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THE
NAVY SURGEON;

OR THE

CONVERSION OF DR. CHA'S H. BROUGHTON,

LATE OF THE UNITED STATES NAVY.

Although educated in a christian community, the subject of the following pages had for many years neglected "the one thing needful." Possessed of a cultivated mind and an amiable heart, he attracted to his friendship many of the young and the gay, among whom he moved as an object of peculiar endearment. In the midst of earthly loves however, he forgot the love of God, and seldom, if ever, lifted his eye from the circle of friends around him, to seek that Friend "which sticketh closer than a brother."

In the winter of 1842 it pleased God to pour out his Spirit in a remarkable manner upon the congregation in N——, Virginia, to which his parents were attached. The old and the young, the moral and profane, were alike made the trophies of redeeming grace. Our young friend, in the mean time, had been ordered by Government to the Gulf of Mexico. An account of the work of God was communicated to him by a devoted sister, who also informed him of the conversion of many of his old associates, and among them some of the members of his own family.

This intelligence seems to have been the special means employed by God, in arousing his attention to spiritual and eternal things. God is also the hearer of prayer, and *his Spirit* can reach at once the family at home and the youth in a distant port.

The following extracts from his letters will exhibit the interest he felt when hearing of the revival in his native place.

“I was deeply affected, you may be sure, by the interesting intelligence contained in your last letter; and had wealth beyond the dreams of avarice become ours, I should have rejoiced less than at the news of an awakening in our own family and town.”

In a letter dated Key West, April 15, he says, “Pleasant and sweet as the voices of those I love were the messengers from home, that came to me by the last mail. They were full of comfort, and raised my heart to the Giver of all good, that even here, where there is no sound of Sabbath bell, where the servants of the Lord are not, and where the wicked seem to strive without restraint, he has provided such rich banquets for me in the gratulations of distant friends, and in their sympathy and advice. To know too, that nearly all the members of my family have, through Christ, been accepted of God, to know that His Spirit is still spreading and extending among the people of my native town, and that many friends, out of the family, but still dear to my remembrance, have felt his influence and forsaken evil, to hear also that the circle of his operations is spreading farther and farther about the country—Oh what rapture, what overflowing of eyes and heart did all this cause me! What praises too do I not owe to the Judge of all the earth, that he has not suffered me to harden my heart in the midst of all these wonders, but has answered the intercessions made in my behalf with the effectual operations of his Spirit?”

The struggles and conflicts through which his mind passed, when under the special teachings of the Spirit, together with his ultimate acquiescence in God’s plan of saving sinners, are stated by himself in two letters bearing date March 4, and April 15. In the former he says—

“I hasten to answer your solicitous inquiry—‘Do you feel yourself a poor, lost sinner, with no hope but in Christ, and no joy but in his love?’ I do indeed humbly and earnestly trust that the Spirit of God has purged my vision to the beholding of the wickedness of my own heart, and shocked and sickened me with the loathsome spectacle. By that operation I have beheld and comprehended the web of sophistry in which sin had entangled my soul, in the hour of temptation lulling my conscience into security by crying peace, peace, when there was no peace, and with all the serpent’s subtlety persuading me, ‘Thou shalt not surely die,’ when God had said, ‘*Thou shalt die.*’

“Oh how clearly did I see its treachery and deceit, its wickedness and folly, and how gladly did I turn from the Syren I had listened to, to trust in the Lord, and to wrestle with him for the hope that is in Christ! But oh, how hard it was to turn—to close my ears to the eloquent pleadings of sin and Satan—to believe that the Savior could pity and love a wretch who had so often witnessed the wonderful works of his Providence, yet went straightway and sinned again! Yet He remembered ‘that we are but flesh—a wind that passeth away and cometh not again,’ and graciously condescended to bruise the head of the serpent that had beguiled me, so that I now hope that ‘old things have passed away, and all things have become new.’

“And how differently now do this world and this life appear! What to me are the cold and unsympathising regards, the unwilling praise that might be wrung from the world by a life spent in its service, to the joy that is in heaven ‘over one sinner that repenteth?’ What are the cares and sorrows of worldly ambition, compared with the love, desire, faith and hope that fill the heart in meditating upon the goodness of God, and in reading his word with spiritual discernment? Surely ‘the evidence

of things not seen, and the substance of things hoped for,' are joys that surpass all the joys that flow from sensual objects.

