The Spiritual magazine; or, Saint's treasury. [Continued as] The Spiritual magazine, and Zion's casket

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THE

Spiritual Magazine;

OR,

SAINTS' TREASURY.

VOLUME III.

FROM JUNE 1826, TO MAY 1827.

* There are Three that bear record in heaven; the FATHER, the WORD, and the HOLY GHOST: and these Three are One.*
  1 John v. 7.

* Contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.*
  Jude 3.

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1827.

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PREFACE.

Brought to the close of another year's labours—the third Volume of the Spiritual Magazine—we again prostrate ourselves before the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in humility of soul and grateful adoration, for covenant mercies extended to us. While witnessing, amidst the changeful scenes of a dying world, a continued and increasing dearth of vital godliness—numerous instances of daring departure from the faith—and the removal to glory of eminently holy and useful servants of the Most High; we are astonished in the reflection, that we are still retained at our humble post, and find favor of the Lord, in being instrumental to the spiritual instruction and edification of the church of Christ.

We would, as did the king of Israel, go in and sit before the Lord, and say, "Who are we, O Lord God? and what is our house, that thou hast brought us hitherto? And this was yet a small thing in thine sight, O Lord God; but thou hast spoken also of thy servants for a great while to come: and is this the manner of man, O Lord God?"

The principles on which this publication was founded, and which have been stedfastly adhered to from its commencement, are too well known to require
reiteration. Our chief aim, in the face of surrounding adversaries, is to set forth the power and excellency of divine truth—particularly in its constraining and sanctifying influences on the heart and affections of the happy recipient. We leave others to brandish the torch of discord, while, by the help of the Lord, it is our determination to stand alone on the defensive against our enemies' attacks,—witnessing their futile efforts with composure, and acting on our Lord's example, "Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously."

We renew our grateful acknowledgments to our Contributors and Patrons, to whose continued exertions we attribute the increasing circulation of the Spiritual Magazine: and we pray that covenant blessings may descend in rich abundance on them, and on all whose souls' desire corresponds with that of the enquiring Greeks—"Sir, we would see Jesus!"
THE

Spiritual Magazine;
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"There are Three that bear record in heaven: the FATHER, the WORD, and the HOLY
GHOST: and these Three are One." John v. 7.
"Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Jude 3.

JUNE, 1826.

(For the Spiritual Magazine.)

REFRESHERMENT FOR THE WEARY.

"As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country."—Prov. xxvi. 25.

TO all who through regenerating grace are thirsting for a knowledge of Christ, the gospel contains the most suited and consolatory tidings; and when accompanied with theunction of the Holy Ghost, is indeed a joyful sound of free and full salvation, from sin in its guilt, the law in its curse, the world in its snares, and death in its sting. And to all who know the plague of the heart, and feel the need of salvation by free grace, how precious must the gospel be, which reveals the Lord Jesus as the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him. Heb. v. 9.

This is his glorious character, in personal conjunction with the Father and the Holy Ghost: for as the elect were chosen by the Father to salvation, and receive the knowledge of salvation by the anointings of the Holy Ghost; so also our dear Lord Jesus accomplished the work of redemption by his own incarnation, obedience, sufferings, death, and resurrection, Dan. ix. 24. whereby he gave full proof of his eternity as God, since none less than the eternal God could have brought in an eternal salvation. 2ndly. It proves also his real assumption of the body prepared by the Father, as an atonement for sin must of necessity be made in the nature that sinned. 3rdly. It demonstrates the perfection of his work, in the full accomplishment of the Father's will; John vi. 38, 39, xvii. 4. by which he did for ever supersede all human performances in salvation; and upon the foundation of his finished work, the gospel proclaims salvation by grace, Eph. ii. 8, 9. And 4thly. It furnishes us with very high discoveries


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of the freeness of his love to the church, since he became the author of salvation; it was his own voluntary act, for he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham; wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. Heb. ii. 16, 17.

Here let the Redeemed rejoice, in union to this glorious Lord, who in the same scripture which saith, he is the author of salvation, saith also, he is the Son of God; Heb. v. 5, 8. corresponding with his testimony in John x. 30. I and my Father are one. One in union of nature and perfections; as that which the Father is, the Son is also, possessing the same underived greatness. And lest any should conceive the Father to be more glorious than the Son, because of his mediatorial abasement, Phil. ii. 6, 7, 8. it is written, the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him. John v. 22, 23. And as there is a perfect oneness between the Father and the Son, so also there is with him, and the church, who are accounted members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones, Eph. v. 30. and one with him in all the perfection of his work, and glory of his righteousness, which is so fully accounted their's, that as he is, so are they in this world, 1 John iv. 17.

But it is no less important to know what is meant by our obeying him. Let not the reader run to the law of Moses, as though that required something in addition to the work and obedience of Christ; but let him enquire into the meaning of Rom. xvi. 26. The obedience of faith; and also Rom. iv. 5. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. And faith which cometh from God, leadeth to God, in dependence upon the work of Christ, and while the recipient of grace can do nothing. Yea, if salvation depended upon one good thought in the creature, he must for ever despair: yet precious faith, led forth by God the Spirit, discovers such an infinite fulness in the person of Emanuel, as causeth the redeemed soul to sing,

"O happy, happy man!
What glorious scenes I view;
According to God's gracious plan,
I nothing have to do."

Thus in the gospel of free grace, we behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and triumph by faith in the efficacy of his blood—the perfection of his righteousness—the prevalence of his intercession—the freeness of his mercy—the fulness of his grace—the stability of his covenant—and the perpetuity of his love. Of the gospel St. Paul declared himself not ashamed, having proved it to be the power of God to salvation, Rom. i. 16. And in his address to the saints at Galatia he said, I certify to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man; for I neither received it
of man; neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. Gal. i. 11, 12.

As the saints of old were cautioned against another gospel, and exhorted to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints; surely in this day of awful departure from the simplicity of the scriptures, so manifest in the great mass of religious professors, it becomes the faithful ministers of God to sound an alarm, to warn against anti-christ, to expose the delusive systems of mere pretenders to divine knowledge, and to make known the good old way with much plainness of speech. And as this is written exclusively for the benefit of God’s covenant family, I beg the reader to consider, that the gospel is wholly of God, to the total exclusion of man’s wisdom, ability, or worthiness.

And in the gospel, the Holy Persons in the glorious Trinity are set forth in their personal acts, and by their personal names, each manifesting a mutual delight in, concern for, and an unalterable determination to save, a number of precious souls, which no man can number. For this purpose, these divine Persons entered into a covenant before the foundation of the world, in which the objects of their love were chosen, blest, and appointed to eternal glory. See Ps. lxxxix. 3, 4, 19 to 37. Prov. viii. 22 to 31. Isa. xiii. 6, 7.; xlii. 7 to 12. and Eph. i. 3, 4.

In the gospel, the people of Jehovah’s choice are taught their security, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding; to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ. Col. ii. 2.

Love is the origin of the gospel; for God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him. 1 John iv. 16. Here the elect have dwelt from everlasting, interested in the covenant purposes, provisions, and promises of love: and such is their oneness, that they are knit together as an act of divine sovereignty in the holy person of their elect head; the Word that was with God—the Word that was God, creating all things by his eternal power; and the Word that was made flesh and dwelt among us; in whose everlasting arms they were placed by the Father, from whence none can pluck them. John x. 28. As they were knit together, by election, before time, so were they declared to be gathered in one, by the offering of Jesus, in the fulness of time. John xi. 52. And they were manifestly knit together, in the day of regeneration, by God the Spirit’s quickening, cementing grace: and they are described in the scriptures by the similitude of the vine and its branches, a foundation and its superstructure, a head and its members; and such are distinguished from all others, as the called out of darkness into God’s marvellous light, as taught the fallacy of human foundations, and as led by God the Holy Ghost to Christ Jesus, the only true foundation on which they are knit together, and grow up to an holy temple in the Lord.

Here let the reader observe, this knitting is together—not with all
classes, whether for Christ, or against Christ; but together, as members of one body, living in the Spirit, and walking after the Spirit; who from their union to the Lord, are of one spirit with the Lord; and being thus knit, they become witnesses for God, contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, and by opposing the enemies of the cross, manifest to whom they belong, and resemble a band of men whose hearts God hath touched. In the gospel such persons are taught all that is essential to their peace, and God's glory; and they possess the riches of the full assurance of understanding, which leads to that acknowledgment, for which the apostles most earnestly contended, and by whom the sweet savour of Christ's knowledge was manifested. The religion of Christ is not, as some assert, made up of ignorance; neither are its principles received by mere human influence; but all who were given to Christ as the choice of the Father, for whom he poured out his soul unto death, are taught of the Lord, even the Holy Ghost, who is the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of Christ; and by whom all the regenerated are made acquainted with their ruin in the first Adam, the pollution of their nature, the pride, carnality, and sin, that is visible in their best works, the spirituality of God's holy law, and the suitableness, sufficiency, and preciousness of Christ, as their wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.

This knowledge is promised in the new covenant, Jer. xxxi. 34. and is received by the gospel, 2 Cor. ii. 14. which gives such a full assurance of understanding, as to put the truths of the gospel beyond a doubt; making its possessor not only acquainted with the condition of man by sin, but in giving life to feel it, not only of the law's extent, but of deliverance from it; not only of God's love and Christ's work, but an interest in it; not only of the existence of the Holy Ghost, but a possession of his witness in the conscience. It is indeed a full assurance not founded on man's word, but God's oath; and while that which is advanced by man leaves room for a doubt, all that our God hath said is in very faithfulness, and must stand for ever: and when he speaketh life into a dead soul, light into a dark mind, and liberty to the poor captive, it is attended not only with a full assurance of interest in his love, but with the riches of eternal life. As our gracious Saviour said, in his address to the divine Father, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent," John xvii. 3. Here I beg the reader particularly to observe, that this knowledge and heavenly instruction, is always attended with an acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; as expressive of the equality, unity, and eternity, of the Holy Three which bear record in heaven. And though St. Paul was highly favoured with discoveries in the mysteries of the kingdom, so much so, as to cause Peter to say, "He had written some things hard to be understood," 2 Pet. iii. 16. yet he could give no further explanation of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, than express his fervent desire that the saints might come to
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the acknowledgment of the mystery; mark, not the comprehension, but the acknowledgment; not reasoning about it, but, under divine influence, acknowledging it with reverence; which is manifest in the conduct of all true believers, by seeking no God beside him who is revealed in the scriptures as the God of promise to Abraham and his seed, the God of provision, the God of condescension, the God of direction, the God of consolation, the God of all grace, and the God of glory. Such a revelation of the Holy Three, in the person of Emmanuel, will for ever satisfy the quickened soul, who, through grace, receives such a glorious God as all in all.

While such persons daily prove his suitableness, they rejoice to acknowledge him, by openly embracing the whole gospel, and by attending upon that ministry which savours of the Father's love, the person, blood, and righteousness of the Son, and of the person and operations of the Holy Ghost, in and upon the elect. And they will further acknowledge this mystery, by a bold contention with all who dare deny any part of God's truth; and they will rejoice to bear their testimony to the blessedness of election in Christ, redemption by Christ, pardon, peace, rest, and acceptance in Christ, and to the assurance of eternal glorification with Christ. And while sin becomes increasingly hateful, self-loathsome, and glory desirable, it is the high privilege of each to say, I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: but after the way which men term heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers.

