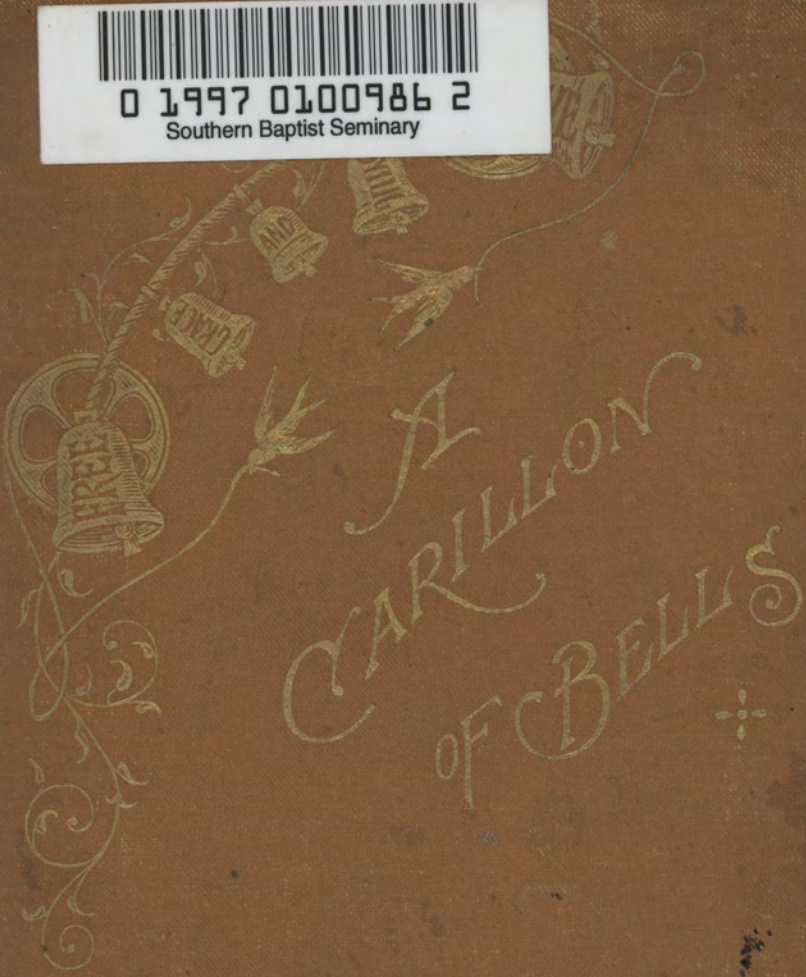




0 1997 0100986 2  
Southern Baptist Seminary



BY  
Mrs C. H. Spurgeon.



242  
Sp93ca

10559

RESTRICTED  
AREA

NOT SUBJECT TO CIRCULATION

*J. Kipper*

A CARILLON OF BELLS,  
TO  
RING OUT THE OLD TRUTHS  
OF  
"FREE GRACE AND DYING LOVE."



A CARILLON OF BELLS,  
TO  
RING OUT THE OLD TRUTHS  
OF  
"FREE GRACE AND DYING LOVE."

BY  
MRS. C. H. SPURGEON.

SOUTHERN BAPTIST  
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY  
2825 LEXINGTON ROAD      LOUISVILLE, KY.

LONDON:  
PASSMORE AND ALABASTER,  
PATERNOSTER BUILDINGS, E.C.

*(All rights reserved.)*



ALABASTER, PASSMORE AND SONS,  
PRINTERS,  
FANN STREET, ALDERSGATE STREET,  
LONDON, E.C.

## CONTENTS.

	PAGE
A CARILLON OF BELLS.	
<i>"He that spared not His own Son, . .     how shall He not with Him also freely     give us all things?"—Rom. viii. 32....</i>	I
"JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF."	
<i>"Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and     God, even our Father, which hath     loved us."—2 Thess. ii. 16. ... ..</i>	6
"THE GIFT OF GOD."	
<i>"If thou knewest the gift of God, and     who it is that saith to thee, Give Me     to drink; thou wouldest have asked     of Him, and He would have given     thee living water."—John iv. 10. ...</i>	12
HIS GREAT LOVE.	
<i>"Not that we loved God, but that He     loved us."—1 John iv. 10. ... ..</i>	15
THE KINDNESS OF GOD.	
<i>"My kindness shall not depart from     thee."—Isa. liv. 10. ... ..</i>	20
THE EXCEEDING GREATNESS OF GOD'S POWER.	
<i>"What is the exceeding greatness of His     power to us-ward who believe."—     Ephes. i. 19. ... ..</i>	26
THE MOURNERS' COMFORTER.	
<i>"The Lord GOD will wipe away tears     from off all faces."—Isa. xxv. 8. ..</i>	32
THE LOVELINESS OF GOD'S WILL.	
<i>"Thy will be done in earth, as it is in     Heaven."—Matt. vi. 10. ... ..</i>	38

10559

242

Sp 93ca

RESTRICTED  
AREA



	PAGE
THY WAY; NOT MY WAY.	
<i>"Make Thy way straight before my face."</i> —Psalm v. 8. ... ..	43
*           *           *           *	
GOD'S BEAUTY UPON HIS PEOPLE.	
<i>"Let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us."</i> —Psalm xc. 17. ... ..	48
DIVINE ANOINTING.	
<i>"I shall be anointed with fresh oil."</i> —Psalm xcii. 10. ... ..	55
OPENED EARS.	
<i>"Cause me to hear Thy loving-kindness in the morning; for in Thee do I trust."</i> —Psalm cxliii. 8. ... ..	60
DROOPING EYE-LIDS.	
<i>"Mine eyes fail with looking upward: O LORD, I am oppressed; undertake for me."</i> —Isa. xxxviii. 14. ... ..	64
THE DETAILS OF EVERY-DAY LIFE.	
<i>"Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, Thou understandest my thought afar off."</i> —Psalm cxxxix. 2. ... ..	68
THE TROUBLED HEART.	
<i>"Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."</i> —John xiv. 27. ... ..	73
THE WELL IN THE WILDERNESS.	
<i>"It shall not seem hard unto thee."</i> —Deut. xv. 18. ... ..	79
AMONG THE FURNACES.	
<i>"Every thing that may abide the fire, ye shall make it go through the fire, and it shall be clean."</i> —Numb. xxxi. 23. .	86
TESTING TIMES, THE PROOF OF LOVE.	
<i>"Fear not: for God is come to prove you."</i> —Ex. xx. 20. ... ..	92