"I need no further evidence of my sinful nature than that even now I transgress daily, having cause often to grieve that the fear of the Lord is not always before my eyes, that my faith is too weak, and that I am liable to be influenced by the fear of ridicule and the habits of those around me. My eyes have been opened, however, to see that this results chiefly from the neglect of some christian duty, and I am thus warned to *be earnest at all times*; for I find that nothing but God's Holy Spirit strengthening me, can so work upon my heart as to destroy the influence of its old habits and associations: nor is this ever withheld when I seek it."

In his second letter his statements are more minute, and the exercises of his mind are given in a more graphic and interesting manner.

"The means God has made use of in drawing me to himself, are to me inconceivable. I understand but this, that 'whereas I was blind, now I see.' There was sorrow following the known commission of sin—there was the desire for reformation—there was the sharp conflict between conviction and depraved but rooted natural habits—there was the frequent triumph of the latter—there was the deep feeling of wounded pride, self-abasement, and complete humiliation, in consequence of my own will not being sufficient for reformation—there was the consciousness that I should perish except I did repent—there was the agony with which I looked upon eternity, dark and cheerless, without joy and without even hope—there was the anxious inquiry, 'What shall I do to inherit eternal life?'—and then, thank God, there was gushing prayer, 'God be merciful to me a sinner'—then came answers like revelations from heaven—then did I seem to hear, 'ME for him, life for life I offer; on me

let thine anger fall; account me man. I for his sake will leave thy bosom, and this glory next to thee freely put off; and for him lastly die.'

"It seemed to me as if God 'reasoned with me,' so quickly were my questions answered, so fully were my doubts removed. Then did I feel,

"The sweet comfort and peace
"Of a soul in its earliest love.'

(Thank you for that hymn, I have it literally *by heart*.) How mysterious do my former blindness and my present light appear! I used to feel quite *secure*; imagined that I loved God, and that God loved me. I worshipped him in the self-righteous spirit of Socrates, or as the Indian worships his Manitou, or the Turk confides in his destiny; knowing nothing of natural depravity and enmity to God, and the inevitable necessity of a Savior; knowing not that without Christ 'we can do nothing,' and that salvation is not of ourselves, but the gift of God. 'O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!'

"And now, what a blessed thing it is to know and love this Savior! 'Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword, separate me from the love of Christ?' I trust not, with the help of God. Though troubles and trials surround me here as a fiery furnace, there is One walking with me like the Son of God, as with the Jewish youths, and the smell of fire shall not pass upon me. How beautiful is the following verse in Isaiah, 'Fear not, for I have redeemed thee. I have called thee by thy name, and thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee. When thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.'

“These things are my comfort, my very present help in time of need. For the daily duties of a heavenly life, I have that best of guides—*the Bible*, read by the light of the Spirit; and for my commentator I have Baxter’s *Saints’ Rest*—a book filled with the breath of active hope and love, as if, to use his own words, ‘the things written there had been engraved on his heart by a beam from the face of the Son of God.’ The Tracts you sent me are very appropriate and please me much, especially those entitled, ‘Do I grow in grace?’ and ‘Advice to young converts.’ My companions, I dare say, think me less of a ‘good fellow’ now than they did; but the christian who acts consistently with his faith, must command respect from all but fools, and the esteem of such, or indeed of any, is of small value compared with the love of God. ‘I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.’ These things, however, God has tempered to me, and I go on my course without exciting the opposition or ridicule of those around me. Generally, and I speak it in their praise, my brother officers, though caring for none of these things themselves, respect the feelings and opinions of others, and have the good sense to distinguish between disinclination for their occupations, and dislike for themselves.”

The following extract from a letter dated Key West, March 16, furnishes many pleasing evidences of the thoroughness of the change which had taken place in the heart of Dr. Broughton. It also exhibits the groanings of his soul while situated amid influences adverse to its spiritual advancement and comfort.

“It is a source of regret to me that I cannot be more alone, to indulge in pious exercises and reflections with greater ease and freedom; and to escape the conversation of the persons around me, I have sometimes gone ashore in a savage country with a musket to protect me, that I

might be alone with God. Yet even the conduct and conversation of my messmates teaches me humility, inasmuch as I, 'knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, have not only done the same, but had pleasure in those that do them.' Thus when I see ignorance and folly in others, far from feeling any self-complacency, I derive the lesson that the good I may have is not of myself, but from the grace of God.

