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THE  
GENERAL'S WIDOW.

A TRUE NARRATIVE.

BY W. C. BROWNLEE, D. D.

Brother, we are only half awake : we are none of us more than  
half awake —LEGH RICHMOND.



IN 1817, I was called, in the providence of God, to take the pastoral care of the church of ——. It is situated in a rich and beautiful valley, with a chain of mountains sweeping round it in a semicircle ; and, for many miles around, all the families of a dense population, with the exception of one or two, belonged to that congregation. Among them was the family of General ——, one of the first agriculturists of the country

When I entered on my pastoral duties the general had deceased, being comparatively a young man when he died. His family was still in mourning for the bereavement; and on the Sabbath, his widow and nine beautiful children, in their deep weeds, attracted the respectful notice and sympathy of all who entered the church. The general and his lady had both descended from a race of intelligent and pious Christians. The colonel, his father, had been no less noted for the gallant spirit and patriotism of his youth, than for enlightened and fervent piety in his advanced years. And the general's lady was among the best educated and most accomplished women of her native county.

But the general had been one of the unhappy victims of error who had been seduced from the ways of the God of his fathers, about the time when infidelity, in its most rude and degraded form, with the noted *Thomas Paine* at its head, made a struggle to gain an ascendancy in many parts of our country. "*The Age of Reason*" had with him displaced the HOLY BIBLE, and he drank in those polluted streams until, being perfectly intoxicated with error, he cast off fear and restrained prayer, and openly denied the God of his fathers.

It was on a delightful morning in May, 181—,—I remember it as distinctly as if it had been yesterday—one of the elders of the church came to desire me, as soon as practicable, to visit the general's widow.

"Ah, sir," said he, as tears filled his eyes, "the poor woman has not long to live, and she knows it not. And O, sir, she is ill prepared to die."

In a short time we were on our way, he having kindly volunteered to accompany me to her mansion.

Our ride lay through the beautiful farms of the late General L——d S——g; laid out in square fields of great extent, highly cultivated; with orchards abounding in every variety of fruit-trees, particularly of grafted English cherries, of no less than twelve varieties; and luxuriant fields of grain, affording happy promise to the labors of the husbandman. We soon crossed the bridge over the dark

P——, and ascended the romantic hill which forms its lofty bank. From its summit, which we soon reached, there is a lovely prospect of ten or twenty miles around. All nature was in the glory of spring: the very air was perfumed with the delicious blossoms on every hand.

“What a happy world this would be,” said the elder, “if our souls, being purified from sin, did so rejoice in the presence of God as he makes all things smile around us!”

“Yes, my friend; but it is the sanctified and well-regulated mind alone, prepared for the Master’s service, which has the capacity of really enjoying his presence in the beauties of nature. That congenial soul sees him in every leaf, and bud, and beautiful flower; hears and adores him in the whisperings of the breeze, the murmuring of the brook, the music of the songsters, as well as in the rushing of the cataract, and the roaring of the mountain storm. He sees him and adores him in every thing. The guilty mind is at enmity with God, and by such a one, the presence of God, in the glorious works of his hands, is neither seen nor appreciated.”

“Ah, sir,” said he, “that was what the good old colonel would often say to his son, whose widow’s mansion we are now approaching. ‘I tell thee, boy,’ the old Christian would say, ‘infidelity paralyzes the noble powers of man, and renders him blind, and deaf, and dead to the joys of God’s presence in the kingdom of nature as well as of grace. *Age of reason*, Ha! The age of folly, of mental degradation, and of little men. Why, I tell thee, it requires a clear head and a pure heart to be able to take up the argument of TRUTH. The profane scoffer of the *Paine* school cannot comprehend the delicacy and force of divine reasoning on the goodness of God in nature, and his pure and overpowering love in grace.’ Another time, when his son was venturing his doubts touching the Gospel, the colonel exclaimed, ‘Doubts, my poor boy! Seest thou that bright sun pouring down his glorious beams? Seest thou those brilliant fields and meadows glowing in their living and breathing beauty under the present Deity? All these—

aye, and my own senses, can I sooner doubt and mistrust, than doubt the love of my God and Redeemer in the kingdom of his providence and grace.' ”

We were now entering the long avenue which led up to the house, lined on each side with rows of cherry-trees, now in all the magnificent beauty of their white and purple blossoms.

“I am not quite sure,” said I, “whether our visit here will be welcome.”

“I am not sure that it will,” said the elder; “but what then? We must never think of measuring duty by such considerations as those which move the men of the world.”

“You are right,” said I. “But tell me, you often visited the late general in company with my venerable predecessor Dr. F——, how were you received in your visits to his death-bed?”

“Always courteously,” said he; “but never recognized, I rather think, as Christians. And often has the pastor observed to me, that he never met with a more deeply confirmed infidel. Sir, I witnessed the last interview: it took place on a Saturday. The minister spent several hours at the death-bed of the general; he saw that the last sands of life were fast falling—he died on Monday following—and his anxious soul was in an agony to win him over, if such was the will of God.

“But no argument, no appeal, no prayer, no tears moved him from his infidel principles, or seemed to shake his confidence. Let no man tell me this was the fruit of the infidel's faith, which, like the reviving and exhilarating hopes and faith of the Christian, in *his* creed and in *his* Redeemer, was now sustaining the hope and confidence of his soul. Ah, sir, I knew the contrary. I was his near neighbor; I saw him oftener than the pastor, and in his last hours, oftener than his infidel associates. I saw him in the midnight hours, and in his unguarded moments; I heard him utter thoughts that came fresh from an unveiled and burning spirit. I saw him—I knew him to be a miserable man; but not more so than any other infidel. An infidel die

happy! A happy philosophic death! Die as a philosopher dies! Can any rational being believe what the infidel himself does not, and cannot himself believe? An immortal spirit leave *its* heaven here, and go away into an unknown, dark, dismal oblivion! Even on its own principles it cannot die happy, without its firm belief in an incredible miracle; namely, that a great and polished philosophic soul can be perfectly willing, that is, happy to give up all the heaven it has, for a dark, unknown, hated, and horrid oblivion. Another proof that infidels are not only the *most credulous*, but absolutely the *most duped* of all the children of men. For the general, he would yield to no argument; he was too proud in spirit: he never had hitherto flinched. But, ah, on that Saturday I saw him yield; and I witnessed the confession which, to this day, is well known over our valley. But it was the mere yielding of parental feeling.

