measure quieted, under all my fears of this trial, by my belief in the truth, that the "Lord is a God of judgment," and that they are blessed who wait on him in the faith of his promises, not doubting either his faithfulness as to the accomplishment, or judgment as to the right timing and measuring of them in proportion to our trials and necessities.

The Lord has often given me, when clouded by this fear of death, a sweet discovery of the beauty of the arrangement, that we have promises to live upon, till the trials come; and that when they come, we shall then get their accomplishments to live on. "In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen."

Finally, the experiences of the Lord's faithfulness, recorded in history, and learned by report, or by my own observation, did often help to strengthen my faith of this: and here I rest to this day. I dare not say, I am ready to die; I dare not say, I have faith or grace sufficient to carry me through death; I dare not say, I have no fears of death; but this I say, there is grace enough to help me, laid up in the promise; there is a "throne of grace," to which in our straits we may have recourse. He is "a God of judgment," who has the disposal of this grace, and he will not withhold it when it is really the "time of need."

CHAPTER XIV.

Containing an account of his being licensed to preach the gospel.

WHEN I was under the violent strugglings related in the account of the former part of my life, I had laid aside all thoughts of the work of the ministry. It was like hell even to entertain a thought of preaching to others what I did not believe myself. But now things began to alter, and the Lord led me on to that which before I declined. And I find the steps of his providence respecting me in this matter, deserve to be remembered by me. My mother devoted me from my childhood to this work, and often expressed her desire to lend me to the Lord all the days of my life, to serve him in the Gospel of his Son. This has often had its own weight on my spirit. The course of my studies had tended that way, and my education pointed towards that work. This providential determination of my studies, though sometimes I had no regard to it, yet on other occasions had some weight on my spirit, so that I durst not rashly turn my thoughts another way. The Lord, by his providence, did forcibly break my design of following the study of philosophy, and by the foregoing exercise of which I have given an account, brought my mind to acquiesce in this dispensation, and made philosophy comparatively distasteful. And upon a serious review of the temptations moving me to incline that way, it was made extremely repugnant to me. The Lord having thus turned my heart from that study, which for a while held a rival with the study of divinity, he did also, by the fore-mentioned result of my gloomy exercise, remove the principal stumbling blocks, and make the way straight. By the discovery of his glory in the face of Christ, he further engaged my heart, and endeared to my soul the knowledge of Christ and him Crucified. He brought me

Under a lively sense of that forcible obligation which was laid upon me, to lay myself out in any way in which he should call me to serve him; and I was made to think, that I should be the more happy, the more directly my work should tend that way. While, like Peter, I was musing occasionally on these things, about the month of April or May, 1698, to my great surprise, two ministers were sent from the presbytery of Kirkaldy, urging me to enter on trial. I altogether declined the proposal, because I had but little theological reading, was wanting in the languages, and had been much diverted from study, particularly by the foregoing exercise, which had filled my thoughts for near a year and a half; and it was not then two years since I came from college. In a word, I answered, "I am a child, and cannot speak." And here I stopped, surprised and tossed with thoughts what this might mean, and whence it was; for I had scarce ever looked near the presbytery. They prescribed John i. 12. for a text, and left me to consider of it. I found my aversion strong against entering at least so soon on trials; but still the business had some weight on my spirit. I thought further of it, and found that the Lord's dealing with me of late, in the great variety of my trials, casting me down and raising me up again and again, looked as a preparation for "comforting others with the consolations wherewith I had been comforted," and for sympathizing with them as one who had had experience of a great variety of temptations. And I found that by these trials my little knowledge of the mystery of the gospel received some improvement. The ministers continued to solicit me, and press their desire, but while I stood out against their solicitations, though not without some secret struggle and doubting, whether in so doing I might not be declining duty, I began to observe the Lord raising a storm against me. I began to see the snares of the station I was in, the advantages which my corruptions had in consequence against me; and in a word, the Lord made it out to me, that I ought to change my station.

But I was not thereby satisfied that I ought to comply with their desire; though I durst not flatly decline it. About this I was much troubled, May 20, 1698. The Lord was taking away some who had been most helpful and encouraging to me, my inward perplexities grew, and I was not likely to have peace in my own mind. While I was in this case, Mr. Riddel came to the Wemyss', May 30, and after much conversation, charged me to try and fix my thoughts on my text, and then to do or refrain, as the Lord should reveal my duty. To this I consented. But after this I still shifted and declined, and could not think of a compliance; and then December 23, Provost Ramsay wrote, earnestly desiring me to take the charge of my lord Maitland. This put me a little to a stand; and at first I was inclined to embrace it. But on further consideration I was fully convinced I ought to reject that motion; and so I remained in my former strait, crying to the Lord frequently, that he would discover to me my duty. I was fully satisfied that I ought not to stay there, but yet was averse to the ministry; at least so soon. But that which had well nigh turned me quite another way, was an express from the worthy Mr. James Duncan, my friend and the friend of my father, urging me, in the most pressing terms, to take the charge of my lord Duplin's children; offering me what encouragement I pleased. My father's deep obligation to that family, and several other things, inclined me to a compliance. But having, at Mr. Forrester's earnest desire, undertaken a homily in the new college, which I was to deliver next week, I took time to consider of it; and after I had, February 28, 1699, delivered my discourse on Job xxviii, 28, I went to visit my acquaintance, the worthy Mr. Shields. And he urged me to enter on trials, with such gravity and concern, as had more weight on my mind than all that had been spoken to me. Upon this and other things that offered themselves to view, I was fully satisfied it was duty to lay aside thoughts of Mr. Duncan's proposal. The presbytery of Kirkaldy, March

16, 1699, urged me to try a common head, and if I was not after that clear to proceed, they promised to leave me to my choice. To this I consented, and delivered it, April 20. Afterwards I accepted of a text, and they offered me Psalm cxix. 9, from which I delivered a sermon, May 10. Afterwards I went through the exercise and addition, which I delivered May 23, before the synod that met about Mr. Inglis' affair. I then took a popular sermon, being not a little encouraged by Mr. Shield's, who again spoke seriously to me after sermon and exercise, which was on Rom. viii. 36. My popular sermon was on Psalm lxxiii, 25, which I delivered on June 22, and was then licensed, after I had gone through the usual trials. As the Lord, by the above-mentioned conduct of his providence respecting me, removed my scruples, and cleared my mind; so his countenancing me in my first public ministrations, not only by supplying me for the work, but by making me successful towards the awakening of some, and the comforting of others, did not a little confirm and encourage me.

CHAPTER XV.

Of his entering on the ministry at Ceres.

BEING thus licensed, June 22, 1699, at Kirkaldy, I continued preaching as appointed or desired for the most part, every Lord's day, and blessed be God, not without some countenance and success. November 23, a call came to me, from South Leith, where I had preached sometime before. Mr. Wishart the minister, with several elders, came with it. And November 29, a call from Eli, where I also had preached, was put in my hand; and much about the same time the call of

the parish at Ceres was brought to me. I took them into consideration, and gave no manner of hopes to any. I found myself in a great difficulty between Leith and Ceres, and the difficulty was much the greater, because both stations lay not within the same province; and therefore there was no judicature equally concerned in both, to whom I might submit the case; so that I was necessitated to make a choice myself. After some endeavors with my own heart, to bring it to a willingness to accept of either, as God should clear up my duty, I set myself to consider and ponder the reasons on the one hand and on the other. And for Leith the following reasons had weight.

The importance of the station, and the largeness of the charge. The unanimity of their call, after they had been long in a divided state. The colleague was most desirable, and one from whom I might learn much, both as to preaching and discipline. There was a considerable number of godly people in the place. I should have the advantage of living in the presbytery of Edinburgh, where there was unquestionably the fairest opportunity for improvement. The Commission's interposition on behalf of Leith, by their letter.

On the other hand, for Ceres, the arguments of weight were:

That the parish was considerable, had been entirely without a minister for a long time, had been divided, and were now harmonious; whereas Leith was well supplied with one.

That as Leith was near Edinburgh, they could have choice of young men, and had men of weight and activity, and interest to obtain whom they had a mind to. It was otherwise with Ceres.

Where colleagues are most desirable, the situation is not without such difficulties, as should incline one not to run into them without an evident call.

I had not enjoyed time for reading; and, in a town, and that so near Edinburgh, where the charge was so

great, I could not have that time for improvement which I might hope for in the country, at least in the winter season.

The charge was less than the half of Leith, and my body was but weak.

I found my temper yielding and unmeet for managing the humors of town's people.

I found my best friends, whom I had reason to respect, as designing nothing but my good, firm of the opinion, that Ceres was the most suitable charge.

Having weighed all, and laid the matter before the Lord as I could, I at length came to a resolution to reject the call of Leith, and January 2, 1700, gave it up, and accepted that of Ceres, to the great dissatisfaction of the minister and people of Leith, who had been at more pains with me than I deserved. Being thus, in some measure, made to accept the call of Ceres, that of Eli making no competition—I entered on trials, and delivered my common head *de Communicatione Idiomatum*, February 13, at Coupar, and on March 19, my exercise and addition on Gallations iii. 9; and April 16, I delivered my popular sermon on Rev. i. 6. and went through the other parts of my private trials; and at last, on May 1, 1700, was ordained at Ceres. Mr. Alexander Pitcairn, minister at Kilmany, preached on the occasion from Heb. xiii. 17; and next Sabbath I entered upon my ministry, preaching from Acts x. 29. May 5, 1700.

CHAPTER XVI.

Of his management in the work of the ministry.

AFTER he was licensed to preach, and before he was ordained to the ministry, on several solemn occasions, he dedicated himself to the service of the Lord, with earnest prayer for suitable endowments, by which he

might be fitted for the discharge of that high trust; if it should please God to call him to it. This occurs frequently in his diary, of which we take an instance or two in his own words :

“April 18, 1700—This being the fast in order to Lesly sacrament, I rose early in the morning; and after some review of my former ways, and serious thoughtfulness respecting the design of the present duty, I did in prayer pour out my soul to God, confessing my sins. And I dare not say, that it was not with some tender sense of the dishonor done to God, and of the wretched unkindness towards God, which they manifest. Original sin, imputed and inherent, lay heavy on me; and so did my own particular sins. I solemnly renewed my engagements to the Lord, accepting of Christ according to the gospel offer and terms, and endeavored particularly to exercise faith in him, with respect to ministerial endowments, and devoted myself to him in that service.

“May 1, 1700*—This morning I renewed my engagements to God, and accepted of Christ upon the gospel terms, casting myself over upon him, not only for what belongs to me as a private Christian, but as a minister; looking to his strength for sustaining me in the whole of the work; particularly pleading for his presence this day. I cannot deny but that I had his presence in secret. Mr. Alexander Pitcairn, minister of Kilmarnock, preached the ordination sermon, from Heb. xiii. 17. In it he enlarged upon the watchman's duty. I cannot deny, but my heart was much oppressed with the sense of the greatness of the work. After I had answered the questions put to me concerning my soundness in the faith, and the sincerity of my purposes in undertaking the office and work of the holy ministry, I was ordained. Lord thou knowest what was my heart's desire to thee at the time. O Lord, help, and through grace I shall lay out myself for gaining sinners to thee.”

* This was the day of his ordination.

Being thus entered into the ministry, he studied and prepared his sermons, with much serious secret prayer for divine assistance and direction in his work : and for a successful blessing upon the preached word, both to himself and his hearers.

His practice also was to examine and review his behaviour, and the manner of his acquitting himself in public duties. He looked back upon the degree of assistance and enlargement he obtained, upon the gravity, seriousness, and tenderness of his own frame, and upon his concern for the souls of his hearers, as also upon the warming of his affections with the comforts and ravishing sweetness of divine truths. And when he was remarkably helped, it issued in thanksgiving to God, and in watching against vain pride and self, that they might not rob the Lord of the glory of his free grace. When it was otherwise with him, it was matter of humiliation.

Knowing that he was called to "watch for souls, as one that must give an account," he had the weight of the ministerial charge much upon his spirit. He was therefore at pains to acquaint himself with the spiritual state of the souls of his flock, that he might be the more capable of dealing with them for their edification ; according to their particular cases. In order to this, so far as his health and strength allowed, he was diligent in visiting all the families within his parish, in instructing his people by the familiar way of catechising, and in marking their proficiency in the knowledge of the truths of the gospel. At some seasons also, especially when he was about to administer the sacrament of the Lord's supper, he conversed severally with such as were to be admitted to that holy ordinance. His wish was not to bring them unto auricular confessions, but to try what sense they had of serious religion and practical godliness, what efficacy and influence the word of God had upon them, and what fruits of the preached gospel were to be found in them ; that he might deal accordingly with their consciences, and rightly divide unto them the word of

truth. Take one instance of this in his own words, as they are found written, July 8, 1703, after he had labored about three years in the ministry at Ceres:

“I have,” says he, “spent now about a month in conversation with my people, and I remark the few following things, viz.

“First. That of three or four hundred persons, there were not above forty, who had not at one time or other been more or less awakened by the word, though with far the greater part conviction proceeded to no lengths. Notwithstanding, it follows from this, that where there is a faithful ministry, it is not probable, but most of the hearers are at one time or other so far affected, as will be sure to result in a dreadful aggravation of their guilt, in their quenching the spirit, and putting out their light. For if so many were affected in such a manner that they could remember it, how many more may have been so, who have not noticed it? The Lord leaves not himself without a witness, even in the bosom of his enemies, whereby he makes them feign submission. He gives the word such power as makes them feel that it is his, and this tends to enhance their guilt while they remain impenitent.

“Secondly. All who were thus convicted, declared that any awakenings they ever had, were either under the preachers in the field,* or since the revolution. Whatever may become of the ministers, this is a testimony in favor of their way; and evinces that they are called of God.

“The most deep rooted and best informed did most frankly declare to me, that till the revolution they were never affected by the preached word. There was not one who said he was touched by the curates. On the contrary, all declared otherwise; and the most zealous of that class, were most frank in making these unsolicited confessions; being led so to do by the plain evidence of truth.

* During the time of the persecutions in Scotland, it was the custom of the persecuted Covenanters to hold their meetings in the fields, and among the hills.

“There has not been one Presbyterian minister in the parish since the revolution, whom the Lord has not honored to awaken many; besides their being helped to beget some through the gospel, to a new and lively hope. I conversed with some of whom I have reason to hope good things, even things that accompany salvation, who seem to have been brought in by all the different Presbyterian ministers, who have been here these fifty years past.

“I observe, (for which I bless the Lord,) that besides many whom the Lord has awakened under my ministry, there are some who seem to promise more than flowers, even fruit. And further I remark a general acknowledgment from most, that the word comes near them daily. This makes me ashamed of my own negligence, and adore God’s goodness that blesses my weak labors, notwithstanding. It encourages me also to think, that whatever may be amiss, yet I have not run unspent.

“I observe, that it is very hard to judge of the competency of knowledge, in order to admission into the church.

“I remark that learned persons, estranged from the power of religion, are in the most deplorable condition imaginable. For I found it almost impossible to get such brought to any sense of their case.”

His ministerial anxieties were not confined to his parish of Ceres, but extended themselves to the whole church. And the consideration of the abounding errors and profaneness of the time, filled his heart with heavy and perplexing thoughts, as may be observed by the following hints.

“Quest. What is the duty which, in a special manner, is called for from this church* at this time?”

“Answ. Mourning. It is a day of abominations.

“A serious endeavor to be rooted and established in the truths of religion; for there is an aim to destroy the

*The Church of Scotland is here meant.

foundations, and temptations to final and total apostasy abound.

“A shining gospel walk, as a testimony against the horrid profanity of the time.

“O that I might have my soul continually exercised in this. Blessed shall he be at this day, who, when the Lord comes, shall be found so employed. A sad neglect of these things, gives ground to fear terrible things.

“One reason why the gospel is so unsuccessful at this day is, because the simplicity of preaching is neglected. A due application of scripture is the best preaching, for confirming which truth it is remarkable, that though God may make use of the words of man in explaining the meaning of it, yet it is the very scripture-word, whereby he ordinarily conveys comfort or advantage of whatever sort. It is the tool of God's own framing that works the effect.”

At another time he says, “Having considered the present growth of error, my heart is affected and filled with many heavy and perplexing thoughts. I have seen, and daily see, more and more the growth of Arminian, Pelagian, and Socinian errors, and this, with the growth of profanity that is visible, gives me a sad prospect of what may be coming. The observations that follow were strongly fixed upon my thoughts.

“The gospel truth when first published, was pure, without the mixture of errors. Yet, when it spread a little, errors were quickly put forth to discredit it. In process of time these errors grew; and the further off from the first times of the gospel, the further was the remove from simplicity and purity. When Christianity obtained external splendor in the world, then there was a remarkable increase of error. Superstition and error at length overspread the church; and the Lord both had to punish and purify it.

“The way he took to do both, was to give up the world in the seventh century, to a general apostasy, under Mohammed in the East, and the Pope in the

West. Thus all these errors, as it were, run into one, or run together. That the churches were sufficiently punished by these two dreadful plagues, and that there was a purifying of them, is plain; inasmuch as after the Reformation, truth broke out with a beaming lustre, and in much purity. Since that time, error has had a second growth, and whether the Lord may not take some method again of purifying us, by calling us all into the furnace, is more than we can tell. We must leave it to himself."

Some of the followers of Mrs. Bourignon having come into his parish, and endeavored to propagate their opinions, under the plausible pretext of singular piety and devotion, he thought fit to guard his people against that infection. A short account of this he gives in the following words:

"April 10, 1707: this day the Lord directed me to strike at the root of prevailing delusions. In opposition to them I taught:

"That true holiness will not admit of leaving out some duties, and that by devotees withdrawing from the world, omitted giving a testimony to the usefulness of the Lord's institutions of worship. They lost their usefulness among men. They failed of diligence in their particular calling.

"That holiness consists not in a strict observance of self-devised rules, such as many of theirs are.

"That when men pretend to holiness in their walk, and neglect the institutions of worship, we have no reason that in any thing they are influenced by the authority of the Lord Jesus. For that same authority binds to the one duty as well as to the other.

"That the most effectual inducement to obedience, is a constant improvement of the blood of Christ by faith, and a sense of forgiveness kept up in the soul.— Lord, bear home truth."

CHAPTER XVII.

Containing his judgment concerning several cases, especially with respect to his own exercises and practice.

Concerning times of trial.

“CONCERNING fears of falling in times of trial, I was much assaulted, and was quieted by the following considerations.

“The fears of this which cause disquiet, are a part of that anxiety about futurity which is forbidden.

“These fears are founded on many wild suppositions, as that I ought to have strength proportioned to trials before they come, while at the same time these may never come, that they that live upon the promises have no sure foundation, &c.

“That passage in 2 Cor. i. 9., ‘We have the sentence of death in ourselves, that we may not trust in ourselves,’ was consoling.

“But my great relief was, that passage which has been my life, that promise, 1 Cor. x. 13., ‘There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.’ It is not what I have that makes me promise or expect to be carried through; but it is what is in Christ and in the promises.”

Of eternity and immortality.

“I had some strugglings about the belief of eternity and immortality; but was very much quieted by a clear view, that eternity was wrapped up and implied in every truth of religion. Especially was I cheered by much light accompanying that scripture, ‘Wherefore hast thou made all men in vain?’ If there be no

eternity, man answers no valuable purpose with respect to God, or with respect to himself; and so indeed he is "made in vain." This thought did more establish my soul in this truth than ever it had been before. And this let me see how soon God can make unbelief go back, and give peace in believing."

Of ministers consulting people in ministerial duties.

"While I had occasion to speak and hear of some ministers, who were much swayed by the advice of good people, in doubtful steps of their ministerial work, I was satisfied in the evident propriety of the following rules :

"That it is very dangerous to lay too much stress upon the advice and opinions of the best of people, as to what may be sin or duty in matters that belong not to their station. For the promise of being taught by the Spirit, as to what may be the duty of the minister's station, belongs not to them.

"It is therefore safer to desire the help of their prayers, that God may, according to his promise, satisfy us, or discover to us what duty is, than to teach them to step out of their stations, and advise in things that belong not to them.

"In consulting with others for light, regard should be had to the different talents of men. And in matters of soul-exercise, most regard should be had to those whom the Lord has fitted to the endowments that way. In matters of government, most regard should be had to those whom the Lord has fitted that way.

"In judging whether such as walk most circumspectly are likeliest to know the Lord's mind, we should consider, when we judge of the circumspectness of walk, not only what a man's walk is, but what his temptations are. For one's walk may be much influenced that way, and grace may be more in one, than in others who appear to have more; when the one's grace is continually tried with floods of temptations pouring upon it, and the other's is untroubled.