(To be concluded in our next.)

(For the Spiritual Magazine.)

COMFORT FOR THE TRIED FAMILY OF GOD.

* When thou passeth through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shall not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee.*

Isaiah lxxiii. 2, 3.

The happiness of the believer is far superior to that of the unregenerate character. The unregenerated character, when exercised with affliction, has no source of comfort; he tries various methods to relieve the anguish of his mind, but consolation fails, and despair rends him asunder. On the contrary, the true believer possesses that happiness which supports him under all the trials of life, and renders him undaunted at the approach of the king of terrors. The reviving consolations of religion are poured into his soul, and the Redeemer whispers to his soul, "Fear not, for I am with thee!" The precious promises animate his hopes of deliverance from every sorrow, and eternal felicity in that celestial state, "where the weary are at rest." The promises are indeed particularly calculated to comfort the sorrowful spirit. In them we behold a balm for every wound, a cordial for every fear. The chapter from which the words of the text are selected, abounds with these promises; few, however, are more consolatory.
than these, "When thou passeth," &c. In order to illustrate these words, we shall endeavour to point out,

1. The peculiar trials which believers experience. 2. The promises given them under their trials. 3. The reasons for which the promise of divine presence and support is given, "For I am the Lord thy God," &c.

1st. Then we will point out the peculiar trials which believers experience. Various are the figures by which a state of difficulty and trial are represented. The figures of fire and water are adopted, in order to shew the depth of sorrow into which believers are often plunged. The expressions imply,—1st. That they have great trials. The present is an afflicted state for the christian; as a stranger and pilgrim he must expect many things which are painful to flesh and blood, "For whom the Lord loveth, he correcteth," and "Many are the afflictions of the righteous." Jehovah, as a Sovereign, doth not afflict all his servants in the same way; he measures out their trials with an unerring hand, and as they are best adapted to their necessities; whilst, with impartial justice, he lifts up one, he setteth down another, and causes him to be exercised with many trials to procure the bread that perisheth. Others, though favoured with the bounties of divine providence, and their cup of earthly blessings runneth over, yet are the subjects of acute pain. Disease drinks up the energy of their spirits, and checks that holy ardour which they once felt in devotional exercises. To aggravate their sorrows, and weaken their attachment from sublunar objects, the king of terrors is permitted to take away the desire of their eyes with a stroke. If not thus visited by death, they experience peculiar trials, perhaps in their families; their children, for whom they have wept and prayed in secret, are permitted to become their tormentors. If, however, none of these difficulties befall the believer, he has still great trials arising from the natural aversion of his mind to spiritual things, and that prevalence to backside, which is the burden of his soul; often in secret he finds that his heart is prone to evil, and that continually; he would draw near to his heavenly Father, and worship him in the beauties of holiness, but he finds a corrupt nature interposing between him and his God, and sighs for that happy hour, when he shall be "absent from the body, and present with the Lord."

2nd. That they have peculiar temptations. If we search the history of the saints, we shall find that great have been their temptations. Numbers who are precious in the sight of the Lord, are often mourning on account of a corrupt nature; they feel the influence of a body of sin, when they lie down and when they arise. In some happy moments they are ready to indulge the hope that their corruptions have ceased; but, alas! they find that the conflict must be renewed, that nothing but death will deliver them from this burden. Whilst such is the mournful experience of some of the saints, others are constrained to weep on account of the temptations of Satan. Though delivered from being finally destroyed by this adversary, yet
they find that he watches daily for their halting. At some seasons he assumes the form of an angel of light,—endeavours to raise high ideas of themselves,—and thus draw them from the cross of Calvary. If this stratagem does not succeed, he appears in his own character. He endeavours to work upon their corrupt nature,—urges them to the commission of sin, and even to blaspheme that holy name, whereby they are called. Determined in his malice, he proposes one temptation after another, and often causes the believer to exclaim, "I shall one day fall by the hand of this enemy!" "O God, my soul is cast down within me."

3rd. They have many persecutions. All the beloved of the Lord are called to pass through the fire of persecution. In the primitive ages numbers ascended to glory in the fiery chariot, and proved that their love to Christ was stronger than death. It is true, in the present day, persecution does not brandish her flaming sword, but the spirit of persecution remains the same. Every calumnious expression against the faithful heralds of the cross,—against the sovereignty of Jehovah, is but the spark, which if suffered to increase, would soon devour the bodies of the saints. In proportion as the believer lives near the Lord, and is steadfast in his attachment to the truths of sovereign grace, his name is cast out for evil. Carnal professors shun him, and the most opprobrious names are given him. These are some of the trials which the Lord is pleased to suffer his people to pass through; and there is a needs be for their afflictions. The christian, like the palm-tree, best grows when he is most weighed down. Prosperity, of any kind, makes him either lukewarm, or rebellious. The Lord, therefore, to fulfil his covenant engagements, causes his people to pass under the rod. He tries them in various ways, that their dross may be consumed, and their graces brought into lively exercise. We proceed.

2nd. To shew the promises given to them under their trials,—"When thou passest," &c. This promise is calculated to produce the greatest joy and peace in the believer's mind. It brings to him every thing that he can need, every thing that can dissipate his fears. There is a promise—1st. Of the divine presence. It is the presence of that God, who hath said, "I will be with thee in trouble." Favoured with his presence, the believer finds that happiness which empires cannot purchase. The most adverse dispensations of divine providence assume a bright aspect, and the heaviest trials become the choicest mercies. Supported by the presence of the Most High, he can pass through the fires of persecution and temptation with courage, and bid defiance to the malice of all his foes. In the language of triumphant joy, he can say, "The Lord of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge." Now, it is this promise which the believer is taught to expect amidst all the trials that he has to experience. And the fulfilment of this divine promise the believer finds. Amidst all his trials he experiences, at seasons, that joy, arising from the presence of the Most High, which causes him to bless the hand by which
he is chastised. Favoured with the divine presence, he exclaims, "Why shall I complain of my trials? Am I interested in the favour of my God? Has he engaged to bring me through all my trials? Then I will trust, and not be afraid. A few more waves of trouble will conduct me to the peaceful shore, where there is neither sorrow, pain, or death."

2nd. It is a promise of divine support,—"When thou passest through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee." Painful as are the temptations of the saints, yet God hath promised to keep them in the hour of temptation. He hath engaged to limit the power of temptation, and with every temptation to make a way for their escape. And the covenant engagements of Jehovah are fulfilled in the experience of the saints. Amidst unnumbered temptations they are upheld. Often when they seem ready to become a prey to satan, the Lord brings them relief. He bids the tempter be still, and checks the power of corruption. If for a moment they fall by temptation, they are not utterly cast down. The work of grace is still maintained; and at the appointed season they are brought to a throne of grace with weeping and supplication, for strength and renewing grace. Nothing indeed but a miracle of power can uphold the christian amidst his temptations. The spiritual life is like a spark of fire in the midst of the ocean, which nothing but a miracle of grace keeps in existence. And it is a sweet thought that all the temptations of satan are known to the Lord, and under his control. Here then, tempted christian, is your support. The Lord is your refuge, and underneath you are the everlasting arms. Whilst, then, you often say, "O Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me," remember that the battle is not your's, but the Lord's; and he will fight for you, against all your enemies.

Sunderland.

(To be concluded in our next.)

CLERICUS.

THE PUBLICAN AND PHARISEE.


Two sinners to the temple went of old,
One, to perform a service (to this day
With looks demure, and attitude devout,
Performed by thousands)—disallowed of him
Who tries the reins, and knows the hearts of all;—
With hypocritic eloquence he tells
How much he'd done of worthless deeds, nor dreams
To acknowledge humbly what he'd left undone!

But, mark the contrast—see the lowly soul
Of him who had nought to plead, and self-condemn'd
"Afar off" stands, nor will his eyes to heaven
So much as raise; when smiting on his breast—
Ah! there the evil raged—in grief of soul,
In bitter grief, admitting not a pause,
Hear his petition—and his countenance see—
"O God, be merciful! be merciful to me!"

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(For the Spiritual Magazine.)

CHRIST THE PEACE OF HIS CHOSEN.

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."—John xvi. 33.

The doctrines of God’s most holy word, which are an opening of his divine mind and will, are so many parts of God’s revelation of himself, and of what God is, and has been from everlasting to his chosen and beloved people in Christ Jesus. This he hath seen good to express by his words, and by his works, which are an uniform expression of his infinite and unalterable love to his church, which hath never ceased to be exercised towards her, in the most perfect harmony with his righteousness, holiness, and truth. As led by the Holy Ghost, and under his anointed teaching, to meditate upon the love of God our heavenly Father, we may well cry out with devout and holy admiration, “blessed, O Lord! is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee;”—while the mind from such a scripture is raised to take in a spiritual sight of the adorable Head of the church, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Man of God’s right hand, in whose person, mediation, and salvation, with the covenant made with him as the Head and Mediator of his church, with the purposes of Jehovah in him, and the acts of Jehovah towards him, we have the truest realization of the everlasting and immutable favour of God towards his church.

In the direct exercise of the mind upon God’s revelation of his Son, as standing first, though not alone, but as the first-born among many brethren, and tracing up the fixation of the love of God to the church, in the person of the glorious Mediator, we may proceed to consider the particulars thereof; and thus become partakers of such an acquaintance with it in a way of believing, as to entertain a prevailing sense of it in the mind, resulting in that which may be termed a rich experience of it: which leads to a spiritual understanding of what we, as saints, are individually called to meet with, under the dispensation or reign of God’s favour and grace towards us; under which we live and shall continue to be, in all the events and circumstances of this present mortal life. With those in whom the word of God dwells richly, by which means alone there is any good degree of establishment in the faith of the gospel, there will be found, more or less, a spiritual understanding and deciphering of the will, purpose, and design of God; to be answered in the way which he is pleased to take with them, and the circumstances he is pleased to bring them into in the present state. This spiritual perception of the will of God concerning his saints, will be found to correspond exactly with the measure of simplicity attained in the knowledge of Christ, his person, love, and salvation, as made known in the gospel; to which all spiritual enlargement and prosperity of soul is to be traced. To be “filled with the knowledge of God’s will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding,” we must
begin, and go on, in the study of the revelation made of it in the person, words, and works of Christ. "The truth as it is in Jesus," the faintest perception of which given by the Holy Ghost from the word, is eternal life, is the life of the soul in every stage of the walk of faith. "Growth in grace," consists in, and is produced by, the indwelling of the word of faith in the heart, and may be comprehended in its taking deeper and deeper root in the mind, by which the believer grows up into Christ in all things.