	PAGE
BRIERS AND MYRTLES.	
<i>"Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the LORD for a name."</i> —Isa. lv. 13. ... ..	98
A CURE FOR DISCONTENT.	
<i>"Let my mouth be filled with Thy praise and with Thy honour all the day."</i> —Psalm lxxi. 8. ... ..	103
THE FETTERS OF UNBELIEF.	
<i>"Why could not we cast him out? Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief."</i> —Matt. xvii. 19, 20. ... ..	110
THE HILL-COUNTRY OF PERFECT TRUST.	
<i>"Therefore I will look unto the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me."</i> —Micah vii. 7. ... ..	114
WAITING AT THE GATE.	
<i>"I wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait, and in His Word do I hope."</i> —Psalm cxxx. 5. ... ..	121
ABSOLUTE SURRENDER.	
<i>"I am thine, and all that I have."</i> —1 Kings xx. 4. ... ..	126



*" Sometimes, in my house of grief  
For moments, I have come to stand  
Where, in the sorrows on me laid,  
I felt the chastening of God's hand ;  
Then learn'd I that the weakest ones  
Are kept securest from life's harms ;  
And that the tender lambs alone  
Are carried in the shepherd's arms."*

## A CARILLON OF BELLS.

*" He that spared not His own Son, . . .  
how shall He not with Him also freely give  
us all things?" —Rom. viii. 32.*

DEAR LORD, faith's fingers are  
joyfully touching the keys of  
this carillon of sweet bells this  
morning, and making them ring  
jubilantly to the praise of Thy  
gracious Name!

" How shall He not !"

" How shall He not !"

" He that spared not !"

" How shall He not !"

What a peal of absolute triumph  
it is! Not a note of doubt or  
uncertainty mars the Heavenly  
music. Awake, my heart, and  
realize that it is *thy faith* which  
is making such glorious melody!



Thou canst scarcely believe it for gladness? Yet it is blessedly true, for the Lord Himself hath given the grace, and then accepts the tribute of gratitude and praise which that grace brings. Press the tuneful keys again and again, for faith holds festival to-day, and the joy of assurance is working wonders.

“He that spared not !”  
“How shall He not !”

Hear how the repeated negatives gloriously *affirm* the fact of His readiness to bless ! These silver bells have truly the power to scare away all evil things.

“*He that spared not His own Son.*” He gave His most precious treasure ; *could* He withhold any lesser good from thee ? He has given thee pounds ; will

He refuse thee pence ? No ; while faith is thus quickened into lively exercise by the Spirit of God, the cadences of exulting praise *must* ring out, clear and loud, “*How shall He not with Him also freely give us all things ?*”

Think well, my heart, what “all things” mean to thee ! If thou hast Christ, then *along with Him*, and included in Him, thou dost possess “*all things.*” All spiritual blessings, rich and precious, are laid up for thee in this Divine storehouse, and God’s choicest and most excellent gifts are here *waiting* for thy faith to claim them. Rejoice, O my soul, that Christ and “the things of Christ” cannot be divided ! Pardon, peace, sanctification, close walking with God, constant communion with



Jesus, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit,—are not all these gathered together “with Him” as a cluster of ripe grapes on a choice vine? Having Him, thou hast all else. There is not a need or desire of thy inner life which cannot be triumphantly met by faith’s unwavering challenge, “*How shall He not?*” Nor is there a necessity of thy temporal state which cannot equally claim the blessing of possessing “all things” in Christ.

Lord, quicken my faith, give me to see how deep and wide, and full and free, is the unspeakable love which spared not Thine own Son, and therefore *can spare* every other gift, to me, Thy undeserving child! I thank Thee that it is not “’way over Jordan, Lord,” that I must go to “ring these charming bells”;

but here, now, in the sanctuary of my heart, and all day long in the open cloisters of my daily life, I may make the blessed music resound to Thy glory, and my own exceeding gladness,—

“*How shall He not!*”

“*How shall He not!*”



“JESUS CHRIST  
HIMSELF.”

“*Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us.*”—2 Thess. ii. 16.

“*OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF.*” Oh, the Divine mystery of wondrous love and pity enwrapped in these few words! “The precious things of Heaven,” “the chief things of the ancient mountains,” and “the precious things of the lasting hills,” are surely all gathered together here; and, with a deep and unutterable longing, my soul desires to search and find them.

That “Name which is above every name” is sung by angels as their sweetest song; but the

tender *earthly* cadence which my heart hears in that emphatic word — “*Himself*” — intensifies its melody to *me*. Never before did a personal pronoun bear such significance, or convey to the heart so dear an assurance of perfect sympathy and love. We say sometimes of choice possessions that they are our “*very own*”; and when we speak of Thee, dear Master, as “*Jesus Christ Himself,*” there is an added fragrance in the “*ointment poured forth,*” a personal realization of what Thou art to us in Thy Divine Manhood, which draws us “with cords of a man, with bands of love.” It brings Thee so close to me as my Saviour, it seems to reveal Thee as the One who can “be touched with the feeling of our infirmities,” and who sympathizes in all our sorrows because Thou



wast "found in fashion as a man." "*Jesus Christ HIMSELF.*" I say it over and over again till my soul is filled with its sweetness, and my heart is satisfied with the peace of believing that this Blessed One is mine, and that He loves even me.

*"And God, even our Father."*

Lord, help me to realize all that this wonderful relationship means to me! As Thy child, I may *claim* all that Thou hast promised to give; and if I am living and acting as Thy child,—dwelling with Thee, loving Thee, and obeying Thee, I shall assuredly find that Thy Father-love is ready to grant every reasonable desire of my heart. Dear Lord, when I see, as I often do, some earthly fathers, whose love for their little ones is intense, forbearing, and un-

speakably tender, I feel ashamed that I do not better understand the love of Thine heart toward me, Thy child through faith in Christ Jesus! Dost Thou ask, "How much more?" I cannot work out such a sum, Lord; but I know the love must be infinitely greater, closer, and dearer, because Thou art the infinite God, and Thy love is "from everlasting." Oh, that I may have the spirit of a child when I draw near to Thee!

What little one is afraid to run to a loving father, and ask for all it wants? Never a doubt rises in a child's mind as to the supply of all his needs, and the direction of all that concerns him. The child has positively no care for the present, no thought for the morrow, no fears for the past. Father knows everything. Father can



do everything. Father provides everything. In fact, *father loves.*

"Which hath loved us." O my soul, canst thou for a moment imagine what it would be of bliss, and rest, and peace, to live out day by day such a child-life in the love of the Father? He knows thee altogether. He understands all thy individual peculiarities, sees thy weakness and sinfulness, thy sore temptations, perplexities, and daily shortcomings; but He loves thee notwithstanding all, not for any merit or worthiness in thee, but *because thou art His child.* Thou hast believed on His dear Son, whom He gave to die for thy sins; thou hast accepted His complete salvation, thou hast received the Spirit of adoption, and now, with confidence and perfect trust, thou canst look

up to Him, and say, "Abba, Father." And does not this suffice to make thee absolutely "without carefulness," like a little child?