“ Observe—Ministers for the most part are more shaken about the truths and foundations of religion, than about their own state; people more about their state, than about the truths of religion. Ministers are assisted to enlighten the people, as to what they are straitened about; and people are, or may be, helpful to ministers in that about which they are in the dark. Thus they mutually excel, and are excelled; that both may be humble and keep in their appropriate stations.”

To find duty in difficult cases.

“ I was much refreshed with the following thoughts, which cleared up a doubt to me, when I was at a stand which way to choose. There is ever a bias one way or other. Seek to get that removed, and pray that God may bring your heart to an equal willingness to take either, or neither way. When this is attained, then use reason, and take the most feasible way. Pray to the Lord that he may stop you, if you be out of the road. If the Lord afford light in any other particular way, use it; but mind to seek light soberly, use it tenderly, and be wary in the application of it.”

Of legal preaching.

“ I saw the evil of legal preaching; which lies in one of two things, or in both. In laying too much stress upon the works of the law, our duties and strength; or in pressing evangelical doctrines without regard to that which is the source of the church’s edification, the Spirit of the Lord. Some press to duties, as if they thought that their reasonings could enforce a compliance; or at least, they do not take care to keep up in themselves, and hearers, a constant sense of the contrary, in order that they may engage with eagerness in dependence upon the Spirit of the Lord. This is legal preaching. O Lord, thou knowest how much of it is in the Church! The glory of the gospel is, that it is the ministration of the spirit. The great privilege of believers is, that the

Lord manifests himself to them, as he does not to the world. When he manifests his authority in the command, it is then powerful. When he manifests his goodness and truth in the promise, it is full of sweetness. When he manifests his wrath in the threatening, it awes the soul. When he manifests his glory in the face of Christ, it is ravishing, reforming, attracting."

Atheism the root of sin.

"I shall here note two things. The Lord gave me a sweet discovery this day during the lecture, of the hearts of men, in rejecting the word of God, (notwithstanding there are more, and more evident, prints of God on it, than on all his other works of creation,) because they cannot get through some difficulties in it; whereas there are many more difficulties in the works of God. The light by which this was set home and illustrated in particular instances, was sweet. Some days ago, reading the 9th and 10th chapters of Exodus, and finding these words, 'that ye may know that I am God,' frequently repeated, as also elsewhere in places innumerable, as the end of God's manifesting himself in his word and works; I observed from it, that atheism is deeply rooted even in the Lord's people, seeing they need to be taught this truth so often.

"It is a high attainment in religion, to be able to know that God is the Lord; and to believe that all sin is resolvable into darkness and unbelief, as to this one point, viz. that God is the Lord; and consequently, that all sin is reducible to atheism.

"The great difficulty which the whole of the divine revelation has to meet, is atheism; and its whole object is to bring back man to his first impressions of a God. This one point comprehends the whole of man's recovery; as does atheism the whole of man's apostacy."

The Lord saw meet to bring him through many sharp trials, and to keep him under much soul-exercise, in the vicissitudes of discouraging difficulties, and refreshing revivals upon his own spirit; that in his

ministerial station he might, from his own experience, be the more capable of dealing suitably with others, according to their various cases and conditions. He also studied much a close acquaintance with his own state and frame, and was careful to observe the Lord's gracious dealings with him; as may be gathered from following short hints.

"July 2d, 1702. The Lord, about this time giving me somewhat of a revival from a long deadness, I think myself concerned to notice the means by which I obtained this benefit. It was finally promoted by conversation with lively Christians: 'As iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.' By some heavy strokes laid on me, the Lord chastened me, and, in some measure, taught me out of his law. By terrible providences with respect to the public, the Lord did awaken me in some measure; 'Awake, sleeper, call on the name of thy God.' The Lord providentially brought to my hands some papers, containing the exercises of some noted Christians, wherein I saw how far short I was of others, and also not a few of the causes of my sadly withered and decayed case. For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee, in a time when thou mayest be found. My revival was promoted by some discovery of the vanity of my sweetest enjoyments; 'Therefore I will go and return unto my first husband; for then it was better with me than now.' By leading me to some subjects which I chose for others, wherein my own case was also remarkably touched, the Lord did in some measure awaken me. Thus while with David, I heard only a parable at first, I was quickly told in the end that I was the man.

"March 11, 1705. This day I preached as ordinarily. I was far out of order; Lord pity and shine on me. At night I was somewhat refreshed in family worship. In meditation on my case, I saw unbelief to be the root of all my misery, and was broken down on account of it. I cried to the Lord for relief against it, and that he would manifest himself to my soul;

Lord hear. I was much grieved, that in a time when so many strange evils abound, there should be such a strange stupidity on my spirit, that I could not mourn for the dishonor done to God; and I cried for a spirit of supplication and repentance.

“April 7, 1705. I was much disordered in body this day, and through indisposition, in little condition for any work, till towards seven at night, and then I was a little relieved, as to bodily disorder, and began to think of preparing for the Sabbath. And bowing my knees in prayer, I was full of perplexity; the Lord hid himself, and my spirit was like to sink; ‘I complained, and my spirit was everwhelmed.’ I got no relief till after I had made some preparation for the work of the Sabbath, and then my spirit was refreshed with that scripture; ‘Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the vail, that is to say, his flesh.’ This I explained somewhat in my sermon, and by this means I found my mind composed. But, ‘O that it were with me as in months past!’

“April 17th, 1705. I was much disordered in body till towards night, and then I began to muse on the state of matters betwixt God and my own soul. I found a great withdrawing of influences in duty, in secret, in my family, and in public, and a consequent deadness following. There was a languishing of all grace. And that too, notwithstanding many loud calls to diligence, and to aim at more usual nearness to God. I therefore resolved in the Lord’s strength, to inquire into the causes of this declension, and cry for light respecting it.

“July 5th, 1705. This morning in prayer, the Lord further pointed out the evil of a neglect of distinct exercise about the guilt of sin. I shall represent the sweet discovery in the following hints.

“My case was discovered. I felt deadness. Weariness in duty. Aversion following hereon. Deadness of spirit in general.”

Causes of present deadness.

“As to the guilt of sin, my sense of it is impaired. Consequently, those discoveries of the want of spiritual strength, which flow from the distinct observation of sins, are weakened. The sense of my dark state is likewise impaired. Consequently, my intercourse with Christ for light, forgiveness, and strength, languishes. This intercourse being the great means of endearing Christ to the soul, and the sweetness of these communications being that which keeps up liveliness in duty; all these evils follow on the want of it. Bless, bless the Lord, O my soul!”

Relief.

“July 19th, 1705. This day the Lord shined on me in duty, my heart was much composed, satisfied, and refreshed, and in some measure made to hope for a revival. Glory, glory, glory to free grace in Christ.

“July 19th 1706. This day I was much refreshed with a view of the glory of the Lord Jesus in his ordinances. My soul was sweetened with a sense of his love, warmed and composed in preaching from Philip. iii. 3.”

February 24th, 1706. This being the Lord's day, and he being to preach, he relates his case thus; “In the morning I was sorely shaken about the truths of God, but acquired satisfaction as to what I was to speak in three things. Lord, thou hast fully satisfied me as to the utter vanity and deceitfulness of all other courses to satisfaction, as to our great concerns, besides that revealed in the gospel. Lord thou hast fully satisfied me, that supposing the truth of the gospel, there is a plenary, and full security in it, as to all that I can desire, both for time and eternity. Lord, thou hast given me a full and rational evidence for the truth of the gospel, far beyond what would in other things fully satisfy me; and therefore it can only be the

wretched unbelief of my heart that keeps me hesitating here. I will look for faith to the Author of it. Of these three things I am so firmly convinced, that no power of temptation has been able to shake me. All my doubtings flow from the power of unbelief, that will not be suppressed without an overpowering sense of divine authority. I preached, and was helped in public worship, being strengthened in body, and sweetened in spirit."

The following is a meditation on his taking a journey from his own house, before the dawning of the day.

"December 5th, 1706. What a different case am I in now, from what I was a little while ago! then I was in a pleasant habitation, surrounded with wife, children, conveniences; in a habitation well illuminated with pleasant light, whereby I saw my enjoyments, discerned the pleasantness of them, and their suitableness. I had necessaries, quiet of mind, and opportunity to retire to my closet to converse with God, wherewith I was refreshed.

"But what a change do I now find! I am engaged in a journey, my way is dark, and I find it cold. Now when I turn thoughtful, I fear every where, fear where no fear is! And again use and custom make me secure, and I fear not, where there is fear. I see no danger, and I begin to conclude there is none.

"Have I not here a view of man's state in innocency, and his state when fallen?

"But what a change do I find! Light begins to appear! Had I never seen it, I should have had no notion of it! What a surprise is this! When did it begin? How did it grow? Where were my senses? Did not I look on, and yet I cannot see, and cannot tell how it began, nor whence! 'So is every one that is born of the Spirit.'

"But certain it is, one thing I know, whereas I saw nothing, now I see. I see where I am, what is near about me; I see where there is hazard, and where there is safety, in the way in which I am; but what

is at a distance I do not yet perceive. The first dawning of saving light is not perceivable in its rise, or in its progress, but unquestionable in its effects, and gives a view of the state I am at present in.

“But a new scene appears, light grows, I see at a distance; but men appear as trees, pleasant trees, delightful fields, men suitable to me, and friends appear as monsters seen with an imperfect light; my fears are quickened. And is it not so with young converts? Light still increases, it grows, every new degree is inconceivable, and we have no notion of the discovery it makes. What before was dark, was frightful, is now pleasant and agreeable. Imperfect views of the best things give but misshapen notions; light increasing gives satisfaction respecting them. ‘Eye hath not seen,’ &c. ‘Truly light is sweet,’ Even before the sun is seen, light is great, and is pleasant. It makes the way pleasant, and gives pleasant discoveries; but it cannot be conceived, without experiencing it, what satisfactory discoveries, what quickening warmth the noon-day sun affords.”

Solemn self-examination.

“January 11th, 1708. In the morning I arose, greatly indisposed, but was somewhat relieved before I went to church; yet immediately after sermon I was seized with vomiting. Lord, teach me and lead me to some suitable improvement. Are daily sins, sins of infirmity, searched; observed, weighed, mourned for? Is there care taken to exercise faith distinctly, in order to the pardon of them? Is peace received, when not powerfully spoken by the Lord? Does the impression of the necessity and excellency of Christ’s blood decay? Are my experiences of its use and efficacy as distinct as before? Am I formal in worship; in secret and private duties, craving a blessing at meat, returning thanks, prayer, meditation, reading, &c.? Is there due care in educating my family? Are chastisements observed, and suitably improved? Is there due concern for the

flock, and singleness of heart and diligence in ministerial duties, prayer for the flock, visiting the sick, &c. ? Is there sympathy with afflicted saints and churches ? Are the sins of the day mourned for ? Is the voice of the rod heard, calling to deniedness to relations, even the dearest ; to deadness to the world, and to this life ; to preparation for death ; and to spirituality in duty ?

“ January, 1709. In secret I looked up to God, and reviewed the state of my soul for the last year, since January 12, 1708. I found, alas ! that the above queries had not been suitably regarded. Another year, under many new calls to repentance and reformation, has not been suitably improved. Is not this the design of my present indisposition, to rebuke me for this neglect ? Alas ! for the power of remaining sin and enmity against duty, which appears in diverting me from secret duties, indisposition towards them, and towards spirituality of mind, meditation, self-examination, prayer, reading the word, and in want of liveliness of mind in these duties. Is it not a rebuke for my failures as to faithfulness in my station, that I am not put to silence ? Is there not a call, if the Lord spare me, to give myself wholly to the duties of my general and particular calling ? May not this indisposition be a check to hinder me from prosecuting my scholastic studies, and an invitation to apply myself to a continuation of my experience.

“ I would here note the mercies experienced during the past year. Though the Lord has chastised me sore, yet he has spared me. When my work called for it, I have been wonderfully strengthened. The Lord has given me some prospect of a termination of the confusions of my worldly affairs. And here, I observe, he gave not all this at once, lest it might tempt me to depend on him no more, or to become careless. Not till the Lord had long exercised me with difficulties, did he give me this view. This served to humble and keep me sober. Lest all this should not do, he still holds the rod over my head. O the goodness, mercy, and wisdom of God !

“As to my souls case; the Lord has kept me from despondency, though the distemper, under which I labor, fosters that evil; yet I have been kept from solicitousness as to events. The Lord has kept me from being altogether secure and unconcerned; and maintained in me a longing for divine teaching while I was chastened. I have been kept composed, and in a watching frame, though much under the hiding of God’s countenance. He has not altogether ceased to be a reprover. Sometimes I have had some glimpses of his countenance, and hopes as to the issue of my trials. I have also had some evidences of more than ordinary providence about me and my concerns.

“As to my family; the Lord has preserved us. God has increased it. God has sent me servants sober and seriously inclined; and however slowly we move, which I desire to lament before the Lord, yet we are desiring to look the same way, as to our external concerns. And, at least, there is none in my family giving utterance to any thing of dislike to either truth or godliness. Blessed be God for these mercies. Lord, forgive my unthankfulness. Above all, blessed be God for the gospel.

“If the Lord spare me to labor among this people, the following truths are offered in meditation as most suitable to my case and theirs:

“In the gospel there is the most sweet, honorable, profitable, suitable, and in all respects satisfying offer and proposal made, ‘A marriage with the King’s Son,’ &c.

“In the long run, the generality of those to whom this offer is made, even of the more sober sort, and who are not among ‘the remnant that use the servants despitefully,’ reject it, and will not come, but make excuses.

“An undue regard to things, in their own place lawful, is that which gives rise to this ill reception of the gospel among the sober sort of people; at least, this is that whereby they countenance themselves in their infidelity, which otherwise they could not continue in

without blushing. 'I have married a wife, I have bought a yoke of oxen, a field,' &c.

"In times of prosperity, or when the church is under no present trial; even the godly may decay and turn secure, fall from their first love, and sleep with the foolish virgins. The causes of this evil are to be carefully searched for. They are, the remaining enmity of heart; change of condition, with the want of judgment how to give every duty its own place and time, so that one may neither jostle out another, nor lead to a careless management; do this, and leaving the other undone; and lastly, the cunning of Satan, enforcing one duty to a neglect of another, as in Christ's temptation.

"This night I got such a view of my guilt, that nothing could have kept me from despondency, but a view of that grace which cannot be measured, but is best conceived by that astonishing evidence of it: 'He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with himself also freely give us all things?' In the view of this grace I desired to live and die, and spend my eternity. I was much refreshed in conversation about some of these things. 'Clouds return after the rain.' This in time of a sore fit of sickness impressed me. Lord keep me from security; remember, pity me. Lord, thou knowest my frame."

His heart was much broken for some years before his death, and something of his feelings in sickness may be learned from the following instance:

"October 12, 1709, I was seized with a violent illness. In three days time I was brought to the gates of death; but it pleased the Lord to bless the means that were used, and my sickness began to abate."

OBSERVATIONS.

"The causes of the Lord's contending with me were many, but were all reducible to this one woful remissness in the tenor of my walk, and neglect to stir up

myself 'to take hold of God,' in a lively, spiritual attendance on the Lord in all the ways of his appointment.

"I found myself on the approach of trouble, at a great loss; the Lord hid himself, the Spirit breathed not on the promises; all was dark.

"I had a multitude of anxieties, and there was no other way, but to roll them over on the Lord. That which oppressed me most, was concern about my soul's condition. As to this I observe, that though I found not that comfortable evidence of it, which I sometimes had, yet I durst not quit the belief, 'that the Lord had made with me an everlasting covenant.' And though many difficulties on all hands surrounded me, I stood resolved to throw myself on free redeeming love, and to venture my surviving wife and children on the Lord's tender mercies.

"Respecting my troubles, God kept me submissive, justifying the Lord without repining at my circumstances. He quieted, in a great measure, my solicitude about events, and led me to commit the disposal of them to the Lord, and to pray for a removal of any aversion to the Lord's will. As to my work in the ministry, though I was not without heavy compunctions, especially for the want of secret wrestling and frequency in it, for the success of the word among my people, and for their salvation; yet it was refreshing, (though I durst not trust in any thing but sovereign grace,) that I could say, in the sight of God, without my heart condemning me, that I was concerned to know the truth; that I durst not give utterance to my own conceits, and that I kept not back what might be profitable. I preached what I resolved to venture my own soul on. And I desired to preach home to consciences."

CHAPTER XVIII.

Of his marriage, and conduct in his family.

MR. HALYBURTON had begun this head in the following words :

“ This being also a considerable change in my lot, and God’s providence being to be remarked, in this as in other things, about which he is particularly concerned ; and ‘ a good wife being from the Lord, who sets the solitary in families,’ I shall notice some things here.

“ At the same time that the Lord convinced me, that it was not meet I should be alone, he also clearly convinced me, that ‘ a prudent wife is from the Lord ;’ and therefore I looked to the Lord, and cried to him, and waited on him for direction, with such remarkable freedom, assistance, and preparation of heart, as gave me some ground to hope that he would incline his ear to hear. My great difficulty was concerning the way whereby I might know his mind, as to the person whom I was to choose. The command, ‘ Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers,’ was, in the strictest sense, powerfully impressed upon my soul, insomuch that no prospect of outward advantages whatsoever, could have induced me to make choice of one, whom I thought void of the fear of God. But whether in my choice to proceed upon the information and testimony of godly persons, and concurring providences, justifying their testimony, and clearing the way ; or whether personal and particular acquaintance were not previously necessary, was my difficulty.

“ I was inclined to think this latter necessary, which, with whatever pretences it was supported, proceeded from too much dependence on my own understanding, and that too, joined with a distrust of the providence of God. This was the beginning of my mistake. The narrowness of my acquaintance with the female sex,

which was confined to a very few individuals, increased my perplexity, and had a considerable influence in the wrong choice which I made. The person I selected wanted not several things which I disliked: yet as she appeared to be more suitable than any with whom I was particularly acquainted, and as at that time she fell under some unusual concern about religion, which she imparted to me, it looked like a providential clearing of my way, and as a reason to hope for the removal of what I disliked in her walk. And upon this I did too hastily proceed in the proposal. I durst never absolutely pray for success in this case, but had great freedom and liberty in pleading that the Lord would direct, and that if this engagement were not for my spiritual advantage, it might be effectually stopped, and that my way might be hedged in."

Meanwhile this gentlewoman carried on a correspondence with another, to whom she was privately married, and so, in the good providence of God, Mr. Halyburton was fairly disengaged. And being thus happily disappointed in this attempt, he sought direction of God, in reference to a design of marriage with another; and set apart a time expressly for this purpose. An account whereof follows, as it was written by himself.

"December 13, 1700. This forenoon I set apart for prayer; and being to address God in reference to my proposal of marriage with J. W. I judged it suitable that I should begin the work with some inquiry into my own state, knowing that one unacquainted with Christ has no reason to expect acceptance in prayer. Therefore, after some serious application to God in prayer for the assistance of his Spirit, to make a true discovery of the state of my soul, I found it as follows: With respect to God, I had a full conviction, that 'life is in his favor,' nay, that his 'loving kindness is better than life.' I had the same conviction, that any interest in his favor, admittance to his presence, or acceptance with him, is utterly impossible, without respect being had to a Mediator. God being one that will 'by no

means clear the guilty,' and I being guilty; God being holy, I unholy, God being a consuming fire, and I one, in respect of sin, meet to be devoured; I cannot see God, without a Mediator, and live. I believed that God, out of mere love, without regard to any thing in sinners, has been pleased to choose, and send into the world, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the Mediator, through whom sinners might be accepted by him.

“With respect to Christ, I found, that notwithstanding the frequent and lamentable prevalency of sins against light, against resolutions, vows, engagements, strivings, and prayers; yet I must say, that no alteration of my condition, since the Lord first convinced me of them, has ever been able to shake me in my entire conviction of the following particulars. That the Lord Jesus Christ is such a Saviour, as became the grace, mercy, love, wisdom, holiness, righteousness, justice, and power of God to provide; and on the other hand, such a Saviour, as became the sinner's need, and therefore deserves his acceptance, as fit, suitable, and sufficient 'to save all that come to God through him,' and that even to 'the uttermost,' his blood being able 'to cleanse from all sin,' and his Spirit sufficient to lead into all truth. God knows what heart-refreshing sweetness I found, in a view of the glory of God's wisdom, holiness, power, &c. in the face of Jesus Christ. That I need this Saviour, in all his offices. At no time, either when things went well or ill in appearance, durst I, for my soul, think of separating his offices. God knows that my heart was as much reconciled to his kingly as to his priestly office; and that it would forever oppress and sink me, were it not that he has a power, whereby he can captivate every thought to the obedience of himself. His reign, God knows, I desire. I dare appeal to the Searcher of hearts, that it is my desire above all things, to be found in him; and never doth sin reduce me to that pass, that I dare admit a thought of the insufficiency of this way of salvation to save me, or of having recourse to any other. But the more that sin prevails, the more do I see of the excellency, sufficiency, suitableness, and

indispensible necessity of this way of salvation, and of the need I have to adhere to it, rejecting all others.