It may here be remarked, that though the life of faith is all simplicity in its acts and exercises, receiving all its support and increase from the word of God; yet, the allotment and disposal of all things that are creature and temporal, by the Lord concerning his people, in the individual course he is pleased to take with them in the present state, is made by him subservient to their life and walk with him in the spirit. It is, however, to be insisted upon that it is only by the incorruptible seed of the word, as the Holy Ghost calls forth faith by and upon it, that the spirituality of the mind is kept in exercise, and the life of God drawn forth and made manifest in the soul.

The scripture I have chosen opens with one of the deepest mysteries of grace, and contains a declaration, which proposes the most exalted consolation to the weary minds of the saints, under the oppressions arising out of the peculiar situation in which they do, or will, find themselves to be, sooner or later, in the course of their Christian pilgrimage. If not, more or less, groaning under the whole of their time here below,—if there be a fainting in the day of adversity, it is because their strength is small; and believers are exhorted to "turn to their strong hold." A believer in the Lord Jesus Christ wants no less a refuge and tower of defence than his Lord and Head had in the days of his humiliation; when he was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, and exposed to all the sorrows that the nature of man is capable of enduring. The life which Christ our Lord lived here below, in our nature, and in our world, as the Head of his church, as well as the Surety, Representative, and Redeemer of his people, was for the nature and degree of his sufferings, (in certain important respects his church will never have conformity to him) as well as for the ends to be effected by them, peculiar to our Lord only. "There never was sorrow like unto his sorrow!" He needed, as the Head and Saviour of his people, all the mercy and all the grace that was in God to exercise, when purging out the sins of his people, and enduring the curse due to them, to bear him up under it, and to give him an outgate from it: though this was through the merit of his own blood, by which God brought him back again from the dead.

The mercy of God lay in his appointing the blood of Christ to such an end; not in his pronouncing his church to be clean through the shedding of it; for, as the blood of the Son of God, and the blood of the everlasting covenant, it had sufficient virtue in it to cleanse the church from all the guilt and filth of sin, and that for ever. It was the will of God to perfect Christ, in the scripture sense of the word, through
sufferings, as well as to perfect his church by the same for evermore; and our adored Lord endured all, according to the ordinance and appointment of God to a certain end; which end, according to the marvellous riches of God’s grace, has been fully and eternally effected, by which his church is perfected, cleansed, and justified in his sight, and before him, and that for ever. Heb. x. 10. And how can we proceed without stopping to exclaim, “O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!” O the depths of his unsearchable riches of grace, all hid in Jesus Christ! all opened in the revelation of his person, of his mediation, of his atonement, sacrifice, and death!

God’s predestination in Christ Jesus reaches to all the riches of his grace in him: he has interested his church in all. And though it is a coming down from far greater, higher, and more exalted subjects, as we glance at the summary of them touched upon in Rom. viii. 29, 30, which might well be enlarged on to the spiritual delight of the renewed mind; and it is hardly prevailed upon to look at any thing below them, while introduced by spiritual meditation into this open field, where it longs to walk at large, roving over in faith the heights, and breadths, and lengths, and depths of the unfathomable love of God in Christ Jesus, which passeth knowledge;—yet, it is a subject not below the faith of the Lord’s people to consider the Lord’s fatherly preservation and care of them, in this present evil world; his attention to their particular individual cases, and circumstances, as the objects of his special favour and regard, as his saints, his beloved, his redeemed and called in Christ Jesus.

Our Lord, whose lips dropped with myrrh, and whose words were nothing but grace and truth, directs the minds of his saints to this subject, saying, “for the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God;” and here, in the words before us for our meditation, we have him uttering a saying which lays a foundation for joy and triumph in God, of the most exalted kind. To “joy in God” as our own God and Father in Christ Jesus, is more than to believe that he hath removed our transgressions from us as far as the east is from the west; it is a further step in that life which we are called to live by the faith of the Son of God. Peace with God through the belief of the gospel, in which God is declared to be “the justifier of the ungodly who believe in Jesus,” is the first blessing partaken of by faith, which makes way for the enjoyment of every other; we have it through the knowledge of the remission of sins, and justification unto life, by the obedience and death of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ:—but, not only so, it is our privilege as believers in Christ to go further, to “joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” “No man,” saith Christ, “can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him;” but being drawn, having “received the atonement,” by the grace of God our Father, what remains, but to exercise the mind upon the favour and good-will of God towards our persons, as being one with Christ, and joint-heirs
in and with Christ, of all the blessings of life everlasting? And to this end we may ascend where Paul leads us, Eph. i. 4, 5, 6. or to where the same Spirit by Isaiah directs us, chap. liii. 6—10. or we may come down to the consideration of God's love towards us as his saints, separated to this holy calling through the belief of the truth, to which our Lord points the eye of our faith, as before noticed, John xvi. 27. and then we are well prepared to understand and consider the present ministration of grace; under which we are as sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, all the time of our sojourning in this present world; in which we not only never cease to be the objects of his favour and love, but are under a certain dispensation to a certain end: the results and effects of which are with himself, to be produced by him according to the mighty working of his power.

Though there is much revealed to the spiritual perception of the Lord's people, through the means of faith, in the general and particular declarations of God in his word, which leads the mind to certain and happy conclusions in and under that variety of suffering in the flesh, with which the saints are exercised; yet, the subject is to be taken up in faith, which is the proper rest of the soul in God; and a holy reckoning is to be made, which will always amount to more than ever will be actually discerned or perceived, understood or enjoyed, by the greatest saint this side heaven. As the saints of God, we enter into rest; as God resteth in his love, so should the saints. "He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him," saith one infallible in the truth: 'tis good to rest here! God in his love in Christ Jesus is the center of the souls of his called people. May God enable his beloved ones to see the immutable ground he has in the revelation he has made of his free, unconditional grace in Christ Jesus, by the gospel; to assure their hearts before him, and to take up the song of triumph put into their mouths by the Lord himself, "unto him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood!" "For this God is our God for ever and ever."

Most truly it is to be lamented, that the gospel as it stands opened and fully revealed in all its glory in the scriptures, is mutilated, corrupted, and lowered, by the comments and reasonings of men, who darken counsel by words without knowledge: rather should we say, that the minds of the Lord's people are by such means diverted, and corrupted from the simplicity which is in Christ. And though the gospel commonly preached amongst men is "another gospel," and not that preached by our Lord and his apostles, yet is it not another, for though there are that do pervert, yet is there but one gospel,—the everlasting gospel of the grace of God, at this moment shining in all its glory in the book of God, incapable of any change, or of being affected by the devices of devils or of men. It is pure as God is pure, and true as God is true; and the glory, excellency, and beauty of it will never be impaired. May the Lord remove out of the way every let and hindrance to its finding an entrance into the hearts and minds of his redeemed people; that it may have free course and be glorified.
and that the fruits of the simple reception of it in the love of it, may abound to the praise and glory of his name. Yet none of the fruits and effects of receiving God’s truth will ever amount, in glory brought to God, to that which he receives by the obedience of faith to the gospel itself. It is the submission of the mind to God’s revelation of his Son in the gospel, that God obtains his highest glory by, in his church here below, and the church her highest good.

May God, in his own time, hear and answer the spiritual desires and breathings of his people and servants, for the prosperity of his Zion, which lies in a languishing condition, and as one expresses it, “bleeding at the corner of every street;” “for there are scarcely any to guide her among all the sons whom she hath brought forth;” nevertheless, “the Lord liveth,” and he will regard the prayer of the desolate, and will not despise their prayer. This is written for the generation present, that we may be encouraged to plead with the Lord to appear in his glory, and build up his Zion, by sending labourers into his vineyard, who shall labour to direct the minds of his people to the full, perfect, and complete word of his grace, contained in the holy scriptures, “which are able to build them up, and to give them an inheritance among all them that are sanctified by faith which is in Christ Jesus,” as therein revealed. Amen.

(For the Spiritual Magazine.)

SIMILARITY BETWEEN CHRIST AND HIS BRETHREN.

*As he is, so are we in this world.*—1 John iv. 17.

The foregoing words of the apostle John are true with respect to the saints’ likeness to God, as they are “born of him,” for they are then “partakers of the divine nature,” 1 Pet. ii. 4. and bear resemblance to God, even in this present state of things; and they strive to be, and desire to be like him; holy as he is holy; and to be merciful even to wicked men, as he is merciful; and to love the saints as he loves them; and to be kind and tender-hearted, and to forgive one another, as he for Christ’s sake has forgiven them. But I think it is clear by the context, that the apostle is speaking of Christ, and that his meaning is, that “as he is, so are the saints in this world.”

Let us see then in what respects the saints bear resemblance to Christ. First, now, as they are the sons of God. It pleased God before he ever formed the world, or the inhabitants of it, to determine in his divine mind who among the sons of men should be preserved from the ruin of that transgression, into which he foreknew the first man, Adam, would fall; and the effects of which, it was his will, should extend to his posterity. These, as St. Paul tells the Ephesians, “he predestinated to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,” Eph. i. 5. and these persons, whom the same apostle speaks of as “a remnant according to the
election of grace," he gave to Christ to be saved by him, as he himself says, "thine they were, and thou gavest them me;" and they were given to him in the relation of children, and were considered as such before his incarnation; for St. Paul says, "forasmuch (or because) the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same." Heb. ii. 14. It is clear then, that they must be the children of God, before Christ suffered and died, yea, even as early as God's choice of them, which was before the foundation of the world. Eph. i. 4.

And Christ betrothed these persons to himself in eternity; he asked them of his Father to be his spouse and bride, and being given to him he betrothed them to himself in loving kindness. And as in natural and civil marriage, if a man marries a king's daughter, he becomes his son-in-law; as David was to Saul; or if a woman marries a king's son, she becomes the king's daughter; so the elect of God, his church and people, being espoused to the Son of God, they become the sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty, the King of kings; and hence in the 45th Psalm the church is called "the king's daughter." The elect of God were taken by him into the covenant of his grace as children; the sum and substance of which runs thus, "I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." 2 Cor. vi. 18. Moreover, through the incarnation of Christ, he not only became the Goel, the near kinsman, but even a brother to those whose flesh and blood he partook of; and because he and they are of one, of one and the same nature, "he is not ashamed to call them brethren," Heb. ii. 11. and if his brethren, then, as "he is the Son of God, they must be sons of God too: yes, and God in his own good time sends forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, to enable them to claim the relationship of children, and to call him Father. Gal. iv. 6. Well, then, as Christ is the Son of God by nature, and the saints by grace and adoption, they may say, "as he is, so are we in this world."

Is Christ loved by the Father with an everlasting and unchangeable love? so are the saints loved by him with the same kind of love, even whilst they are in the world; for Christ, in his memorable address to the Father, says, "thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me; and thou lovest me before the foundation of the world." John xvii. It was because the Father loved them, that "he chose them in Christ before the foundation of the world;" made a covenant with them in him; sent him into the world to obtain salvation for them: quickens and calls them by his grace in time: takes care of them in the world: supplies all their wants: supports them under all temptations: delivers them out of all their afflictions, and causes all things to work together for their good, till he brings them safe to glory. Thus, as the saints are loved with the same love as Christ, they may say in the apostle's words, "as he is, so are we in this world."