O my Father, teach me to realize how deep, and strong, and pitiful is the love of Thine heart to me, since it led Thee to give Thine only-begotten Son,—Jesus Christ Himself,—to redeem me, and bring me home to Thee, my God!



"THE GIFT OF GOD."

*"If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give Me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water."*  
—John iv. 10.

O WEARY MAN, footsore and sorrowful, sitting thus on the well, asking a draught of water at the hands of a poor sinful woman,—Thou art my Lord and my Redeemer; I believe in Thee, I love Thee, I worship Thee!

Nearly two thousand years have passed since Thou didst speak the sweet words which are now comforting my heart, yet with what power, and solace, and blessing, do they come to me at this moment!

*"If thou knewest."* Lord, Thou

hast told me who Thou art, Thou hast in mercy revealed Thyself to me, I know Thee to be that blessed "*gift of God*" which alone can save and satisfy my soul. The depth and compass of Heavenly love are manifested in Thee, and Thou hast shown me, not my need only, but the sufficiency of Thy grace and power to meet it.

I am an empty sinner, Thou art a full Christ!

*"Thou wouldest have asked."* This, too, O blessed One, Thou hast taught me and enabled me to do; and my heart's constant cry, "Lord, give me this living water," is familiar to Thy listening ears! It is *Thyself* I want; Lord, "my soul thirsteth after Thee, as a thirsty land." Not Thy gifts, nor Thy grace, nor even Thy glory, could satisfy the desire of a soul which Thou



hast made to long for *Thyself*. Thou, the Giver of all other precious things, art *Thyself* the choicest, the "unspeakable" gift! Lord, into the thirst of my empty heart pour the full stream of Thy living love! Give me *Thyself*, or I die!

And, having asked, I believe that Thou *dost* give, for Thine own lips have said it, "*He would have given,*" and I whisper softly to myself the blessed words, "*Who loved ME, and gave Himself for ME,*" realizing the sacred, overflowing joy of pardoned sin, and peace with God, filling and satisfying my soul.

So, dear Lord, my spirit, like a weary bird, folds her wings beside this sweet well-spring of comfort, creeps into this blessed "Cleft of the Rock," *and is at rest.*

### HIS GREAT LOVE.

"*Not that we loved God, but that He loved us.*"—1 John iv. 10.

AS the precious balm of Gilead, or the cassia and sweet calamus of the holy anointing oil, so came these blessed words into my dull and aching heart this morning. Dear Lord, I thank Thee for them; Thou hast taken them from Thine Own Book, and spoken them to me with Thy living, loving voice, and they have quickened me.

I had brought to Thee, with shame and sorrow, a hard and insensible heart; I could only groan out before Thee my utter lack both of faith and feeling. The very *desire* to love Thee seemed to lie fettered and power-



less within me, only an occasional struggle revealing its bare existence. Then, Lord, while I knelt in Thy presence, with bowed head and troubled spirit,—tears and sighs my only prayers,—Thou didst whisper those sweet words in mine ear, and they brought light and liberty to my captive soul. Blessed be Thy dear Name for this glorious deliverance! It is not my poor, cold, half-hearted love which is to satisfy and comfort me; but *Thy love*, great, and full, and free, and eternal as Thyself! Surely, I had known this before, Lord; but I had shut myself up in unbelief till, in Thy sweet mercy, Thou didst speak the Word which released me from my bonds, opened my prison doors, and let me out into the sunshine of true peace in believing.

“*Not that we loved God.*” No, and that is the sad wonder and mystery of our unrenewed life, dearest Master. *Not* to have loved Thee, is our greatest guilt and shame. It was even worse than this with us, for we were enemies, by wicked works, to Him who claimed the most ardent and grateful love of our souls; we had put ourselves in an attitude of *defiance* against our best Friend; or if not openly defiant, we were totally forgetful of Him to whom our heart’s allegiance was justly due. “*NOT that we loved God.*” Ah, dearest Lord, Thou knowest how deeply, sadly true this was of me, and how I mourn over the years spent without love to Thee, and at a distance from Thee! O hard heart, O blind eyes, O poor dull sluggish soul, that could be unmindful of the



strivings of God's Spirit, could deliberately neglect the pleadings of a Saviour's love, and see no beauty in One who is "altogether lovely"!

"*But that He loved us.*" Here is a blessed contrast, here is the antidote for sin's sting, here is light after darkness, hope after despair, life after death! Lord, my soul flings itself on this glorious *fact*, this saving truth, as a drowning man seizes upon a life-belt thrown to him in the surging sea! If Thou dost not love me and lift me, I must perish for ever. But there is no question of sinking when Jesus saves, no fear of losing life when He loves.

O my Lord, how I thank Thee for this precious Word upon which Thou hast caused

me to hope! Now, all the day long, my heart shall sing over the safety and blessedness of being freely loved, instead of fretting about the sad lack of my poor love to Thee. "*Not that we loved God*" is darkness, and bitterness, and death eternal; but "*that He loved us*" is light and pardon, peace and everlasting life.



## THE KINDNESS OF GOD.

*"My kindness shall not depart from thee."*—Isa. liv. 10.

SOMETIMES, we like to think of the consolation which awaits us in Heaven, when our warfare is accomplished, and our iniquity is pardoned; but here, in this precious Word, we have comfort and help for the daily life and strife of earth.

THE KINDNESS OF GOD! It is unutterable, illimitable, unchangeable! Every believer has experienced it; but the whole host of the redeemed, gathered from all lands, throughout all ages, could not tell the heights, and depths, and lengths, and breadths of this "great"

"everlasting" "loving" kindness which dwells in the heart of God for His people.

*"My kindness."* Dear Lord, the words are sweet to my soul as honey and the honeycomb. They carry in them an answer to all my misgivings, a response to all my pleas, a promise of power to overcome all my weakness. I say to Thee, sometimes, "Lord, how is it that Thou canst be so tender and indulgent to one so forgetful, so unworthy, so inexcusable as I am?" And Thy answer is,—"*My kindness*,—'I have loved thee with an everlasting love.'" "But, Lord, I am a worse and greater sinner than I thought I was; every day reveals to me some hitherto undiscovered evil in my heart, which must be displeasing in Thy sight." Again Thou sayest,



"*My kindness*,—'I have put away thy sin.'" "But, Lord, I have no power to do right, I cannot of myself even think a good thought, much less live that life of holiness which Thou dost command and require." And again Thou givest me that sweet reply, "*My kindness*,—'My grace is sufficient for thee, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.'" Oh! that I had a seraph's tongue to tell, or a pen dipped in the praises of Heaven to write, what His loving-kindness and tender mercy have been to me!