“All my hope as to freedom from that darkness, which is my burden, is from Christ’s prophetic office. And my hope of freedom from the guilt, pollution, and power of sin, and of acceptance with God, arises from his priestly and kingly offices. In one word, I have no hopes of any mercy in time or eternity, but only through him; it is through him I expect all, from the least drop of water, to the immense riches of heavenly glory.

“As to the law, I dare take God to witness, that notwithstanding my frequent breaches of it, I count all his ‘commandments, concerning all things, to be right.’ That I desire inward, universal conformity to them all, without reserve, and that in their spiritual meaning and extent, as reaching all thoughts, words and actions, and even the most minute circumstances of life. That I would not desire any alteration in any of his laws, but on the contrary, I see the greatest excellency in those, which cross my inclinations. ‘This at all times, when not under the immediate violent influence of some impetuous temptation, occasions an habitual and strong desire of conformity to God’s law—my heart ever breathing, with the Psalmist, ‘O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes.’ Since the commencement of this affair, particularly, I have seen a peculiar beauty in the law, as exemplified in the life of our Lord, who ‘fulfilled all righteousness,’ doing always the things that pleased the Father; and more particularly in his absolute and unlimited submissions to the Divine will, even in those things which crossed the natural inclination of his innocent nature. And though at times I could scarcely reach this submission, in reference to this affair; yet I could pray to be made submissive. I looked upon submission as exceedingly amiable; and I desire it, and condemn myself, in as far as I come short of it. God knows, I desire ‘to hate every evil way,’ and would be free from every sin. As to my frame of mind and success in prayer, I can say,

I thought it resulted in calmness and composure ; and as to this affair, contrary to my positive resolution, I was led on to be more peremptory in my petitions for success, than usual, though under fears of a refusal ; yea, though I had my spirit in a more submissive frame, yet now I was more peremptory as to the event, than when my heart was most eagerly set upon the thing.

“ January 17, 1701. This day was set apart by J. W. and me, at parting, to be kept in order to our obtaining a blessing upon our marriage. In the morning I began the day with prayer, wherein I endeavored to trace back sin to my very infancy, and found the Lord countenancing me, by bringing sin to remembrance. Lord, I have been in all sin ; not one of thy commands but I have broken, and that almost in all instances, except that I have been kept from the outward acts, and no thanks to me that it is so ; for, Lord, thou knowest it was only thy restraining grace that kept me from any sin. O ! how ignorant are they of their own natures, or else of how far different natures from mine are they, who deny original sin. It may be that some of them, had they been acquainted with my way and manner from my youth, would have been apt to think me of a good nature, and not given to ill. But O how ignorant are they who think so ! for though I had not the ensnaring influence of bad company to draw me aside, yet without temptation I was inclined to sin, and that too against nature’s light. Whatever others say of their good natures, Lord, I must own mine sinful, and that all the ‘ imaginations of the thoughts of my heart have been only evil from my youth up.’ When I look at my face in the glass of the holy law, Lord, how black it is ! Nothing but sin, wherever I set mine eye.

“ The Lord helped me to confess sin, and thereby gave me a fresh sight of my need of Christ in all his offices ; of his excellency, sufficiency, and suitableness ; and drew out my soul solemnly to accept him, renouncing all other ways of salvation, devoting myself, in my station, as a minister, to him, waiting for him,

and expecting from him (according to his most gracious promise, as the Prince exalted to give gifts to men,) such supplies of gifts and grace, as are needful for my faithful acquittance in the discharge of that office. I did likewise, solemnly devote myself to him, in the new relation upon which I was about to enter, pleading that he would not contend with either of us for the sins of our single life, that he would make us holy, and grant us to walk before him; and that he would bless us with all the comforts of the married state, fitting us every way for one another. In my second address to God by prayer, the Lord gave me much sweetness and enlargement, in reference to the particular subject, for which I set apart this day. Blessed be God for his Spirit's directing me what to pray for, and assisting me in prayer. I hope this event will be prosperous. 'When he prepares the heart to pray, he inclines the ear to hear.'

"I looked on it as a part of the duty of the day, to search into my state. And after serious application to God for his Spirit, that 'searches the deep things of God,' to assist me, I pitched on the following evidences of the Lord's gracious work upon me. The Lord has given me by his Spirit some discovery of my sin. And here the Spirit has discriminated. He has fixed upon innumerable particular sins of different sorts, fixing mine eye upon time, place and circumstances. He has been very full; letting me see myself guilty of all sin. This day he took me to all the commandments, and did clearly lay before me, innumerable breaches of every one. He has discovered to me the sins of all the different periods of my life; infancy, childhood, and youth. He has discovered to me spiritual evils; selfishness, pride, unbelief, and aversion to God. He has given me a clear view of the sin of my nature, as the root of all these things; an amazing discovery of its enmity to God, of its propensity to every sin, of its impotency, and aversion to every good thing, and of the utter impossibility that it should ever lead me to any thing that is really good. The Lord has discovered to me the

guilt and hatefulness of these sins; so that I have been made to loath myself on account of them. The Lord has discovered to me the vanity of all those reliefs to which nature leads. And first, as to the guilt of sin, he has made me see, that my performance of duties cannot save me; and I hope he has taken me off from resting upon them. For, under disquietudes occasioned by sin, nothing, save Christ, could give me rest. Performances of duty, when trusted in, have rather increased than allayed my fears. The Lord, when I have been most assisted in duties, has taken such care to guard me against trusting in them, that he then always opened mine eyes to see a world of sin in them. And here, I have been made to desire, with as much concern, to be saved from my best duties, as ever I did from my worst sins. The Lord, by the discoveries he made to me of the inclination of my heart, at times to lay some stress upon the performance of duties, when spiritually performed, has stirred up in my soul a jealousy of my heart in this particular. As to the power of sin, I found it, by manifold and sad experience, too strong for my prayers, vows, tears, resolutions, &c. So often has this been felt, that I have been brought to an utter despair of obtaining relief in this way.

“The Lord has been pleased to determine my heart to choose the way of salvation revealed in the gospel, through faith’s acceptance of Christ Jesus, and resting on him, for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. This the Lord brought me to approve of, as the only way of obtaining those things; as a way full of admirable wisdom; as a way full of wonderful love; as a way of great peace and security to sinners; as a way suited to give glory to God; as a way suited to honor Christ; as a way suited to honor the Spirit of God; and as a way suited to honor the law. Now, in all these particulars, I thought this way incomparable; and my approbation of it was evident, in that I every day found my detestation of all other ways increasing. I saw every day, the necessity of this way. And I found, that the

more I looked at it, the more I loved it, and admired it, as full of all things that can make it desirable. I found in myself an approbation of the law, and holiness of God in it. I am now satisfied, that the law is holy, just, good, and spiritual. 'The carnal mind is enmity against God, it is not subject to the law of God, neither can be.' But, blessed be God; that enmity which I once had against the law of God, is removed.

"As evidences of the existence of this enmity, in my heart, I may mention, that I found in my mind a stated dislike to spiritual mindedness, and to the laws enjoining it. I had a complacency in being freed from all attendance upon duty. I would fain have had some of God's laws altered, &c. The evidences that this enmity was removed were; the Lord remarkably reconciled my heart to these laws, which, formerly, I would gladly have had altered, so that I now would not have them taken away by any one. And this evidence is the stronger, because I find those sins which these laws forbid, deeply rooted in my nature; I have manifold temptations to them; and I have it to regret, that I am too often overcome by them. The fear of hell and damnation, on account of my breaches of the law, God knows, never occasions me such pain, as the fear of offending him does. I do desire no alteration, no change to be made in the law. God knows, I would have my heart reconciled to it, and not it to my heart. I find a constant shame and self-loathing on account of my short-coming, and want of conformity to the law; and that too in instances wherein none, save God and my own conscience, are witnesses. I find extraordinary satisfaction, when any degree of conformity to the law is attained. The ordinary and serious breathing of my soul, is such as that of the Psalmist's, in the 119th Psalm, throughout. Upon these grounds I do conclude, that the Lord has wrought faith in me, and therefore will save me, and complete what concerns me; and because he has determined me to choose him, therefore I dare call him, 'My God, my Saviour, my Sanctifier.' The Lord did, this day, help me to plead

for strength against sin. And my God will hear me. I have reason, when I have done all, to say, I have nothing, I cannot serve the Lord.

“In the beginning of this affair, in March 1700, I was confident I should meet with a disappointment; I was resolved to quit it, and did so for some time. God, by one means or other, broke all my projects of giving it up; he kept me intent in observing his providences; he gave me an opportunity of prosecuting my suit, directed me to means of which I had not thought, and prevented my fears respecting those which I thought most unfavorable. After I had the greatest prospect of encouragement, I met with discouragements, and then again with encouragement when I least expected it. I was kept from a reliance upon means, kept to low thoughts of myself, and in dependence on God, as to the result. The thoughts of these things made me, with much sweetness, promise myself good at the hand of God.”

In prosecution of his purpose, he was married at Edinburgh, January 23, 1701. As God blessed him with children, it was his constant practice to devote them to the Lord. He was much in prayer for his family, submitting all his and their concerns to the divine disposal, as to life, health, &c. But most earnest was he for their soul's eternal welfare; as the following extracts from his diary will show.

“March 1705. An account of my feelings with respect to the state of my young child's soul, a girl eleven months old. When two years ago my son died in the birth, I was much concerned in desiring some satisfaction as to his eternal state, but obtained no particular promise at that time, except only, that I was made to bless God, that I had no ground to fear the worst, as I might have had if he had come to age. I was made to look to the extensive promise of the covenant which is to us and our children. I had peace in the thought that I had devoted him to the Lord. When the child of which I now speak, fell into a languishing sickness, and death began evidently to approach, I had

more deep feeling respecting her eternal state. I was sometimes much enlarged in prayer, in her behalf; but I was unwilling to rest here, and humbly desired, that the Lord would give me some ground from his word to hope in her case. That I might not be wanting in the use of the means of the Lord's appointment, I consulted books, and the experience of such of the Lord's people as I had access to, to learn what I might expect; but I found no satisfaction. Yet I resolved to wait on the Lord, and cry to him. When I cried to him, I found, for a considerable time, no answer, but heavy rebukes; for not observing the teachings of the Bible, as I should have done; for not seeking the Lord more in prayer; and for not studying the scriptures as much as I should. Thus the Lord dealt with me as with Israel; when they cried, before he sent deliverance, he sent a reproof. The Lord, further to humble me, visited me with several afflictions, my wife's sickness and my own.

"When I was in this distress, I cried to the Lord, and in prayer he relieved me, by that passage, 'Suffer little children to come unto me.' As to this I remark, that it was suggested to my mind while I was in prayer, crying for mercy for the child. And the Lord let me see in it, that it was the parents who brought their children to Christ, desirous of his blessing them. The disciples were against Christ's taking notice of them, or putting any particular mark of respect on them; but Christ rebuked his disciples, and said, 'Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not.' Though the disciples would not have us expect any evidence of the Lord's special love to young children, yet the Lord is of another mind. The Lord approved of the parents bringing the children, and he blessed them. Here the Lord enlarged me, helped me to rely on him, that he would put his hand on the child and bless her, and so quieted my soul, and filled me with thankfulness. And I was relieved respecting the child that was gone, as well as the one that was dying. Bless, bless, bless the Lord, O my soul; he prepares

the heart to pray, and he will incline the ear to hear. 'Remember the word on which thou causedst me to hope.'

"April 11. The child died. Blessed be God I have had a child to give at his call, and blessed be the Lord that he helped me to give her willingly."

Another instance at the death of his son George, March 23, 1712.

"The Lord's day, a day to be remembered by me; a day wholly spent in prayer and praise, an introduction to life. O my soul, never forget what this day I felt, and what I attained. My soul had smiles that almost wasted nature. My kind colleague and I prayed alternately. O such a sweet day! About half an hour after the Sabbath, my child, after a sharp conflict betwixt nature and the disease, slept pleasantly in Jesus, to whom pleasantly he was often given.

"The mercies I received, and the grounds which I had for hope in this dispensation, were, that the Lord from the beginning fixed my eye on himself, and kept me submissive and dependent as to the child. In the commencement the Lord brought the disease pleasantly on; and gave him astonishing patience, when for several days and nights, he was entirely deprived of sleep. The Lord gave me warning of his death by the following circumstance:—Though the child, I believe, scarcely knew his mother's name or mine before, but always called us only father and mother; in his sickness, when asked who we were, he answered, Thomas Halyburton and Janer Watson. Here the relation was disowned, which struck me at the first, and therefore I thought the relation loosed. His mother, one day, asked him, why he called her so, but he returned her no answer. I asked him, some days after he was taken sick, George, would you like to get well and live, or die and go to heaven? I expected a child's answer; but he readily, and more readily than was consistent with his usual way of speaking, said, 'I will go to heaven.' I was, by his answer, somewhat rebuked for not being serious enough in the question;

and from that time I expected his death. I had, all this winter, been remarkably assisted in crying for mercy upon the children; and any relief I had obtained, and loosing of my bonds, was, when I directed my prayer this way. Often I got freedom to cast them on sovereign grace, often to speak to them directly from the scriptures, at night, and not more than about a month before this, from Jacob's last words. I thought that now God was to try me in the tenderest point, and see whether I should endure, and hold to the often repeated resignation of myself to his will, which I had made.

“I could not find freedom in prayer, in seeking the child's life, but much in crying for mercy to him. When he first fell ill, the burden was great on my spirit, till that night, after my kind colleague and I had communed, with much concern, about the present state of the church, and of religion in this place; concern for the Lord's interest got far the ascendant in my heart, and my own dearest concerns sunk. And from that time the Lord scattered the clouds, and comforted me, as to my present great anxiety, especially in giving me enlargement to bless him, that I had no positive grounds to call in question his state. Again the Lord led me to lay stress on his command, to bring little children to him; nay, he caused me to hope on that word, and on the extension of the promise to children. The nearer he was to his end, the more were my affections loosed from him, the more cheerful my resignation, submission, and humble confidence, the more refreshing, purifying, and quickening my spirit. The Lord led both me and others to express confidence respecting his future state: we could not avoid it. My kind colleague and I spent the whole day in prayer with and for him; and he, in his turn, praying just when the child was dying, could not even stop short of saying, *We desire to believe, we hope, nay, we are confident he is entering into glory.* Although he had been free from restlessness and delirium, for forty-eight hours before his death, he came to have some little

struggles at last, though without contortions. I was led to cry to the Lord for pity as to this, and to ask it as a token for good, and was heard. That same grace which prepared the heart to pray, inclined the ear to hear, kept the soul cheerfully resigned, and not only composed, but sweetened our spirits; so that before his death, prayers were well nigh made up of praises, and he was sent forward with thanksgiving."

CHAPTER XIX.

Of his entering upon the Professorship of Divinity.

THE place of Professorship of Divinity in the new College in the University of St Andrews being vacant, a proposal was once and again made to Mr. Halyburton, of procuring him an appointment to that situation; but he gave no encouragement to it, resolving to be in no way the disposer of his own lot. And in December, 1709, being advertised, that her Majesty's patent was granted in his favor, he said, "Lord, put a stop to the scheme, if it is not for thy glory. Herein I have peace, that I had no hand in it." The Queen's patent being forwarded, the College thereupon applied to the presbytery of Cupar, to have Mr. Halyburton dismissed from his pastoral relation to the parish of Ceres, in order to his being settled Professor of Divinity in St Andrews. But that reverend judicatory, in February 1710, referred the affair to the provincial Synod of Fife, which was to meet at St. Andrews the next April; and the matter being deliberately debated before the Synod, and the people of Ceres fully heard in what they had to say, the desire of the College upon her majesty's patent was granted, without a contradictory vote."

Upon the whole business, Mr. Halyburton had the following reflections:

“As to this affair, it seems to be of the Lord. For it commenced without my so much as thinking of it. The Lord crossed all other attempts, and disappointed the prospects which they had of obtaining other persons. The Lord kept my spirit, and held me so by the hand, that I durst give no encouragement to the project. The desires of many who feared the Lord, were, that I should be selected. The Lord laid his hand on me in sickness, and therein seemed to say, that I should not probably be competent for the work in my present large congregation. As the Lord began it with me, so he did carry it on, through obstructions, remarkably enough. I had no reason to doubt the singleness of purpose of any concerned in the business, or who acted in it. When I began to compare the course of the Lord’s dealing with me, and the course of my studies, I could not deny that there might be something in it. My people, as soon as the matter was proposed, began to doubt. Their consciences were affected with the preponderating evidence of the reasons in favor of my removal, as was mine, though their inclinations were opposed to it. The Lord condescended to bring the matter to the decision of the most competent judicatory.

“The Lord made me willing to submit to the course of his providence; and since there was a present harmony between me and the congregation, I resolved, after seriously eyeing God’s providential dealings with me, to go as far as the congregation inclined. And it being proposed in a full meeting of the elders, they unanimously declared that they designed to acquiesce in the decision of the Synod. It was my prayer to the Lord, that there might be some evidence from him, attending the determination; and I dare not deny but that there was this evidence, even beyond expectation, to the conviction of all my own people. There was evidently a great weight on the spirits of the members about light to direct them. The Lord was remarkably with Mr. Hogg, who prayed before the vote. When I retired, I cried to the Lord, that if the matter was not for his glory, he would put a remarkable

stop to it ; and if it was, that he would carry it on in a way, that might give evidence of his approbation. The Synod inverted the course of the rolls, casting St. Andrews and Cupar last, that two presbyteries, which were not interested, might be first. } There was not one contradictory vote ; only the presbytery of Cupar forbore to vote, because they could not vote against the transfer, and would not irritate the parish. When all this was intimated, it was done with a convincing light, by Mr. Grierson, the moderator *pro tempore*. The will of the Lord be done. I had composure in my own mind, the Lord condescending to grant it, even beyond my expectation. Now, Lord, fit me for what thou dost evidently call me to."

April 26th, 1710, he was, by the Principal of the New College, inaugurated Professor of Divinity there ; and delivered his inaugural discourse, in confutation of an atheistical pamphlet, entitled, "Epistola Archimidis, ad Regem Gelonem.

Being admitted Professor, he enjoyed not much sound health in the exercise of that office. For in the beginning of April, 1711, he was suddenly seized with a dangerous pleurisy, which obliged his physicians to take from him a vast quantity of blood. And though he was relieved of that disease, yet he never fully recovered his former strength, by reason of the indisposition of his stomach, and frequent vomiting, which prevented the regular supply of blood for the nourishment of his body. Hereupon ensued, in the following winter, a coldness, swelling, and stiffness in his legs, with frequent and excessively painful cramps. But besides his bodily indisposition, the grievances of the church of Scotland did not a little add to his trouble. His spirit was much oppressed with the melancholy news of the toleration, and the restoring of the power of presentations unto patrons. And he was no less afflicted with the imposing of the oath of abjuration upon ministers, from the apprehensions which he had, of the sad effects that might follow, upon their different sentiments about

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the lawfulness of that oath. He freely declared his own opinion, in the meeting of the Synod at St. Andrews, April 1712. And in conferences of the Presbytery upon that matter, he advised, that ministers, after all due means of information, should act according to their light. But what he especially endeavored to inculcate, as he had opportunity, was, that the difference among them about the meaning of an expression, in that oath, gave no just ground for any alienation of affection, or for division and separation, either among ministers or people.

CHAPTER XX.

An account of some of his last words on his death-bed, September, 1712.

WEDNESDAY, September 17th, when a friend came and asked him in the morning, how he had rested the past night, he answered, Not well; and added, he had that night been sorely tossed with the thoughts of eternity: "but", said he, "I dare not say they were distracting. My evidences are much clouded indeed. I have been thinking on the terrible things of God, and all that is difficult in death to a saint. All my enemies have been round about me. I have had a great conflict, and my faith like to fail. O! that I may be kept now, in this last trial that is ensuing, from being an offence to God's people." In the afternoon, when some of his brethren came in to visit him, he said to them, "I am but young, and have but little experience; but this death-bed now makes me old; and therefore I use the freedom to exhort you to faithfulness in the Lord's work. Ye will never repent this. He is a good Master. I have always found him so. If I had a thousand

lives, I would think them all too little to employ in his service." All this day, and some days preceding, he was under a cloud, and his spiritual joys deserted him.