"Blessed be God too, that the new desires and impulses he has planted in me, he has not forgotten to water and increase. I felt not shame but joy, a few days ago, when appealed to to decide an argument about the propriety of some pleasurable sin, to hear its advocate exclaim, 'Oh the doctor takes *his* morality from the Bible.' And yet, not a long time has elapsed since I should have been ashamed to have him see me with the Bible in my hand!

"I have been always fond of acquiring knowledge; but latterly, how changed is the motive. Once, every fact that I added to my hive, every new idea that flashed upon my mind, every labor that was undertaken, and every task performed, was but a snare to my feet, a temptation in my path. Ostentatious display was the motive, and self-conceit the result. And great indeed was the barrier of pride and self-reliance with which I had thus fortified my heart. The grace of God, however, has been greater, and the knowledge of Christ is now my highest aim, my chief hope. A mine of wisdom has been opened to me in the Gospel by the light of grace, where I had previously groped about in darkness.

"In the wonders of scientific research I now can hear the voice of God, and see his hand. In the history of the past I can watch his providence working out its own ends, and so disposing events as to make them work together for his own glory and the advancement of his king-

dom. Even my imagination, that enemy to truth and heightener of sinful lusts has, under the gentle influence of Christ, become an associate with faith and hope and love, in strengthening my convictions and quickening my perceptions of heavenly things. There are sins, alas too numerous, that do easily beset me, and which sometimes bring the fear that my 'goodness is as the morning cloud,' that I am still under the dominion of sin and Satan, and that the hope of eternal life with me is a mere delusion.

"I endeavor to forsake sinful pleasures, for I have ceased to delight in them. An easy disposition however often induces me to yield. May God forgive me, and strengthen me by his grace to hold on in 'patient continuance in well doing'—to trust less in myself, and more in Christ—to watch and pray lest I enter into temptation. Your prayers, my dear sister, I am sure I have. I have written a long account of my feelings upon religion. It is a subject that engages my thoughts continually, and which has precedence of every other, so that I should not tire were I to write ever so much more. You will feel with me and for me, and can fully appreciate my situation."

When a soul is converted it is impossible for it to be idle. Salvation may *begin* with itself, but can only *end* with *all who need it*. The feelings of Dr. Broughton on this subject are exhibited in a communication, dated Indian Key, May, 1842.

"It is the high privilege of my vocation not only to minister physical relief to suffering man, but also in the ear of him who thought to die hopeless and unpitied, to speak words of sympathy, comfort and peace. Of what priceless value then—and at what small cost—is a simple pressure of the hand, accompanied with a whisper of that love that requires of the most hardened sinner the exercise of faith alone for salvation.

“I have for some time past been deeply interested and affected by the accounts that reach us of the revival of religion, and the progress of temperance at the North. They surpass all human conception, and ought alone to convict sinners, as the great light from heaven did Saul. How visible are the workings of God’s Spirit! I look with wonder and confidence to these movements and the missionary cause, as the setting of the tide towards the kingdom of heaven universal upon earth. Inquiries into the future, farther than depends upon the promises of God, are generally vain and useless. But these *promises* should urge christians onward—not to ask, ‘Are all things ready?’—but earnestly to *labor* that the knowledge of salvation may be spread abroad, and freely to *give* as they have freely received, the glad tidings of ‘good will to men.’

“I am perhaps carried beyond the humility proper for me, in thus expressing my opinion; but these are matters that I feel zealous about, and my mouth speaks out from the fulness of my heart. I feel my benevolent sympathies expand the more, the more they are gratified. Like the circle in water that starting from one point spreads itself over the whole surface, so charity with me, by God’s blessing, though beginning at home, did not stop there. My first desires were for myself, then my family, my friends and acquaintances came next, then my country, then all human kind; and, glory to God, his work seems to prosper in all. Please tell Thomas, that as he is my purser I make him my almoner also, and commission him to make an offering for me at the concerts of prayer for missions, and also for Sabbath schools.”