Was Christ God's elect, chosen of him and precious? Yes; God speaking of him by his prophet says, "behold mine elect," Isa. xlii.
and St. Peter speaks of him as "chosen of God and precious."
2 Pet. i. 4. He was elected and chosen to the office of Mediator between God and man, to be the Saviour and Redeemer of the Lord's people; to be the head of the church, the foundation and corner stone of that spiritual building, and to be the Judge of quick and dead; and to be the author and giver of eternal life to as many as were given him: yea, and so precious too, that he is made higher than the kings of the earth, or than the angels in heaven; and a name given him above every name in this world or in that which is to come.

Well, so are the saints the elect of God, as St. Peter says, "elect according to the foreknowledge of God;" elected to grace and glory, and chosen too, in preference to all others, to constitute that church of which Christ is head, and to live with him hereafter in glory: yea, and so precious to him, that he says he will keep them as "the apple of his eye," and "watch over them night and day, lest any hurt them;" that though a woman may forget her sucking child, yet he will not forget them; and he gives to them "a name better than of sons and of daughters," even "an everlasting name that shall not be cut off." Yea, so precious are the saints to God, that he calls them his "treasure." "The Lord (says the psalmsist) hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure." Psalm cxxxv. He has chosen them as his inheritance, his portion, his peculiar people, and who are to him as a treasure of jewels. "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels, and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." Mal. iii. 18. Well, then, as Christ was elect, chosen, and precious, the saints may say in the apostle's words, "as he is, so are we in this world."

Is Christ now in heaven? so are the saints representatively while in this world; for when he rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven, they rose with him, their Head, and he represents them while they sojourn here below in the tabernacle of their flesh, Col. ii. 12. so, even in this sense, "as he is, so are they in this world."

And here, let me remind you, on the testimony of a learned commentator, Dr. Gill, that in three different versions of the bible, the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic, the text is, "as he was, so are we in this world." As Christ was in this world a man of sorrows, attended with afflictions, loaded with reproaches, and followed with the persecutions of men; so are his brethren; and he has forewarned them not to expect better treatment than himself. "If the world hate you, said he, ye know that it hated me before it hated you; if ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. The servant is not greater than his Lord; if they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you." John xv.

Was Christ tempted of satan, forsaken by his friends, and deserted by his God? Yea, he was tempted by satan in the wilderness;—
he was so forsaken of his friends, that when he preached the truth to them, it is said, "from that time many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him." John vi. 66.—and he was so forsaken of God, that in bitter agony he cried out, "my God! why hast thou forsaken me!" Well, so are the saints tempted of satan to doubt God's promises to them; to doubt their acceptance, or that he will preserve them safe to glory; and as David says, "this is their infirmity." Ps. lixvii. They are sometimes tempted to do those things which God has forbidden; and the conflict is sometimes very sharp and bitter between the flesh and the spirit. And they are forsaken by their former friends, who separate them from their company, and reproach them, and cast out their names as evil. Luke vi. 22. And they are sometimes deserted of God, are without any comfortable sense of his gracious presence, and walk in darkness and see no light; and thus like Jonah in the belly of the fish, they cry unto the Lord by reason of their affliction, when his billows and his waves pass over them. Well, then, as Christ was tempted of satan, forsaken by friends, and deserted by God, the saints may say, "as he was, so are we in this world."

Did Christ go through a great variety of sufferings, and death itself, to his present state of glory in heaven? So must the saints "through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God," Acts xiv. 22. and though the "narrow way" in which they are travelling to the heavenly Canaan may sometimes seem to them a rough way, as it did to Israel of old, while journeying through the wilderness to the earthly Canaan; yet it is a right way: and as it was fit that Christ the captain of his people, should be made perfect through sufferings, Heb. ii. 10. to bring many sons to glory, it is a needs be that those sons should suffer too. God has appointed afflictions for his people, and has appointed them to afflictions, 1 Thes. iii. 3. that they may be partakers of his holiness, Heb. xii. 10. it is a needs be on account of the decrees of God, for he has said, "I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." Zech. iii. 12. It is a needs be for the trial and exercise of the several graces of the Spirit, to wean them from the world; to draw their affections to another and a better state; and perhaps to make the joys of heaven sweeter when they come. Well, then, as Christ was subject to sufferings, the saints may say, "as he was, so are we in this world."

Was Christ righteous in this world? Yea, verily, "he did no sin, nor was guile found in his mouth," 1 Pet. ii. 22. he performed an unsinning obedience to the law, and perfectly fulfilled the righteousness of the law. The saints are righteous as he was righteous; for St. Paul speaking of his righteousness, says, that it is "unto all and upon all them that believe." Rom. iii. 22. "For," says he, "as by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous." Rom. v. 19. As by Adam's sin all his posterity are made sinners, and so are brought under
a sentence of condemnation; in like manner, by the obedience of
Christ, the second Adam, all his spiritual seed are made righteous,
and are justified in the sight of God, and entitled to eternal life. The
church of England holds this doctrine in her 11th article, where
she says, “we are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit
of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own
works or deserving.” I take it that in the same way the sins of
Christ’s people became his, his righteousness becomes theirs: Now
their sins became Christ’s by imputation only; the Father laid them
on him, imputed them to him, or placed them to his account; and
he took them upon him, and looked upon himself as answerable to
justice for them; and so in the same way, his righteousness is made
over to and put upon his people. “For he who knew no sin, was
made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in
him,” 2 Cor. v. 21. that is, accounted righteous in him, through his
righteousness imputed.

There are several things said of this righteousness of Christ im-
puted to believers, which serve to set forth the excellency of it. It
is called “the righteousness of God,” Rom. iii. 22. being wrought
out by Christ, who is God as well as man; approved and accepted of
by God, and freely imputed by him to believers, as their justifying
righteousness. It is called “the righteousness of one,” that is, of
Christ, who is the one common head to all his seed; and though his
obedience, or righteousness, serves for many, it is “the obedience of
one,” Rom. v. 18, 19. and therefore they are justified, not partly by
their own obedience, and partly by Christ’s, but by his only. It is
called “the righteousness of the law,” Rom. viii. 4. being wrought by
Christ in conformity to the law; so that this righteousness is a legal
righteousness, as performed by Christ, being every way commensurate
to the demands of it; though evangelical, as made over to his people,
and revealed in the gospel; for it is manifested without the law, though
witnessed to by the law and the prophets. It is called “the right-
eousness of faith,” Rom. iv. 13. because it is revealed to faith, and
faith lays hold on it, receives it, rejoices in it, and boasts of it. It is
called the “gift of righteousness,” and “the free gift,” and “the gift
by grace,” Rom. v. 15, 16, 17. because freely wrought out by Christ,
and freely imputed by God the Father; and because faith is freely
given to receive and embrace it. It is called “a robe of righteous-
ness;” the church says, “he hath covered me with the robe of righ-
teousness,” Isaiah lx. 10. not with her own, for that is a rag and not
a robe, and a filthy one too, Isaiah lxiv. 6. but with the righteousness
of Christ, which being imputed to his people, covers their persons and
their nakedness, and all their sins, so as not to be seen with the eye
of avenging justice. It is spoken of as “a garment down to the foot,”
Rev. i. 13. because it covers the whole mystical body of Christ. It
is signified by “gold of Ophir,” and “clothing of wrought gold,”
Psalm lxi. 9, 13. because the finest gold was found at Ophir, and
which adorned queen Esther's dress; and because Christ wrought it out for his church, and it is rich and valuable, substantial and durable. And it is also spoken of as "raiment of needle-work," Psalm xlv. 14. perhaps to shew the pains and trouble it cost Christ to work out this righteousness for his spouse the church. It is said to be "change of raiment," Zech. iii. 4. and "the wedding garment," Matt. xxii. 12. for want of which the uninvited guest was turned out from the marriage supper.—Yea, it is called "the best robe," Luke xv. 22. because a better robe than Adam had in Eden, or the angels in heaven; their's, at best, being but the righteousness of a creature, and that loseable, as the event shewed; but Christ's righteousness is the righteousness of God, and an everlasting one. Well, then, as Christ was righteous, his brethren may say, "as he was, so are we in this world."

March 1, 1826.

(For the Spiritual Magazine.)

OBITUARY.

Mr. Editor,

In the following account of divine sovereignty, in the dispensation of grace, should be thought worthy of a place in your excellent Magazine, its insertion will oblige,

Your's, &c. G. C.

Somers' Town.

After my dear friend had expressed himself freely on his son's affliction, the irritability of his disposition, his habitual swearing, &c. he says, "My son was the subject of early convictions, and when a child, on hearing a sermon from Cor. v. 2. We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, which was never forgotten by him, states, that the affliction which terminated his earthly existence, was attended with serious impressions, which he freely communicated, and expressed a hope that the Lord would not take him away till he made things of an eternal nature more plain to him. I perceived a great deal of patience under his sufferings, which surprised us all, and which I believe to have been God's gift. His disorder wearing, at times, a favourable aspect, he expressed a wish to live, that the reality of his state might be manifest; but turning out the reverse, I observed, on the account the physician gave us of little or no hope, that the balm of Gilead, and the great Physician of souls, was the only remedy. There appeared a great thirst in his soul for divine knowledge. I spoke of the benefits of right prayer, of the spirit of prayer; he said, he had poured out his soul to God, but feared he was not heard; yet he had hope, for he remarked, "He never will say to Jacob's seed, seek ye my face in vain." Expressing his abhorrence of himself, for his gross sins, committed even from his youth up, he
said, he thought at one time they were too vile to be forgiven, “but I do not now think so.” I said, I believed that God could not only pardon, but justify, in a way honourable to the divine character; and “whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely;” —yes, “whosoever calleth on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” “Do you think so?” he said; I replied, “Yes, my son, and I trust my God has now answered my prayer for you, the first of my dear children, for whom I have travailed in prayer and supplication for twenty-three or twenty-four years.” This seemed to console his mind; and I said further, “I hoped he was seeking salvation through the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ, applied to the heart by the Spirit of God;” he replied, with peculiar fervency, “I have no merit —I am so vile; if I am saved, it must be by the merits of Christ alone—I have no other dependence.”

I then freely conversed with him on the leading doctrines of the gospel —the fall, the remedy, the righteousness of Christ, the atonement; and particularly on the doctrine of election, knowing the great enmity of his mind in times past against those divine truths; on all of which he was enabled to express his views very freely, —said, it was God’s word—his experience joined with it. The scriptures now became very precious to him, particularly many portions as read by his dear mother. But I must now come to his happy moments before death approached him, which was the 24th of February, 1826, aged twenty-four years.

On Wednesday morning I entered his room,—he said he was very happy; on the same day, myself and the rest of my family went in to see him; the solemnity of that occasion I shall never forget. After prayer and praise, I attempted to leave the room, but he said, “Father, do not go—I have something to say to you.” I therefore sat down, and introduced the subject of the penitent thief on the cross; in the midst of my discourse with him, he clasped his hand, and fixing his eyes heavenward, addressed the Majesty of heaven in the most solemn manner, on behalf of me, his mother, and four sisters and brothers; but, oh! the most pleasant part of it was on his own account—begged God would give him more grace, more faith, more patience, more submission to his righteous will, and not leave him to himself, no, not for a moment; then, turning to me, said, “Father, you have been speaking of the dying thief, and I should like you to sing the hymn (at the same time repeating the words)—

“The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day;
Oh! there may I, though vile as he,
Wash all my sins away.”