“‘Well, general,’ said the minister, as we rose to go, ‘time speeds its course; I must take my leave of you.’ He took him by the hand. ‘Farewell; I shall never see you more, until you and I stand at the judgment-seat of eternal Justice: farewell.’ He paused; the general still kept a hold of his hand. ‘Ere I go, I have one question to ask you,’ said the pastor: he paused again, and turning, cast his eyes around the circle of the general’s sons, his daughters, and his weeping wife: the general’s eyes wandered after those of the pastor, over the dear and interesting group. ‘Now, hear me,’ said the minister; ‘my question is this: Is it your will, now, in your last moments, that these dear and beloved beings should follow the *minister, or yourself?*’

“The general looked first at the pastor with an earnest eye, as if to penetrate into his soul: he saw that he was in earnest, for the tears rolled in silence over his cheeks: he rapidly glanced at the circle of his dear children and spouse: he heaved one deep sigh as he clasped his hands on his breast; then resuming his hold of the pastor’s extended hand, he said with a solemnity which I never heard from the general before, ‘*It is my will that they follow the minister.*’



“ ‘Then let me offer up my last prayer at your death-bed,’ said the minister, as he threw himself on his knees. And O, sir, he did pour out his soul in such fervent wrestlings as I never witnessed before: all of us wept, except the general. He appeared confounded and bewildered; he seemed conscious that his creed was untenable; he did seem like one looking out for some fearful and undefinable disaster; his reason seemed to reel; but his pride, shall I call it, or obstinacy, prevented him from humbling himself at the throne of grace. He seemed like one given up of God and of man. And he died as he had lived, I fear. And this desperate outbraving of all entreaties and remonstrances of conscience, this reckless clinging to his shipwrecked hope, and defiance of the justice of God his Judge, has tended to harden his family in unbelief, and to efface from their memory all the admonitions, and prayers, and tears of the minister. But here we are at the door,” added my friend, “and may God give you wisdom, my dear pastor, to win over to Christ the souls of this desolate family.” “Amen,” said I, in the extreme anxiety of my spirit, as we advanced to the chamber of the general’s widow.

We found her sitting up; but her once beautiful form was wasting away under the disease that was consuming her vitals. She received us with the utmost politeness and kindness. But we soon discovered that it would be impossible to engage her in devout, or even serious conversation. She contrived to resist every attempt to direct her attention in good earnest, to the necessary preparation to meet her Judge. And she abruptly put an end to all our suggestions by a remark of this kind: that “her dear husband died in the belief which she held; such a good man could not be miserable. And as for herself, she never could wish to go to a better place than where he was!”

We parted from her with a heavy heart. I had utterly failed of delivering my message; and at this, and also the second visit, not even the permission was conceded to us of joining in prayer with her.

As I approached the house on the day of my third visit, I felt my mind exceedingly agitated. Here, thought I, is an interesting immortal being now very near the verge of eternity, and, alas, utterly unprepared; and not only so, but this noble spirit of hers is filled with bitter enmity against the cross of Christ.

I found her alone: she was now confined to her bed; and the hectic spot on her pale cheek indicated that her days were nearly numbered. She gave me a cordial welcome, and thanked me for this token of respect in coming again so soon. I blessed the Lord for this favorable opportunity, and in secret implored of him wisdom and skill to do my duty at this critical moment. A long and painful silence followed. At length she broke it, by *asking*, "Is not God goodness itself, goodness in his very nature? Am I wrong in believing also, that he has implanted in every soul the unquenchable hope of happiness? And who will say that infinite goodness will blast the hope which he himself has nursed and ripened in us?"

This opened a fruitful theme of discussion for at least an hour. The following dilemma was respectfully placed before her: "Madam, how do you know that God is *goodness itself*? If from the demonstrations of nature and providence, then from the same evidence do we learn infallibly, that he is infinitely just and awfully severe. You have only to look abroad over the world's history, and contemplate the tremendous exhibitions of his justice in the endless train of the terrible scourges which have swept the men of many generations off the earth. Do these prove simply his unmingled goodness? Again, if you seek your proof from the holy Scriptures, there we are taught that 'He who is good and merciful, will by no means clear the guilty.'" And the argument against *universal happiness* was closed by submitting to her vigorous mind these *two* ideas.

"If you choose to decide the matter by the full and most complete evidence drawn from *Scripture*, then is it obvious that the inspired writer, who uses the same word in Matt. 25:46, to express the eternity of the wicked man's

punishment, and that of the righteous man's glory in heaven, without giving us any intimation of his using it in an *infinitely different* sense in the same sentence, has decided the point that the SECOND DEATH of the one party is as enduring and endless as is the LIFE of the other party. The objection that 'everlasting' is applied to the hills and material things, has no force here. To whatever object it is applied, it always means the *longest possible existence of that object*. Here it is applied to the *immortal* soul, immaterial and ever-enduring: to that this punishment will cling as long as the soul exists; that is, FOR EVER AND EVER. And hence, in perfect accordance with this, the punishment of the wicked is pronounced by God to be 'everlasting,' after temporal duration has ceased, and after eternity has commenced. 2 Thess. 1 : 8, 9, etc.

"And, madam, if you choose to settle the point by *reason*, aided by revelation, then you must admit that God will not confer happiness on sinners as long as their sin and impenitence continue. But inasmuch as they die impenitent, and hence descend into eternity full of sin, and still sinning; and inasmuch as neither God, nor themselves, nor any other being will convert them after death, they will continue to hate God and sin against him just as they did before death; and as sin goes on in its self-perpetuating virulence, they will rebel against the most Holy One for ever and ever. Hence, they keep themselves out of heaven, that is, they keep themselves in hell, for ever and ever.

"Besides, Universalists and Infidels are usually believers in *freewill*, in its unlimited acceptation. I pray you, then, madam, how can you, or any of them, pretend to justify God, if he were to *compel* these unconverted men, *against their determination to the contrary*, into a holy heaven, a place which they have all their lifetime abhorred, and which they will as heartily abhor as ever, to all eternity?"

This address I uttered in the mildest terms I could. Her danger excited in me feelings of the intensest earnestness. The effect of these plain and simple truths was visible. There was a solemnity in her words, and in her whole

deportment, which I had not witnessed hitherto. O my God, I thank thee that I am not without some hope that the Spirit of the Lord is visiting her in mercy. Breathe on her, O blessed Spirit!

The following propositions I put into her hand as I left her.