"*My kindness SHALL NOT depart from thee.*" God's negatives and affirmatives are like great rocks jutting out from the insecure and shifting sands of all earthly experiences. When a troubled, bewildered

soul is enabled by faith to cling fast to one of these, all fear vanishes, all anxiety is gone, nothing can move it from its confidence and peace. We have all suffered, more or less, from the ever-changing influences around us; perhaps we ourselves have added somewhat to the sorrow which is in the world by reason of inconstancy and changeableness. But never, for one moment, has our God withdrawn the love with which He loved us from all eternity, never has He forsaken or forgotten those who have put their trust in Him. Bless His dear Name, there is no such thing as *departing kindness* with Him: "no variableness, neither shadow of turning." 'Tis true, our sins and our ingratitude may so grieve and provoke Him, that He may hide His face from us for a



while ; but even then, His love yearns over us so much that, as Joseph Hart sweetly sings,—

“Shouldst thou a moment’s absence  
mourn,  
Should some short darkness  
intervene,  
He’ll give thee power, till light  
return,  
To trust Him,—*with the cloud  
between!*”

“*My kindness shall not depart from thee.*” O my loving Lord, let the stay and comfort of this precious “*shall not*” sink deep into my soul this morning, and strengthen me to face every difficulty, and resist every evil, and bear any trial with the courage such an assurance gives ! Or, make it a sweet resting-place and refuge for me, Lord, where I may be sheltered from all the disturbing changes of the world around me. Though friends may grow cold, and

times may change, and circumstances may alter, and old age may creep on, and infirmities may gather themselves together, and flesh and heart may fail,—yea, though my feet touch the cold waters of the river of death,—this promise will stand fast and true, and Thy kindness shall not depart from me *for ever*, for it shall present me “faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.”



THE EXCEEDING GREAT-  
NESS OF GOD'S POWER.

*"What is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe."*—Eph. i. 19.

COME, my heart, satisfy and delight thyself, this morning, with the thought of what thy mighty God can do for thee,—the grace He is able to give thee now,—the glory He is reserving for thee,—the uplifting, upholding, strengthening, and preserving power which is all vested in His loving hands on thy behalf. Here is a storehouse of riches on which thy largest demands can make no perceptible diminishment, and all this is thine!

*"Exceeding greatness."* Yea, Lord, more vast and wonderful than my poor finite mind can

conceive. Thy power bids the sun pour forth his radiant light and heat,—Thy power holds the stars in space, and hangs the earth upon nothing,—Thy power rules the universe with a word! Is it not exceeding great? All nature shows Thy handiwork, and Thy wondrous power is as much seen in the lowest forms of life and growth as in the higher developments of Thy creative hand. All the discoveries of science, all the revelations of its secrets which have of late so surprised and delighted us, are but glimpses of the infinite might and wisdom of the God whose "love is as great as His power, and neither knows measure nor end."

But, Lord, it is not on the majesty of Thine Omnipotence as shown in Thy material world that I would meditate at this



moment; it is, the "*power to us-ward who believe*" that enchains my heart, and thrills my soul with joy. Help me to draw nigh to Thee, dear Lord, humbly and reverently, that I may "see this great sight;" for, though this is holy ground, and the bush burns with fire, there is no barrier, as of old, to prevent a near approach to Thee, seeing that, now, we "are made nigh by the blood of Christ."

If I have true faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, then the exceeding greatness of the power of the Most High God, "according to the working of His mighty power," is to me-ward, is on my side, or—I say it with deep reverence,—*at my service*, always at hand to help, to guard, to defend, and to provide for me. My pen pauses as I ask myself, "Do I believe this? Do any

Christians really hold this faith? Is it possible that there can be among the feeble, doubting, self-engrossed, and half-hearted people that I see and hear of, any who possess the assurance that the power of the living God dwells in them, and that they 'can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth' them? If there be any such, why, oh! why do they not walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called?"

Look to thyself, my soul. Is the exceeding greatness of thy Lord's power manifest in thee as it should be? Blessed be His Name, thou canst say, "He has redeemed me from death and hell, pardoned my sins through the shedding of His precious blood, and given me a promise of life eternal in His presence." But what more? Those are the



cardinal gifts of His grace, the corner-stones of His mercy and love. What dost thou possess of the *details* of His mighty working, the filling-up, as it were, of the great plan of His will and design concerning thee? What does "the effectual working of His power" produce in thy heart and life? Art thou wholly consecrated to His service? Hast thou given thyself and all that thou hast into His loving hands? Art thou filled with His Holy Spirit? Does He control every thought, and word, and deed? And are all the powers of thy being and all the possessions of both soul and body subject and surrendered to His absolute sway?

Ah, Lord! Thy poor child sorrowfully confesses to falling very far short of the high

standard of Christian life to which Thy Word expects us to attain. In common with so many others, I seem to live at a "poor dying rate" when I might have "life more abundantly." I know that the possibilities of conformity to Christ are only to be measured by the exceeding riches of Thy grace, and the exceeding greatness of Thy power, and yet I sometimes seem content without a full participation in the glorious experience which Thy love offers. Lord, enlighten and quicken me, I beseech Thee! Put forth in me the mighty grace which will make my daily life a proof that Thou art working Thine own will in me, and giving me to know, at least in some measure, "what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe."



## THE MOURNERS' COMFORTER.

*"The Lord GOD will wipe away tears  
from off all faces."—Isa. xxv. 8.*

COME, all ye sorrowful, mourning souls, and see what a fair pearl of promise your God has brought to light for you, out of the very depths of the sea of your affliction. Here is an assurance so inexpressibly tender, a fact so blessed and joyful, that you can hardly regret the weeping which is to enlist such Divine sympathy and consolation.

Come, and we will together—  
for I also am a mourner,—look  
into this precious Word of our  
God; we will dwell upon its un-  
speakable love, we will think upon

its gentle pity, till our tears catch its soft radiance, and glisten with the beauty of the "rainbow round about the throne."

I have sometimes wondered whether that glorious arch, encircling the very throne of God, can be typical of the transformation of earth's sorrows into Heavenly joys,—a lovely symbol of the shining of God's pardoning love upon the rain of tears from mortal eyes, for sin, and suffering, and death. There can be no rainbow without showers, you know, and certainly there can be no weeping in Heaven; so, may it not be that the Lord has put this "appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain" in His high and holy place, as a token to us that all the tears we shed on earth are reflected up in Heaven, and gleam there in fair colours, as



the light of His love to us in Christ Jesus falls tenderly upon them? "I have seen thy tears," He says, "they shall all be wiped away some day."