Converted on board a man of war, and separated by his situation from the privileges of the sanctuary, the heart of Dr. Broughton, like that of David panted for

the courts of the Lord's house. His feelings, together with his high appreciation of the Holy Scriptures in his temporary exile from the house of God, may be learned from a letter dated Indian Key, June 17, 1842.

“God knows what is best for me, but I cannot feel here, while surrounded by persons whose associations and habits influence me somewhat, as if I had given my whole soul to Christ. Too often do I feel bowed to the dust with shame that having understood so great salvation, I have not buckled on the whole armor of God to guard it against all assaults of the enemy of souls. I sometimes fear that my peace has been presumption, so liable am I to be led away from the Spirit by trusting for strength to myself. Oh for the sympathy and companionship of christian friends! Oh for the benefit of pious example and conversation, for holy Sabbath days and the enforcement of the Gospel by teachings, persuasions and alarms!

“Yet God has stood by me in the greatest straits, and every fresh conviction of sin and unworthiness has been joined with fresh conviction of the necessity of a Savior. Like Pilate, I used often to ask, ‘What is truth?’ and like him, too often I would not wait for an answer. I used to think that truth was something that people wished or imagined to be so; that every man's notion of what was true depended upon prejudice, and that all questions might have as much said upon one side as on the other. But how different is *Revealed Truth!* He that has it knows it, feels it, it is *his*. The combined powers of the world and of Satan cannot take it from him; it is a part of him—the sure ‘evidence of things not seen.’

“Oh, I have felt my whole frame tingle and my hands clasp in ecstasy, as in the Bible the Spirit of truth and love has revealed to me mighty and wonderful things, such as I could have never known or even dreamed of. And I have hated the flesh, whose sluggishness, whose

passions have made us to see these things 'in part' only. Certainly nothing can be more powerful than this truth, to comfort, to exalt, to redeem. I cannot refrain in my letters from pouring out my feelings to you on this subject. They find here no other earthly vent, and you, I am sure, will be interested by them, while it is a relief to me."

In a letter dated August 12, we find the following consolatory language in reference to some afflictions in the family.

"You must have had a season of distress, but I am sure you all have found that it was good to be afflicted. How forcibly, when I think of it all, am I impressed with the truth 'that affliction cometh not forth out of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground.' No human prudence can foresee or avoid them—no human skill can remove them, or even understand the manner in which they cease to operate. God alone can wound or heal, can break or make whole again.

"And is it not wise and just in Christ to take us up into the wilderness to be tempted as he was, to fast and to pray as he did, and to drink with him the bitter cup; as well as to permit us to eat of his body and drink of his blood? Are 'the sufferings of this present time to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us?' But alas, alas, how little can I myself feel or practice these convictions. When God withdraws his face to try me, how soon do I fall into hopelessness and hardness of heart; and it is only his abundant mercy that brings me back to his favor, and makes my errors and sins cover me with humility, imparting the consciousness that Christ is the only refuge for the soul, and the only object worthy of love and abiding confidence.

"If, too, when I have 'done all commanded,' I am still an 'unprofitable servant,' how much more so when I transgress daily, if not in open sin, at least in the ne-

glect of the proper exercises of faith and love—in sinful and perverse thoughts, words and affections? But there is One who ever liveth to make intercession, and the merit of whose atonement will remove the imperfections and make acceptable the services of him who is vile and despicable in his own eyes.”

But a short time after this the vessel in which Dr. Broughton had been an involuntary exile from the means of grace, was ordered home. What were the emotions with which he met his parents, brothers and sisters, can better be imagined than described. During his absence his father, three brothers, a sister, a brother-in-law and himself, had all been hopefully converted to God. The family had become indeed a *christian* family, and the very ark of God seemed to have taken its abode within its walls. Nor was this all. Almost all his acquaintances and old friends were now members of the church. Oh how great a change in so short a time. And how agreeable were all these things to the young convert from the everglades of Florida!

But there was another joy for the heart of this young disciple. Long had he been panting and sighing after the ordinances of God. Long had he been groaning in spirit while in a desert of the means of grace. But now the sweet Sabbath shines around him; the church-bell drops its notes upon his ear; thronging multitudes crowd the still streets, and the sanctuary is open for his reception. High privileges these—holy seasons these! And as he entered the house of God, and there sat among his people; as the commingling voices of the worshippers began to arise; as the accents of prayer and public instruction were uttered; and especially as the cloud that had sheltered him in the wilderness re-appeared in God's temple, diffusing all around a spiritual baptism—how truly did the heart of our young friend unite with that

of the pilgrim at Luz, "This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!"