1. There is no power or virtue in sinful man, which can *efficiently* lead him to peace with God and true happiness.

2. To deny a communication from heaven, on the supposition that God has the intention of showing mercy and favor to us, is actually an impeachment of the divine goodness. The infidel system is cruel: on the face of its very first principle, it brings a solemn impeachment against the divine goodness and pity.

3. It is our duty faithfully to determine by a close examination, whether it be by argument, or by delusion and depravity, that we are induced to continue in hostility to God our Maker, and to hate the Holy Bible.

4. No man nor power on earth can prove what the infidel affirms; namely, that the Bible is *not* a genuine revelation from heaven.

5. No man can call Jesus Lord, or give the Bible the reception of true faith, but by the Holy Ghost.

This visit was closed without prayer, it having been declined by her. She noticed the pain which her refusal caused, and retained my hand for several seconds; and I hurried away to conceal my emotions. Her mind, I knew, was not prepared to have these services *urged*, far less *forced* upon her. O gracious Master, grant me spiritual skill, wisdom, and patience to do thy work aright; deliver me from a furious zeal without knowledge; free me equally from the spirit of indolence, coldness, and negligence in duty.

As soon as practicable, I hastened to renew my visit. I found her in company with her daughters and two grown up sons. She was fast fading away, like the sere leaves of autumn, or the snow before the April sun.

“Sir,” said she, as by her request I took my seat close to her, “I own myself overcome by those dilemmas which you placed before my mind. ‘*The simple truth of God is overwhelming.*’ That expression of yours, dropped occasionally the other day, I cannot get rid of. Yes, I must even admit—my conscience will not let me equivocate—if *the Bible be true, then Universalism, in which I have taken refuge is false—aye, utterly false!* This is now my deliberate opinion: yes, my children, by the civil law, the deliberate murderer must die; that is to say, be cut off *for ever* from this life, *for ever* from his family, *for ever* from all earthly happiness. I should insult my reason, and never regain self-respect, did I conclude otherwise. *If the Bible be true, then am I sure Universalism is false as Satan.* But then, the Bible—I cannot, I will not, I never can believe it to be a revelation from heaven. Oh, I cannot ——”

I made no reply until she was restored perfectly to self-possession. Her fine mind, which knew no disguise, here betrayed, without concealment, one of the usual and very natural feelings of one who has unhappily been seduced by the impious sophistry of the infidel. In its desperate efforts, the unsettled mind hurries from one false refuge into another, plunging deeper and deeper at each retreat. She had been strong in her confidence in Universalism: the lingering remains of her respect for the Bible were owing to her being taught this sentiment: the delusion had rapidly vanished under the light of reason, conscience, and the plain exhibiting of divine truth: and the deep current of hatred, quickened by the disappointment, was directed, in all its force, against the Holy Bible.

I endeavored to draw her attention to the NECESSITY of a divine revelation, and exhibited in a plain manner the usual arguments on this point, taken chiefly from *Horne's Introduction*. And I concluded, by illustrating the *second* proposition, which I had submitted to her consideration at a former meeting.

“Do you believe that God is good?” “Undoubtedly

he is," she replied. "Do you believe that God intends to be merciful and gracious to us?" "I do believe it." "Then, my dear madam, if you admit all this, and yet obstinately deny that God has spoken to us one kind word, or one cheering promise, you take away the very basis of this belief; you have thence no ground of faith, nor of the humblest hope in mercy, or pity, or love, from him. In fact, you impeach his goodness and mercy. And that malignant being who goes about to compass the ruin of immortal souls, could alone counsel and devise such a horrid scheme."

She turned her head round on the pillow, and placing her hand on her brow, remained some time in deep meditation. "Ah, dear madam, who can have persuaded you that our heavenly Father, who intends to be so merciful and gracious to us, does, nevertheless, never utter one word of peace—never send one ray of light—never make one communication from heaven to us? Believe it who will, I cannot. None but the heartless infidel can cherish an idea so melancholy, and so opposed to divine goodness."

"I cannot, I do not believe the Bible; it is no revelation from heaven," cried she, waving her hand and turning her face away from me. A long and painful silence ensued. I implored in secret that the Master would give me prudence, and the tongue of the wise who win souls to Christ. Then, as if nothing had fallen from her lips, I begged her permission to review the *fourth* proposition formerly submitted to her. "With your leave, my dear madam, I shall presently examine the evidence of the Holy Bible, *external* and *internal*; but there is a previous question with you. Are you aware that the infidel school can never prove what they assert, namely, *that the Bible is not a revelation from heaven?*"

This excited her deep attention. I went on. "Have you, or any of all your school, from Celsus down to the humblest writer of the *canaille*, searched this sacred volume itself critically, historically, in the originals, or in its various translations? No one who has not done this has

any claim to be heard, or even to be reckoned a sensible believer in the infidel creed. Have your champions searched all the evidence of the Jews, and their writings? Have they searched all the evidence attainable from every Christian in the world? Have you conversed with angels, and collected the evidence that those pure intelligences can communicate? Have you sought out all the evidence attainable from departed spirits now in heaven, or from the doomed spirits now in hell? No. Then your researches for evidence, even after all the labors of thousands of years, can scarcely be said to have yet begun. Now, until this infinity of sources be perfectly examined, no one of you can have faith in the infidel creed. You may imagine a faith and a peace of mind. You may stifle conscience. But if you only act as reasonable beings, you must ever be in a state of agonizing doubt. Hence, there can be no peace, no joy. You must, in fact, cease to think or act as rational beings, and you must drown your noble powers in the perdition of this world's profligacy before you can cease to feel the agonies of remorse. And even all these are wretched opiates, out of the sleep of which you will one day awake to acuter and more horrible agonies."

Both of her sons, who had imbibed infidel opinions, had come close up to us, and were listening with deep attention. At the close of the argument, they cast an anxious and searching look on each other, and then on their mother; while her eyes were scrutinizing their looks, as if imploring their aid against these dilemmas. They were agitated, but remained silent.

"If you discover any defect in this argument, young gentlemen, you will confer a favor on me to name it; but if there be truth in it, O, in the fear of your Maker, I beseech you, resist it not. We can have no interest, either of us, in being deceived in a matter of this solemn importance."