How often are we constrained to cry, "Mine eyes do fail with tears" for the *sin* which still rises up with terrible force in our heart, and how constantly have we to weep over the evil which is present with us! Such tears are mute but eloquent witnesses of our repentance towards God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and no jewels can be so comely and precious in His sight as the tears of a sinner for his sin. Yet these tears shall all be wiped away some day.

The salt drops which steal down our cheeks through physical *suffering*,—wrung from our eyes by mortal pain and weak-

ness, are all seen by our loving Lord; they are put into His bottle, His purpose concerning them shall be manifest when their mission is accomplished, and then the source from whence they sprang shall be for ever dried up. "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

And with what inconceivable tenderness shall the bitter tears caused by *bereavement* be wiped away when we get home! Here, the deep waters of our sorrow seem to be assuaged for a little while, only to burst forth again with greater power to deluge our hearts with the memory of past anguish; but how completely will all traces of grief vanish there! When we see for ourselves the glory of that land whither our beloved ones have passed before us, our wonder will be that we could have



sorrowed at all at sparing them from life's woes to enter into the "fulness of joy" at God's right hand.

"*The Lord God will.*" There is not the shadow of a doubt about this, poor sighing soul. Not only did our Father inspire His prophet Isaiah to speak thus assuredly, but, twice repeated, He gave the same sweet message to the apostle John at Patmos: "God *shall* wipe away all tears from their eyes." As a fond mother hushes her child, as a tender husband solaces his spouse, so, weeping one, shall thy God comfort thee when He brings thee home, and thy consolation shall be so complete that thou shalt "no more remember thy sorrow."

Yes, the world is full of

weeping; even Paul spoke of "serving the Lord with many tears." Every heart knoweth its own bitterness, and every heart has a bitterness to know. Sin *must* bring sorrow, tears are the inheritance of earth's children; but in the city whither we are bound, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

Blessed be Thy dear Name, O Lord, for this "strong consolation"—this "good hope through grace." Tears may, and must come; but if they gather in eyes that are constantly *looking up* to Thee and Heaven, they will glisten with the brightness of the coming glory.



THE LOVELINESS OF  
GOD'S WILL.

*"Thy will be done in earth, as it is in Heaven."*—Matt. vi. 10.

WHEN my soul is tossed on the rough waves of the troubled sea of this life, if I can but cast out the anchor of hope into the depths of *God's blessed will*, it holds fast at once, and the winds and the waves are rebuked.

Dear Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast made Thy will so dear and precious to me! Once, in the midst of darkness and unutterable sorrow, Thou didst enable me to say, "He hath done all things well;" and now, though the days are calmer, the fast-revolving years bring round

the time of sad memories, and I look back, and say it still, "He hath done all things well!"

*"Thy will be done in earth, as it is in Heaven."* My God, I bless Thee for the most welcome and soothing thought that, while the dear one Thou hast taken from me is joyfully doing Thy will in Heaven, I, by Thy tender grace, may be doing the same on earth. I cannot do it as *perfectly*; but I may do it patiently, humbly, and acceptably. Lord, make this my daily desire and delight! How near this hope brings me to my beloved! "He is with Christ, and Christ is with me;" there is but the veil of flesh between us, and that may be rent asunder any day soon, and then we shall be "together with Him."

*"Thy will be done."* This



resting in the will of God is one of the most comforting and blessed experiences of the Christian life. To say, "Thy will be done,"—not in a reluctant or compulsory way, as if we were shrinking from some inevitable pain, but with a sincere and glad conviction that our dear Father is really doing for us what is best and most loving, although it may not look so to our dull eyes,—this is glorifying to Him, and supremely consoling to us.

God's plans and purposes for me, and for you, dear reader, were all made and determined on from the beginning; and as they are worked out day by day in our lives, how wise should we be if, with joyful certainty, we accepted each unfolding of His will as a proof of His faithfulness and love! When once I, as a believer, can say from my heart,

"This is the will of God concerning me," it matters not what the "this" is,—whether it be a small domestic worry, or the severance of the dearest earthly ties,—the fact that it is *His most blessed will*, takes all the fierce *sting* out of the trouble, and leaves it powerless to hurt or hinder the peace of my soul. There is all the difference between the murderous blows of an enemy, and the needful chastisement of a loving father's hand! The Lord may make us sore, but He will bind us up. He may wound, but His hands make whole. How often has the Lord to *break* a heart before He can enter into it, and fill it with His love; but how precious and fragrant is the balm which, thenceforward, flows out of that heart to others! Dear Father, how many of Thy children can truly say, "Before



I was afflicted, I went astray,  
but now have I kept Thy Word"!

"Thy will be done in earth,  
*as it is in Heaven.*" Lord, can  
such a thing really be? The  
attainment seems so high, so  
Heavenly, so impossible! Yet,  
if it were not within our reach,  
Thou wouldst not have taught  
us to pray for it. Doing the  
will of God from the heart must  
be at least the reflection, the  
copy, of the perfect obedience  
of the saints in light. Oh, to  
be thus beginning the service  
of Heaven, while yet on earth!  
Practising *here*, to be made  
perfect *there*! Learning the laws,  
and manners, and customs of  
the land where our eternal in-  
heritance awaits us! Say, my  
soul, art thou thus diligently  
preparing thyself for thy citizen-  
ship in Heaven?

THY WAY; *NOT* MY  
WAY.

*"Make Thy way straight before my  
face."*—Psalm v. 8.

DEAR FATHER, this cry is going  
up to Thee, this morning, from  
many a tried and perplexed  
soul, who is fearing to "wander  
in the wilderness, where there is  
no way." Wilt Thou graciously  
bend down Thine ear, and listen  
to their prayer, and grant the  
desired direction and guidance?

*"Make Thy way straight."*  
Dear Lord, it is not that Thy  
ways are ever crooked or devi-  
ating, but that my eyes are bent  
on seeing pleasant little by-  
paths, where the road is not so  
rough, or the walking so toil-



some, as on the King's highway! *My* way looks so enticing, so easy, so agreeable to the flesh. *Thy* way means self-denial, taking up the cross, and the relinquishment of much that my heart desireth. Are not these very things the guide-posts which show me the right road?

Now, dear Lord, hear my cry, "*Make Thy way straight before my face.*" Compel me, by the power of Thy love and Thy example, to go in the narrow road; "hedge up my way with thorns," rather than that I should take a step out of Thy way which Thou hast laid down for me.