Nor did he delay to fulfil the vow he had made in a distant land, of dedicating himself *wholly* to the service of God. On November 27, 1842, together with four others, one of them a converted Roman Catholic, he made a public profession of the faith of the Gospel, and for the first time sat down at the table of Christ among his people.

' How sweet and awful is the place,
' With Christ within the doors,
" While everlasting Love displays
" The choicest of her stores!"

And sweet no doubt our young brother felt it to be—a day of espousals—a day of communion with Christ and his people—a day never to be forgotten.

For several months after his connection with the church our young friend held the office of surgeon on board a ship of the line, then lying in port. He now enjoyed the privilege of attending the sanctuary regularly, and of mingling his christian sympathies with those of his brethren. His pastor has often noticed the steady fixedness of his dark eye, and the animated glow of his earnest countenance under the preaching of the word. His ardor was amazing, and yet it was so internal, so deep as not to be noticed by any save his most intimate friends. He often visited his pastor in his study to converse about spiritual and eternal things. On most of these occasions he would replenish himself with Tracts, which he distributed among the sailors as he had opportunity. For the seaman he felt a deep sympathy. He knew his destitution, and had a heart to relieve, so far as he could, the inconveniences to which he was subject.

A judicious friend of his having suggested to the

writer that his talents might probably be available for the pulpit, the Tract entitled, "Call and qualifications for the Gospel Ministry," was put in his hands. This Tract he read carefully and with much prayer. It laid before him a field of usefulness larger than had previously occurred to his mind. Many difficulties, however, arose. He was in his country's service. He was in not only an honorable but a useful profession. Change was uncertain. He might not be qualified—he might not be *called*. All these objections arose. His desire for usefulness, however, had well nigh conquered them all when he was suddenly ordered by government to a cruise among the West India Islands. This circumstance placed his mind in great trouble. As a conviction of duty, however, he obeyed his country's call, saying to me as we parted, "I hope to have my mind made up by my return."

It appears from his letters afterwards that he altogether relinquished this idea of preaching. His humility, his consciousness of the greatness of the work, together probably with the disadvantageous situation he occupied to decide such a question, brought him to this result. Still, he "being dead speaketh;" and the writer earnestly hopes that even his *quenched desire* may excite the heart of some other of *like spirit* to fill his place in publishing salvation to a lost world.

The first letter received from Dr. Broughton after his departure was dated Nassau, New Providence, Jan. 20, 1843. In this he writes—

"I feel much ashamed of the despondency I exhibited just before leaving home. I knew that I was about to be subjected to trial and privation; and looking only to myself I felt discouraged and afraid of sinking. The Lord, however, has graciously stretched out his hand to me though of little faith, and so far I have had blessed

experience that he will not forsake those who look to him for help. I am amazed at myself that I have had so little faith. If God's ways were as our ways, or his thoughts as our thoughts, I should long ago have fallen from his favor. But while Christ *ever liveth* to make intercession, Oh who or what shall separate us from the love of God?

“I feel happy to think that, though far away from you all, we meet together morning and evening at the throne of grace, and that our Sabbaths, our God, and our Savior are the same. You must write to me all the new things which occur in the church, and what the result may be of the season you expect in February. Send me on also, to Pensacola, your numbers of the *Missionary Chronicle* when you shall have finished reading them, and give my affectionate regards to the many and kind friends that God has given me.”

The following letter dated Matanzas, Cuba, Feb. 20, will be read with interest.

“One could scarcely imagine a situation more unfavorable than mine for reading and meditation, and yet I am surprised to find that I can acquire and digest knowledge here as well almost as under more convenient circumstances. The frivolous conversation that is often carried on around me creates a want of occupation, and books and self-study come kindly in to supply it. My slothful flesh tries hard to wheedle me into the belief that there is ‘a lion in the way,’ and that it is useless to try to read; but I am otherwise constrained to make the effort, which is generally successful. I also find much time when the officers are asleep or keeping their watch on deck. I have thus read Scott's ‘Force of Truth,’ Newton's ‘Life and Letters,’ ‘Mammon,’ several Tracts, and have made progress in familiarising myself with our larger catechism.