September 18th. When a friend returned in the morning to ask him how he was, he broke silence with these words—"O what a terrible conflict I had yesterday! But now I can say, 'I have fought the good fight, I have kept the faith.' Now he has filled my mouth with a new song; 'Jehovah jireh, in the mount of the Lord,' &c. 'Praise, praise is comely for the upright.' Shortly I shall get a different view of God from any I have ever had, and shall be more qualified to praise him than ever: O the thoughts of an incarnate God are sweet and ravishing! and O how do I wonder at myself, that I do not love him more, that I do not admire him more. O that I could honor him! What a wonder that I enjoy such composure under all my bodily trouble, and in view of approaching death! O what a mercy that I have the use of my reason till I have declared his goodness to me."

To his wife he said, "He came to me 'in the third watch of the night, walking upon the waters,' and he said to me, 'I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, I was dead and am alive, and live for evermore, and have the keys of hell and death.'" And then added, "He stilleth the tempest, and O there is a sweet calm in my soul!"

Afterwards, when desired to be careful of his health, he said, "I'll strive to last as long as I can, and I'll get my rest ere it be long. I have no more to do with time, but carefully to measure it out for the glory of God."

Then he said, "I'll see my Redeemer stand on the earth at the last day; but I hope to see him before that; him, the 'Lamb in the midst of the throne.' O it will be a beautiful company: 'The spirits of just men made perfect, and Jesus the mediator of the covenant!' O for grace, grace to be patient to the end." He then desired a minister to pray.

After prayer, he called for a little water to wash his

eyes, and said, "I hope to get them washed, and made like dove's eyes; and then farewell sin, farewell sorrow." In a little while, when taking some refreshment, he said, "You see I am eating heartily here. I get sleep from him, and I get food and drink from him, and I'll get himself. 'My heart and my flesh fail; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever.' But we have need of patience."

When one said, Keep the light of the window from him, it may hurt his eyes, he said, "'Truly, light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is to behold the sun,' the Sun of righteousness. O glorious light, where 'the Lamb is the light of that temple! We cannot have a conception of it now; eye hath not seen, nor ear heard,' " &c.

Seeing his youngest child, he caused them to bring her to him, and said, "Mary, my dear, the Lord bless you; the God of your father, and of my father, bless you; 'the God that fed me all my life, the Angel that redeemed me from all evil,' bless you, and the rest, and be your portion. That is a goodly heritage, better than if I had crowns and sceptres to leave you. My child, I got you from him, and I give you to him again."

To his wife he said, "My dear, encourage yourself in the Lord; he will keep you, though you even come into enemies' hands: surely he will cause the enemy to treat you well." And then, declaring his willingness to part with his dearest relations, he said, "This is the practice of religion, Sirs; this is the practical part of religion, to make use of it when we come to the strait; this is a lesson of practical divinity."

When the physician came in, he said, "Is my pulse weak, Doctor?" "Yes; but I have seen it as weak." Then he said, "Doctor, as to this piece of work, you are nearly at an end with it. I wish you may lay it to heart: death will come to your door too. And it is a business of great moment, to die like a Christian. And it is a rare thing. Christ himself has told us, that there are but few that shall be saved, even among them who are outwardly called. I wish the Lord himself may

show you kindness. The greatest kindness I am now capable of showing you, is to commend serious religion to you. There is a reality in religion, Doctor ; but this is an age that has lost the sense of it. 'He has not said to the house of Jacob, seek ye my face in vain.' Atheists will see one day, whether it be so or not.

"I bless God I was educated by godly parents, in the principles of the church of Scotland. I bless him, that when I came to riper years, I did, on mature deliberation, make these principles my choice. I bless the Lord I have been helped ever since to adhere to them, without wavering. I bless him I have seen, that holiness yields peace and comfort in prosperity and in adversity. What should I seek more, or desire more, to give me evidence of the reality of religion ? Therefore, 'I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.' I am so far from altering my thoughts of religion, by reason of the present contempt thrown on it, and opposition made to it, that these things endear it the more to me.

"As to the simplicity of gospel worship, many must have gaudy pomp, now-a-days, in worship. This is an evidence of the decay of religion ; for when people are without the power and spirituality of it, they must have something to please the carnal heart. This is my opinion of it, and they are 'the words of truth and soberness.' I speak moreover, as being shortly to appear in judgment ; where I hope to give an account of this with joy, as a part of the testimony of Jesus. Well, Doctor, the Lord be with you, and persuade you to be in earnest. I return you thanks for your attention. Is my pulse low ?" "Yes." He replied, "I am very well pleased. I would have been content to have been away long ere now. I found my spirits failing. It is but a few strokes more, and victory, victory for evermore, through the 'Captain of our salvation.'"

After a pause, he said, "Every one that is in Christ Jesus must be a new creature ; he must have union

with Christ, and a new nature. That is the ground work of religion. The Christian religion is little understood by the most part of us. O the gospel of Christ, how purely was it preached in this place, when I was at the university! though I found not the sweetness in it at the time, when I heard others preach on these subjects, I have found it since; and it has fallen on me like showers on the mown grass. Verily, there is a reality in religion. Few have lively impressions of it. Now get acquaintance with God. The little acquaintance I have had with God, within these two days, has more than ten thousand times repaid the pains I have, in all my life, taken about religion. It is good to have God to go to, when we are turning our 'face to the wall.' 'He is known for a refuge in the palaces of Zion, a very present help in trouble!' O there is a strange hardness in the heart of man! I believe there are few men come to age, who, when they see others dying, do not have a conviction that they must die, and yet are not duly affected with it. What they meet with, is like one rising from the dead. But 'they have Moses and the prophets; if they will not hear them, neither would they hear, though one should rise from the dead?' We must have an ear from God before we can hear. 'Ye hear not my words,' says Christ, 'because ye are not of God.' However, whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear, it is our duty, whom the Lord has employed to preach his gospel, to speak of his word. And when we are dead, what we speak of his word in the name of the Lord, will take hold of them.

"We must have patience to wait till he come. 'Yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry;' and till he come, the just shall live by faith. 'But if any man draw back' says the Lord, 'my soul shall have no pleasure in him.' Once to start heavenward, and then draw back, is a dangerous thing. We are foolish creatures, we would have all our trials at our disposal, and limit the Lord as to the circumstances of them. Why should I complain of a

little trouble, in lying on the bed? Blessed be God, there is an everlasting rest. Yea, Christ hath perfumed a bed of languishing, and a grave; he has taken the sting from death."

At another time, he said, "Enemies in this place will be insulting over me, but I am not afraid of that. But what fills me with fears, is a misimproved gospel in St. Andrews. St. Andrews has sinned against as clear gospel light, as ever shone in the isle of Britain. I remember, when I was at the college, how much of God there was in the preached gospel! I had my part in the misimproving of it."

Afterwards to his children he said; "My children I have nothing to say to you, but that ye be seekers of God. Fulfil my joy. Alas! that I was so long in beginning to seek God. And yet I was touched with convictions that God was seeking me, before I arrived at the years of some of you."

To his eldest child he said, "Ay, Margaret, you seem sometimes to have convictions; beware of them, they are the most dangerous things that ever you meddled with. For although you may seek not God, yet each of them is God's messenger; and if you despise God's messenger he will be avenged on you. My dear, seek the Lord, and be your mother's comfort."

In the forenoon he said to a gentlewoman, "Madam, I wait for the supplies of the Spirit of the Lord Jesus, whereby I may be able to finish my course with joy. I began a text at Ceres, (being my farewell sermon,) and, (smiling, he said) I failed in it, I went not through with it. When I came to St. Andrews, I began where I left off at Ceres, 'I go bound to Jerusalem,' &c. The point which I prest was, 'Ministers may have a clear call to work in a place, even where they have the certain prospect of difficulties, and severe trials. I was very clear respecting God's calling me hither, come of it what will, whether I do any good or not. What would befall me I did not know, I had a very dark prospect, especially in this place, which had so much despised gospel light. And when he was taking away

his servants here, it made me tremble to think that wrath was coming, and that I could do nothing to keep it off—I can signify nothing. The Lord help; I wish for Jerusalem's peace and joy. I have nothing to do with my life, but still to husband it, that I may lay it out for my God; for this it is my duty to do. What had I been if the grace of God had not been revealed in the gospel! He has 'brought life and immortality to light.'" One said, "Keep your hold to the last; Satan is busy." He answered, "I have had trial of it already. O! sober, sober religion is necessary. I was often stealing from the Lord; but blessed be his name, he made me lay it down again with shame, and cry, 'Not I, but the grace of God which was in me.' I was always afraid in public, on that account."

He caused to be read, one of Mr. Rutherford's letters, the 138th, written to Mr. John Mein—and then said, "That is a book I would recommend to you all; there is more practical religion in that letter, than in some books of large volumes."

To a minister that came in, he said, "I am lying, waiting for the salvation of God." The visiter replied, "Remember what I spoke to you concerning Mr Anderson, how gracious the Lord had been to him, taking him away before these heart-breaking providences that have since fallen out." He replied; "I know there is a better end of it; the cause that is down will not remain down. I said it, I will venture my soul on it; 'Say to Zion, thy God reigneth.' Kings and ministers of state, that build their power on the ruins of Zion, they and their buildings shall be ruined and perish, and their memorial with them." One said, "If the Lord would spare you, it would be a mercy to the place: as the apostle says, 'to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.'" He answered, "What can a poor wretch signify? I'll tell you, brother, what I have long thought, I am no prophet, I pretend to know nothing but what the word of God teaches; my thoughts of taking off the servants of God at this time, are, I fear it is coming to the point, that there is no stop to be put

to the overflowing scourge. There is like to be a general, overflowing consumption, running over not only this, but all the reformed churches. Sovereignty I will not limit."

Afterwards, as one was speaking of the difficulty we should have, while in the body, with indwelling corruption, he remarked, "I often find it; but the Lord has relieved me. I found this same night, even after the Lord gave relief, indwelling sin showing a great deal of strength." One said, "You know, while you are in the body, that will not be quite taken away; a perfect separation from it we are not to expect here." He added, "This we know, that 'when he shall appear, we shall be like him.' This has been made a sweet word to me last night."

After a little interruption, he said, "In the day when I was in my distress, and brought to the foot of mount Sinai, 'the mount that might not be touched, (it was a sensible thing, but by divine appointment it might not be touched,) and when I came to the blackness and darkness, and heard the crashing of thunder, &c., I was standing trembling, wishing I had never been born. While I was waiting for my sentence, he brought me to Zion, and to the blood of sprinkling; that view gave my mind rest." To the apothecary he said, "The Lord is upholding me. The Lord show you mercy; study religion in the beginning of your years; mind, if you come to be afflicted as I am, without it you can have no comfort. I give you as a solemn warning, if you become hardened by the frequent sights of persons in my circumstances, you may become hardened for ever, and your conscience never be sensible more."

To three ministers in the place, he said, "My dear brethren, you are all that there are in the town, except my dear colleague, and I have sent for him. Dear brethren, it is not from any confidence in myself, but out of a sincere love to you, and from what I myself have felt, that, for your encouragement, I presumed to say, when the Lord helped me to diligence in studying

and meditating, I found him then remarkably shining upon me, and testifying his approbation of a sincere mind. There is nothing to be had with a slack hand." Then to one of them lately entered into the ministry he said, "Your entry into the ministry is like to fall in an evil day; but there is one thing for your encouragement, you have a call. The times will make hard work for you in this place; but that which makes your work the harder, is, that this people are hardened under a long course of pure gospel ordinances. However, be faithful, and God will strengthen his own work. I will not say, you will get things brought to the state you would desire; but I'll tell you I have one thought, and I abide by it; if ministers ply their work, they cannot, it is true, bring persons to the Lord, but they may make their consciences, whether they will or will not, speak for the Lord."

Continuing his discourse to the ministers, he said, "Now, brethren, give diligence; 'hold fast what ye have.' I must say a word to my brethren; it is on my heart. I am young, but I am near the end of my life, and that makes me old. It becomes me to take advice from you; however, I only wish to exhort you to diligence in the common salvation. I repent I did not more, but I have peace in reflecting, that what I did, I did in sincerity: he accepts of the mite. It was the delight of my heart to preach the gospel, and it made me sometimes neglect a frail body. I ever thought, if I could contribute to the saving of a soul, it would be to me a star, a crown, even a glorious crown. I know this was the thing I aimed at; I desired to decrease, that the Bridegroom might increase, and to be nothing, that he might be all; and I rejoice in his exaltation." When one remarked that such great attainments must be comfortable to him now, he replied; "I lay no stress on them; the thing I rejoice in is, that his grace enabled me to do this. Well, brethren, this is encouragement to you to try and go farther. Alas, I have gone no length; but I would fain have gone farther: 'the hand of the diligent makes rich.'

Much study, much prayer, temptations even, and distinct deliverances from temptations, are useful helps. I was fond enough of books; but I must say, that in the course of my ministry, what the Lord let me see of my ill heart, and of what was necessary to guard against it, was more serviceable to me than all my books." One said, that was to believe, and therefore to speak. He replied, "the Lord help me to honor him: I desire no more, but to honor him here and hereafter. O that I had the tongues of men and angels to praise him! I hope, I hope in a little while to get a will to answer duty, and skill and ability to answer will. O, to be helped so, and to fear always." One said, blessed is he that feareth always, even under manifestations and discoveries of God, "he that stands, let him take heed lest he fall;" he replied, "sobriety, would fall in a little while, if he withdraw; but do not stumble, Sirs; though I should be shaken, the foundations stand sure."

When advised to lie quiet a little, he said, "In what should a man spend his last breath, but in commending the Lord Jesus Christ, God clothed in our nature, dying for our sins? 'It pleased the Lord to bruise him.'" It was remarked, the Lord hath said, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice;" and he was entreated to be tender of his body. He answered, "O but my heart is full!" And then desiring a minister to pray, he said, "Pray that God may have pity on a weak thing, that is not able to bear much in the conflict."

After prayer, when the ministers were retiring, he said, "Well my brethren, remember me. I desire to be thankful for what I have. I do not desire to want you long." Afterwards, to a minister's wife he said, "I recommend to you the fear of the Lord; I know you have a husband to direct you; I know you are the seed of the righteous; but neither of these will avail. Make it your business to grow in practical acquaintance with him, and encourage yourself in the Lord. I fear the time is coming when it shall be said, 'Blessed are the breasts that gave no suck, and the

womb that never bare.' I fear heavy trials are hastening on."

To two ministers, who came from the country to visit him, he said, "Brethren, I'll only say this; we have need to take care, with the great apostle, 'lest when we preach Christ to others, we ourselves be cast-a-ways'; we have need to fear lest it be so; happy is the man that fears always. Be diligent in preaching the gospel. I venture, in my present condition to suggest the advice, that it not only be your care to be diligent in composing sermons, but above all, to scan your own hearts, and make use of what discoveries you get there, to enable you to dive into consciences, to awaken hypocrites, and to separate the precious from the vile; and to do it with such accuracy and caution as not to make sad the hearts of those whom God has made glad. That is the great point in religion, and in the management of your ministry, that you may obtain the testimony of the great Shepherd, when he shall appear. Now it is probable I may not be far from the conclusion of my work. As to the work of the ministry, it was my deliberate choice; were my days lengthened out much more, and days as troublesome as they are like to be, I would rather be a contemned minister of God, than the greatest prince on earth. I preached the gospel of Christ with pleasure, and I loved it; for my own soul's salvation was upon it; and since I lay down, I have not changed my thoughts about it. I commend it to you all, to make it your business to double your diligence: there may be hard conflicts. You have a prospect of difficulties between you and the grave. We all appear good when untried; but we have need to have on the whole armor of God, to watch and be sober."

One of them said, "I would gladly hear the Professor's opinion respecting the oath." He answered, "As to the matter of the oath, 'let every one be fully persuaded in his own mind.' As those who are clear, should guard against every thing that may endanger the peace of this church; so likewise, others, who are

not clear, who cannot get over the difficulties, and cannot in conscience and duty comply; these are bound in conscience, not only to abstain from separating, but earnestly to convince their people, that separation strikes at the root of church communion. If ministers go on in separating measures, the result will be, that people will be taken up with public, and forget private religion. Whoever takes this course, will give strength to this disposition. We shall have people running about seeking to have their ears gratified, who love not the power of godliness. We shall get a public religion in the room of real godliness. I love their persons that differ from me, and I value what I see of God in them; but I am 'to call no man master save Christ.'

"With respect to the difference that is like to ensue among ministers, with the greatest earnestness I say, my dear brethren in the Lord Jesus, if differences happen, there must be condescension, forbearance, and tenderness; we must not fly at the ball. Whatever apprehensions I have of the consequence of some ministers not acting conscientiously, and running about preaching in such a strain as may do hurt, yet I would speak tenderly, and act tenderly towards them; and let there be much of the forbearance and meekness that is in Jesus. Follow peace; peace is worth much; wounding our church among her enemies is grievous. I would not have a hand in wounding the church of Scotland for a world. Wounding her at this day, is stabbing her under the fifth rib. These things are oppressive to me now, upon the view of eternity. For, 'let my right hand forget her cunning, if I prefer not Jerusalem to my chief joy.' For my brethren, for her peace and constitution I'll pray. The great evil which, at this time, is like to be our bane, nay, our utter ruin, is, that there is a coldness and indifferency that has crept in, a want of tenderness in the course of our walk, which gives a great advantage to our enemies. We do not maintain the testimony of God in an humble, tender way, in such a day as this, when many are running

from God. It seems to be a principle now, with many, to try how far they may go and not be ruined, that is, to go to the brink of destruction ; but the Christian rule is, to stand at a distance. Now the Lord help you. Pray that I may be helped to honor God in life and death : I have much reason to bless him. O to bear it out, and stand the trial thankfully. O what ground of thankfulness have I !”

To his successor in the parish from which he had removed, he said, “I have this to say as to my congregation, that people were my choice ; with much peace and pleasure, I preached as I could, though not as I should, the gospel of Jesus Christ. Though in all things I own myself to have sinned exceedingly before the Lord, yet I have the consolation that I anxiously aimed at leading them to the Lord Jesus ; and another foundation can no man lay. I hope you will build on that same foundation ; for, as you will, in that way, save your own soul, so it is the way to save them that hear you. From experience I can say, that the pursuing of this sincerely, is the way of salvation. Signify to them, that if it please the Lord to take me away, I die rejoicing in the faith, and in the profession of what I often preached to them under a low state of body ; and that without this I could have no relief. I would have my people understand, that the gospel which I recommend to them, if it is not received, will be a witness against them.” His successor remarked, “I am persuaded you have seals to your ministry in that parish.” He answered, “We are, like our master, ‘set for the fall and rising again of many.’ Though we can do no more, if we are faithful, they ‘shall know that a prophet has been among them.’”

To one that came in to see him, he said, “Learn to die. It is a rare thing to die as a Christian ; most persons think there is no more to do, but to lay down their heads and die. This is even as if one would cover his face, and leap over a rock into the sea.” To a gentlewoman, he said, “I may cry, shame on me, and woe is me, that I began not sooner, and ran not

faster ; for the Lord's way is as silver tried. We should never in matters of eternal moment, choose a way that we shall repent of. I will not detain you, you have your uncle, he will be a good friend to you ; follow his advice, and the advice of such persons as he ; follow their example. In a word, follow the example of Jesus Christ, and be conversant with his word. Be careful not only in reading the Scriptures, you may soon tire of that, but cry for the Spirit of the Lord, to quicken them, and then you will be as the child that cannot live without the breast. Be diligent in attending the ordinances of the gospel. The Lord bless you. As for me, for any thing I see, I am dying ; but I die, I bless his name, in the way that I have hitherto deliberately chosen, and I have no ground to complain. Commend me to all my friends. Carry this commission along, what I say to one, I say to all ; Seek the Lord. And all I have to desire, is that I may stand to it."

'To a private Christian he said, "Seek the Lord, and be in earnest about religion. Content not yourself with the form of it ; a mere profession will not do the turn ; this will be only the shell without the kernel ; but they that are sincere, shall inherit the crown. Let not the scorn and contempt that is cast on religion, cause you give up with it. 'Tis not in vain to seek the Lord, you have found that it is not. The scriptures of truth are a contemned book, by men, but they are able to make you wise unto salvation ; beware of quarrelling with them, and throwing them by as a useless book ; but converse with them, and you will find your account in them. All the books of the world could not have stood me in that stead, that since yesterday they have been to me. Choose good company ; beware of evil company, keep at a distance from it ; seek that God may guide you into religious company, and improve it ; persons by whom you may learn something, and that without learning any thing that may be hurtful. You have a sad set of gentry round about here ; take heed you be not drawn aside

by them. This is a friends advice ; it is proper for me, in my circumstances especially, to give, and meet for you to receive."