For the first time, I saw a tear quivering in the mother's eye, and stealing down her faded cheek. "O, my God," said I, in the secret agony of my heart, "break, break in

pieces this hard and flinty heart. O, is not thy word as a fire and a hammer?" I rose to take my leave, not wishing to check this first flowing of emotions from the flinty rock: she retained my hand for some moments: there was a mental struggle. "Oh, you will not go away thus—you will surely pray with us," said she, with a sweet and imploring look. "Blessed be the Lord, who has heard us, and put this at last into your heart," said I, with emotions which I could not overcome. I felt as if a ray of hope had burst through the dark gloom, and beamed on this beloved being, for whom our souls had been in travail. We kneeled down by her bed; and Oh, I thought I felt the reviving presence of the Holy Spirit with us in prayer, and believed his power was awakening deep convictions in her for whom our souls were poured out. And yet, when I bethought me of the deceitfulness of the heart, and in a special manner, the fearful malignity of the spirit of deism, I seemed to hope against hope; while I cried unto God, and said, "Come from the four winds, O Spirit of the Lord, and breathe upon this dying mother and her family."

At the next visit I was grieved to find her tender impressions gone, or carefully concealed; and I thought with pain of that message of the Lord, "Your goodness is as the morning cloud; and as the early dew it goeth away." O my God, slay the enmity of this sin-stricken heart by the sharp sword which issueth out of thy mouth, even thy living and powerful word.

At this and the following visit, by her leave, I went over the evidence of the authenticity and divinity of the Holy Bible. I conducted her active and acute mind over the *historical* evidence. She listened with attention and eagerness to the testimony of the Christian fathers, from Augustine back over the early centuries, and up to the apostolical fathers; while I demonstrated to her that not only all these, but that *heathen* writers also, and *opponents*, such as Celsus, Porphyry, and Julian the Apostate, freely quoted these books called THE BIBLE, as genuine and authentic writings. *Every ancient antagonist admitted these*



*books of the Bible to have been written by the men whose names they bear.*

“The inspired writers possessed the gift of tongues and the power of working miracles: they healed the blind, the maimed, the lame, and raised the dead. All this was done publicly before the church and their enemies. And having thus established their divine mission from God, they presented publicly to the church the books written by them, as the accredited messengers of God. Thus the miraculous powers and gifts established the fact of their apostolical commission from God: this was their grand object. And the fact of their being the authors of these books was established by the living and credible witnesses, even all Christians, in their days, who received these books publicly from their hands, and deposited them in their archives, and transmitted the *autographs* to their children. Now, when these books of the New Testament were written, there were hundreds of thousands of Christians alive: these with one voice declared that they saw the apostles work miracles: ‘We knew them, and believed most truly that they were sent of God: we know these books to have been given by them, for we received them as a public deposit, and as such we transmit them to our children.’

“No one book, nor even a single sentence, could be added to these inspired books without speedy detection. This could not happen in *the apostles’ lifetime*: they were alive to expose to the church the imposture. This could not happen *after their decease*; for by this time copies were multiplied, and the holy Scriptures were in every church in Asia, Europe, and Africa. In fact, dear madam, it would be as easy and as practicable to add a new chapter or a new sentence to the common law of the land, or to a national charter, or to abstract from them, as it would have been to palm a new book of holy writ, or even one sentence, on the watchful church of God.”

Here we were interrupted, and at her request I closed with prayer; and with many tears she was commended to God, the great and good Shepherd of Israel, who gathers

the wandering sheep from "all places whither they have been driven in the cloudy and dark day."

In a few days my visit was renewed with an interest now daily increasing. I met her physician, who whispered in my ear to take courage: "She has at length commenced a diligent reading of the Bible: her attendant reads to her as long and as often as her weakness can sustain it. But it is singular," added he; "*she will hear only out of the Old Testament.*"

After an affectionate salutation from her, with her permission I proceeded in the examination of the *internal evidence* of the Scriptures: I pressed upon her attention the evidence of their divinity, from the peculiar *sublimity* of their conceptions of God and his perfections, and their spotless *purity*. "The genius and the wits of Greece and Rome never, in one thought or conception, attained any thing similar, far less equal to the sublimity of their conceptions of God; and never, in one instance, to any thing resembling their spiritual purity. There is evidently something on the pages of the Bible altogether superhuman. Unassisted human nature would let fall of necessity, as in fact we see it invariably does in all matters and in all human writings, the stain of its own impurity. Good men, having the fear of God before their eyes in all things, could not practise a deception on the world, and give out their own impostures as from God. And most manifest is it, that no wicked man could have conceived such pure and heavenly doctrines in his mind; far less, by any combination of his associates, have formed a system breathing nothing but spotless purity in morals and religion. And then notice the perfect *harmony* of all the parts. These tracts which compose the volume of the Bible, were written, some of them, by kings and princes; some by statesmen; some by peasants and herdsmen; men living over a period of *fifteen hundred years*, who never saw and never conversed with each other. Such a perfect harmony in views and in sentiments, on any subject, existing among some *fifty* men, even in our times, and who had even all seen and conversed

with each other, would absolutely be pronounced a *miracle* by even the Deist.

“Their purity in waging a war of extermination against all sin—even in the secrecy of the heart’s emotions and desires—and their irresistible efficacy in subduing the hearts of the children of men, exhibit the proofs of their divinity. They convert the passionate man into a lamb; the avaricious into benevolent Christians; the timorous and cowardly into courageous soldiers of the cross; so that, at the call of their Lord, they can despise fires and torments. They have converted the lewd into pure and chaste persons; the cruel and bloodthirsty into kind-hearted and courteous Christians; the unjust, foolish, and notorious offender they have rendered equitable, prudent, and holy. Nay, so great, says Lactantius, in one word, is the force of divine wisdom, that when infused into the heart, it expels, by a single effort, folly, the mother of sin. And these are *moral miracles*, which you and I witness weekly; as the church has witnessed them in all ages. In the days of the apostles, hundreds of thousands, once vile and debased heathens, but then clothed in the robes of righteousness and holiness, stood up as the living witnesses of this irresistible power of the Gospel, and of its moral miracles. And from that period millions, in their successive generations, have borne their testimony, with all the force of a moral demonstration, to the all-powerful influence of the blessed Gospel of Christ. They have done—and done before the eyes of the shrewdest and most cunning opposers—what no human eloquence, no human reasoning, no human persuasions, no energy of philosophy, no created authority, or force, ever could do. They have illumined the darkest minds; subdued and softened the hardest hearts; overcome the most obstinate pagan and idolater; and returned them to society, virtuous, pure, and holy men: they have soothed their mental agony in the dying hour, and led them to rest and glory in eternity. In a word, that has been done by them, which God only does by his own selected means. Hence, the seal of heaven’s testimony is set to them, that they are

God's most holy truths, used by him, and owned by him, before all."