Afterwards discoursing on the important truth he had been singing, he desired again to sing the praises of God. I asked him, “Was there any other hymn he could wish?” he repeated,

“Grace ’tis a charming sound,” &c.
This led us into discourse again, on the sovereignty of Jehovah in the salvation of his people, in its fulness and in its freeness, as flowing forth to guilty man, through the blood and obedience of the Lord Jesus. I again repeated the former question, "Had he any hymn on his mind?" "Oh, yes," said he, and repeated,

"Salvation, oh! the joyful sound," &c.

At its close I addressed the God of our mercies, blessing his dear name for the displays of his matchless goodness and mercy to my dear son; and commending him to the Lord, I took my leave, after having spent three of the happiest hours I ever spent in my life.

About eight the same evening, I again, in company with a pious female friend, visited him; he said he was happy, though he had been sorely tempted by the enemy. I said, it was so with me; it is our mercy his power is limited, and though permitted to distress the lambs of Christ's flock, he can never devour. The adorable Jesus was tempted in all points as his people are, that he might be a sympathising high priest; and he will succour his tempted ones:—in his temptations he was without sin, but it is more than we can say. He replied, "Yes, indeed."

On the following day I went into his room, and enquired, "Are you still building on Christ Jesus? Is he your only rock?" "Yes," said he, "oh, yes!" and repeatedly said, "Come, Lord Jesus,"—"Blessed Lord Jesus,"—"Come, take me to thyself,"—and desired to praise his dear name—and we sang,

"Thou dear Redeemer, dying Lamb,
We love to hear of thee;
No music like thy charming name,
Nor half so sweet can be."

The next morning I entered his room, the family expecting his departure near; he was engaged in mental prayer,—took no notice of me for some time, but when his eye caught sight of me, said, "Father, I am very bad;" and, pausing for a few moments, broke forth into singing, and sung, twice over, the following verse—

"Though painful at present,
'Twill cease before long;
And then, O how pleasant,
The conqueror's song."

I said, "My dear son, it seems you are more than conqueror, through him that hath loved you, over sin, satan, death, and hell." He said, "I think I shall be," and added, "I know I shall."

On the next day, being the day of his death, he sung distinctly, "Grace 'tis a charming sound," &c. afterwards became rather delirious, and continued so till within half an hour of his departure, when he distinctly articulated, "Holy! Holy! Holy! Holy! Triumphant! Triumphant! Triumphant! Triumphant! Blessed Lord Jesus! Crown him! Crown him! Crown him!" and just as he departed, repeating, till he fell asleep, "Lord! Lord! Lord!" &c.
OR, SAINTS’ TREASURY.

ORIGINAL ESSAYS.

XVII.

ON THE GOSPEL MINISTRY.

The church of God is the recipient of incalculable mercies in the time-state of her existence, which the fruition of blessedness in eternity alone recalls to remembrance, and capacitates her to estimate; and there is scripture warrant for the belief, that a large portion of the bliss in reversion arises from the retrospect of the way in which the Lord God hath led his people in the wilderness. The displays of mercy and grace, in ten thousand times ten thousand instances, during the saint’s progress through the vale of tears, are received—enjoyed—and forgotten; but there, it may be presumed, each seasonable intervention, and every timely manifestation, beams forth anew to the admiring vision of those who are made perfect. And who can tell the high felicity that is enjoyed in glory, from the recovery to the lost memory of countless instances of covenant mercy displayed to the heirs of the kingdom?

The traveller to Zion has unceasing cause to adopt the language of the king of Israel, “bless the Lord, O my soul! and forget not all his benefits!” Of those “benefits”—and they are all covenant mercies—some, have the effect of inducing a more evident expression of gratitude to the God of all grace, than others; for often, from the commencement to the termination of the spiritual course, they are made blessedly and principally effectual to the instruction and growth in grace of the dear followers of the Lord. But though it would become the faithful, in the enjoyment of their exalted privileges, to forget none of the benefits conferred on them; it will ever be found, while they inhabit tabernacles of clay, that there are those which claim precedence in their warmest affections, and to which all others appear to be tributary.

A faithful gospel ministry is one of the means, in the command of the Lord the Spirit, by which the precious things of the lasting hills come down upon the heads, and enter into the hearts of many, very many, of the family of God. And so true is it that this means of grace obtains priority of others, in the estimation of numbers of the Lord’s redeemed, that many—and the fact is notorious—attribute their spiritual advantages either in greater measure, or solely, to this ordinance of the Lord’s house. Meditating, then, the extreme importance of the subject, under the present view of it, we proceed to offer a few thoughts necessarily arising thence; and leave a more general survey, with the propriety of an exclusive honour paid the gospel ministry, to future consideration.

Presuming that the prominent characteristics of a faithful ministry are familiar to the reader, we remark that whether a Balaam by con-
straint prophecy good things concerning Israel, or a Barnabas cheerfully perform the work whereunto he is called, each testimony demands the acceptance and faith of the enlightened mind; for neither the worthiness of the faithful, nor the perverseness of the faithless, affects the nature of the message, nor bars the progress of the purpose for which it is given. Many of the family of grace have spurned at the truth, and refused the consolations of the gospel, because offered them through a medium they cannot in all things approve; hence, much of the leanness of soul and the imperfection in knowledge, which are commonly attributed to the agency of others, results from a misapplication of the means, whatever they be, with which the pupil in the school of Christ is abundantly supplied. But as we are here bordering on a tender point, and one that is strongly disputed by many who hold the truth, we must descend into further particulars.

We re-assert, that a vast deal of the ignorance and lack of spiritual comfort, in hearers of the gospel, arises more from their own distorted views, than from the positive influence of the ministers of Christ, whether they be firm or feeble in the faith. The apostle, writing to the Hebrews, iv. 2. says, for unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard. Here it is clear, beyond contradiction, that the cause of the word preached becoming unprofitable, was not assigned to the person preaching, but to those to whom it was preached. If the hearer have not faith—faith in Christ—faith in the word of Christ, in vain he makes complaint of the ministry. In this eventful day of spurious profession, it is too true that faith in men is accounted the one thing necessary to salvation. They cry from sabbath to sabbath, and from sermon to sermon,—“Have faith in God!” “Believe the gospel—only believe!” When the undisguised meaning of the terms, with them, is—“Have faith in me!” “Believe what I teach.” “Renounce what I forbid—and accept only what I offer!” And that this is the intent of such exhortations, according to their own mode of interpreting them, abundant proof is given, in the prevailing deficiency and neglect of scripturally portraying the person of Christ, and the nature of a true and living faith. On the other hand, hearers of a gospel ministry are apt enough to charge the preacher with faithlessness, when the principal if not the sole cause of their lack of spiritual profit arises either from their own deficiency in knowledge, or the want of that living principle of which the apostle treats.

But while all the professing church is in arms on the subject of moral character, with respect to those that minister in holy things, it is more especially requisite that again and again the warning voice be given, and continually reiterated, while a probability exists that the lightest accusation against any one of them is founded in truth. O ye ministers of the Most High! ye who are called as faithful stewards to do the business of your Lord and Master in singleness of heart; not with eye service as men pleasers, but as the servants of
Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; see that ye call not that man "brother," nor become partakers of the deeds of him, who strives not to adorn the doctrine of Christ in all things. Doubtless, among the members of the spiritual church (and not into the professing church only) certain men have crept in unawares; ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness. And can you that are chosen and faithful continue to hold your peace? Can you leave the task of marking the character and execrating the conduct of such, to those that are performing a work unto which they are not called?—who do it not sincerely, but of contention?

It is now as it was in the days of the prophet, both priests and people have gone after their idolatries, and the sins of the professing church call aloud for vengeance. And if judgment have begun at the house of God, what shall the end be? Alas! "Is not the meat cut off before our eyes, yea, joy and gladness from the house of our God? The seed is rotten under their clods, the garners are laid desolate, the barns are broken down; for the corn is withered."

Cease not then, ye that are true and faithful to your Lord's honours, but cry aloud—spare not—lift up your voice like a trumpet, and show the people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins. Greatly is it to be lamented that there are servants of the Most High whose characters stand in the sight of men without blemish, bidding defiance to the most piercing shafts of calumny, whose lot is to find numbered among their admirers persons of disreputable name and immoral conduct; who, like the followers of the apostles, exhibit in their lives and conversation the influence of the satanic principle, let us sin that grace may abound. It is also the unhappiness of the gospel minister often to be kept in ignorance or in doubt of such wretched characters; for they appear to wear the habiliments and to feed in the pastures of the flock, and to follow the voice of the shepherd, whereas, according to the word of the Good Shepherd, they are not of his fold, but have come in some other way; and they do now, or presently shall, prove themselves to be like wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood, to destroy souls, to get dishonest gain.

Oh! how much do we and our brethren need the exercise of the seven-fold gifts of the Lord the Spirit, that we may be found faithful in all things appertaining to the well-being of our own souls, as well as of those for whom we labour. The spirit of wisdom, to know the will of God as connected with the duties we are called to engage in. The spirit of understanding, to discern the nature and quality of the faith which is exercised in the truth proclaimed. The spirit of counsel, to advise and commune with the strong, and to instruct and establish those that are weak. The spirit of might, that we may stand fast in the truth, while constrained to confess that vacillation and indecision marks the general conduct of those around us. The spirit of knowledge, that we may realize our own standing on the Rock of Ages, and be enabled to lead into the way of life all that are
earnestly seeking for and crying after Jesus. *The spirit of fear,* that we may, as "sons of God," with filial affection and devotedness be emboldened to have frequent access into our Father's presence, and as the invariable effect, by the sanctity of our walk and deportment, shew that we have been with Jesus.

And our need of a quick understanding in the fear of the Lord, is confirmed by the existence of all the evils we have detailed, and by the unnumbered painful occurrences and exercises which overtake us in our progress to our Father's house. Our heart's desire and prayer is, that we might be knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ. Amen.

(For the Spiritual Magazine.)

MANCHESTER AND SALFORD AUXILIARY GOSPEL TRACT SOCIETY.

Proceedings of the Second Annual Meeting, held on Thursday Evening, April 13, 1826.

The Rev. W. Nunn being called to the chair, commenced with reading 2 Tim. iii. and the Rev. John Kershaw, of Rochdale, implored the blessing of the Lord upon the institution.

The following report was then read by the Rev. W. Nunn.

To the friends and subscribers to the Manchester and Salford Gospel Tract Society, the committee fervently desire from the courts of the Eternal Jehovah, health and peace.