What if, sometimes, there be mists and fogs so thick that I cannot see the path? 'Tis enough that Thou dost hold my

hand, and guide me in the darkness; for walking with Thee in the gloom is far sweeter and safer than walking alone in the sunlight!

Dear Lord, give me grace to trust Thee wholly, whatever may betide; yielding myself up to Thy leading, and leaning hard on Thee when "fears shall be in the way." Thy way for me has been marked out from all eternity, and it leads direct to Thyself and home. Help me to keep my eyes fixed on the joy set before me, and deliver me from the very faintest desire to turn aside, and linger in the flowery meadows which have so often lured the feet of poor pilgrims into danger and distress.

Father, Thou hast said, "My ways are not your ways, neither



are My thoughts your thoughts." Truth, dear Lord; but then Thou canst uplift my thoughts to Thine, and exalt my ways till they reach the mountain-top of obedience to Thy blessed will. Work this miracle for me this day, O Lord; use that sweet compulsion which will delight my heart while it directs my steps! *Make* me to run in the way of Thy commandments, and I shall run gladly, with the blessed certainty that I shall reach the goal at last! Hast Thou not given me a monitor within, which strikes a gentle warning note when my feet turn but an instant from the straight way?

But, best of all, dearest Lord, come Thyself with me along life's road, to-day and every day! Let the abiding of my

soul in Thee be so real and constant, so true and tender, that I may always be aware of Thy sweet presence, and never take a single step apart from Thy supporting and delivering hand!

"O come, for Thou dost know the way:  
And, if to Thee I cannot move,  
Remove me, where I need not say,  
'O come, my Lord, my Love!'"



GOD'S BEAUTY UPON  
HIS PEOPLE.

*"Let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us."—Psalm xc. 17.*

WHEN I read these wonderful words, this morning, there came to me, quick as a lightning flash, the solemn question, "*Soul, is this beauty now resting on thee, and on all thy daily life?*" Alas! there was no reply by speech or voice; but a bowed head, and silent lips, and the inward sighing of a convicted, yet penitent heart, gave the only possible answer.

Then I sat down before the Lord, wondering and ashamed, and the multitude of my thoughts within me took

form and fashion thus:—Father, Thou knowest that I covet earnestly the loveliness of sanctification, I would fain obey Thy command to be holy; and if longings after complete surrender to Thee would avail to secure this special grace, I should possess it. What is it that so constantly defeats my purpose, and foils my efforts, and prevents the fulfilment of my most devout desire?

Dear Master, if Thy will concerning me be my sanctification, why is not that will more absolutely done in me? Can it be that I am unconsciously cherishing something in my heart that hinders the work of Thy Holy Spirit, and so the blessing Thou hast designed for me does not reach me, because the way is barred by a will not wholly yielded to Thine? Or



have I been satisfying myself with mere empty desires after conformity to Christ, indulging in poor feeble longings in which there was so much half-heartedness that the Spirit of God was grieved, and would not reveal His power?

O Lord, pity me, and pardon me! Awaken my soul to an earnest sense of the solemn responsibility involved in belonging to Thee, and bearing Thy Name! Rouse in me, Lord, a blessed eagerness to become all that Thou wishest me to be! Fill me with that mighty influence which worketh in us "both to will and to do" of Thy good pleasure! Yea, chasten and afflict me, Lord, if nothing else will serve to make me a partaker of Thy holiness!

*"Let the beauty of the Lord our*

*God be upon us."* Dear Father, *I must have this blessing.* Help me to pray the marvellous prayer intelligently, remembering at what an awful cost Thou hast secured to me an answer, and glorifying Thee for the matchless love which makes me,—

"With His spotless vesture on,  
Holy as the Holy One."

What hath God wrought! I can see, only too plainly, the ugliness and deformity which sin has worked in my nature, and the havoc it has made among all the creatures God had formed for Himself. If it had not been for this deadly thing, we should have borne "the image of God" even now. Doth the lily plead for its whiteness, or the tree for its lovely foliage, or the sun for his splendour? Nay, they are as God made them;



they have kept their first estate, and are still "very good"; but man, sinful man, has fallen, and he who was made in the likeness of God is defaced and disfigured by the evil within.

Ah! dear Lord, when Thou dost give us a sight of our own evil heart, we are overwhelmed with horror, and should soon be driven to despair, didst Thou not at once turn our eyes to that wondrous hill of Calvary, where One "altogether lovely" made the great Atonement which brought us back to Thee! That precious blood, which cleanses us from all sin, restores to us the beauty which that sin has forfeited; its royal purple not only covers our disfigurement, but removes it, and bestows upon us the comeliness which the Lord looks on with pleasure.

O soul of mine, dost thou not desire above all things that this "beauty of holiness" may be thy glorious dress? Then thou must keep very close to the Master, shutting the door of thy heart to every evil thing, and opening it wide to the incoming of His Holy Spirit, who, in revealing Christ to thee, will make thee *like Him*. An old fable tells how a piece of common clay became sweetly scented by close contact with a rose;—the fable will be a blessed fact in thy experience if the Rose of Sharon blooms in thy heart, and sheds its fragrance around thy life. "Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty," yea, may God grant it; but the condition is thus expressed,—"Holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."

Everlasting praises be to the



Well-beloved of our soul, that His perfect righteousness covers us now, and that in the day when He shall bring us home to His Father's house, we shall be "PRESENTED FAULTLESS BEFORE THE PRESENCE OF HIS GLORY WITH EXCEEDING JOY."

### DIVINE ANOINTING.

*"I shall be anointed with fresh oil."*—  
Psalm xcii. 10.

LORD, if Thou wilt Thyself put this confident language into the lips of my heart this morning, and give me the power to believe in Thee, then this thing that I say shall come to pass,—I have Thine own Word for it (Mark xi. 23).

*"I shall be anointed with fresh oil."* How wonderfully do Thy mercy and my need meet together here! My soul's necessities make a blessed pretext for the outpouring of Thy grace. When Thy love wakens me in the morning, how cheering is



the thought that this anointing awaits my poor listless, sluggish, corroded soul! The "renewing of the Holy Ghost", the "quickenings of the Spirit", the "coming" of the Comforter,—these are the precious ingredients which give "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning," and make the face to shine with Heaven's reflected glory.

*"I shall be anointed with fresh oil."* O my dear Lord, Thou alone knowest the deep and constant need I have of this "anointing which teacheth all things." Sometimes, my spiritual life seems to come to a deadlock, like a delicate piece of machinery which is clogged by rust and grime. Scarce a desire Heavenward moves the lagging wheels, only a feeble heart-throb, now and again,

proves the motive-power to be still lingering within. "My soul cleaveth unto the dust," and my whole being is deadened, till I cry, "Quicken Thou me, O Lord!"