During this last address the widow was bathed in tears ; and often uttered, in a low and tremulous moan, "O my God. O my distracted soul. God, pity my weakness. Mercy, O Lord, mercy on me ; and heal my blindness, if I am in error."

Kneeling down, I once more mingled my tears with hers, and offered our fervent supplications to the prayer-hearing God for his quickening and forgiving grace to this broken-hearted woman. I did feel as if I was now wrestling in hope. "O heavenly Father, dissipate this dark cloud of sorrow : bring in this poor wanderer : receive her to the bosom of thy love. O God, say unto her, in the effectual workings of thy free Spirit, Daughter, thou art loosed from thine infirmities ; go in peace. O bring her to the foot of the cross of Christ : there let her be found sitting, clothed, and in her right mind." And yet I could not resist the fearful forebodings which came over my mind as I rode home. O the fatal influence of infidelity ; so congenial to corrupt reason ; so soothing to the depraved heart ; so subservient to the vicious desires and appetites ; so potent in its seductions. I dared scarcely indulge a hope. "But O, most merciful Father, thy Spirit is able to subdue the most obstinate heart : I present her at the foot of thy throne : O descend, Holy Ghost, in thy subduing influences : renew her soul : O pluck the brand from the flames. To thee I commit her."

In a day or two I renewed my visit ; and at her request, after prayer, I discussed with her the evidence of *miracles and prophecy*. She lent her deep and serious attention to the subject.

I studied to remove her difficulties on miracles, and show her that a miracle is just as susceptible of proof as any other fact or public event of history. "Christ and his apostles came before the public, and called on all men, in the name of God, to believe the Gospel and repent of their sins. In evidence of their divine mission, they invited all

to bring out their blind, their maimed, the impotent, the dead; and with *a word* they healed them all, *instantaneously*, and called the dead to life in the presence of their foes. And in their appeals to the multitude they said, We have cured all your diseased, and raised your dead, now believe us as the accredited messengers of God: believe in Christ, who, by miracles performed by his own unborrowed, underived power, has shown himself to be the Son of God, come down to save the lost world: believe in our messages from him: believe in these our written testimonies, which we now publicly deliver to you, and leave in the bosom of the church, to be transmitted to posterity.

“And they did so in the very seat of opposition, even in Jerusalem. Within a few days after the descent of the Holy Ghost at pentecost, there were many thousands converted to the Christian faith in that city; and no mean men were they: there were among them some of the chief priests, some of the chief men of the nation; men who had been witnesses of all the leading events in our Lord’s life and death; and even those who had taken an active part in his trial, and in putting him to death. These being converted by the Spirit of God, stood up and publicly declared that they had seen these miracles, and felt the power of them on their own bodies, and on those of others before their eyes. To suppose that so many of the most intelligent persons in Jerusalem and Judea should thus be imposed upon, and induced to declare publicly that they believed what they knew to be false, would, in fact, be the supposition of a miracle greater in its very nature, and surrounded with more difficulties than what any infidel, even of the most extraordinary credulity, would care to encounter. It is, in fact, an assertion by a few men no ways worthy of credit, that several thousands of people, the most virtuous in Jerusalem, and some of them the foremost men of the nation, had all, without any accountable motive, suddenly conspired to become an army of impostors.”

I paused to give the widow or her sons time to reply; neither answer nor objection was offered.

The discussion of the evidence drawn from *prophecy* was taken up, and at her request continued at intervals, as she was able to sustain it. We went over the field of prophecy touching the Jews and other ancient nations, and also those which respect events of a more recent date: we pointed out instances of fulfilment in the New Testament era, and also those now actually being fulfilled, relative to Jews, and Mohammed, and popish Antichrist. See Horne's *Introd.*, vol. 1, chap. 4, sect. 3.

I had observed more than once, in my intercourse with this family, and indeed with all other Deists whom I had met, that whenever we entered on cool and deliberate argument, on *miracles*, *prophecy*, or *historical evidence*, they chose usually to say little, or nothing. It occurred to me that, with a few exceptions, infidels are led by prejudice, or a vitiated taste, or a depraved heart, to adopt their theory; and, with few exceptions, they contrive to keep themselves in it by scoffing or ridicule, and not unfrequently by rude and boisterous merriment. Argument and investigation seem out of the question. They fulfil, to the letter, the divine prediction, "There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts;" there being many things which they are "willingly ignorant of."

I availed myself of an opportunity of drawing the attention of the family to this; and I was speedily convinced that, of all their antipathies, no one is stronger than that against the devoted "*ministry*." This occupied our attention, in a singular discussion, the most of an afternoon.

I asked a question for information—it was this: whether, next to the "*minister*," they did not feel an unconquerable aversion to the peculiar ordinances of the Gospel, namely, *baptism* and the *Lord's supper*? They seemed surprised at the question, but frankly admitted that they did; that they not only *ridiculed* them, as they did the priests, but even *detested* them.

I replied that it would, to me, have been inexplicable, if they had not hated them: and I went on to show them, that this proceeds from a deep principle in the corrupt

heart, and is cherished by the master spirit who opposes Christ.

I set out in the discussion, by insisting on the distinction between the true pastor and the false pretender, the Romish priest: *two* beings as distinct as the lawful magistrate, and the fell despot. And by an appeal to reason and history, and to the character and office of the two—the one being *the minister of Christ*, the other *the priest of antichrist*—I succeeded in removing much of the odium, and, thence, very much of their prejudice. The “minister” comes not to lord it over the conscience; not to persecute; not to offer any new *sacrifice* “for the quick and the dead:” “Christ, by his one sacrifice, has for ever perfected them that are sanctified.” But he comes in the meekness of an unassuming teacher: he relies on no civil authority, no human power: he comes with no armor but the armor of truth: he comes with no traditions and ordinances of man: he appeals to the public documents of Christianity—“to the law and the testimony.” Out of these, lying open to every man’s inspection, he reasons, and teaches, and urges, not as a lordly tyrant, but as the humble and devout follower of his divine Master.