After a little pause, he said, "I'll only tell you one difference there is, this day, between my case and the case of many in the world ; the course I have followed, though feebly, has been at least to join with them that are on God's side. Now, it is come to a trial, and I have peace ; I always wished to have God for my God, and to possess the heritage of his chosen. But those who walk contrary to God, and forsake him, I have seen frequently, when they were come to a pinch, cry, 'O shame upon the way I have been in!'" In the night time to some present he said, "Do you observe this growing weakness of my eyes?" "No." He replied, "Yea, but I know it is so ; now that is a prognostic of a change. If he shut my eyes, he'll open my eyes, no more to behold vanity ; but I shall behold him in righteousness, and when I awake, I shall be satisfied with his likeness." Afterwards he said, "If this be the day of the ending of my conflict, I would desire, even humbly to seek of the Lord, that he would, of his great mercy, condescend to be tender to one that loves his appearance ; that as he has dealt wonderfully and condescendingly with me, so he may even deal tenderly to the end, in loosing the frame of my tabernacle, and that I may be helped to honor God by a composed resignation of my spirit into his hand. Religion, and the glory of it, in this degenerate age, has been much on my heart ; and God has said, 'Them that honor me I will honor.' I was willing through his grace to have borne reproach. If my adversary had written a book, I would have taken and bound it as a glory." Finding some sweat on his face, he said, "I fancy that it is an indication of a greater change. I can compose myself, and bless his name. I know not how it comes to pass, that a person, who has met with so much of God, should be so unthankful, as in the least to doubt him about the rest. O what an 'evil heart of unbelief,' have I. O how has God honored me ! O that I

should yet have such an enemy in my bosom, as an evil heart."

He caused the 4th and 5th chapters of 1 Thess. to be read. And when one said, "Sir, I think you need to take a night's rest;" he answered, "I have no need of any rest, were it not to put me in a condition to 'finish my course with joy.' Lo, what the power of Christ's death, and the efficacy of his resurrection are! And now I find the advantage of one at 'the right hand of God, who is able to save to the uttermost;' and that is the sight I long for; he will but shut my eyes and open them in glory! O it is a great matter, Sirs, to believe; yet we have strong grounds to believe, only we have 'evil hearts of unbelief.' This I dare to say, that to have my soul entirely submissive to God, and all things, even every high imagination and thought made subject to him, is my sincere desire; and I shall get that done shortly. Then nevermore will there be a reluctant thought, nevermore a thought estranged from God. 'Now it does not appear what we shall be; we shall be like him when he appears; for we shall see him as he is.'"

To one who observed that he was faint, he said, "I am not faint, I am composed, and I am refreshed, I am not drunk with wine, and yet I am refreshed with wine, with 'the spiced wine.' O there is a sweet calm on my soul! And my desires are towards him, and the remembrance of his name.' Remember him! why should I not remember him, who remembered me in my low condition? He passed by, and said, 'live;' and when he speaks, he commands, he gives rest."

After the reading of the aforesaid scripture, he caused the 1st chapter of 2 Cor. to be read, and after the 9th and 10th verses were read, he said, "Now there it is all; God has delivered me, and filled me with peace, when I was under that heavy condemnation; and I hope he will deliver me, even from that which I feared in death, and let me find that I have got the victory; and that the God of peace will shortly bruise Satan under my feet, so that he will get up no more, and that I shall

get a victory over the cunning world; the deceitful heart. O! many a weary day I have had with my unbelief. If I had had faith to believe things not seen, if I had had faith answerable to the convictions I had on my soul, that my happiness lay not in things seen and temporal, but eternal; if I had had faith's abiding impressions realizing these things, I should not have known how to abide out of heaven a moment."

A little afterwards he said, "As I preached the gospel in my life, so I desire to die preaching it; and though I live not to a time of suffering, I may get in among the witnesses. Sirs, I will be a witness against St. Andrews. I will be a witness against the professors, that are come about me, if they follow not the Lord." When desired to lie quiet, and take some sleep, he answered; "The people I am going to, 'sleep not day nor night, but cry, holy, holy, holy!' 'They that wait on the Lord shall mount up as with eagles wings.'" Then he said, "Do you find any alteration as to the coldness of my limbs? The only reason why I ask, is, I would not lose my time. Ah, poor uncomely me, who am ashamed to come in among that fair company." One said, "You will be as fine as the rest." He replied, "Blessings to his name, for my composure. I cannot get my heart in a right tone, as I would have it, but within a little time, I will get it so." After he had laid quiet a little while, one said, "You have slept none." He answered, "No, I had much work, but blessed be God, pleasant work." Afterwards, when his wife asked him how he was, he answered, "My dear, I am longing for the salvation of my God, and hastening to it." Then, seeing her very sad, he said, "My dear, encourage yourself; here is a body going to clay, and a soul going to heaven, where I hope you also are to come."

September 19. About five in the morning, when he was desired to lie quiet, and try if he could rest, he answered, "No, no; should I lie here altogether useless? Should not I spend the last bit of my strength, to show forth his glory?" His hands and legs being greatly swelled, he held them up, and said, "Lame

hands, and lame legs, but see a 'Lame man leaping and rejoicing!'"

Speaking of his children to his wife, he said, "They are all a devoted thing to the Lord; and I can say, when some of them were baptized, that the Lord helped me to devote them to him, and bade me bring the rest, and he would accept of them."

Afterwards, feeling himself disordered, he said, "This is just one of the forerunners of the change, the great change." One said, "Blessed be the Lord, that he is providing you with relief." He replied, "His word is a good word; and O, he has been condescending, astonishingly condescending! And I am even made to say, 'Why are his chariot wheels so long a coming?' 'When shall I be admitted to see the glory of the higher house, and instead of that clouded light of a created sun, to see that clear and perfect glory, and the 'Lamb in the midst of the throne?'" After a little silence, in the forenoon, finding himself very low, he took farewell of his wife and children; saluting them all, one by one, and spoke particularly to each of them. Then he said to his wife, "A kind and affectionate wife you have been to me, the Lord bless you; and he will bless you." To a minister that came in, he said, "Your servant, brother. I am upon a piece of trying work; I am parting with wife and children. I bless his name, though I have had one of the best of wives, yet she is no more mine, but the Lord's." Then to his children, he said, "Now, you are fatherless, your father is to be taken from you; but seek God. And as I got you from the Lord, so now I give you back to him. Now I leave you upon him; you are no more mine." To his son, he said, "God bless the lad, and let my name be named upon him. But O! what is my name! Let the name of the Lord be named upon him. I do not say, keep up my name; but O! that you may be honored to tell the generation following, how good God is, to hand down the testimony. And O that you all may be the Lord's." After that, he spoke to his servants, and said, "As for you, my servants, who have

been in my family, my dear friends, make religion your main business, and mind that above all things. I charge all my servants in my house, beware of graceless masters, avoid them, as what may turn to your destruction. Seek to be with them that fear the Lord."

Again he said, "I will not bring an ill report upon religion; nay, I cannot but give a testimony to it: 'tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed.' God has shed abroad his love in my heart; and I am waiting for his salvation. Here is a demonstration of the reality of religion, that I, a poor, weak, timorous man, once as much afraid of death as any; I that have been many years 'under the terrors of death,' come now, in the mercy of God, and by the power of his grace, composedly, and with joy, to look death in the face. I have seen it in its paleness, and all the circumstances of horror attending it; I dare look it in the face, in its most ghastly shape, and hope within a little while to have the victory." Then he said, "I hope he will deal tenderly; but pray for me, that my faith fail not. I loved to live preaching Christ, and love to die preaching Christ." To some ministers that were come in, he said, "My brethren, I have been taking farewell of wife and children, I have been giving them up to God, from whom I got them. I am upon the wing for eternity; but, glory to God, 'I know in whom I have believed.'" Then he said, "Dear brethren, will you begin and speak a word to one that longs to hear of him? O I love to hear the gospel, I love to preach it; it is a joyful sound, a sweet sound. I love to hear of his name; 'His name is like ointment poured forth.' This gives them their efficacy, they are his ordinances, his institutions, and he has promised to bless them; that makes me desire them. The gospel as dispensed is the 'Ministration of the Spirit.' I have need of grace, that I may be helped to stand to it to the last, and in the last conflict to honor him." One said, "God has been gracious to you hitherto; and you know, he is always the same; he is the same to those that belong

to him. There is one good word, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.'" He answered, "Blessed be his name, that he will stand by me. O to have him shut my eyes himself, and then to open them, that I may behold him in his own light."

Afterwards, he said, "Well, Sirs, what shall we say of the Lord Christ? 'He is altogether lovely.' Religion is a mystery; but I was looking through the promises, this night, and observing how to provide against the last conflict. I was astonished, and at a stand, when I saw the sweet accomplishment of them. Every promise of the word of God is sweet; they are sure promises. O, Sirs, study the word, observe the accomplishment of it; it was the thing I loved all my days, and it is sweet to the last. O the accomplishment of the word, is worthy to be observed, and especially when I was looking, this same night, to what he has already fulfilled to me!" To a minister, he said, "Now, Sir, though I will not limit the Lord, as to time, I am expecting the onset from the last enemy; and I know not but I may get many enemies about me ere that time." Then, having exhorted some present to think on death, he said, "To think of death is a profitable thing. To meditate on death is not to go to church yards, and visit tombs; but it lies in this, to be habitually under the impressions of death, in its rise and cause, in its present state and relation to both covenants, the various results and consequences of it, and the way of delivery from it, and all the circumstances attending it."

Then, as to his spiritual enemies, he said, "But I think I am now almost out of their hands." One remarked, "That is a great victory." He answered, "I dare not speak of victory; but he holds me up, though I cannot keep my way. I am afraid to speak, lest a cursed enemy, self, lie at the door to catch me; for when I had the greatest advantages, I have felt corruption stirring and making no small difficulty, inclining me to despoil my Lord of his glory." It was remarked; "Neither under mercies nor afflictions shall we be free from this trial." He said, "O strange,

when death has been so long kept in view, that it should be so!" One observed, "You have reason to count it a victory, that the Lord has helped you over your late fears. You know what a dread you were under, on Wednesday, and what a sweet relief you obtained." He answered, "I desire to bless his name for it; but I should still be under as great a dread, if he should withdraw. Holy fear, caution and jealousy, are still needful."

After that, to the ministers, he said, "Brethren, are you there? In case I should be surprised by death, I take this opportunity to acknowledge your tenderness to me, and that I am most unworthy of it, in many respects. I can say I desired to live in love with you; and I bless God that there was harmony amongst us. The Lord bless you and your labors; the Lord himself multiply spiritual blessings on you and your families, and support you against discouragements. And the Lord in mercy look on the rising generation; the Lord hold his hands upon the Seminaries in this place; God, look with pity on them." Then, to one he said, "My dear brother, who hast been my comfort in affliction, stand your ground, acquit yourself like a man, be strong. Now, Sir, now, my dear friend, I shall only say, as I wish you the blessing of God on your family, so I desire that you will even show kindness to the dead, in sympathy, with all kindness, to my dear wife and children. I recommend her to your care; she has been the friend of my bosom, the wife of my youth, a faithful friend." And turning to all the ministers present, he said, "O, Sirs, check my poor little children, if you see any thing in them disorderly. I have lent and devoted them to the Lord. Last spring the Lord made proof of it, and took me at my word. O, Sirs, it is an evidence of the decay of religion; that sympathy and love among the saints is decayed. O that the Spirit were poured out from on high!" Then he said, "Pray, Sirs, pray for grace. I would have the praise of the victory given to him."

Afterwards he said, "Patience must have its perfect

work; I will wait for it. My soul longs more than they that wait for the morning. Sweet Lord Jesus, make haste, 'until the day break and the shadows fly away.'" Then to a minister he said, "Pray a word that I may have patience to endure this last trial."

CHAPTER XXI.

The same subject continued.

AT his desire, a large paper was now read over to him, which he had dictated some days before, containing a testimony to religion, and advice to his family. After it was read, he owned, before several witnesses, that he had dictated the same; and desired that it might be attested by them as his words. It was as follows:

"Having, in another paper, made such a disposition of my worldly concerns, as I thought most expedient for my family, I thought myself bound, moreover, by this present statement and latter will, to declare my sentiments and opinion as to religion; being hitherto, through the mercy of God, in the full and composed exercise of any reason and judgment that God has given me, though otherwise very frail in body. And this I am the more inclined to do, as a testimony against the growing apostacy of the day we live in, and in expression of my earnest concern to have all, with whom I have any influence or interest, adhere to truth and the way of God; in opposition to that general inclination to apostacy, in principle and practice, which, at this day, prevails.

"In the first place, then, I do ingenuously acknowledge, that I came into the world a defiled, polluted branch of apostate Adam; under the guilt of his sin, tainted with the pollution of sin derived from him; having a heart full of alienation from God and enmity

against him; in a word, 'a child of wrath, and heir of hell.' And long did I follow the bent of this corrupt nature, going on, notwithstanding, reclaiming means of all sorts, from evil to worse; though mercifully restrained from those more open scandals, which bring reproach in the eyes of the world. In a word, I had ruined myself, and could do nothing for my own recovery; and must have been everlastingly ruined, if the Lord, in tender mercy, had not looked upon me.

"I must, on the other hand, and the Lord knows I do it with much cheerfulness of heart, bless the Lord, who cast my lot in a land where the gospel of Christ, and the way of salvation by him, is clearly, plainly, and purely revealed and preached; where the pure ordinances of God's worship, without the mixture of men's inventions, have, through the mercy of God, been kept up, and the beautiful order of his house maintained, according to the rule of his word. I bless the Lord that he so ordered it, that I was born in a religious family, of godly parents; and that I had this to say, that God was my father's God, and that I had been, by my parents, earnestly and seriously devoted to him. And whereas I was early subjected to other lords, in my childhood and youth, I bless and adore the Lord, that by his word and Spirit, he ceased not to be a reprover, and reclamer, and to strive with me, until by a day of power, he made me cheerfully give up those abominations, and return to the God of my fathers. Long did I struggle against the Lord's work, but, praises to free grace, he proved stronger than I, and overcome me; and I rejoice in his strength.

"I bless the Lord, that, though by many provocations of all sorts, I have given him just ground entirely to abandon me, yet he has not so done; nay, even when I was as a beast before him, he held me by the hand, and left me not to run away. O astonishing sovereignty of grace! I bless the Lord, that when I stood trembling under the terrors of God's law, he seasonably saved me from despair, by some discovery of the blessed way of salvation for self-destroyed sinners,

through a crucified Saviour; even such a discovery, as made me resolve to part with all, that I might have the field, Christ the treasure hid in it, and the 'pearl of great price.' There is nothing I dread so much as a mistake in this matter; it is Christ only that will answer me and my case; and without him I am undone. On him, the efficacy of his sufferings, the power of his resurrection, and of his whole mediation, as revealed in the gospel, do I bind all my hope.

"I bless the Lord that ever he honored such a sinful, unworthy worm, to preach the glorious gospel of his Son. I confess I have but ill managed this glorious trust; and my manifold corruptions made me an exceeding great sinner in all I did; yet so far as I know my own heart, it was the life of my life to 'preach Christ crucified,' and to treat with the consciences of men about accepting him; nor durst I deal coldly or indifferently, in a matter wherein I knew my own and my hearer's salvation for eternity depended. Herein this day I have peace, and I know that in this matter, I shall never have ground of regret. I must bear my honorable master this testimony, that he never bid me go any part of my warfare upon my own charges; if I was straitened, it was in my own bowels. As to him I always found, that to spend and employ in his service, was the best thrift. When I was helped freely to give what freely I had received, I never wanted seed for sowing, and bread for the eater, and I hope sometimes I had a blessing to bestow.

"I bless God, that he has cast the lot of an insignificant worm among those to whom his weak labors were not unacceptable. And I look upon it as a high privilege, to have the countenance of the saints, 'the excellent ones of the earth.' I have desired to live with them here, and desire to have my lot with them eternally, hereafter. I have peace, this day, that through his merciful hand, I have been kept from making any worldly interest my main design. It is to his grace only that I owe this, and every thing else.

"I bless the Lord, that I have been happily supplied,

in the several places where I have lived, with kind, affectionate, and useful fathers and brethren, with whom I have lived with much delight and satisfaction, and for whom I heartily bless the Lord.

“In a word, I desire to join my insignificant testimony to that of the glorious cloud of witnesses; and particularly do I attest, as my fixed persuasion, that Christ alone has the ‘words of eternal life;’ that the gospel alone has ‘brought life and immortality to light;’ that this blessed revelation is able ‘to make wise to salvation every one that believeth.’ I must bear testimony that the way of holiness is the way of peace, and the way of pleasantness; and that gospel ordinances, in their native simplicity and purity, are blessed and effectual means of communion and fellowship ‘with the Father and with the Son.’

“I see a generation, which has long ago lost the power of religion, some of them once seemed to have, hastening fast to an utter rejection of the purity of gospel ordinances, and strongly inclined to substitute in their room that dead carcase of forms, ceremonies, and superstitions, which England, at her reformation, regarding political considerations more than the rule of church reformation, retained, to the unspeakable prejudice of souls, and to the endangering; one day or other, the whole of the christian religion there; it being plain, that among those who adhere to them, the power of religion is still becoming less and less. And nothing could induce this generation to make the change, but their utter ignorance of the power of religion; for something men must have. It is obvious, that the change is not of God; the lives of those who are zealous for it demonstrate this, as does also the opposition made by them unto serious godliness, and the encouragement given unto profane persons, if they will but join with them in this party design. In a word, my opinion of it is, that it flows from the want of a sense of the spirituality which God requires of his worship, and that it is likely to result in the loss of all religion. Such as now cavil at the purity and simplicity of religion, and put

forms in its room, are likely, ere long, as we have seen instances, to set the form aside too.

“In a word, every thing in God’s way and in his word, is glorious, honorable, and like himself; he needs none of our testimonies; but it is the least that we can do, to signify our wishes to have his praises celebrated. And I, being so many ways obliged, take this solemn occasion to acknowledge, before I leave the world, these among my other innumerable obligations, and I desire to bequeath this, as my best legacy to my family, even my serious and solemn advice, that they should make choice of God for their God. He has been my father’s God, the God both of my wife’s predecessors and mine; he has been, we hope, our God. And I recommend him to my children for their God; solemnly charging them, even all of them, as they will be answerable in the great day, to make it their first care to seek after peace with God, and reconciliation through Christ crucified; and being reconciled, to make it their perpetual study to please him in all things. I beseech them, with all the bowels of a father, as they love their souls, that they sit not down short of a saving acquaintance with him, that they wait diligently upon the means of grace, and attend the worship of God in all duties, especially secret and family duties, and that they carefully attend public ordinances. Beware of contenting yourselves with the mere form of these duties, but cry to the Lord for communion with him in them, and for the out-pouring of his Spirit, whereby you may be enabled to worship God, who is a spirit, in spirit. It is my charge to you, and that in which more than every thing else relating to you, I am concerned that you follow him fully, without turning aside to the right or left hand. In this way, I dare promise you blessedness. If you follow this way, I bless you all, and pray that He, who blesses, and they are blessed, may bless you all. I have often, as I could, devoted all of you to God; and there is nothing I have so much at heart, as to have this stand, that ye may indeed be

the Lord's. And if ye turn aside from this way, then I shall have this to be a standing witness against you in the day of the Lord. O that God himself, by his grace, may, in a day of his power, determine your tender hearts to seek him early; for then he will be a good portion unto you, and see well to you. 'Your bread shall be given you, and your water shall be sure.' Necessaries you shall have, and a blessing; and though you have not many blood relations, you shall not want a friend every where, and that a steady friend. I leave you, my dear family, upon the mercies of God in Christ, and recommend him and 'the word of his grace' to you, and you to him, and 'the word of his grace.' Be obedient and pleasant to your mother, as you would have God's blessing. She deserves this at your hand, and will need such comfort.

"I leave this one advice more to my family; that whereas we have a prospect of divisions, and different beliefs and practices among ministers and people, particularly about this oath of abjuration; beware of interesting yourselves in these differences, or entertaining prejudices against ministers upon the one hand or the other. There will be faithful ministers on both sides, and on either hand they will act according to their light. Whoever shall join in weakening any of their hands, will find no peace in it, in the close of his life. Beware of a religion that is mostly taken up about public matters. The sum of the gospel, is Christ crucified. Seek where this is purely preached; beware of a fondness for pulpit debates. 'Walk humbly with God; fear always.' Keep at a distance from appearances of evil; follow peace, truth, holiness. This, instead of legacies, I leave unto you, as my last will, never to be revoked.