Then, in wondrous answer to my call, there comes the whispered word of power and deliverance, "I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes," and the soul feels the blessed softening and life-giving working of the Holy Ghost, as she shakes herself from the dust, and utters once again the glad assurance, *"I shall be anointed with fresh oil."*

And oh, how easily and smoothly all things go when the Spirit dwells in the heart, and *sheds abroad* the love of God within and around us! All the



canker and rust disappear from our daily lives, and with eager diligence we set ourselves to do our Master's will.

Dear Lord, Thy Word declares, "The anointing which ye have received of Him, abideth in you." Fulfil this promise to me, I beseech Thee, that I may no more dishonour Thee by languid or half-hearted worship or work.

Anoint me for *service*, Lord, that, in all I do for Thee, either directly or indirectly, there may be manifested the power of the Holy Spirit, and the whole-hearted earnestness which He only can supply!

Anoint me for *sacrifice*, so that, contrary to my sinful nature, *self* may be overcome, and bound, and crucified, that

Christ alone may reign in my mortal body!

Anoint me for *suffering*, if so it be Thy will, that I may praise Thee as I pass through the waters and the fires of affliction!

Anoint me for *intercession*, O my Father, that for others, as well as for myself, I may plead with Thee, and may prevail! This morning, Lord, pour Thy holy "oil of joy" upon my head, and let the precious, fragrant unction of Thy grace drop down from hour to hour of the day's garments, till the skirts of night shall enfold both body and soul in the sweet spices of the sleep which Thou dost give to Thy beloved!



## OPENED EARS.

*"Cause me to hear Thy loving-kindness  
in the morning; for in Thee do I trust."*  
—Psalm cxliii. 8.

THE ears of my soul are fast stopped, Lord, until Thou dost open them. I am deaf, and cannot hear the music of the mercies which are singing around me, like sweet choristers from Heaven.

*"Cause me to hear."* As Thou didst open the eyes of Elisha's servant, to behold Thine armies of defence and protection for Thy prophet, so unclose my ears that the tones of Thy still small voice may penetrate to my heart, and thrill it with exceeding joy ;

or, if I am too deafened by the roar and rush of earth's turmoil and distress, speak more loudly to me, Lord, "*Cause me to hear,*" lest I should miss the unspeakable privilege of listening to Thee.

*"Thy loving-kindness."* Lord, what unutterable depths of compassion are covered by those two words! Thy "kindness" would be an undeserved mercy ; but Thy "loving-kindness" is a miracle of Divine condescension and pity. Thou dost not only rescue, Thou dost embrace ; Thou dost not only pardon, Thou dost espouse ; and the robe of Thy righteousness, which is wrapped about Thy redeemed ones, is lined with the soft miniver of Thy *tender mercies*. And this for *me*, Lord, so vile, so unworthy, so often ungrateful



and forgetful! What can I say to Thee for this?

*"In the morning."* When all around are sleeping, Lord, waken my heart with Thy tender call, uplift my spirit into true fellowship with Thee. Early hours with my God will sanctify all the day. In my quiet time with Thee, Father, so fill my soul with the sweet sounds of redeeming grace and pardoning love that, through all the succeeding hours, there may be melody within, and joy too deep and real to be disturbed or broken by any of earth's jarring discords.

*"For in Thee do I trust."* Thou knowest this is true, Lord. My soul rests in Thee; it lies down on the sure promises of Thy Word, and hath sweet content. Yea, though this

prayer, this desire of my heart to hear Thy voice, be not granted to-day, and Thou shouldst be silent unto me for a while, it will be but Thy way of drawing me closer to Thee that, in tenderest whispers, Thou mayest tell me, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love."



## DROOPING EYE-LIDS.

*"Mine eyes fail with looking upward:  
O LORD, I am oppressed; undertake for  
me."*—Isaiah xxxviii. 14.

HEZEKIAH had been sore sick when he wrote the psalm, or ode, from which these words are taken. A long and painful illness had brought him to "the gates of the grave"; and he here expresses, in pathetic language, some of the groans, and sighs, and cries, which were wrung from his heart during the time when he feared that he might be deprived of the residue of his years.

*"Mine eyes fail with looking upward."* Upon first reading

these words, my heart felt envious of the poor sick king's experience. What! To look up to God so constantly and continually that my eyes should be wearied with the *upward* glance? This surely would be a pleasant pain, a sweet sorrow, a most rare and blessed spiritual attainment. With me it is, alas! so different; mine eyes mostly fail with looking *inward*! The fountain of sin within seems ever rising from the depths of my nature, and overflowing the banks of my life, and my gaze is too often riveted on the dark flood, instead of being lifted to Him who has cast all my sins behind His back.

But I look again carefully at the text, and find that it should read thus, "*Mine eyes fail upward.*" The two words "with



looking " are interpolated, they are not in the original Hebrew. The meaning is, literally, " Mine eye-lids *droop*, mine eyes are too weak to look upward." Ah! now I can understand, and Hezekiah's words touch my very soul. It is as if he said, (what I have so often had to say,) " I am utter weakness, Lord; a weight of sin, and sorrow, and sickness oppresses me, I am brought so low that I cannot even lift up mine eyes unto Thee; but come Thou, sit by my bed, close to me, Lord, so that I need not *look up*, but can shut my weary eyes for very bliss that Thou art *looking down* in tenderest pity on me, and saying, ' Fear not, for I am with thee.' "

" *Undertake for me.*" Oh, the blessed restfulness of putting

everything,—physical, mental, and spiritual,—into my Father's hands, and just leaving all there! When once faith can heartily make this transfer, all is well with the soul, and its peace is perfect. God does nothing by halves; if He undertakes our case, He will deliver us from all evil, He will blot out our transgressions for His own Name's sake, He will sanctify our affliction to His glory, He will turn our sorrow into joy.



THE DETAILS OF  
EVERY-DAY LIFE.

*"Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, Thou understandest my thought afar off."—Psalm cxxxix. 2.*

"*THOU knowest.*" Come, my soul, here is a test as to thy present spiritual condition! Wilt thou apply it? Wilt thou be weighed in this balance of the sanctuary, and see whether or not thou art found wanting? Does thy Lord's intimate knowledge of thy every thought, and desire, and action, oppress and disconcert thee, or art thou willing and glad to live under such close inspection, and even to covet the glances of that

eye which searches thee through and through?