“Passages of the Bible are sometimes brought home to my heart with great force, though generally my conceptions are not so clear as I could wish. This, however, is an incentive to perseverance and diligence. Mammon is a very scrutinizing book, and I trust it has done me good. It has certainly opened my eyes to behold a beauty in economy, which the phlegmatic maxims of Franklin could never bring me to perceive. Newton, too, I have enjoyed much. One of his letters seemed to take scales from my eyes, and gave me a clue to understand how, through a dark period of doubt and distress, an unseen hand had been keeping alive the fire in my heart which Satan was striving to quench. I can now bless the hand that chastened me, and own with wonder and admiration that he doeth all things well. Now I know, not because of what was told me, but because ‘I have seen him and heard him myself.’

“I see the hand of God in many of the events of my past life, how he has been before me as a refiner of silver, waiting for me with compassionate forbearance, and wooing me to take his image while I have been heaping dross in the way, and my neck has been a sinew of iron, and my brow brass. And what is man’s heart, that God should love it so, and be resolved to win it? It is strange enough that he should stoop to save us; but how much more wonderful is it that he should draw us to him against our efforts!

“You would scarcely believe me, were I to tell you what narrow conceptions I had formed of God’s love, and how ignorant I was of his ways. A short time before I left home I read in Pilgrim’s Progress the description of the man in the iron cage, and my heart feared that the case was mine; it was so much like what I *felt*, it was so much like what I *deserved*. Like David I was afraid lest I should one day perish. But He who knoweth our frame sustained me by his word which preached

perseverance in so many places that even unbelief was convinced, and I was enabled calmly to wait for him who 'has the words of eternal life.' Since then I trust I am prepared to say, in whatever frame I am, 'Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him.'

"It is a great source of comfort to study the providence of God towards me, and to see in many apparent evils how much good can be extracted. He has disappointed hopes that I had formed of earthly happiness, only that I might seek and prize the more the 'rest' that 'remaineth.' He has placed me here amid trial and privation that I may learn my own weakness, and be taught to rely solely on him. He has taken me, so young in grace, from those means and ordinances by which his mercy refreshes others, that I might look *immediately* to him without helps and aids. .

"One thing at first distressed me much, the limited sphere of usefulness in which I live. I am now sure, however, that there are few situations on earth in which a conscientious christian cannot make himself useful. Even in the midst of worldly associations he can observe the specious arguments by which unbelief hides itself in the natural heart, and knowing himself to have been similarly deceived, he can endeavor to convince others that Eternal Life consists not in vain speculations about 'fixed fate, free will, fore-knowledge absolute,' nor in the adoption of the mere forms of church worship; but in repentance unto life and faith in the atonement of Christ. This, to be sure, is looked upon as puritanical; and human reason will rather delight itself in measuring eternal truth by its own standard, than in considering itself imperfect, and that faith in God's revealed word is the only true wisdom.

"It is something, however, to tell such that they are wrong, and to have good books at hand which they will sometimes read, if from no other motive, to fill up

the vacancy of their time. I have also an additional privilege. The captain has requested me to read prayers on Sundays; and then I can select what parts of Scripture I wish to read, and with God's help I shall not be wanting in a word of exhortation, though not a prophet nor a prophet's son."

We have already noticed the fact that Dr. Broughton when leaving home had serious thoughts of preparing for the christian ministry. The following letter from Pensacola, dated April 24, alludes to this subject, and also exhibits the deep interest he felt in the spiritual welfare of seamen.

"The denunciations of the Bible against time unimproved and duty unperformed, and the promises held out to even feeble attempts, had filled my mind with the desire to devote myself to a cause in which I might hope, by the Divine blessing, to be in some humble degree useful. But my charity was unwilling to begin where it should have done. Sloth and selfishness magnified the difficulties I should encounter among those around me, till it seemed a matter almost impossible that I should be useful here; and I am ashamed while I make the confession, that the privations I must endure in my present position, and the constant need for caution and watching lest the cause of Christ should suffer reproach through my weakness, may have had some influence in clouding my understanding and directing my thoughts to the sacrifice of myself that I proposed to make.