"As for my body, I commit it to the dust, under the care of the Keeper of Israel, expecting and hoping, that that quickening Spirit, which is the Spirit of the Head, and actuates all the members of his mystical body, will in due time 'quicken my mortal body;' and as to my

spirit, I commend it unto the Lord Jesus Christ. To him I have entrusted it, long ago; and I will end with Stephen, crying, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.'

THOMAS HALYBURTON."

Afterwards, to some present, he said, "Professors, I have this to say, to-day, about religion, we have a double call to give a testimony to it; atheism and profaneness are coming in like a flood. We shall all be martyrs. Blessings to his name that I have leave to lie on this bed, to testify against profaneness and atheism." But it is very painful to be lying here when all is ready; I mean, when there is a habitation, a better house to dwell in than this. I am loosed from my enjoyments, my dearest wife and children, I have given them up, and my heart is disengaged; but I put them into a good hand, I have put them into the Lord's hand. I do confess, God has been beating me in a mortar, this long time, and I see he has been doing some work; I was made like a weaned child; I durst not repine." Then he cried, "O when wilt thou come? Come, Lord Jesus. I wait for the Lord."

Afterwards, when some people came in to see him, he said, "These fourteen or fifteen years I have been studying the promises; but I have seen more of the book of God this night, than in all that time. O the wisdom that is laid up in the book of God; that is to be found only there!" Then he said, "I know a great deal which comes from a dying man, will go for canting and roving; but I bless God, he has so kept the little judgment I had, that I have been capable of reflecting with composure, on his dealing with me. I am sober and composed, if ever I was sober. And 'whether men will hear or whether they will forbear,' this is my testimony. The operations of the Spirit of God are ridiculed in this day; but if we take away the operations and influences of the Spirit of God in religion, I know not what is left. He promised the Spirit to 'lead us into all truth.' O that this generation would awake, to seek after the quickening influences of

the Spirit. O for a day of the down-pouring of the Spirit from on high, in a work of conversion; for such a day as that, when the Spirit of God effectually reached our fathers, and brought forth great men, and made others to be conquered by them. 'The residue of the Spirit is with him.'"

To a minister, he said, "I have now won, I say, I have won, brother, longing for the salvation of God, and for the day when I shall see his appearance. But I must keep my post; and good reason, if he will but send me fresh supplies, as much as will help me till I come home, that I may not dishonor him by begging at another's door. I am so proud, that I would take from him, and not beg from other lords. Our master gives his servants a very honorable allowance."

Then to the physician he said, "Doctor, it requires great courage to face death on a sick-bed. The heathens of old, whenever they became impatient, ran away to kill themselves, and so make an end of themselves; they could not endure it. Is it not more courage, and a nobler spirit, which the Lord gives even the weak, the timorous, the faint, as a power, whereby they can lie under sickness and pain, and brave the stoutest enemy, by a patient spirit?"

After a pause, he said, "I think we shall lose the very show of religion. Our gentry and nobility, I think, if the Lord do not reclaim them, are all likely to become heathen; drunkards, swearers, &c. Among other reasons, why I rejoice that the Lord is taking me away in my younger years is, that I shall be free from the transgression of the wicked. And it has many a year, grieved my soul to see it."

After a little while, he said, "There is a sweet composure on my spirit. The beams of the house are, as it were, cracking. I am laying down my tabernacle to be built again. O to obtain grace to be faithful to the death! For after we have gone through many things, yet still we have need to wait on God to the last. For it is 'he that endures to the end that shall be saved.' Am not I a man wonderfully upheld by

God, under affliction and death? The death of the saints is made a matter of derision in our day; but if they laugh at me, I can laugh at them, and I think I have better reason. Let them come to my condition, and they will not dare to laugh then. But 'I will rejoice in my God, and joy in the God of my salvation, though the fig tree should not blossom, and there should be no fruit in the vine, and the labor of the olive should fail.' But, blessed be God, I am provided for; God is a good portion. I want death to complete my happiness."

After a little pause, he said, "I was afraid, this day in the morning, that want of rest might have discomposed me. I would fain have rest for fear of my head. The Lord has been very kind to me, in giving me composure, and the exercise of my judgment, after I had a sore distracting trouble in the beginning of this death-bed sickness. But being laid here, I must speak; it is the last service the Lord Jesus calls for at my hand; and I owe him so much, that I cannot but commend him. As far as my word will go, I must proclaim it, he is the best master that ever I saw."

Then to the physician, he said, "I fancy my feet are growing cold, Doctor, yea, yea, all the parts of this body are going to ruin. You may believe a man venturing on eternity. I am not acting as a fool, but I have weighed eternity, this last night. I have looked on death as stript of all things pleasant to nature; I have considered the spade and the grave, and every circumstance in it which is terrible to nature; and under the view of all these, I found in the way of God, not only a rational satisfaction, but a heart-engaging power attending it, that makes me rejoice." The Doctor, said, "You speak beyond your strength; it is a wonder to see you hold out so." He answered, "I cannot bestow my strength better, and I owe him much more. I have narrow thoughts; I am like to be overwhelmed, and I know not where I am, when I think on what I am to be, and what I am to see. I have long desired

and prayed for it. Blessed be God, I am richly furnished. I had as much, the day after my sister died."

To his son he said, "O man, if I had as many sons as there are hairs in your head, I would bestow them all on God. David, these are honest people; (meaning the ministers,) mind their advice; the curse of God will overtake you, if you follow it not. Beware of ill company: read the Bible. I pray you may be an encouragement to your mother."

He was much concerned about his two nephews abroad, and dictated a letter to one of them, which is as follows:

"DEAR NEPHEW,

"The words of your dying uncle, the last letter from him, should have some weight; and my earnest desire that it may have weight in order to your eternal salvation, is the reason of my employing some of my last minutes, to entreat you, by a borrowed hand, to make an earnest matter of religion, and not to rest content with a dead, dry, barren profession. I can tell you, since I came to this bed of languishing, I have found a full proof, that religion is a real, useful, noble, and profitable thing. I have been helped, through the mercy of God, during my lying here, to rejoice in the goodness of God, and lie composedly and pleasantly. Nothing but religion, nothing, nothing but the power of the grace of God, can have efficacy sufficient to enable me do so. And having found it such a serviceable friend, I could not but commend it to you. It is a day of power only, that will engage you effectually, and will prevail with you to engage in earnest. A providence like this may rouse some present affections, which will go off again in an empty flash; but it must be a renewing work of grace, that will fix an abiding anchor. The Lord, in mercy, engage your heart to him, that you may find how good he is to the soul that seeks him, as I do this day, to my joy, and as I hope to do more fully, in a little while. I could not but commend,

the Lord to you, having found so much of his goodness. I never found so much when I was in health and prosperity, as I find now in sickness and languishing. I find he makes all things to be his people's for good; sickness or health, or diseases, or whatever they be, all are for good; and I find them so. I am longing to be away, and I must break off. If God be pleased to bless this advice from a dying friend, we shall meet, and meet comfortably in the higher house; I mean, if you comply with this advice. I fear the influence of the place you live in, want of lively ordinances, and of the converse of lively Christians, may endanger you. Converse much with the word of God; be much in secret prayer. God can give a good appetite, and a strong stomach, which, out of a very sapless piece of nourishment, can fetch something that will give strength, and make coarser food subsist and nourish too. However, as soon as you can, seek after lively ordinances; endeavor by all means to make acquaintance with the saints, 'the excellent ones of the earth,' who fear God.

"Dear Nephew,—I remember kindly your wife, and I advise you, in that place, where you scarce can have access to any ordinances, and cannot but be exposed to many disadvantages and dangers in point of religion; I advise you to take the first opportunity of coming out of Babylon, and settling your business where you may be under lively means of grace. You are a child of many prayers, and you were prayed back from the gates of death. And now I wish that you may give evidence, that you have been prayed back indeed, for mercy to yourself. I shall be glad, if this advice from a dying man, proves to be in any wise useful to you. The Lord be with your spirit. You cannot expect, from one in my condition, a digested, polished letter; but I speak the words of soberness, and full composure of mind, blessed be God. Let your kindness to the dead appear in your kindness to my dear widow, whom I leave behind, and my six children. Show your concern for both.

THOMAS HALYBURTON."

To some present he said, "O Sirs, I dread greatly, that a rational sort of religion is coming in among us. I mean by this, a religion that consists in a bare attendance on outward duties and ordinances, without the power of godliness. And thence people will fall into a way of serving God, which is mere deism, having no relation to Christ Jesus, and the Spirit of God." To his colleague he said, "Dear brother, let not modesty hinder you from laying out your talents that way; God has given you abilities. Well, brother, to encourage you, I must tell you, I must say it, your conversation has been a blessing to me. Our mutual communication about the concerns of the Lord, was reviving. It was after a sweet night's communication of this sort, that God took the burden of my son George off me, and brought me to sweet submission, in the prospect of his approaching death. O, if we could be concerned about God's interest, he would look well to ours."

Then he said, "If I had all our brethren present now, I would tell them how much it is upon my heart, that they may maintain brotherly love, and beware of division." One said, "I have observed, that that has been many times, the greatest trial of the church of Scotland. Alas! the fatal lengths to which division went in time of persecution, helped on by the influence of some by their preaching, have brought us to such a pass, that we are not like to recover." He said, "O what a care has God of me, who is hiding me from the evil to come? I was willing to stand my post with you, to stand and fall with the church of Scotland; but my master is calling me off. O, I pity, I pity them that stay behind. I am no prophet, I do not pretend to prophecy; but I am persuaded a storm is coming on this church." One said, "I hope, brother, the Lord will not forsake his room in Scotland." He answered, "Indeed I hope not; but I much doubt if this generation will be honored to do God great service, and see good days. I do not much wonder that he has laid me by. But, however, they that 'keep the faith,' and

'fight the good fight,' shall have abundant peace. Well, well, Sirs, the day must break; I hope, I hope, the Lord will arise, and the church be made a wonder. He will say, 'Lo! this people have I formed for myself.' He can make a nation to be born at once."

Often he said, "O how composed am I this day! What a wonder to be so, while I see the evident symptoms of my dissolution! And he often cried, as in the Song, 'When shall the day break and the shadows flee away? Turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe, or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether.' I am longing 'to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which is far better.'"

When a minister's son came in, he said, "John, you are going to get another lesson from a dying man; you got one from a dying father, and now another from a second father." This he said, because that young man was recommended to his care. Then remarking how kind the Lord was to that minister, when dying, he said, "I have found much of God's goodness too. I did not think to come near to it, but I was desiring and panting after a share of his happiness; and God has given it me. And now, John, I charge you, trace your father's steps, as you will be answerable at the great day. O serve the Lord, and for your encouragement I tell you, that he is the best of masters. Be encouraged to seek God, beware of the vanities of youth; and take heed to your ways, according to the word of God. The Lord bless you, and bless your sisters, and make them in their younger years all seek God, and it will be well with you. The reverend old man, your grandfather, your father considered as an orphan. Be you as a father to him; be always presenting the word of life to him; and have a tender care of him; it is the way to obtain a blessing. Pray for me, for patience to the end, that I may be enabled to praise him. I had many times, a mistuned voice; but, what is worse, I had a mistuned heart; but I shall get all rightly tuned above."

To a minister, that came from Edinburgh to visit

him, he said, "Come and see your friend in the best case in which you ever saw him, longing for a deliverance, and 'hastening to the coming of the day of God;' 'waiting for the salvation of God,' on a bed of roses, a perfumed bed, though nature and skin say not so. And, Sir, I sent for you, I longed to see you, that I might give you encouragement in an evil world, to preach the gospel, and stand by Christ, who has been so good to me. This is the best pulpit that ever I was in; I am now laid on this bed for this end, that I may commend my Lord." He answered, "It is a great blessing that he commends himself to you, and I desire to bless him on that account." To which Mr. H. replied, "Yea, he commended himself first."

September 20th. In the morning, when a minister asked him how he was, he said, "I am composed, waiting for him." To which it was replied, "You see how kindly he deals with you, he is antedating in your soul both heavenly exercise and heavenly enjoyments." On which he said, "He is preparing me, and making me 'meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.'" The minister said, "He deals so tenderly with you, that he gives you little to do, but to praise." He answered, "I have reason to desire the help of all to praise him. 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name.'"

To some persons entering the room he said, "Indeed, Sirs, you are very welcome. I am taking a little wine for refreshment, and in a little while I shall get my wine fresh and new in his kingdom of glory. I scarcely dare allow my thoughts to run directly upon it. I must look aside, lest I should be overwhelmed. But I cannot say enough of him who has done wonderful things for me, and has kept me this day in a perfect calm." One said, "You have got, I trust, what your heart can desire, to qualify you for going through the valley of the shadow of death, since Wednesday, when you had your own trial." He answered, "'Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.'" It is but a little while, and I shall get that rest.

I am getting the earnest of it. It is but a little while, and I will get himself. 'Light is sown for the righteous, and goodness for the upright in heart.' O! when will it come that I may go there, where I shall conceive aright of glory. 'I cannot order my speech now, by reason of darkness.' But I long to behold it. I have the patience to wait until he come. I have experienced much of his goodness, since I lay down in this bed. I have found that 'tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope.' And I have found the 'love of God shed abroad' in my soul." Then, turning to his wife, he said, "Come away, my dear, and encourage yourself in the expectation, that under the conduct of the same Captain of salvation, you will come hither. Cast yourself and your family upon the Lord: encourage yourself, for God liveth. Blessed be my Redeemer, the Rock of my strength."

After that, to his son he said, "I am going to die, I am to be a bridegroom to day; at least, I am to be a bride. I am going home to my God, and I hope your God. And be sure that you be often with God, and if you be often with him, you will be where I am. My dear; seek God, seek him, and seek him early, and he will be found of you. 'The angel that preserved me, bless the lad.' Remember, David, that I have commended God and his way to you." Then he said, "O Sirs! that there were a day of the power of God going along, and God taking hold of the hearts of youth. Poor thing, read your book, and be a good scholar; and be sure to seek God, that he may teach you."

Then he said, "Who is like him! Oh! what he has allowed me this night! I know now the meaning of that word, 'Ask what ye will in my name, and ye shall receive it.' I say, the Lord has even allowed me to be very particular in every circumstance, and I have thought, I was even taking too much liberty."

Then to his daughter he said, "Come, Margaret, I must again commend to you my God, and his ways. Be an encouragement to your mother. Remember

the many exhortations I have given you, and despise them not, and save your own soul. And pray, that by a day of his power, he may make you sincere. You have lost a loving father; it will be God only that can make him up. But he can do no more; and indeed, we must not compare fathers. Your father and mother have given you to God; do not you give yourself unto the devil. In all things, aim at pleasing God; and my dear, you will never rue it."

After that, he caused his son to come to him, and said, "David, keep not near vain persons, any body that will swear, or lie, or use unseemly language, or that will break the Sabbath day; come not near them. And pray that God may give you a better memory to remember the sermons you hear, that your heart may be steadfast."

Then he said, "O let us exalt his name together. O glory dwells in Immanuel's land. I long for the fragrancy of the spiced wine. 'Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples; for I am sick of love.'" Then he requested a minister to pray.

Afterwards, to a minister that came in, he said, "I am come 'to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant;' I will be in among the blessed company that stand around him. I will be in among that assembly above, where the 'Lamb in the midst of the throne' has the precedency. And now I wait for his salvation; glory to him. 'What shall I render to God?' 'Let us exalt his name together.' He has done wonderful things for me. I have been many a day fearful, how I should get through the valley and shadow of death." One said, "It is a mercy, Sir, that the Lord has taken away the fears of death, before death comes." He answered, "O there is much in this; he has wrought us for the self same thing! Since I was laid down here, the Lord has carried on a work of sanctification far on my soul, which makes me meet for heaven."

After prayer by some of the ministers, it was asked him, "Find you any more ease?" He answered, "Yea, I found ease in the time of prayer." Then he

said, "I long to launch out in his praise; it is an ocean. If I come not to be 'like an angel of God,' yet the weak 'will be like David,' the sweet singer of Israel. **O** be encouraged to follow the Lord, every one of you, Sirs."

Then to one of the elders of the parish, he said, "James, you are an old man; and I am dying; yet I am dying old; old, and satisfied with days; the 'child' is going to die 'an hundred years old.' I am like a shock of corn fully ripe. I have ripened fast; but O! I have been under a bright sun; a day when the Sun of righteousness shines, and I have refreshing showers."

After a little silence, he said, "I have been sleeping, and I have awakened refreshed; and now what shall I say? I can say no more to commend the Lord; not for want of what to say, but for want of words wherewith to express it. Well, Sirs, you will meet with difficulties and discouragements; but this may encourage you; you see God owns his servants, and should not his servants own him, and rejoice in him, and despise what their enemies can do, when the master does so much for them; God has preserved my understanding and my judgment, for the best piece of work that ever I had to do. Blessed be God, my head and heart are so sound. Though many a time, a vain heart has run away with me, and carried me down the stream—yet I may say, the habitually determinate desires of my soul, from the day that God first revealed his Son in me, have gone out after him, and the remembrances of his name. And now, I find, he meets them that rejoice and work righteousness; glory, glory to him. O what I see of God! I never saw any thing like it. The beginning and end, Sirs, of religion, are wonderfully sweet. 'Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.' I am not calling myself perfect; the Lord knows, I am far from it; I have found corruption stirring since you came in this morning." One said, "His dealing with you has been very uncommon." He answered, "Very uncommon indeed, if you knew all that I know. Yea,

but therein is the glory of the Lord, that he makes the weak strong; the 'excellency of the power' is the more remarkably seen." The other replied, "There is a borrowed perfection." He answered, "Yea, yea, that is perfection; glory to him for that perfection. The other adding, "And as all our righteousness comes from him, so does all our strength;" he said, "Yea, yea, now may you all ascribe to him the 'honor of his name;' may you be all engaged by this unto the Lord himself, and established in his way. The glory is his, his only; and engagement of heart, as consequent on the discovery, should be to him only; 'Not unto us, not unto us, but to thy name, O Lord, be the glory.' O the sweetness of a Creator to a creature!"

Having continued his discourse a while to those about him, he said, "O this is the most honorable pulpit that ever I was in! I am preaching the same Christ, the same holiness, the same happiness I did before. I have much satisfaction in this, that I am not ashamed of the gospel I preached; I was never ashamed of it, all my days, and I am not ashamed of it at the last, when I am put to the trial, on the bed of languishing. Blessed be God, we are all agreed in this, that it is 'the power of God to salvation.'"

After that, to a minister that had come from Edinburgh, he said, "Now tell my honest friends at Edinburgh, tell them 'what God has done for my soul,' and encourage them to hold on their way; they are a blessed seed. Besides these, to Christain acquaintances I am very willing it should be told, how good God has been to me. Are we ashamed of the gospel? Will these experiences of the reality of religion be driven out of our minds? Here I am now, a weak man, in hands with the king of terrors; rejoicing in the hopes of the glory that is to be revealed, and that by the death and resurrection of a despised Christ." The minister answered, "Sir, I believe, you know, that your friends at Edinburgh, will be very well satisfied, that mercy from the Lord has been shown to you." He replied, "All that fear God may be glad. Indeed as strength would

allow, when the beginning of this trouble was on me, I prayed for 'a token of good;' and, indeed, I think God has shown me a token for good."

Then to some present, he said, "This is an evil time. I will tell you, Sirs, it was this evil time which has helped on all this. It has oppressed my spirit, the prospect was so dark. But, it may be, I was more anxious than I should have been. We trust God too little. I sought the continuance of my reason, and he has continued it." Then he desired a minister to pray, and said, "'Truly the lines are fallen in pleasant places, and I have gotten a goodly heritage.' Now pray; but be short, because I find a great alteration in my body; and praise, O praise him; 'praise is comely.'" After prayer, he said, "Christ is exalted; death is not terrible, death is unstinged; the curse of the fiery law is done away." To a gentlewoman he said, "I long for his salvation; I bless his name I have found him; I am taken up in blessing him; I am dying rejoicing in the Lord. Well, I long to be in the promised land."

Apprehending himself to be very low, he said, "Here I die, saying, 'Lord Jesus receive my spirit.' Come, dear Lord Jesus, receive this spirit fluttering within my breast, like a bird to be out of a snare. When shall I hear him say, 'Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone.' Come, sweet Lord Jesus, come and take me by the hand, that I stumable not in the dark valley of death." One said, "He has been pleased to set his love upon you, and he will help you through, in this last conflict; for his word is still the same, 'I will never, never leave, nor forsake you.' 'He is able to save to the uttermost.'" He answered, "I know that." A little after, the other said, "We have, brother, such a view of his love and glory that shall be revealed, as shall excite to praise and thanksgiving, as will be the eternal song of the redeemed. You are beginning that song now." He answered, "Ay, ay, blessed be his name."