In humble dependence upon the Lord for a blessing on their labours, your committee have endeavoured to promote the interests of the society during the past year, sensible that he alone could render effectual our efforts to extend the knowledge of his truth. We take this opportunity of reminding you, that the leading feature of this society is, the circulation of tracts specially intended for the purpose of edifying the body of Christ. The aim of the society is, that to the Lord's chosen but uncalled people, the tracts may bear a faithful testimony of the total depravity, and absolute spiritual inability of human nature of itself to do good works acceptable to God; and to those who are renewed by the Lord the Spirit, they may be a mean of encouragement and consolation. Your committee trust, that the society will ever maintain the great and important principles with which it has commenced its operations, and that the editors being directed by the Spirit of truth will publish no doctrines but such as are in conformity to the sincere milk of the word, uncontaminated by the adulterating opinions of the carnal mind; that in their illustration of christian experience they will treat clearly of such as is wrought by the Holy Ghost in the hearts of the regenerated, and that they will plainly testify that the fruits of righteousness can be produced only in souls quickened to spiritual acts, in virtue of their eternal union to the great Head of the church.
We rejoice that the Lord has enabled us to forward the interests of the society, but acknowledge it is a subject of regret that in taking such a position as upholders of the truth, and openly avowing that our views of God's most holy word, are different to the sentiments commonly received and promulgated by the religious world, we should have to endure the invidious remarks of those who falsely imagine we assume to ourselves more than we have a right to claim; but although our endeavours may be condemned, and the spirit with which we would pursue our design be misinterpreted, we conceive it to be our high privilege and a necessary duty, to maintain that position, believing, we ought particularly to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, remembering, that it is not by the wise or mighty of the earth, that the Lord is pleased to accomplish the everlasting decrees of sovereign grace in the salvation made manifest to the objects of eternal electing love. Rather would we, in common with all the Lord's people, gather encouragement from the dislike of the nominally religious, it being a testimony to us that we are not of the world, for the world heareth us not.

Your committee have to state, that although the increasing success of the society has in some measure been hindered by want of a greater number of new tracts, yet we have the pleasure to report that there have been more tracts dispersed through the medium of your society in the last, than in the former year: 9982 tracts have been sold, and delivered to the subscribers during the past year, which with the 9176 circulated the year preceding, make the whole number issued from your depository from the commencement of your society to amount to 19158.

From the report of the parent society it appears that many auxiliary societies have been established since the formation of the institution, and it is humbly anticipated by your committee that the Lord will manifest his good pleasure in the efforts of the society, by adding a greater number of supporters to the cause. We trust, however, that the society will never, through an unscriptural spirit of accommodation, deviate from the unerring standard of eternal truth, in order to win the approbation of those who know not the Lord; anxious to have the estimation of the called of God alone.

Your committee lament that the increasing infirmities of the Rev. Dr. Hawker, who has so ably and faithfully advocated the constitutional principles of the society, indicate, that the society may ere long be deprived of his services; that the church militant may at no distant period lose the advantage of his continued labours, which through the grace of God, have hitherto so materially promoted the edification of the Lord's Zion. Your committee would adore the goodness of the Lord in making manifest the spirituality of his sentiments by the spirituality of his life, proving thereby that the doctrines maintained by himself, and the society, are not inimical to morality of conduct.

In closing the second report, we would urgently press upon you the necessity of renewed exertion in supporting the cause we have undertaken to espouse, believing as we do, the cause is of God. While
the Prince of Peace is pleased to manifest his glory in our camps, shall not the shout of a King be among us? It is our privilege to support an institution which interferes with no private judgment in forms of worship non-essential to salvation. It is our happiness that in this society the faithful follower of the Lord, let him be termed a Baptist, Independent, or Churchman, can join hand in hand with others who may not be of the same external fold, and while assisting in giving publicity to the everlasting truths of the gospel, bear mutual testimony of fellowship in, and with, the one Eternal Jehovah, three Persons in the one glorious, co-equal, undivided Trinity!

The following resolutions were then unanimously passed.

1. That we, the friends of truth, connected with this society, sensible of the necessity there is for a zealous regard to the word of God, amidst the manifold inventions of mankind, to evade and suppress the same, do earnestly intreat the subscribers and friends of the Gospel Tract Society to promote as much as possible the interests of the institution; do approve the report now read; and as there will be no report of this auxiliary society printed this year, do recommend that a copy thereof be sent to the committee of the London Society.

2. That we are desirous of attributing to the eternal Jehovah, the glory due unto him for the benefit arising to his people in the dissemination of truth through the various channels of the Gospel Tract Society, and while ascribing to him alone the praise, would implore his continued blessing upon the united endeavours of the called and faithful, in their attempts to promote the edification of the church of God through the medium thereof.

3. That we acknowledge the exertions of the committee in support of the cause; resolve that five pounds be sent to the parent society as a donation; that 3000 tracts be placed at the disposal of the committees of the past and present years for gratuitous distribution, in order to render greater publicity to the operations of the society; that in future the anniversary be on the second Thursday in April.

The Rev. W. Nunn having then addressed the meeting on behalf of himself and coadjutors, and a hymn being sung, opened up a prayer. The meeting then concluded with impressions of Christian benevolence and fellowship, mutually prevailing throughout the assembly, which was considerably larger than on the preceding anniversary.

W. NUNN, Sec.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

Dr. Hawker's Works.—On Saturday, the 10th Inst., will appear, No. 1. of a handsome uniform edition of the Works of the Rev. Robert Hawker, D.D., Vicar of Charles, Plymouth; to be published in Numbers every Saturday, price 6d. each. A few copies will be printed on Royal paper, price 1s. each.—Prospectus containing the conditions of publication, &c. may be had (gratis) of the Publisher, E. Palmer, 10, Paternoster Row, and of all booksellers.

The Rev. Samuel Eyles Pierce has in course of publication, a corrected and considerably enlarged edition of his 'Forms of Prayer,' which will be published in a few weeks.
REVIEW.

Babylon and Infidelity foredoomed of God; a Discourse on the Prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse, which relate to these latter times, and until the second Advent. By the Rev. E. Irving, Minister of the Caledonian Church, London. 2 vols. 1826. Whitaker.

The writings of this popular minister, on the prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse, are worthy the closest attention, by those whose minds are directed to a scriptural view of the government of Jehovah in the church and in the world. His powerful mind has taken in the vast survey, nor shrank from the numerous obstacles which multiplied before him, and which have deterred many of his predecessors, or caused them grossly to err, in the same pursuit. The present state of the church of Rome, and the alarming strifes the demon of infidelity is making over our highly-privileged land, call forth the solemn consideration of all who fear the Lord, and demand, by every argument that weighs on the spiritual mind, the exercise of uncompromising faithfulness and unceasing watchfulness. But, be it borne in memory by our readers, that by the rapid march of infidelity we do not, we cannot, allude exclusively to the despicable band whose exertions are employed in this metropolis, for the dissemination of profaneness and blasphemy. For when we come to note Mr. Irving on the subject, we shall be found fully to coincide with his views on the march of intellect, as connected with the present spread of infidel delusion; though we may not approve his system as a whole.

While the signs of the times forebode an issue widely differing from the anticipations of the religious world in general, it behoves the enquirer humbly and prayerfully to seek information from the holy records, that he be not lost to and fro by every wind of doctrine, nor driven without helm or compass on the turbulent sea of conflicting opinions. Probably very few of the Lord's people enter deeply into a consideration of the prophecies concerning these, the latter days of the church, and, consequently, by neglect of the momentous predictions against "the mother of harlots," and "the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit," they cast a closer veil of mystery over the Lord's word than the inspired penmen were instructed to do. But, surely, the voice of God at the present juncture is unusually commanding, and "louder than ten thousand thunders," urges his people to the contemplation of his marvellous doings and designs!

It is a circumstance requiring our highest admiration, that the faithful Guardian of the church hath at various periods in her history, sent forth his servants who understand and interpret, by the wisdom he alone furniseth, "the parables and dark sayings of old." This
has been, and we rejoice in the thought, continues to be a distinct and an invaluable part of the divine administration. For among other unrevealed, and it may be, never to be fully revealed advantages, resulting from an elucidation of the obscure predictions of holy writ, this is not of small moment,—that thereby the faithful, who are earnestly looking out for the appearing of the Lord, are kept continually and with strong confidence on their watch-tower, each one with exulting triumph prepared to exclaim on the dawning of his auspicious approach, BEHOLD HE COMETH! And himself hath said, in allusion to his second advent, when he shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe:—and he hath said it for the consolation of all who are called, and chosen, and faithful.'—Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when he cometh, shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants!

But we must return to our author. The two volumes are very conveniently divided into various parts, under the following heads: the introduction—the opening of the subject—the papal period—the judgments of the papacy which have come—the scheme of the Apocalypse—the six vials—the judgments of the papacy which are still to come—the progress of the infidel power—the battle of Armageddon—the sign of Christ’s coming fulfilled—the improvement to the British nation.

The spirit and design of the publication are well traced by the writer in his preface, from which we make but one short extract, as we want all the space that can be spared for quotations from the body of the work. Mr. Irving with great faithfulness toward his brethren in the ministry observes:—

"Furthermore, believing as I do, all the things which are written in this discourse, I cannot conclude the preface without entreaty my brethren in the ministry of the church of Christ, to take it into their most serious and solemn consideration, whether these things are so; for the agreement on these matters, among the interpreters of prophecy, is now sufficient to have made out a case to the most sceptical; and if the approach of our Lord be so near at hand; if, of his kingdom, the first thirty-three years have already been running their unobserved course, and preparing the way for the great event of his appearing; holding out to us all the signs of his coming; what manner of servants are we? what manner of stewards of his house, if we be found careless ourselves, and careless in admonishing his flock? The years of omen are nearly at an end, and the day of his coming approacheth: blessed is he that watcheth."

It would have afforded great pleasure to ourselves, and, we are persuaded, to many of our readers who may not have the greater advantage of perusing the work, did we prepare an analysis of the whole of this powerful writer’s system and argument; but to do Mr. Irving, justice would supply matter too voluminous for our
narrow limits. We must be content to direct attention to those passages which more particularly attracted our attention on the perusal.

The following bold and nervous appeal, on noting the tremendous havoc of the rival powers, papacy and infidelity, obtains our decided approbation:

"At present there is a rest, during which the spirit of infidelity is playing its part most successfully, and hath obtained the mastery of every thing but the tyrant thrones, and the superstitions altars, for which the terrible contest is about to be holden. The whole science of Europe serveth infidelity. I know not one name of note, who is not a trust-worthy champion of bis. The whole philosophy of Europe serveth infidelity; for there is no philosophy but the philosophy of expediency. The whole morality of Europe serveth infidelity, which is also grounded only upon utility. The spirit of freedom and liberty, which is smouldering beneath her thrones and governments, ready to toss them on high, and shiver them to atoms, serveth infidelity, and hath no end but to destroy that which is established: having no longer any reverence for constitutional charters, or royal promises, it is crying deep in its breast, raise it! raise it! away with them! The spirit of the reformed religion over Europe serveth infidelity; for it hath set aside faith in the scriptures, and builds upon the common sense or reason of mankind, and were better to acknowledge Paine's Age of Reason, than the gospel, for its standards. The spirit of poetry in Germany, where alone any powerful poetry exists, hath bowed to infidelity in the two bright and potent stars of Goethe and Schiller; and our Byron is becoming the poetical idol of foreign nations; and all over Europe, from Russia to the Isles of Greece, and from the Isles of Greece to the rock of Lisbon, our Bentham, the apostle of expediency, hath the upper hand of the lawmakers. And what is left I know not, but that these, the chief and sovereign influencers of the destinies of men, religion, morality, philosophy, science, poetry, and law, who have joined themselves to infidelity, should dispense and disseminate their proclamations to the body of the people; which now they are doing, by the wonderful extension of education, and circulation of the scriptures; for as satan can convert himself into an angel of light, he will use the scriptures also, to show the people the monstrous superstition; and, when the people have seen it, and signify the same by any audible voice, or sensible sign, then the superstition will lay upon them its heavy hand, and lash them into madness. Oh! who, that hath an eye to behold the signs and causes of events, can fail to observe what a storm is brewing in the heavens, is ready to burst over all the earth!"