"I had not then experienced how prone the heart is to pervert the leadings of the Spirit, by mixing with them the desires of our own foolish and fond imaginations. Nor had I then reflected that many sailors were themselves heathen, so far as the lack of Gospel preaching, and minds darkened by ignorance and superstition, and hearts under the dominion of Satan could so be considered

But now that christian philanthropy has opened her heart to them, and persons unconnected with them are seeking their welfare, it certainly became *me*, from my relation to them and from the peculiar opportunities I possess, to take up *their cause* and to endeavor to help it forward by whatever means the Lord has given me."

In another letter, June 16, he says, "I have seen no reason to regret the conclusion I was brought to on the subject of the ministry: on the contrary, in a letter from Mobile containing information that a present of the Evangelical Library had been made to the crew of the B., I have been encouraged by the expression that 'the moral advancement of the seamen around me was the noblest of all ends;' and I hope to make it my chief concern hereafter to be conscientious in the discharge of this duty."

A short time after this we find his vessel again cruising among the West India Islands. While at Havana he fell in with a congenial spirit, a young physician from the United States who was "exerting himself as far as he had the power, to spread the knowledge of the truth around him," of whom he says, "The doctor's company was a great comfort to me, and has strengthened and encouraged me not a little."

In writing from Cienfuegos, under date of Sept. 11, he thus alludes to the religious condition of the place.

"The fooleries of the Catholics have lost nothing in the hands of the people of this place. Friday, the 8th, was the feast of the nativity of the Virgin Mary; and her image, bedizened with silk and spangles, was to have been paraded through the streets in procession, but the succession of rainy weather has put a stop to the mumery. Yesterday (Sunday) evening was however celebrated by a ball, I presume in honor of 'nuestra Señora,' (our Lady.) To this, in common with the officers, I re

ceived a card in which 'Señor Dr. B.' was informed that the committee of arrangements, desirous of eclat in the discharge of their office, solicited his assistance. Whether the efforts of the committee unassisted by Dr. B. were sufficient to make the entertainment a brilliant one, I cannot decide. My country is welcome to the honor of the invitation, no doubt intended in all decency and courtesy; but while I may be gratified to have her honored abroad by the civilities of strangers, I cannot but pity the poor deluded souls who are taught to 'reject the commandment of God that they may receive the tradition of men.' Of a truth, from what I learn, the curse of God is upon them. They prostrate themselves before Vice and Ignorance with the willingness of the worshippers of Juggernaut. No social ties are sacred, no virtues are practised or respected. It is indeed a nation that has drunk deep of the wine of the fornication of the beast. Soul sickening are some of the accounts I have heard of the state of morals here."

With the exception of a small note, the following is the last of Dr. Broughton's letters, dated Pensacola, Nov. 2, 1843.

"Ere long I hope and believe that God will direct my way to you all, though I must say that the pleasurable anticipations I had formed of this event have been not a little diminished by the painful intelligence you communicate of the apparently declining state of religion in the church. My great desire of returning among you was, that I might have my faith increased and strengthened by the example and counsel of faithful christians, that I might be better able to make known among men the ways of God. I trust that the hope of increasing mere selfish comfort and enjoyment was only a secondary motive, for I have learned in part to bear with contentment the privation of these, in the belief that an *eternity*

of enjoyment will be sufficient to satisfy my most longing desires.

“Wherever I go, the cry of creation groaning under the curse enters my ear, and the voice within me whispers, ‘What art thou, O atom? that thou shouldst regard thyself; that thou shouldst bury God’s talent in the ground, or consume his Spirit on thy lusts!’ Feeble indeed have my efforts been, but God despiseth not ‘the day of small things.’

“Since God has enlarged my confidence in him, I am less perplexed with the superiority of others in natural endowments, and I can argue in a spirit of more candor than formerly, being now more desirous of elevating the truth than of exalting myself. I have so often failed when venturing in my own strength to defend the truth of God, in consequence of the greater ability of some of my associates, that I am now quite willing that God should defend his own truth, and content myself with opposing ‘the sword of the Spirit’ to the lovers of the world, trusting that its Author will cause it to smite where he willeth that they should have repentance and the knowledge of Him. There are many kinds of voices in the world which speak of God to these men, and though they have least disposition to listen to the plainest one, yet all the others are but the echoes of this, and with proper light may be known to depend upon it. It is in this way that conversation upon almost any subject may be brought home to the word of God, and thus rendered profitable.