“And the influence of their moral exertions and religious labors in a nation are incalculable in their importance. There is one nation set up as a beacon on the stormy ocean; I mean France, and she has the lesson before her, written in blood. Had the Bourbons not destroyed the reformed ministry of France by a long series of persecutions—and thus overthrown the spiritual guides of the people, and quenched the lamps of truth—never would she, probably, have experienced the reign of atheism and terror in the old revolution.

“Besides, my dear friends, the ministry exercise no dominion, no deceptions of ‘priestcraft;’ they usurp no power not given to them from the word of God and the voice of the people. It is the Christian community who call out the ministry and sustain them. *This the infidel ‘is wilfully ignorant of!’*” This produced a deep sensation on the young men.

“Now, my friends, permit me to conduct you to the main point—and one which you, I presume, have always overlooked,” said I, availing myself of Leslie’s four rules, in his *Short Method with the Deists*.

“We can demonstrate the truth and the facts of Christ’s miracles, resurrection from the dead, and the gospel system and history, just as easily as you can, by national monuments, demonstrate the fact of our national Declaration of 1776.”

I paused. They begged me to proceed. “Let me have your careful attention, then, to our *four rules*. 1st. The matters of fact commemorated, must be such that *man’s senses* can be judges of them. 2nd. These deeds and facts must have been *publicly done*, in the face of men. 3d. Not only must *public monuments* have been set up, but certain *outward actions* performed in memory of these events. 4th. These monuments and outward actions must have been instituted, and must have commenced, *at the time* when the facts took place.

“Now apply these *four rules* to the miracles of Moses and his times, and to the miracles of Jesus Christ and his times. Let us, in order to be brief, confine ourselves to the last, namely, the miracles of Christ.

“In accordance with the first *two rules*, the miracles of our Lord were palpable to men’s senses, and publicly performed before men: such as the raising of Lazarus from the dead; curing all manner of diseases, instantly, by a word; and finally, his own resurrection from the dead: they were public, that is to say, before witnesses. Will you admit this?”

They nodded their assent with an interest which convinced me that I was understood. I went on.

“Now, as the national rites of the Jews, and also the dedication of the *Levites* to the office of the priesthood, were the national monuments to perpetuate the knowledge of these facts; even so the gospel ministry, and the holy ordinances of the New Testament, are set up as the grand monuments to commemorate the Saviour and his works.



The same eyes and the same ears that witnessed the miracles of our Lord—and thousands witnessed them—saw these evangelical monuments set up and corresponding actions enjoined on their faithful observance. “Do this in remembrance of me.” “Go ye and preach the Gospel to every creature, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”

“And fourth, these monuments were set up at the very date of those facts and miracles. And, like our own national monuments of the *fourth of July*, and our republican magistracy, they have continued to this day, in a regular succession, in memory of these facts and events. And I do aver, that it is just as reasonable to assert that an impostor could persuade twelve millions of people that they keep the *fourth of July* in memory of what *never took place*, or could palm the body of our republican magistrates on the American republic, under a charter which never existed, as to maintain with the Deist, that the Gospel and its institutions are the inventions of priestcraft.

“The Gospel is as much a law to the Christian churches, as the laws of Moses were to the nation of the Jews. This Gospel declares, on the face of it, that these monuments, and the public office of the ministry, were appointed by Christ; and are to continue in unbroken succession to the end of time.

“Now, let us suppose, as the Deist does, that this Gospel is a fiction; and, of course, *invented*. If *invented* in ancient times, and put forth under the names of the apostles, of course it must have been instantly detected by the living apostles and their thousands of Christian converts. In this era, then, they cannot date the age of the fiction. If a fiction, then it must have been *invented* in some period or other after Christ, and after the apostles had departed this life. Now, mark it well: if invented after them, then, at the time of the invention, there could be no public monuments, no ministry of the Gospel, no baptism, no Lord's supper, on the part of the Church, unless—what would be an extraordinary supposition—the cunning impostor in ques-

tion did actually, by a miracle, *invent* and make all these public monuments; and moreover did succeed in persuading all the Christian nations and people to believe that they had actually been observing public rites, and had actually seen the gospel ministry publicly officiating—when, on the Deist's supposition, they did not, previous to that moment, actually exist!

“On the other hand, if the cunning impostor who invented the Gospel, appeared before men simply *with the Gospel as a written record*, unaccompanied by any monuments, and without the clergy as its ministers, to expound and teach; then that Gospel bore on the face of it the evidence of its own falsehood. It declares on its first pages, that this gospel ministry and these holy ordinances did exist, and were used and celebrated by corresponding actions, in all times of the Gospel; and yet these very monuments mentioned and appealed to by this impostor's gospel, were never yet seen, and never yet heard of, on the Deist's allegation!

“But here are monumental actions and official characters existing in the successive generations from our Lord's resurrection: no man could palm these on the nations and Christian churches—these hold forth the Gospel from Christ; and their evidence is as irresistible and as decisive in favor of the facts and truths of the Gospel, to say the least, as the national monuments of our *fourth of July*, and our Declaration of Independence, and our body of the magistracy, prove, with irresistible demonstration, that we did separate from England, and did establish a republic in 1776.

“And hence, in conclusion—this being the grand end of the monumental *actions*, and *offices*—it is just as natural that the great adversary of Christ and his truth should stimulate into operation all possible hatred and malignity against them, as that he should excite all possible opposition to the divine evidence of his holy word. If the children of infidelity and darkness did not persecute the ‘*priesthood*,’ and hate the sacred ordinances of the Gospel, then

could the adversary view unmoved, and without opposition, all the grand and palpable evidence of God's Gospel by these monuments. In one word, in proportion as Satan and his emissaries pursue, with unrelenting malignity, the ministry and the ordinances of Christ, so do they indicate their perception and deep conviction that their existence is an irrefragable evidence of the truth of the miracles and facts on which the glorious Gospel is immovably based!"

The attention of the young gentlemen was excited by this to the highest degree. It was evident that they never had seriously examined into the nature, uses, or ends of these evangelical *monuments*. And as they expressed some anxiety to pursue this argument at length by themselves, I put into their hands the original of LESLIE'S SHORT WAY WITH THE DEISTS.

The next week, when I renewed my visit, my good friend, who had been with me at the last discussion, whispered in my ear, as we approached the sick chamber, "*Sir, you must shoot lower!*"

I had not a moment to reflect on this hint, nor did I conceive, at the moment, his meaning; in an instant we were by the death-bed of the general's widow.