"Seeing what I see at home, and hearing what I hear, and knowing what I know, I conceive far more powerfully than I can describe how it must be in those foreign parts which have none of the restraining forces, and reclaiming graces, and meliorating influences of our blessed land. The noisome sore is spreading again over all the men of the earth, and is about to run in blood. I dread its effusion even among ourselves. I fear not for the church which Christ hath planted amongst us, whose gates are adamant, and her walls fire. But for our nation I not a little fear, lest she should also go down under the evil influence of this horrible star, which is to rule the bloody ascendant of the bloody time. They positively laugh you to scorn for propounding any other ground or basis of human action, or political government, than utility; and I have lived to hear the statesmen of this protestant nation declare, in the hearing of those walls where heretofore the religious liberties of the land were established by two centuries of debate, that "there is little or no difference in creeds,"
or, in other words, that faith is little more than a name: and I have lived to hear it declared, by a high official authority, before the Senate (proh pudor!) of that university where Knox studied, which Melville governed,—

"it is gone forth, that a man is no more answerable for his faith, than for the stature of his person, or the colour of his skin." How, then, must it be on the continent of Europe, where, in the universities, there is nothing but rationalism in religion, and liberalism in politics: in the protestant churches, nothing but formality or persecution;—where there is no spiritual sentiment but to be laughed at, no spiritual man but to be scorned; and hardly any at all either of spiritual sentiment, or spiritual life, intermingled with the great fermenting mass of feeling? Superstition hath driven infidelity to its strong hold, which is, diffusion and ramification. And infidelity hath driven superstition to its strong hold, which is darkness and force. And the friends of the new power exult on all hands in the march of mind, in the development of thought and feeling: But in that developed feeling, there is no faith; in that mighty march of mind, there is no religion. It is the natural man, unrestrained of God, fighting against the restraints of man. It is satan in one form, fighting against satan in another form. The beast from the bottomless pit, without crowns upon his heads or his horns, despising all lordship or mastery, and with blasphemy written all over his body, fighting against the beast from the sea with his horns crowned, and blasphemy written on his heads. The devil in his last and worst form, endeavouring to take and hold the earth."

We have for many years past deplored the truth of this statement:

"To my mind, the apostasy of the intellect amongst the protestant nations hath been, for a century, as remarkable and afflicting as the apostacy of sense is amongst the catholic nations. If not persecuting the church by fire and faggot, and other torments of the sense, they have afflicted her with scoffs, ridicule, and arguments, and the other weapons of the intellect. So that it is very painful, yet most necessary for me to say, that since the time that Paul first preached the gospel to the Gentiles, they have, in their national capacity, as rebelliously opposed, as wickedly corrupted, as earnestly persecuted the true faith and the true believers, as the Jews did during their long and merciful probation. The church, which, among the Jews, was as a sorrowful widow weeping for her children which were not, hath been so also amongst the Gentiles. The church, which, among the former, was as a besieged city, hath been so also amongst the latter. And if there hath now and then been amongst us a zeal for righteousness, as there was sometimes among the Jews, it hath been as the early cloud and the morning dew, which soon passeth away."

"I know how men who have no knowledge nor understanding in the history of God's church, will stand amazed at this controversy which I maintain with the gentle nations, whom the Lord hath called with his holy calling, and treat the whole of it with levity; calling this a religious age, and the people a religious people, because so many hundreds of thousands are levied yearly for religious uses, from people, from whom ten times as many millions are levied for political uses; who have got the notion, that, only give them time enough and money enough, they will convert the earth, and bring in the universal dispensation of glory. The men are drunk with vanity. They know the history of the last thirty years of the world, and they are lifted up with novelty."

We also add our testimony to the truth of the following, on "the culture of the intellect:"—

"And how much this is the occupation, is the rage, is the idolatry of the present day, let any one observe, in the universities and schools of learning,
in the national institutes, and philosophical societies, in the mechanical
institutions, in the periodical magazines, in every indication of the public
taste, and demonstration of the public activity. 'The spiritual sciences,
which have their origin in the soul, and proceed by silent meditation of
our own being, and stationary contemplation of the outward works of
God, are gone down into the very earth, and can nowhere be found. But
the physical sciences, which are outward, and proceed by mechanical
helps and motions, and mixtures and resolutions, have taken the firm-
ment of knowledge unto themselves, and swept the steadfast and ever-
lasting lights away, and exalted themselves against all that is called
spiritual and divine. They have done this, and no man regarded it. The
soul is waxed into powerless dotage. The body hath become the end of
all science, and philosophy, and policy. It is a poor mechanical age, with
expediency for its pole-star, and reason for its divinity, and knowledge for
its heaven. Truly, O prophet! according to thy prophecy, 'many
have run to and fro, and knowledge is increased.' And faith is waxed
cold and faint, whereby also we know the latter day is at hand."

A variety of important passages marked for quotation we are
obliged to omit, as, also, the observations we had penned on several
remarks not comporting with soundness in the faith; notwithstanding
which we recommend the work to the serious consideration of
our readers.

The Abominations of Babylon. A Sermon preached in behalf
of the Continental Society, in the Church of St. Clement
Danes, Strand, on Monday, May 8, 1826, by the Rev. Hugh
M'Neil, A.M. Chaplain to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant
of Ireland, and to his Grace the Archbishop of Dublin.
Sherwood and Co.

The honest and fearless manner in which this reverend gentleman
treats on the mother of abominations, under which term he includes
all the evils and idolatries which have sprung from "the great
whore that sitteth upon many waters," even, "the whole of the
anti-christian systems of the western empire," is deserving great praise.
In the opening of the sermon, which is founded on Rev. xviii. 4, the
preacher makes this faithful address, on the weighty and important
question, Who are the people of God?

"Who are the people of God? Man has fallen into enmity against God;
has taken part with the devil and his angels, to counteract the purposes
of Jehovah. The whole race is sunk by nature into a state of enmity
against God, and is arrayed on the side of evil, in opposition to his
will. But God hath chosen out of mankind a people to himself,
in his Son Jesus Christ. He hath everlastingly determined to bring
them to salvation by his Son. In pursuance of this determination,
these people are "called by his Spirit working in due season: they
through grace obey the calling: they are justified freely: are made
sons of God by adoption: are made like the image of his only be-
gotten Son, Jesus Christ: they walk religiously in good works, and,
at length, by God's mercy, they attain to everlasting felicity." These are
the people of God. They are not identified with any sect or party; they
bear no exclusive mark of God's favour: the line which bounds them is
invisible to the eye of man, but, guided by God, it goes through the
nations of the earth, selecting from the mass of men, and gathering into
its embraces, the predestined family of Jesus Christ. These are the
people of God. To these the cry of the text is addressed; and it is the province of the Continental Society to carry it through the length and breadth of Babylon, that the people, being warned, may fly from the abominations thereof."

And on speaking of the abominations of Babylon, he notices, 1. the power ecclesiastical—2. the power temporal—3. infidelity—4. radicalism.

In proof of the correctness of the estimate we put on this discourse, we intend the author shall speak for himself. Under the first head he says:—

"The reformation extended over but a small part of Europe. Switzerland and Germany started, indeed, and some of the stream of the waters of life flowed across France; but the bulk of France, Austria, Spain, and the other continental nations, continued to sleep the sleep of death. Even in England the work was but partially accomplished; and even in London, this "queen of cities," the abominable traditions which have been enumerated, are taught as doctrines of Christ! The spirit of popery is too congenial to the nature of man to be given up without a desperate struggle; and it is grievous to be obliged to testify, that not only does it prevail where the reformation did not extend, but, like a venomous reptile, has crept into the bosom of the reformed church, concealing its name under many plausible titles, indeed, but still doing its work of death. The spirit of popery has made its way behind enclosures which were raised for the purpose of excluding it."

We should spoil the effect of these quotations, were we to cumber them with our own remarks.

[Our readers who unite in opinion with us on the subject of these two reviews, will be abundantly rewarded for the expense they may best in purchasing the publications.]


This puerile production is evidently got up to subserve some party purposes, and consists of an animated description of the weakness of the writer’s judgment in the things of God, and the rancour of his heart against many, whose life of faith and labour of love in the gospel, prove the falsehood of the assertions which adorn nearly every page of his dialogues. The ‘conversations,’ the writer professes to have held, appear to have been with a description of persons with which we are not in the habit of associating; and according to his own account of their character, when not “reclaimed,” our suspicions are very strong as to the veracity of their statements.

The view Mr. Giles has of the person and the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, is too plainly avowed on p. 52 to be mistaken; and we quote it as a specimen of the worth of his sentiments:—

"Nor is it true, that God doth not see sin in his people. Balaam made this assertion, concerning Israel, when he would fain have brought the curse of God upon them. But he evidently meant by it, only, that God did not see sin in them *at that time*, as a nation, of a nature that called for national judgments: but when Balaam, by seduction, effected what he could not do by enchantments, *God saw sin in them*, and most awfully punished it."

From intimate acquaintance with the whole of the tracts published by the Gospel Tract Society, we can confidently assert that the statements of Mr. Giles relative to that society, are false in every particular!
THE

Spiritual Magazine;

OR,

SAINTS' TREASURY.

"There are three that bear record in heaven; the Father, the Word, and the Holy
Ghost: and these three are One."  John v. 7.

"Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."  Jude 3.

JULY, 1826.

(For the Spiritual Magazine.)

THREE PRECIOUS GIFTS OF GOD TO HIS SAINTS.

"We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for
you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all
the saints, for the hope which is laid up for you in heaven."  Col. i. 3, 4, 5.

The foregoing words of the apostle Paul are sufficient to prove
that the graces of faith, and love, and hope, are gifts of God to his
saints, for it is to such the apostle writes this epistle.  "To the saints
and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse:" and as he thanks
God for their faith in Christ, for the love they bore to the saints, and
for their hope of good things laid up for them in heaven, it is evident
that his epistle was not designed generally for all men, for he tells us
that "all men have not faith," 2 Thes. iii. 2. and our Lord spoke of
some who believed not because they were not of his sheep, John x. 26.
Neither do all men love the saints, for our Lord has forewarned
them, that "men shall separate them from their company, and re-
proach them, and cast out their names as evil," Luke vi. 22. and
that they shall be "hated of all men for his name's sake." Matt. x. 22.
Neither have all men a hope laid up for them in heaven, for the
apostle speaks of some who had no hope, Eph. ii. 12.