“But let me tell you of *one* application I made of the texts you quoted in your letter. Since God has enlarged my confidence in him, I have discovered my relationship by grace to a much larger family than that to which I am bound by nature, and although his Spirit has prompted me to pray with much earnestness for the enlargement and establishment of his kingdom upon

earth, yet I have been led to regard with *special interest* in prayer my own family and church. This I know is often with you all a subject of prayer, and we must pray *in faith*, that God may grant our requests. I believe that he does answer prayer thus offered, not only from his word and the experience of christians of whom I have read or with whom I have conversed, but also from indubitable evidence in my own experience. I think too, that the experience of churches is the same with that of individual christians, and that sunshine and clouds are necessary to the perfecting of faith in both.

“We are all short-sighted, but experience has taught me, at no small cost, what I dare say it must teach all, that in the day when the candle of the Lord shines upon us, we are prone to be satisfied with ourselves, and to use your own words, ‘to think it impossible that we should ever get back to our former cold state.’ We are apt in this condition to imagine that we have a *supply* of God’s grace, which will last us at least for some time to come, and thus grow careless about the use of the means of sustaining our spiritual life. The manna, however, that is so covetously laid up, corrupts, and we discover by sad experience that as natural life must be supported by *daily* food, equally true is it that only *daily* supplies can sustain the life and vigor of our faith. If the means are used with the belief that God will deliver us, even our temporary decline will become a blessing, for in overcoming it we shall have greater strength and confidence than before. *Perseverance in effort* is the kind of faith that I have found to remove mountains. It is not *sighing* but *running* that wins the race. I have found no remedy for suffering and for distressing thoughts like *doing*. Active obedience is the evidence of that faith which quenches all the fiery darts of Satan. If then we who are members of an unhealthy church are patient

and faithful, we can confidently expect that God will answer our prayers, and that bread thus cast upon the waters will return after many days.

“I am afraid, from consciousness of my youth and want of wisdom, that what I have written may have been written with the haste of presumption, and may be so considered by you; but it has been the result of experimental reading of God’s word and of prayer, and I have expressed myself thus, not because I think I know the truth more or better than others, but because I think that the ways of God to me have been wonderful, and that the experience of the humblest child of God may be read by others with profit.”

But a short time after the date of the above Dr. Broughton commenced his voyage homeward. While stopping a short time in the West Indies he was seized with fever. It was principally of a nervous character, and seemed to threaten his life. He reached home, however, early in the next month. He was emaciated, and his appearance excited the sympathy of all who saw him. He survived about two weeks. On the 22d of December, 1843, he breathed his last, calmly reclining on the bosom of God his Savior.

His exercises on his death-bed were deeply interesting, but were frequently interrupted by mental aberrations. On one occasion he said to his mother, “I saw myself all pollution and sin; and it seems to me that just a drop of a Savior’s blood fell on me, which removed all my pollutions and gave me acceptance with God.”

Just before he expired he leaped up in the bed exclaiming, “Where is Abraham’s bosom? Where is Abraham’s bosom?” The physician in attendance replied, “Doctor, Abraham is not here.”—“Abraham not here!” he exclaimed with amazement—“Abraham not here!” and fell back upon his pillow and died! Thus vanished

into the light of heaven this blaze of piety, which God had so wonderfully created and sustained.

On the next Sabbath his funeral was attended by a very large concourse of citizens and naval officers. The sermon was preached from Heb. 11 : 4, "He being dead yet speaketh." The impression was deep and solemn, and all seemed to be amazed at the wonderful example of his grace, which God had produced on the coasts of Florida without the ordinary means of salvation. We followed the hearse to the silent grave where, within walls of brick and amid rows of ever-blooming cedars, we deposited the body of our dear beloved Broughton with christian and military honors. Venerated parents, brothers and sisters, and a large circle of friends commingled their tears at his tomb, remembering his virtues, and mourning his early loss.

"But no, he is not lost—
"In heaven his spirit shines,
"While here, the frame once tost,
"In hope of life reclines.

"He is not lost—a ray
"From e'en his tomb ascends,
"Which marks to bliss the way,
"And Jesus recommends.

"That way may others tread,
"Upon that Savior trust,
"And find, as he, the dead
"Have comforts in the dust."