I found that she had been studying the New Testament, at last; the Holy Bible lay open, on a small round table by her bedside; it was open at the seventeenth chapter of John. She had been weeping over it: several tear-drops still moistened the sacred leaves. Yet, in the course of conversation with her on the state of her mind, I could discover that we had only shaken her confidence—in no small degree, it is true, in that deceitful system in which she had been seeking repose. This was indeed much, but, alas, there was the same cold and deathlike aversion of the soul to Christ, and, I feared, an utter repugnance to his precious doctrines, and an obstinate aversion to the yielding up of her soul in submission to him.

These six weeks we had been laboring; and yet little progress, apparently, had been made. The words of the elder now occurred to me: "*I must shoot lower.*" Hith-

erto I had been exhibiting the outworks of the Holy Bible : now for its precious hidden treasures, its peculiar doctrines, the doctrines of the cross ; now we come to close quarters ; and may the Holy Spirit direct us. Amen.

At this and my next interview I drew her attention to the nature of sin, viewed in the holy light of God's spotless purity and impartial justice. I dwelt on its terrible influence on the soul and the heart ; its bitter fruits ; its terrible guilt, as committed against the Holy One. I endeavored to bring before her mind its appalling evils, entailed on man in this world ; its inconceivable terrors on a dying bed ; its fearful retribution in the world to come. Behold the displays of God's holy indignation against sin ; behold his anger against it, in all the evils which infest our world—wars, famine, pestilence, death in every appalling form : it has turned the world into a Golgotha, and it has formed the bottomless pit ! O, who can conceive, who describe the evil of sin—"the abominable thing which God hates !" And opening the Bible, I repeated certain texts with the solemnity befitting the subject. "God is jealous, and the Lord revengeth : the Lord revengeth, and is furious : the Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies : he is slow to anger, and of great power, *and will not at all acquit the wicked.*" "Upon the wicked God will rain snares, fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest : this shall be the portion of their cup." "They shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power—when he shall come to be glorified," etc. etc. "I will gather you into the midst of the furnace, and I will blow on you in the fury of my wrath, and I will leave you there, and melt you." Ezek. 22 : 18-22. O then, "can thine heart endure, can thy hands be strong in the day that I shall deal with thee ? I the Lord have spoken it, and I will do it." O wretched condition of the sinner ! God is angry with him every day ; he hardeneth his heart against his Maker : "he makes his brow as brass, and his neck a sinew of iron !" "He hideth himself in his false refuges ;

he flatters himself in his extravagant delusions : he saith in his heart, there is no God ; there is no justice ; there is no punishment ! He wars against conscience, and reason, and God ; until the hatefulness of his iniquity is found out." "A tempest stealeth him away in the night."

These alarming passages of God's word, and this appeal struck deep into her conscience: she had wept incessantly on her sister's bosom from the time that we had entered on this subject ; now her whole soul seemed to be bowed down under the rod of God ; and often she moaned out, "O my God, is there no hope ? God be merciful to me a sinner !"

These touching exclamations led me instantly to the exhibition of the Lord Jesus Christ and his atonement. I drew her attention to the *necessity* of the atonement: "Without shedding of blood there is no remission." To its *reality*. Having the true and spotless matter of a sacrifice, a holy human nature, he offered up his *one* sacrifice, and once for all. "He was wounded for our transgressions ; he was bruised for our iniquities ; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes are we healed." "He hath made him to be 'a sin offering' for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." And, finally, its *perfection*. "The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness' sake : he will magnify the law, and make it honorable." And now, "behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world."

"O my God, I wish——" She paused a long time. "I wish I had known these things years ago. But now—O, they are hid from mine eyes. I sinned against conscience and early instruction—I have sinned against the strivings of the Spirit. O how wickedly I strove against him, and resisted him ! Now he has given me up—and there is no hope ! *I would not know these things* because I *disbelieved* the Bible."

I now hastened to lay the gospel call before her wounded and broken heart ; while I implored of God wisdom and spiritual skill to guide her, and woo her heart to Christ. The call of the Gospel I set before her, taking care that

she should not lose sight of the fearful and just denunciations of the pure law of God. From the top of Sinai I bade her hear the law: "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." I pressed it on her conscience, while I implored of the Holy Spirit that she might be "*so kept under the law,*" as to feel her utter helplessness from the deeds of the law; and that she might "*be shut up to the faith,*" hedged in on every side, that being no longer left to go after false refuges, and self-dependence, and legal hopes, she might be "shut up" to the one new and living way, "the faith of Christ," the simple reliance ON HIM ALONE.

I made a long pause, for my emotions had overpowered me. I felt as if choked. I could not find utterance for some moments. I thought of the misery of the sinner, and her guilt. I thought of the infinite purity of DIVINE JUSTICE, with which all sinners do most awfully trifle; I thought of the horrors of perdition, and the worm that never dieth. I thought of this most gracious provision of God's grace by the mediation of his Son. O what misery! O what a remedy! O blinded and most wilful sinners—they will not come unto *him*, that they may be saved! O deplorable condition of this interesting woman; so near the grave, and apparently, so ill prepared! And in a mental agony I wrestled with God for her immortal soul. "O Holy Spirit, come, break, subdue, breathe life into the dry bones: breathe on her soul, and she shall live!"

At this moment the elder drew near; and taking her by the hand, said, "'Turn thee, turn thee, why wilt thou die? As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; wherefore, return ye, and live.' Does not God even stoop to expostulate with thee? hear his voice. 'Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow: though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.' Yes, dear lady, thine iniquities are great—thy transgressions are infinite! I lay no flattering unction to thy troubled conscience, but, glory be to his

grace, his mercy is equal to all thy misery; his grace to thy boundless wants. 'Christ is able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by him.'

The widow sobbed aloud; and I could hear her utter in a suppressed moan, "God be merciful to me a sinner! what *shall* I do—what *must* I do, to be saved? I believe the Bible to be from God. Can it lead me to a cure for a broken heart? Is it Jesus Christ?"

"What avails it," continued the elder, not hearing what she said, "that thou shouldest reject the Holy Bible, and urge all the strength of infidel objections against the revelation of Christ? thine immortal soul is quivering like a sere leaf on the autumnal bough, ready to drop into hell. O tell me wherewith thou shalt come before thy Lord, or bow thyself before God? Can the most costly offerings be accepted by thy Judge? How canst thou be justified before HIM who is of purer eyes than to look upon iniquity; who cannot behold it without abhorrence? Can the Judge declare that there is no sin, where thy conscience itself crieth out under the load of thy guilt? Can he who has declared that he will by no means clear the guilty, even now acquit thee without an adequate reparation to law and justice? O may God be merciful to thee a sinner! Deists may prate, and the profane may scoff; but there is a God—there is impartial justice—there is a tremendous bar of judgment! And there is a sentence under which the boldest and stoutest-hearted blasphemer shall quail, as the fiercest demon in eternal darkness has quailed! But O, there is hope for *thee*. Cast away all thy transgressions; there is justification for the chief of sinners."