Then he prayed, and said, "Pity me, and let me depart in peace; for my eyes have seen thy salvation."

When a minister said, "Do you desire one of us to pray?" He answered, "Yea, yea, pray that I may get comfortably over." One said, "He has need of some refreshment." He answered, "I have meat to eat. Pray, that, like a good soldier, I may strike the last stroke." After that he said, "I wait for thy salvation. How long? come, sweet Lord Jesus. O come, sweet Lord Jesus, take me by the hand." Then he caused a minister to pray, and said, "Pray, pray, and praise." After that he said, "Come Lord Jesus; I have waited for thy salvation. I wait for thy salvation, as the watchman watcheth for the morning. I am weary with delays, I faint for thy salvation. Why are his chariot wheels so long in coming? He is trying my patience—he is trying my patience. O what means he to stay so long? I am like to faint with delays."

Then, having revived a little, he said, "Draw the curtains about me, and let me see what he has a mind to do with me." This being done, after silence of some time, he said, "Whence is this to me? There is a strange change, within this half hour. Ah, I am like to be shipwrecked to health again; I am afraid of it, and tremble at it. O what sort of providence is this? I was in hopes to have been at the end of my journey; and now I am detained by a cross wind. I desire to be patient under his hand; but he must open my heart to glorify him." Then he said, "Pray for me, that none who fear him may be ashamed on my account." After that he said, "'I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thy honor dwelleth.' 'Thou, who knowest all things, knowest that I love thee.' Lord I may not do without thee."

Then to the ministers, he said, "Brethren, go and pray to the Lord for me." One remarked, "Brother, I am not disappointed in that reviving you received. The Lord calls to submission to his will; he does all things well; he has given you wonderful assistance,

hitherto." He answered, "I find corruption vigorous and strong, so that I have no reason to quit my post, no, not for half an hour."

Afterwards he said, "O that I could bless the Lord ; such a wonder of mercy as I have been made." When he was breathing forth a passionate longing for his dissolution, one said to him, "You have reason to account God's kindness to you very surprising, since now, these three days past, you have had so much of sensible comforts without interruption ; while some of the greatest men in the church of Scotland have been long and sorely tossed with desertion, and have not had, at death, the half of your consolation, have not got the half of these manifestations, which you have had." He answered, "His loving kindness is indeed marvellous to me. 'What am I, O what am I, that he has brought me hitherto.' What I have is not a vivid and very sensible joy ; yet I bless, I bless his name, I am much composed, having solid, clear, scriptural manifestations of God, and the things of God."

To the apothecary he said, "I thought to have been away, and am come back again. I should be glad to be gone ; not that I am wearied ; he has not allowed a fretting thought to vex me. O I am a monument, a monument of the power of God. My trouble is great, but I am helped to bear it ; and so far am I a martyr, as well as a witness. My great desire has been, these many years, to suffer for the truth of our religion ; and now God has given me the greatest honor, to be a living witness to it, and a monument of the truth, that 'We have not followed cunningly devised fables.' I shall be in heaven shortly ; I shall come there by the word of my testimony, and the blood of the Lamb. All is of grace. He has chosen me, called me, justified me, and sanctified me by his grace. 'He gives grace and glory ;' these are precious gifts."

Then, after many apologies, he said to the ministers, "That he, as a dying man, begged them to request of the ensuing Synod, that they would keep up brotherly love, and the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace ;

and with the utmost care avoid distracting measures, whatever temptations they might be under. I am concerned, as long as I am in time, for the church; I even pity you. O let all of us abide by him. O that the ministry of Scotland, may be kept from destroying the church of Scotland. O that I could obtain it of them with tears of blood, to be concerned for the church! Shall we be drawn away from the precious gospel, and from Christ?"

To one of the students, he said, "If I had you, lads, all about me now, I would give you a lesson of divinity. However, this will be a standing witness of the reality, solidity, power, and efficacy of the truths I taught you; for, by the power of that grace revealed in these truths, here I lie pained, without pain; without strength, and yet strong. I think it would not be a lost session, though you were all here." To a citizen he said, "Sir, I am a monument of the great goodness of God. There are but a few names in this place that set their faces heavenward; be encouraged to go on. The Lord bless you and your family; you have been a kind neighbor." Then he said, "They 'that are planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the courts of our God.' I am planted in the house of God; here is an evidence of it; I am but young, and yet 'the child is going to die an hundred years old.' Last winter, I thought I was going to be cast as a withered stick over the hedge; and now the dead stock that was cut, has budded again, and grown a tall cedar in Lebanon."

After a pause, he said, "My body complains of pain, but I complain of none. I was never more myself in all my life, than in this sickness; I was never more indebted to grace. Ah, I mistook myself; O cursed self. I should have been too easily let off without all this suffering, and yet I am wasting away to heaven. I thought to get away with this rubbish; but my God sees fit to purge me of all my dross. He is keeping me, and he will have me as 'gold purified seven times,' ere I go hence. And I shall be well purified, and get fair, clean garments, washed and 'made white in the blood

of the Lamb;’ and the enemy that accused Joshua, the high priest, will not dare accuse me for filthy garments. Yes, ‘not unto us, not unto us.’ O there is a beauty there! Would you have a mark of a true Christian? here it is, to aim at the bearing down of self, in all its most subtle actings. I am full of sores, but all my bones shall praise him.”

Then he pressed the ministers to discourse to him, and said, “I desire to hear the word of God read, to hear the word preached. Many times, when I thought on the worthies that lived in the days of old, I have said, I was as one born out of due time; but now I think I am born in due time, for I shall see Jesus. O sweet Jesus that delivers from the wrath to come! I shall see Elijah and Moses, the great Old Testament prophets; I shall see the two great Mediators, the type and antitype. The three disciples obtained a sweet and glorious sight of Christ in his transfiguration; this was indeed an edifying and confirming sight, allowed to the disciples for strengthening their faith against the objections of the unbelieving Jews, and the staggering trials they were shortly to meet with. Was he despised as mean, and a mere man, and his Godhead disowned? Lo! here he appears in divine majesty and glory. Did they say that he was against the law? Lo! here is Moses by whom the law was given, paying respect unto him. Did they say that he was not the promised Messias, foretold by the prophets? Lo! he is Elijah, the most zealous among the Old Testament prophets, owning and honoring him. Was he reproached as a deceiver of the people? Lo! the voice from heaven saith, ‘This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him.’ Yet this sight was of short continuance, and terrible while it lasted. But in heaven, we shall have a more glorious and abiding sight; we shall behold his glory, ‘we shall be made like unto him, for we shall see him as he is.’ ‘Lo! this is our God, and we have waited for him!’ When his people are in trouble, the wicked say, Where is your God? But let those wait the issue till their deliverance come, and then they can

say, 'Lo, this is our God.' "O," said he, "I am full of matter; I know not where to begin or end. The Spirit of the Lord has been mighty with me; O the book of God is a strange thing? It is written within and without! I never studied it to the half of what I should; but God has given me to understand much of it. Never was I more uneasy in my life, and yet I was never more easy. All my bones are like to break, they stick through my skin, a hand is a burden to me, my mouth is a burden, and yet all is easy. 'Not unto us, not unto us.'—O there is a beauty there."

Then to his wife, he said, "O my sweet love, are you there? I am no more thine? I am the Lord's. I remember, on the day I took you by the hand, I thought of parting with you; but I wist not how to get my heart off you again, but now I have got it done. Will not you give me to the Lord, my dear?" Then seeing her very sad, he said, "My dear, do you weep? you should rather rejoice; rejoice with me, and let us exalt his name together; I shall be in the same family with you. You must even stay awhile behind and take care of God's children."

In the night time he said, "Ah, St. Andrews, I am afraid it is coming to such a pass with it, that the power of religion will wear quite out among professors in St. Andrews, and that they will not seek the influences of the Spirit in ordinances."

When waking out of sleep, he said, "I am lying pleasantly, and waiting patiently till he finish and perfect what concerns me. God is with me still, and he will be with me. I shall be cold within a little while, and I long for it; I long for my dissolution. O who could not lie in this condition till they be all wasted away!" One remarked, "He will become sore in lying!" He answered, "I have no sores; he has bound up all my wounds. The gods that the blinded nations fear are but lying vanities; but the God of Israel, the Portion of Israel, is not like them. I am now in the hands of the king of terrors, and within a little while I shall be out of them. I am now about to grapple with

the last enemy, and I find he is a conquerable enemy; I am 'more than a conqueror.'" A person observed, "A strange champion indeed." He answered "I? 'Not I, but the grace of God in me.' 'By the grace of God I am what I am.' 'The God of peace has bruised Satan under my feet.' You see affliction is no mark of God's displeasure. I often wondered how the martyrs could clap their hands in the fire; I do not wonder at it now. I could clap my hands, though you should hold burning candles about them, and think it no hardship, though the flames were going round about them. And yet I should cry, and not be able to bear it, if you did but touch me, if the Lord withdrew."

Then, after a paroxysm, he said to one, "Find you any alteration in my pulse upon this?" "No, it is as vigorous as yesterday." "Well, well," said he, "I will wait cheerfully." It was remarked, "You are well hired to do it, as you used to say, yourself." He answered, "I am so. I will wait till I be all wasted away; but my tongue is my glory, to 'render the calves of my lips.' God has given me my head and my tongue to praise his name. I lost my spirits; God has given me my spirits again."

CHAPTER XXII.

The same subject continued.

SEPTEMBER 21st, about three in the morning, he said, "And is it then the Sabbath? This is a good Sabbath; the best that ever I had. My pleasant George, on a Sabbath night, went into his rest; I bestowed him on my God. Blessed be his name, he made me content. I would even have given him all my chil-

dren that way, and I hope it shall be so ; blessed be his name."

After a little pause, he said, " Shall I forget Zion ? nay, ' let my right hand forget her cunning, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.' O to have God returning to this church, and his work going on in the world. If every drop of my blood, every bit of my body, every hair of my head, were all men ; they should go to the fire, to have this going on."

And after that, to some he said, " O Sirs, I could not believe that I could have borne, and borne cheerfully, this rod so long. This is a miracle ; pain without pain. And this is not the fancy of a man disordered in his brain, but of one lying in full composure. O blessed be God, that ever I was born. I have a father, a mother, and ten brethren and sisters, in heaven, and I shall be the eleventh. O blessed be the day that ever I was born. O if I were where he is ; and yet, for all this, God's withdrawing from me would make me as weak as water. All which I enjoy, though it be miracle upon miracle, would not make me stand, without a new supply from God. The thing I rejoice in is ; that God is altogether full, and that in the Mediator, Christ Jesus, there is all the fulness of the Godhead, and it will never run out."

After a little silence, some having heard him groaning, he said, " It is not for pain I am groaning, but for the church of Scotland, and for the cup of indignation in the Lord's hand that is going about. I have been days, weeks, and months in terror, thinking what I should do in the days of pestilence ; but now I see, in him there is safety, and that an invisible God can keep from a visible stroke. O it is a strange thing, to consider how an unbelieving heart could not trust him ; but now I am kept ' in perfect peace.' ' The name of the Lord is a strong tower ;' And he that dwells under the ' shadow of the most High,' shall abide and not be afraid. O the book of God, Sirs, is a rich treasure, a sweet book. Make all of you, much use of your Bibles."

Then to his wife he said, "O wait upon him, for he is a good God to his own; and he never takes any thing from them, but he gives them as good, and better, back again; you will get himself. My dear, we have had many a sweet day together; we must part for a while, but we will meet again, and shall have one work in the praises of God, and in the praises of the Lamb. O how wonderful is it! and let my soul wonder. O to get a discovery of him, eye to eye; it is so enlivening. It is life eternal to know the living God and Jesus Ghrist. I will not, 'when it is morning,' say with Job, 'when will it be evening?' no, I dare not say it. It will be but a little while, and I shall get rest."

Then to some present he said, "Do you think that he will come and receive the prisoner of hope to day? Whether he do or not, holy and righteous is he; but, I confess, I long for it. This which I am bearing is vastly more than many deaths, and yet the Lord bears me up sweetly with his power. Were it not for the power of grace, nature would fail under what I have upon me even now; but the Lord upholds me. I do not weary; but the hireling longs for his wages. He seems in his adorable wisdom to try me further, and holy and reverend is his name; he is not wanting to me." One said, "Well, that is enough, if he is now giving you a heavy burden to bear, he gives you a remarkable supply of grace." He said, "I desire only grace to be faithful to the death, unto the Lord Jesus, unto my God, until I come to the land of praises, even to Jerusalem's gates, to pay thanks to the name of the God-of Jacob." One said, "You have this promise for sustaining you, and he cannot fail in performing it. I hear the disease has been heavy upon you to night." He answered, "Yea, yea; but O keep me from impatience, or charging my God foolishly." One said, "It is weak faith that cannot believe, when it has such a support of sensible comfort as you have." He answered, "The hundredth part of this trouble would have put me into a distraction, if the Lord had not sustained me. This is his day, it is his holy rest, I long for the

rest; I long for this desirable rest." One said, "Well, you have obtained a will submissive to his." He answered, "It takes a great deal of hammering to polish us, and make us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."

To his son, he said, "My dear David; I am lying here, finding how good God is; and I would fain have my David, I would fain have you God's, and acquainted with his way; that when I am dead, I may live in you, and you may tell the generation not born, how good God is. O man, if I had you a seeker of God, I should think myself happy in it." Then a minister asked, "if he should pray." He answered, "Yea, yea, pray for me."

After prayer, he said, "This night my skin has burned, my heart has panted, my body has been bruised on the bed with weakness, and there is a sore upon me that is racking my spirit, and my heart has been sometimes like to fail; and yet I cannot say, but that the Lord, after all this trouble, holds me in health in the midst of all. If the Lord give such support, and continue me years in this condition, I have no reason to complain. One said, "No hypocrite is able to counterfeit that language, in such a case as you are in." He answered, "It is as great a wonder to me as to any about me. Brother, I know not whether I may not desire you to beg of the Lord with respect to this poor body, even to pity and to shorten, if it be his will, my trial; the hireling longs for his wages; but I have reason to do it with submission."

Afterwards, he said, "My body has got such a hurt, that I believe I shall scarcely recover it, and that is the thing which keeps all my body in a fire. The panting for want of breath is over: but O, it is the mercy of God that keeps me composed. This trouble of my bowels draws my stomach all together as if it were with cords. And yet I must say, 'What am I, and what is my father's house, that God has brought me hitherto.'" One said, "You have resigned yourself to his will and pleasure; he gives strength for the bur-

den." He answered, "He has done it hitherto. I have a heart warm to God, and I have a carnal heart too." One said, "Corruption will remain while in the body." He answered, "But I long to be away, to get a deliverance. It was remarked, "In due time that will come." Then he said, "I am lying here, and the Lord helps me to wait for that consolation which is in Christ, that will fill me with admiration to eternity. But I have already the pleasant peaceable fruits of righteousness, and a sweet composure.' I had what was worse than a thousand deaths, and he has held me by the hand."

To the ministers, he said, "The Lord has been still with me. I am carnal, but I long for a deliverance from the remainder of a body of sin. I long for a deliverance from this trouble; but if God lengthen it out, if he give me more troubles, then why not? righteous is his name. I know not what alteration may be. I long, indeed, for a share of that everlasting rest; and I confess I am like a bird on the wing, and I would fain be at Immanuel's land where the tree of life is. Well, all this is encouragement to you to acquaint yourselves with God; you see religion is advantageous; 'great is the gain of godliness.' All these soft clothes are like sacking about me; and yet I have perfect ease of spirit. My breast is drawing together, as sore as it were with cords; and still the Lord keeps composure. What is this! I could have scarce believed, though I had been told it, that I could have been kept in the right exercise of my judgment, under this racking pain. The drawing of the breast seems to me to be as if I were all hung together, all pulled together. So that I would make this improvement, whatever comes of it; I am sure I am a demonstration that there is a reality in religion; and I rejoice in this, that God has honored a sinful worm, so as to be a demonstration of his grace. I am preaching the gospel, I have a dispensation committed to me. Shame belongs to me; I am a sinner; the praise of all belongs to him; 'worthy is the Lamb, to receive glory.' I hope I shall shortly

be present at that glory I have been long expecting : though I come not near Mr. Shield's glory, nor Mr. Anderson's. Only, O if I were in heaven I should be well enough, I will be well enough when I get there. Dear friends about me, take the commendation from my hand ; while I live I must preach the gospel. He has given me a while yet here, that should be reckoned precious, and I reckon it should be my work still to commend him. The gospel speaks, providence speaks in me ; and if there be a despising of the gospel under this new discovery, take heed it will still make it the worse with you. Glory to him, that ever he revealed himself in me ! he is free in his love. I was wallowing in my blood ; but he past by, and cast his skirt over me."

To two ministers who tarried with him, when the rest went to the church, he said, "I would desire a word read, and prayer ; and if my head would endure, I would fain hear singing. I do not now find any change, but there may be ; and I am the less concerned, because the Lord, in some measure, has taken away that inclination to limit him as to the hour ; though you may be sure, the hireling longs for his wages." He caused them to read Psalm lxxxiv., and having joined in singing, he said, "I had always a mistuned voice, and a bad ear, and what is worst of all, a mistuned heart ; but shortly, when I join the temple service above, there shall not be, world without end, one string of the affections out of tune." And after that, he caused one of the ministers to read to him, what Doctor Owen had said of this temple service above, in his book on the person of Christ. Often this day, did he bless God he had been helped to give such a testimony to God's ways.

To some that came from church, he said, "You have been in the assembly of God's people, the assembly wherein communion and fellowship with the Father and Son may be attained ; and all these enjoyments are among the most valuable to be had here, and they are the way to the rest, which remains for

the people of God; but O! to be joined with the company above. How amiable are thy tabernacles, even here! but more so above, where there is the eagle's eye, that can see a glorious light, even the light of the Lord. Now, our faith, even at its highest elevation here, when it looks to these things, finds them so great, that we are not able to behold them. Now, I hope in God, and blessed be his name. Though I was once well nigh saying, my hope, 'my strength is perished from the Lord;' yet the Lord rebuked that. My unbelief was very impudent in urging suggestions. A shadow of a difficulty will frighten, and lay me on my back. I am nothing, less than nothing, a vile sinner; but Mercy does all, I bless him; and he himself has said it, and done it; and now I am lying his debtor not able to pay a mite of it."

Then to the ministers, he said, "Now I would fain hear, Sirs, hear of the gospel, hear of Christ." On which the ministers present discoursed a while on the promises of God, the faith and experiences of the saints in former times. "The Lord," said he, "has indeed dealt wonderfully with me; he has taken me out of 'the miry clay and set my feet upon a rock;' he has come in the watches of the night, and calmed the waves of the raging sea. I expected no smile when I took this trouble; and many a time this winter, I have been ready to say, I am like to be a branch that is withered, and cast over the hedge. I brought all this strait on myself; and I thought, if I could get away creeping with terrors, to be plunged into eternity with a 'peradventure,' it was fair. 'Praise is comely;' I am one of the chief of sinners very kindly dealt with; 'whence is this to me!'"

At night, he said, "There will be a change." One said, "Yea, no doubt of that, your defluxion is already dried up." He said, "I feel shiverings, but I am hopeful, it is my deliverance coming, under the conduct of the great Captain of salvation. I will shake hands with the king of terrors; though one fit of sickness should but take away my tongue, another my ear.

another my throat, I will be content." One said, "That is a mercy." He said, "Yea, yea, a troubled sea, a mind fretting, rising up in rebellion against God, is uneasy. I bless him, I got that mercy in the violence of my trouble; he kept me from daring to entertain a harsh thought of him; he held me by the hand; and I see now what corruption is; even while under the most clear manifestations of God and his goodness, I have been kept under a continual fear of my evil heart. These are the two worst enemies I have, self with its fair shows, its secret insinuations, and unbelief, struggling hard against me. It is a mercy, that he gives me now and then, when I am able to speak, leave to preach and commend Christ; I think he has given me good cause. Sometimes I find it safer for my body and head, to hear others speaking."

After he had laid quiet a little while, he said to his wife, "O! my dear, I was just praying for you and my children, and commending you to your God, and my God; to our fathers's God." Being much troubled with the cough, he said, "There are no coughs in heaven."