Well, then, the apostle writes this epistle to the saints, and thanks
God for bestowing upon them three precious gifts, even faith, love,
and hope.

It has often appeared to me a little inconsistent in ministers to call
upon unregenerate men to believe in Christ, and to sold them for not believing, when it is so plainly set forth in the word of God
that faith in Christ is his gift, and not bestowed on all men, but only
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on his saints. It is true indeed it is in every man's power to believe all that is written of Christ; that he is the promised Messiah; is God and man in one person; (and the Socinians are inexcusable for not believing this) that he was born of a virgin; that he lived in this world free from sin, and died to make atonement for the sins of his church. And yet to believe in Christ savingly and spiritually, is more than this, and is not of a man's self, but one of the blessings provided in covenant for the elect, and which God, sooner or later, bestows on those whom he has ordained to eternal life, Acts xiii. 48. Hence St. Paul speaks of faith, as "the faith of God's elect," Titus i. 1.

He tells the Ephesians that the faith they had was not of themselves, but the gift of God, Eph. ii. 8. and he tells the Colossians that their faith was of "the operation of God," Col. ii. 12. and it is mentioned in the Acts of some, that they had "believed through grace," that is, their faith was a fruit of, and flowed from electing grace. To come to Christ, or to believe in him, which means the same thing, is owing to the Father's teachings, instructions, anddrawings. "No man can come to me (said Christ) except the Father which hath sent me draw him. Every man that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me. No man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father," John vi. 37, 44, 45, 65. True saving faith in Christ, is not of a man's self; and the reason which Christ himself gave, why some did not believe in him was, that they did not belong to him; and no better reason can be given why some at this day do not believe: they do not belong to him; they are not of those given him of the Father, or "chosen in him before the foundation of the world." Eph. i. 4.

On all such, God, sooner or later, bestows that grace by which they look to Christ as their Saviour, Isaiah xlv. 22—come unto him, John vi. 37—venture upon him, as Esther ventured into the presence of king Ahasuerus, saying, "if I perish, I perish," Esther iv. 16—venture upon him, as Benhadad's servants advised him to trust to the king of Israel, saying, "peradventure he will save thy life," 1 Kings xx. 31. venture upon him, as the four leprous men ventured upon the host of the Syrians, saying, "if they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die," 2 Kings vii. 4. Yea, God bestows on his saints that precious grace by which they commit themselves to Christ, whose "name is a strong tower into which the righteous run and are safe," Prov. xviii. 10.—lay hold on him, who is "a tree of life to them that lay hold upon him, Prov. iii. 18.—lay hold on him, as the "ten men shall lay hold on the skirt of him that is a Jew," Zech. viii. 23.—flee to him, as Joab fled to the tabernacle of the Lord, and caught hold on the horns of the altar, 1 Kings ii. 28.—hold him, as the spouse held him when she found him, and would not let him go, Song iii. 4. or as Jacob wrestled with the Angel of the Covenant, and said, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me," Gen. xxxii. 26.—lean upon him, as the spouse came up out of the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved, Song viii. 5.—stay upon him, as the Holy One
of Israel, Isaiah x. 20.—come down to him, from all self-exaltation and self-confidence, and like Zacheus receive him joyfully, Luke xix. 6.—receive him, in his threefold office of Prophet, Priest, and King; as their Prophet to instruct them, and their Priest to make atonement for them, and their King to rule over them and in them by his laws;—receive him, as "of God made unto them wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption," 1 Cor. i. 30. wisdom to enlighten their dark minds, righteousness to justify their guilty persons, sanctification to cleanse their polluted natures, and redemption in the resurrection of their bodies. Yea, these saints possessed that grace of faith which comes from Christ, of which he is the author and the finisher, and which returns to him and lives upon him. And it is not to be wondered at that the apostle should thank God for bestowing this grace on those whom he called brethren, and loved as such; for consider the various blessings which flow to God's people through faith. They are justified by faith, Rom. v. 1. that is, by faith they receive the blessings of Christ's justifying righteousness from him. By faith they receive the blessing of adoption, as the apostle says, "we are children of God by faith in Jesus Christ," Gal. iii. 26. that is, they become manifestly by faith what God has decreed they should be from eternity, his children by adoption and grace, Eph. i. 5. By faith they receive the remission of sins, for the apostle says, "God hath set forth Christ to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, of the remission of sins," Rom. iii. 25. that is, by faith they receive some sweet sense of the remission of their sins, as flowing from the grace of God, through the blood of Christ. They are sanctified by faith, as Christ said, "sanctified by faith that is in me," Acts xxvi. 18. and their hearts purified by faith, Acts xv. 9. not that faith has such virtue in it as to sanctify and purify from sin, but as it has to do with the blood of Christ which cleanses from all sin. Eternal life and salvation are connected with faith, for it is eternal life to know Christ, that is, to believe in him, John xvii. 3. and he that believes on him has everlasting life, John vi. 47. not that faith is the procuring or meritorious cause of it, for "eternal life is the gift of God through Jesus Christ," Rom. vi. 23. but faith looks unto the mercy of Christ for it.

By faith the saints have communion with God, with Christ, and with his people, in his word and ordinances; they have access to God at the throne of grace, and can use freedom, boldness, and confidence with him, in asking of him what they stand in need of: "in whom (says the apostle) we have boldness and access with confidence, by the faith of him." Eph. iii. 12. The habitation of Christ in the hearts of his people is through faith, for the apostle prayed for the Ephesians that "Christ might dwell in their hearts by faith," Eph. iii. 17. not in their heads by fancy and notion, but in their hearts by faith. The saints live by faith, as St. Paul says, "the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God," Gal. ii. 20. and no life is so comfortable in this world. They stand by faith, 2 Cor. i. 24. that is, they keep their ground, do not turn back, and are not
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moved from the hope of the gospel. And as they stand by faith, so they walk by faith, 2 Cor. v. 7. that is, they go on believing in Christ, till they receive the end of their faith, the salvation of their souls. And faith makes Christ precious to them, for St. Peter says, "to them that believe, he is precious," 1 Pet. ii. 7.

I would observe, however, though this grace of faith is alike precious to all on whom God bestows it, as to its nature, its object, and its acts; yet it is not alike to all as to measure, or the same at all times; for we read of "little faith," Matt. vi. 20. and of "faith as a grain of mustard seed," Matt. xvii. 20. One said, "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief," Mark ix. 24. Others said, "Lord, increase our faith," Luke xvii. 25. Abraham had great faith, but not at all times, for he did not trust God as he ought to have done, at Gerar and in Egypt. David had faith, but not at all times, and this was his infirmity: "hath God forgotten to be gracious, (said he) and hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" and I said this is my infirmity," Psalm lxvii. 7. But though faith may be weak and low, it is great comfort to the saints to know, that he who is the author, is also the finisher of their faith, Heb. xii. 2. and that it is a grace that cannot be lost, but is one of those gifts of God which are "without repentance," Rom. xi. 29. and flows from, and is secured by, the firm and immutable decree and purpose of election.

Now another grace possessed by the saints at Colosse, and for which the apostle gave thanks to God, was the grace of love, love to one another. This grace is wrought in the soul in regeneration, and of which men are quite destitute while in a state of unregeneracy; for the world hates those that are chosen out of it, and called to be saints. John xv. 18. and 1 John iii. 13. And even the people of God, before their conversion, are described as "hateful, and hating one another," Titus iii. 3. but when they are regenerated, they are "taught of God to love one another," 1 Thes. iv. 9. and this is an evidence of their regeneration, for St. John says, "we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," 1 John iii. 14. St. Paul speaking of this grace says, it "suffereth long, and is kind; envieth not; vaunteth not itself; is not puffed up; doth not behave itself unseemly; seeketh not its own; is not easily provoked; thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." 1 Cor. xiii. 4.

Those who are possessed of this grace bear and forbear much, and are kind to all men, and seek to do them good, and especially those who are of God's family, and of "the household of faith." Neither do they envy the superior gifts and graces they may see in others; neither do they carry themselves high towards their inferiors; neither are they puffed up with their own attainments; neither do they behave themselves unseemly by shewing contempt for others; neither are they selfish, or seek profit, honours, or pleasures for themselves, to the exclusion of others; neither are they easily provoked to wrath against those that offend them; neither do they listen
to groundless reports of others, or think evil of them; neither do they rejoice at, or like to commit iniquity themselves, or see it done by others: but they rejoice in the truth, and in speaking it, yea, and in hearing it faithfully preached. They bear with patience the evil things that are said of them by others; believe all good reports of others, and hope all things for the best of them; and they endure all things, even the ill manners, the rudeness, and the ingratitude of those whose welfare they have sought to promote. Without this grace, religion is no better than a name; and where it is wanting, though a man may talk of his love to God and Christ, he is a liar: St. John says, “If a man say I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?” 1 John iv. 20.

But the apostle not only thanks God for having bestowed on the saints at Colosse, the graces of faith and love, but of hope also; they had a hope laid up for them in heaven; or rather they enjoyed a hope of endless happiness in heaven; and though there are various kinds of hope, this is the only one worth having. Job speaks of a hope which shall be cut off, and as being like a spider’s web, Job viii. 14, and so will be the hope of all who seek for acceptance with God on any other ground than Christ’s merits only. Hypocrites have hope; but says Job, “what is the hope of the hypocrite, when God taketh away his soul?” Job xxviii. 8. Some have a hope of which they will be ashamed, and therefore David prays, “let me not be ashamed of my hope,” Ps. cxix. but says he, “happy is he whose hope is in the Lord his God.” Ps. cxi. 5. Happy is that man whose hope is in Christ, “God manifest in the flesh.” Happy is the man who hopes for salvation, pardon, righteousness, and eternal life, through him and him only; for such as hope in him shall not be ashamed and disappointed. That hope only is good, which makes a man comfortable in this world, which has God, his grace, and promises, for its object; Christ and his righteousness for its foundation; and the Spirit of grace for its author. This is a good hope, and where it is enjoyed, it is through grace: it is as the apostle says, “a good hope through grace,” 2 Thess. ii. 16, it is not of a man’s self, but flows from the grace of God, and which he grants more or less to all whom he designs should live with him in glory; yea, sometimes, he causeth them to “rejoice in hope of the glory of God,” Rom. v. 2, and “to abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost,” Rom. xv. 13. And the means by which God communicates this grace of hope to his people, is the gospel; and therefore St. Paul calls it “the hope of the gospel,” Col. i. 23. It is by the good news and glad tidings which the gospel brings of free and complete salvation by Christ, of full pardon of sin by his blood, and of reconciliation and atonement by his sacrifice. Yea, it is God’s word of promise applied by the Spirit which causeth hope; and it was no doubt some word of promise which first caused David to hope, and by which he prays the Lord would revive his hope. “Remember the word unto thy servant,” said he, “upon