"O how?" cried she in a transport; "where, dear pastor; by what means; by whom? O that I knew Him, I would come even to his feet."

The elder's manner was severe, but his heart was all kindness: the evidence of this was manifest, for he was shedding tears while he was uttering these searching words. And then allowance must be made for him: he was the neighbor of the general and the widow's family, and he had

long been witness of the virulence and malignity with which the Holy Bible and the Christian religion had been treated in this family; and he thought *no convictions too deep, no remorse too pungent, no repentance thorough enough, in such a penitent.*

She laid her hand gently on mine, and in deep distress repeated, "Tell me, O tell me how, where, by *whom* I can be justified from this overwhelming guilt of my soul."

I hastened to explain the nature of saving faith and evangelical repentance. I dwelt at some length on the nature and manner of justification before God, by faith in the atoning blood of Christ. I implored her, in the name of the Most High, to cast herself on the grace and mercy of God in Christ. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." The gospel offer is clear, full, explicit; so also is the call of mercy: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

"Stop," said she, with a look of mingled emotion—"repeat that again."

"Come unto me"—"Whom?" cried she; "what *me*? who speaks this to me?"

"Christ the Lamb, the dear 'Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world.' 'He bore our sins in his own body on the tree,' that such sinners as you and I may be saved, and never come into the second death. He says this; and his saying is a command. Come, then, unto him: O seek his Holy Spirit, to illumine thee and renew thee. Here is the promise."

"What promise?" cried she, eagerly.

"I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart, also, will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh." Ezek. 36 : 25-27.

"O may I venture?" said she, in a low moan. "Hear," said I, "out of his own word, the authority binding you,



and the reason why you should *venture* instantly. 'Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.' 'Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.' 'The Spirit and the bride say, Come; and let him that heareth say, Come; and let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him come and take the water of life freely.' "

"O, my God, and are *such* promises, are *such* offers made to *such* as me?"

"O yes, to *thee* and the chief of sinners: free is the gospel offer; perfect is the atonement; all-sufficient the blessed Saviour: and you have, as your warrant to come, God's own call. O come unto him: accept him: add not the sin of fresh rebellion to all thy other sins. Believe in him *now*, and thou shalt be saved."

Her face was bathed in tears: she covered her head, and turned herself round into the arms of her sister, who had been all this time supporting her on the bed. A long and deep silence occurred, interrupted only by her low moanings and sobbings of pain and agony. The children hastened into her bedroom, as if anticipating her dissolution. Her son I—— leaned on a sofa opposite her bed, with his eyes fixed with intense interest on us.

The elder had bent his head down on his knees, and was wrestling for her soul in secret prayer; and my spirit, in indescribable emotions, with some faint beamings of joy, was imploring the outpouring of the Holy Ghost. "Come, O breath of the Lord, and breathe on this crushed and broken spirit. O leave her not; let her not return again to folly. Deliver her, O gracious Saviour: bring her up out of the deep waters. Set her feet upon a rock—the *Rock of ages*: put the new song into her lips. Holy Father, hear her, O hear her in these secret wrestlings and agonies of

her soul ; and let it be seen that she is a vessel of mercy for the Master's glory. Amen."

The silence was long and distressing, still interrupted by heavy moans and sighs. Meantime her sister, a mother in Israel and a ripe Christian, was whispering instructions and consolations into her ear.

We rose to depart ; we were unwilling to interrupt these emotions ; and we hoped that these were the labors and travails of the new birth. She pressed my hand, and retained the hold of it for several minutes, without turning round or uncovering her head.

"My dear madam, farewell : may God bless you. You are on the borders of Jordan, for you are fast fading away ; and now we take our leave. I may never see you in the land of the living any more : pray, what are *now* your hopes and prospects in the solemn view of eternity ?"

I shall never forget the scene that followed. She turned herself slowly round, raised her hands, and clasping them, said, in the most solemn tone, "O, my Redeemer, I take thee—I take thee as my Saviour—now, wholly, only, and for ever." She paused ; then added, "I have found thee, O my Redeemer. Long, long have I wandered from thee, my Shepherd ; thou hast sought me, even me, in these dreadful wanderings. On thy bosom didst thou lay me, and bring me back. Dear Saviour, in thy righteousness alone have I hope and strength. Rich is the grace that saved a wretch like me."

She spoke this in a low whisper, yet with great animation ; and sunk back on her pillow, and gave way to a flood of tears.

The elder looked first at her, then at me, and then round the circle of the children ; and in an ecstasy of joy, clasping his hands, and sinking down on his knees, he cried, "Then, dear pastor, let us give solemn thanks : the wanderer that was long lost, is found ; and she that was dead, is now alive."

We all kneeled down by her bedside, and offered thanks and praises to the Hearer of prayer, who had in his rich

grace, sought out and brought back the lost sheep from the places whither she had wandered in the cloudy and dark day. And we parted from her, "glorifying God in her behalf;" and rejoicing at the consolations of the Spirit which were abounding in her.

I saw her only twice after this happy issue of her sorrows: she continued to rejoice in hope of the glory of God. She seemed to be steadily engaged in meditation and secret devotion; often repeating, with unusual satisfaction, these gracious words of Christ which had brought her comfort: "Come unto me, all ye that labor;" and delighting much in the daily reading of the Holy Bible. And her pious sister, who was by her night and day, told me that she died with the calmness, resignation, and mild joy of a Christian; breathing out her soul into the bosom of the Redeemer; uttering, in a low whisper, "Lord Jesus, receive my parting spirit: thou hast redeemed me, Lord God of truth."

On the third day her funeral took place. And at the suggestion of my friend the elder, I gave a detailed account of the form of instruction which we had pursued in our first ten visits previous to her conversion. And the most of the inhabitants of that vicinity are alive this day, who heard the detail with emotions and tears of joy. For the church rejoiced in the grace and mercy of her Lord, who had given this signal triumph of his truth over the fell enemy that had sent desolation and woe, in former days, into this family.