In the night time he caused to be read the songs of degrees, and said, "They were so called, by some, because they were sung on the steps of the stair, that led up to the temple. And what more fit to be read to a poor sinner, who aims at climbing up the hill of God, where the temple of God is. Under the Old Testament, it was only the high priest who was to enter within the most holy place, and that once a year, and not without blood; but now there is a way opened into the holiest of all, for every believer."

One said, "I thought, Sir, you was expressing your fears about the times." He answered, "Yes, indeed. I am no prophet, I am not positive on the point, but I greatly fear a heavy stroke is coming on this land; I fear the plague of God is coming on Scotland." One asked, "The pestilence, Sir, do you mean?" He said, "Yes, indeed, and a bloody sword also. Nay, it is what I have feared, these several years, and I abide by

it, I am of the same mind still; and I do not see in what way it is avoidable without a miracle; and a miracle I do not expect. But seek to be established in the truth. These are like to be trying times."

September 22. At half past one, he asked what hour it was, and said, "Early in the morning my friends should be called, because I do expect this cough will hasten my deliverance; the Lord can do it speedily, but in the mean time he will give me rest, rest with himself. What needs a poor creature that hath a prospect of such a rest, to be weary of outward trouble? I am lying very composedly, glory to his name. I hope I am going to the land where there is a calm." One said, "You have no reason to doubt of that calm." He said, "No, no."

Then he renewed his discourse on the condition of the church, and said, "Zion has been much upon my heart; I have had much tossing about the poor church of Scotland; O, what will come of it, and of the town of St. Andrews!" Then he expressed his fears of a stroke coming on all the churches, that God was about to give them a terrible shaking. One said, "If so I I would hope it may be Antichrist's last stroke. He answered, "Perhaps it may be so." He spoke of Mr. Hooker's denunciation of wrath against England, which is mentioned in the history of New England. "And," said he, "we are going to unite with the sins of France; what ground for fear may not this be? I fear persecution by the popish party." One said, "However, there is the more reason to hope, because the reformed churches are like to be joined with us in the trial." He answered, "But I am very apprehensive God is indeed about to winnow the reformed churches. Well, well," continued he, "I shall get out of the dark cloud. Within a little while, I shall be in Abraham's bosom; yea, in the bosom of him who 'carries the lambs in his bosom;' and I am sure that goodness and mercy in great store, even all that is laid up for his people, will follow me. O, he is good to a poor worm, 'the chief of sinners.' 'O, let us exalt his name

together ;' it is the constant employ of all above ; 'they cease not day nor night ;' they see and sing, they have a clear vision. O, if I saw his lovely face, who is 'fairer than the sons of men ;' yea, who is beyond the sun at noon-day ! O, to be where there is no sin. How sweet has even this bed been. Though sin remains, and my trouble is great, yet I have been composed in the midst of my trouble. He can give heaven, even in the worst cases. What shall I say ? How shall I conceal his goodness ?"

Thinking on the students of divinity, who were then separated in time of vacation, he dictated a letter, to be communicated to them at their next meeting. The following is a copy of it :

"Dearly beloved in our Lord, my joy and hope, and the hope, shall I say, of the church of Scotland :

"You are devoted to the study of the gospel, for preserving a seed to serve the Lord in the church of Scotland, in order to the continuance of the gospel among the rising generation. This is a prospect of the highest concern ; the most honorable piece of service you can ever be employed in. In this study, as well as I could, I endeavored to assist you, 'according to the measure of the gift of Christ,' in public, and in private, to the utmost that an infirm body would allow, and even beyond my strength. Yet I did it with much pleasure and satisfaction, in hopes that the Lord, one day, might make my weak labors and your vigorous studies, through his blessing, useful in the church of God, a blessing to posterity, and a high honor to yourselves. Want of health allowed me not to do, what it was in my heart to do, for your assistance and encouragement. And now I have no more left me, but to give a sincere testimony of my entire affection for you, and that I have really the yearnings of a parent's bowels towards you, by entreating, in this short letter, when upon a death-bed, and near the confines

of eternity, that you may vigorously ply your studies, and rest not short of saving acquaintance with the power of divine truth, and experimental knowledge of the mystery of God and of Christ, diligently using all means, that the 'word of God may dwell in you richly,' and that you may have treasures richly furnished, with 'things new and old,' and that you may prove, one day, 'able ministers of the new testament.' But rest not, for the Lord's sake, and for your own soul's sake, in the bare fruits of your own study; seek to be taught of God, that you may at once 'grow in grace and in the knowledge of God.' Beware of curiosities and novelties in religion. Adhere, as you will be answerable, unto the doctrine of the church of Scotland, sincerely taught by your worthy and judicious master, in whom you are happy, if you know your own mercy, and have grace given you to improve it. This is a time of abounding errors; beware of drinking them in; beware of an assuming boldness in the matters of God. 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.' 'What man fears God, God will teach him the secret of his covenant.' I have no time nor strength, being by the Lord's hand cut short, to write my mind particularly to you; but since I am now very near eternity, loaded with the riches of God's goodness, I could not but by this line signify my sincere desire, that you may be nourished up in the words of truth, and that you may use wholesome food, and be kept from poison. I recommend to you, among human writings, for a true view of the mystery of the gospel, especially, the writings of the great Dr. Owen. But the word of God, in dependence upon the Spirit of God, must be your study and meditation, day and night. Words cannot express what I have found of God, since I came to this bed of languishing, what advantage I found of having aimed at following that God, that truth, that gospel, which I recommend to you; and, therefore, I am bold to recommend to you this, as the most noble, honorable, advantageous work you can be employed in. And I am this day sure, from

experience, that it is better to serve the Lord in the 'gospel of his Son,' than to serve the greatest princes on earth, in the highest station. If God help you in this service to be faithful, the reward is too great to be expressed. My thoughts, my words, are swallowed up; and my affection towards you is such, that my body would quite sink to speak what is on my heart, of love to you, and desire to have you acquainted with my dearest Lord; to whom I was always deeply obliged, but now am so much indebted, that I fear to mention how good he has been to my soul. O choose him, cleave to him, serve him, study to know more and more of him, live in communion with him. Never rest, till you reach eternal communion with him. This is all from your dying master. I have desired my brother-in-law to sign this, in my name. A death-bed will excuse confusion. I wish nothing more than that, after you have done much service to the church here, I may have the happiness to hear you approved of, by the great Shepherd of the sheep.

THOMAS HALYBURTON."

To a minister, he said, "I think, brother, my case is a pretty fair demonstration of the immortality of the soul." It was remarked, "Your case may be confounding to atheists." Then he said, "Glory, glory, for support, continued support to the chief of sinners. O that I could sing forth his praise. Indeed I am patient, yet 'not I, but the grace of God in me.' 'Not I,' should always be at hand. Cursed self, that robs God of his glory. Could I have believed (but I am an unbelieving body) that I could have had this pleasure and patience in this condition! Once or twice, Satan was near breaking in upon my faith. I wakened in a sort of a carnal frame, and thought I had lost my jewel; but now, I hope, he will stand by me to the end. If ever I was clear in my judgment and memory, in my life, it has been since he laid his hand on me. Glory to him; what shall I render to him? My bones are breaking through my skin; and yet all my bones are

praising him. 'I said, I am cast out of thy sight, but I will look again towards thy holy temple.' The enemies of the gospel in St. Andrews, shall have this, among other things, to answer for, that God has taken and singled me out for a monument of his mercy; but the design of it is, the establishment and consolation of his own, and, I hope the engaging of some, it may be, poor young things to God. Glory to the Captain of salvation. 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?' There is no curse of a broken law here, I shall get the cool of the day."

To a minister, who said, "How are you, Sir, to-day?" he answered, "I bless his name, I am going to eternity, to heaven."

To a gentlewoman, he said, "Well, desirable neighbor, I am dying in a way that may confirm the truth, that God is good. Well, well, I am near heaven." Then he fainted, and when revived, said, "This is another messenger come for me."

When he was to take a little refreshment, in asking a blessing, he used the following expressions: "'Glory to God in the highest,' that there is 'good will to men, and peace on earth;' glory that 'life and immortality are brought to light.' Help to put a crown on the Mediator's head. It will be our glory to eternity, to run deeper and deeper in debt. Glory to God, that a vile worm, 'the chief of sinners,' is singled out to be a monument of his grace, and to speak his praise. 'Who is a God like unto thee?'"

After he had taken the refreshment, he said, "Trust him to all eternity; credit his word. I listened to unbelief after I came to this bed, and it had almost killed me; but God rebuked it. I sought the victory by prayer; and God has given it; he is the hearer of prayer. I have not much more to do with death."

To one he said, "Another messenger comes for me. a cough. O man, I am kindly dealt with! The Lord has done wonderful things. All I ask is, grace to be sober to the end, for our strength lies in him. Well, thirty eight years, come December 25th, is my

age. Hezekiah said, I am cut off from the residue of my years ; but I will not say so. God is giving me this to make up for the residue of my years, which he takes from me. The Lord is even wasting away my body, to let me see, that my spirit can live without it. I will not now become weary through his grace. Brother, pray for me, that the Lord may help me to honor him to the end. Ay, I will be washed, and get white robes ; the crown on my head, and palms in my hands.

“I am calling you to see a miracle ; God is melting me down into corruption and dust, and yet he is keeping me in a calm. O ! who is like unto our God ? ‘Not unto us, not unto us, but to thy name, O Lord, be the praise.’ ‘Our light afflictions, that endure but for a moment, work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.’ I will get the martyr’s crown, with the minister of Christ’s crown ; and O, but the martyr’s crown is a glorious crown ! I am now a witness for Christ, for the reality of religion ; and I am suffering. ‘It is given unto me, not only to believe, but to suffer for his hame.’ I sought an increase of faith from the Lord Jesus, and our Lord has heard me ; and now it is but a little while and I will get the crown, and though there be a little loathsomeness about me, yet I am willing that you should be spectators of it ; for it is not for my sake that I meet with this, but for your establishment. Is there not a beauty in this providence.”

After struggling with a defluxion in his throat, he said, “The Lord has sent another messenger for me, to hasten me home. The other day I should have been away without this glorious evidence of the grace of God ; but it is more for my advantage, that I am thus tried and comforted. I am hastening, and I will not complain of the slow paces of time. ‘Why are his chariot wheels so long in coming ?’ But I will not say so any more. ‘Yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry.’ ‘Come, all ye that fear the Lord, and I will tell you what he hath

done for my soul.' Then he caused a minister to pray, and said, "Pray that he may strengthen me for the last stroke, so that I may be 'a conqueror, and more than conqueror.'"

To his son he said, "David, come, O seek thy father's God. I am like the slave born in God's house, and I, my wife and children, are the Lord's; therefore let your ear be bored to his door post, and be his servant forever. And if you serve him, my God will bless you; he will bless you forever. Come, my dear, your grandfather and grandmother are in heaven. Is it not hard, to die well, for them that do not know God in Christ? If you knew the sore skin that I have, you would cry and weep. I am not weeping nor crying. How glad should I be, David, if I knew my little household would be a witness for God, a sufferer for the name of Christ, 'striving and resisting even unto blood.' I had rather have you such, than an emperor of the universe, and would rejoice more in it. Were I called to it, I would spend my blood, and go through fire and water for it."

Then he said, "If I should say, that I would speak no more in the name of the Lord, it would be like a fire within my breast. I was early musing with myself, how I should stand the shock, and be a martyr against Popery. I lay one night musing about it, and slept none."

When some looked at him as if they had been amazed, he said, "Why look ye steadfastly on me, as if by my might or power, I were so? 'Not I, but the grace in me;' it is the Spirit of God that supports me. I am here on a death-bed, going to heaven. 'Tis but a little time, and corruption will be raised in incorruption."

To his daughter, he said, "Margaret, I charge you to seek early the God of your father; he is a wonderful God."

To his wife, he said, "Be not discouraged, my dear, at the unavoidable consequences of nature which I endure, it is an evidence that there is but very little

time, and death will be swallowed up in victory; the body will be shaken into pieces. I am wasting away, blessed be God; and yet my head is as composed as it was before my sickness."

To another of his daughters, he said, "Janet, O seek God; he is good, he will be a better father than I am; you are born in his house. I have not a child, I have given you all to him; I leave you to the abundant grace of God. I am much concerned for the young generation; I fear they will all reject religion together."

To a gentlewoman in the parish of Ceres, he said, "Behold your dying minister; I am hastening to eternity; and hastening to heaven as fast as I can. I am dying in the faith of those truths I preached among you. You may remember I preached on that text, 'When I heard, my belly trembled; my lips quivered at the voice; rottenness entered into my bones, and I trembled in myself, that I might rest in the day of trouble.' Then you may remember, I told you, that there was a rest for the Lord's people, even in trouble; and now I feel this rest. O! I am well paid for all all this; I have perfect composure of spirit, perfect peace without any roving of mind, or any thing that is the effect of the disorder. O what wonderful power is that! Tell my parishioners, that my God is blessing me, that the single attempts I made at serving him, in preaching the gospel of his Son, the Lord has already, rewarded to a miracle. Now I find the gospel 'the power of God to salvation,' to all sorts of salvation. All in our religion is experimental; it will abide the proof. Well, Madam, God bless you, and bless your children, and make them a blessing to you. Seek God, make earnest of religion. O 'what shall I render to the Lord!' Blessed be God, that he gives me so honorable an occasion to commend him."

To one of his children he said, "If you forsake the God of your father, who has been so kind to me, this will be a witness against you. Here I am a witness, that 'our Rock is not as their rock.'"

Then to some present, he said, "My moisture is much exhausted this night; but 'the dew lies all night on my branches, the dew that waits not for man, nor tarries for the sons of men.' O what cannot grace do! How have I formerly fretted and repined at the hundredth part of the trouble I have on my body now. Here you see a man dying, a monument of the glorious power of admirable, astonishing grace: and 'generations to come shall call me blessed.' Follow my advice, it is the power of religion, and not a name, that will give the comfort I find. Now, Sirs, here is something to be improved for a while, it is worth telling. There is something worth telling in this providence; I shall dwell on it through eternity. If there be such a glory in his conduct towards me now, O what will there be, to see the Lamb in the midst of the throne, to see the Lamb that was slain, in the midst of the throne, the Lamb that has the seven horns, and the seven eyes? I have peace in the midst of pain; and O how much of that I have had for a time past! My peace has been like a river, not a discomposed thought. There have been some few suggestions since I received the great assault of my enemies, in one league together. I received one assault and I was like to fall; but since then the Lord has rebuked them; there is not a discomposed thought, but all is calm."

To the ministers, he said, "Brethren, bless God on my behalf, and pray that I may be helped. I have been grappling with the king of terrors, and I find he is conquerable; I found the rattling of his drum in my throat, (meaning the choking defluxion in his throat,) and I was not affrighted: I am melting away bravely."

To two of the students, he said, "Well, lads, you see your dying master confined within these four posts, and by the grace of God he is what he is; he is dying as one unto whom the Lord is showing himself marvelously good. This is no raving of a sick man; I bless God, I never had my judgment more clear in all my life; an evidence of the reality of religion." When the cough came on, he called for a little medicine, and

said, "I think all the substance of my body is wasting away. But, (with a smiling countenance, he added,) it is welcome. Now, my body is wasting like a piece of a bank, by a mighty current; and yet the power of God keeps me up."

To a gentlewoman, he said, "You are come to see your old friend dying, a wonder indeed, but a wonder of mercy. I have preached from the pulpit, but now I am preaching from a death-bed; and I would be content, if his sensible presence were continued, to speak till flesh and bones were wasted to nothing. Labor to get a clear view of him. 'The God of glory appeared to me; and the first sight I got of him, was such as won my heart to him, so that it has never been loosed. Though I have had many wanderings, yet I can say, I was never myself till I got back to the centre again. Follow me; take my word for it, he is a good master, you will never regret the service; and I am well paid for it.'" He took a little rattle in his throat, and said, "This may be irksome to you; but every messenger of death is pleasant to me, and I am only detained here, that I may trumpet forth his praise a little longer."

About noon, he said, "I was just thinking on the pleasant spot of earth that I will get to lie in, beside Mr. Rutherford, Mr. Forrester, Principal Anderson, &c. and I will come in as the little one among them, and I will get my pleasant George in my hand; and O we shall be a knot of comely dust." Then he said, "It will not be all my sore bones that shall make me weary yet, as long as God gives me a tongue to speak, and judgment to conceive, to preach the gospel."

He broke out in frequent admiration, with the greatest warmth, at what he felt; "Strange," said he, "this body is wasting away to corruption, and yet my intellects are so lively, that I cannot say there is the least alteration, the least decay of judgment or memory; such vigorous acting of my spirit towards God, and things that are not seen! But" said he, "Not, I, not

I, but the grace of God in me.' 'Not unto us, not unto us;' which still I must have on my heart, since cursed self is apt to steal glory from God; here I must watch, lest the enemy give me a wound."

Then to some ministers, when they came in, he said, "What a demonstration has God given you and me, of the immortality of the soul, by the vigor of my intellects, and the lively actings of my spirit after God, and the things of God, now when my body is so low, and also so pained."

At night he became very weak, and after a sore conflict, prayer being ended, he said, "Ebenezer." One remarked, "The Lord has helped hitherto, and he will help."

Sometime afterwards, he said, "Good is the will of the Lord, and every one of these throes is good, and I must not want one of them. I must not fly from my post, but must stand as a sentinel; for this is my particular work. This would be hard work without Christ; but it is easy, having him the Captain of salvation."

He complained of his head, but said, "In a battle there must be blood and dust: 'every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood.' 'Tis meet I should be hard put to it, that I may know to whom I owe my strength. O, that I were at the throne above, that my glimmering sight were taken away, that this unsteady sight might terminate in perfect vision."

Then, looking to a minister, he said, "This is a gymnasium." And some, who stood by, asking what that word meant, he said, "It is a school for exercise, a place where they wrestled and fought naked; and I am in agony, and wrestling with the king of terrors." "But," said the minister, "you will obtain the victory through the Captain of Salvation, who, you know, is able to keep what you have committed to him."

When, after a severe shock, he revived, he said, "I am defeated;" and added, "I am shipwrecked into health again." One said, "But you have still a

pleasant view of an end of all your pain and trouble, in that land 'where the inhabitant shall not say he is sick.'" At which he gave pleasant looks and smiles, and turned up his eyes and hands, while he was not able to speak.

One said, "'Blessed are they that die in the Lord;' there is much that goes before, along with, and after it. 'We groan in this tabernacle, being burdened,' not simply that we would be dissolved, but 'clothed upon with our house, which is in heaven.'" Then he said, "When I fall so low that I am not able to speak, I will show you a sign of triumph when I am near glory, if I be able."

Then, for awhile, he was very low; he fainted; but afterwards, as prayer was ended, he revived a little. One asked, "Had you no trouble?" He answered, "No, I know not where I was; I know nothing about it. Yea, yea, 'he can do no iniquity.' It is meet there should be a trial. I am wonderfully helped, beyond the power of nature. If my mouth be not wet every moment, it is as hot as fire."

Then he said, "The conflict is pretty long, but blessed is he that gives patience. I am mightily spent." One said, "Shall we pray a short word?" He answered, "Yes."

Afterwards, one said, "That tabernacle will be repaired again, in a more glorious manner. Our vile bodies will be fashioned like unto his glorious body." Then he said, "I am very well pleased if the Lord take me away now. The Lord has allowed me long exercise of thoughts about my condition."

A little after that he said, "Lord, pity."

Sometime after, being like to vomit, he said, "I am effectually choked." Then he said, "I desire to adhere to the Lord: but I am like to be quite choked with defluxion." He had elevated looks, and cried, "Pity, pity, Lord."

To his wife he said, "My dear, be not discouraged, though I should go away in a fainting fit; the Lord's way is the best way; and I am composed."

To some others, he said, "You need not be discouraged, Sirs; what if I should go away with a fit of vomiting or fainting; it is all one. I did not know whether I was up or down."

After that he said, "Though my body be sufficiently afflicted, yet my spirit is untouched."

One said, "You seem to be near the crown for which you have been so long wrestling." He cried, "Free grace, free grace, not unto me." Speaking of his body, he said, "Why should it not go to dust?"

One said, "You have been crying much to God that he would be with you; and I doubt not but you are finding him with you now." He said, "Yes." One said, "Now you are putting your seal to that truth, that great is the gain of godliness." He answered, "Yes, indeed." One said, "And I hope you are encouraging yourself in the Lord." As a sign of it, he lifted up his hands and clapped them, when he could not speak.

Then in a little while, he went to the land where the weary are at rest.

He spoke little the last six hours before his death, only some broken sentences, which with difficulty were understood; but urged the ministers present with him to discourse to him, and often cried, "Pray, pray." This was done by five or six ministers, till he fell asleep in the Lord; about seven in the morning, September 23, 1712.