Nothing but "full assurance of faith" in the precious blood shed for thee on Calvary can give thee *this* boldness. Happy art thou, my soul, if thou knowest that God "looks through Jesu's wounds" on thee, and through those wondrous windows of ruby sees thee so changed and beauteous that He can say, "Thou art all fair, My love, there is no spot in thee."

"*My downsitting and mine uprising.*" Lord, dost Thou love me so much as to watch tenderly over me in such small matters? How the thought comforts me! We do not care about the details of the every-day life of *strangers*: but when we love anyone very dearly, we



take great interest in all that concerns them; and even so, my God, this searching, knowing, understanding, compassing, besetting, laying of Thy hand upon me, are all most precious tokens to me of Thine unutterable love!

How watchful and careful should this knowledge make me! "*My downsitting and mine uprising.*" My home life! My daily duties, both of work and of leisure! My going out and my coming in, my conduct and bearing under all circumstances! How these are all gathered into the compass of those five words! Lord, help me to walk worthy of Thee, unto all pleasing!

"*Thou understandest my thought afar off.*" What infinite

knowledge! Well may the psalmist say, "It is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it"!

*Before* I think, God knows my thought! O my soul, are not thy thoughts the source of most of thy grievous perplexities and sorrows? They are often so unruly and rebellious, sometimes so unholy and profane, that all thy efforts to bring them into captivity to the law of Christ are unavailing! Then, see where thy help lieth. The God who can understand thy thoughts "*afar off*" has the power to restrain them; nay, more, before they reach thee, while they are yet distant and unexpressed, He will purify and cleanse them, so that they shall enter thy heart as angel whispers, and pass thy lips only as words of love and blessing.



Dear Master, I make Thy servant David's prayer my very own, and say, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

## THE TROUBLED HEART.

*"Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."*—John xiv. 27.

FROM whose lips do these tender words fall "like rain upon the mown grass"? Whose heart has such intimate knowledge of my need, and such profound sympathy with my weakness, as thus to meet both with the grace of His exceeding love?

It could be no other than "Jesus Christ Himself," my gracious Lord and Master, who thus speaks, and I shall do well to ponder each weighty sentence as I listen to His loving voice.

*"Let not your heart be troubled."*  
Dear Lord, these words of Thine, though so sweet, are imperative.



They are a *command*, and should be instantly obeyed. Perhaps I have never before looked upon them in this light, never realized that, in carrying about within me a troubled spirit, I am acting in direct *disobedience* to Thy bidding!

“Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law.” Say the words over again to me, dear Lord! Speak “as one having authority,” and, with Thy gracious command, issue also the mighty power which will enable me to fulfil it. How often must I have grieved Thee by my want of trust in Thy tender love and care! How often must Thou have marvelled at my foolishness in attempting to bear burdens which might have been cast at Thy feet!

“*Let* not your heart be troubled.” Truly, I hear a grave note of rebuke and disappointment mingling with the music of these sweet words on my Lord’s lips. It may indeed be so, dear Master, for after all that Thou hast done and said, my heart should never be troubled. I ought not to “*let*” it be afraid. And yet how soon does fear overtake the steps of joyful assurance, how quickly do I pass out of the light of Thy presence into the deep shadow cast by the mountain of my sin!

Lord, help me to reason with myself about this, for a few moments, or rather, say Thou unto me, “Come now, and let us reason together,” for then I know that Thy infinite love will conclusively silence my fears, and hush all the disquietude of my soul.



*Why* should my heart be troubled? Is it on account of the overwhelming sense of sin and of unworthiness which sometimes threatens to crush all the spiritual energy out of my life? Then, I have but to turn again to "the fountain of blood", and there see all my iniquities pardoned because laid upon the Sin-bearer, all my guilt forgiven because He suffered in my stead. Can I keep a troubled heart when He died that I might have peace through believing? Can I have trusted *Him* with my soul's salvation, and yet permit myself to doubt whether He has truly saved me?

*Why* should my heart be troubled? Is it the things which are seen and temporal, which are distressing me? The cares of this life, the struggle for

daily bread, perhaps, or if not that, the thousand vexations and disappointments which are the lot of our poor humanity? Come again to thy dear Lord, my soul, and bring to His feet all that perplexes and grieves thee; thou wilt surely hear Him say, "*Let* not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid; all your sorrows are known to Me, and I am guiding and directing all that concerns thee. Is it more difficult to trust My love in earthly ills than for eternal joys?"

*Why* should my heart be troubled or afraid? There is nothing on earth or in hell that can harm a soul who believes in Jesus. Every fear is put to flight by His perfect love. Even the fear of *death*—so great a bondage in some lives,—is lifted quite



away when "God giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Blessed Lord, help me to be obedient to Thy command, and to receive meekly Thy well-deserved rebuke, glorifying Thee henceforth in my daily life by a restful faith, which nothing can disturb or dismay! "The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose," ought never to know trouble or fear.

### THE WELL IN THE WILDERNESS.

*"It shall not seem hard unto thee."*—  
Deut. xv. 18.

DEAR LORD, I have this morning lighted upon one of the secret springs of sweet waters; an ancient, hidden well in the wilderness, which Thy love, as it were, kept covered up and concealed, till my great need moved Thee to open my eyes to discover it. How precious has Thy thought been to me, O Lord! How strengthening and refreshing are these "cold waters to a thirsty soul," which Thou hast thus made to break forth in a strange place! For I thought I was suffering a hard thing, Lord, in the dealings and



discipline which Thou hast seen necessary for me ; and, though Thy grace kept me from openly murmuring and complaining, my inner self constantly cried out, " This *is* hard, Lord, this is very hard."

But now Thou sayest, " No, My child, it must not even *seem* hard unto thee. Thy trust in Me should be so perfect, thy faith in My love so strong, thy obedience to My will so complete, that nothing should seem grievous which I appoint, no trial that I send should affright or overwhelm thee. Have I not always been to thee 'a very present help in trouble' ?" Lord, my heart says, " Amen!" to Thy gracious words, and then trusts Thee to work all this loving obedience in me by Thine own mighty power.

" IT *shall not seem hard unto thee.*" The peculiar trial through which I may now be passing, is the very "*it*" which must not seem hard to me. God's bow is never drawn at a venture ; He makes no mistakes, either in telling the number of the stars, or in meting out to me the griefs which shall teach me to glorify Him. And, dear reader, if you would find comfort from the words which so comforted me, you must look upon your *present* trouble, *whatever it may be*, and say, " Lord, this shall not seem hard to me, for I have received so much bounty and blessing from Thee, I have known so much of Thy pity and pardoning love, that I dare not mistrust Thee, or question for a moment the Divine wisdom of Thy dealings with me." Ah! our eyes are so dimmed by



earth's fogs and shadows that we cannot see clearly enough to distinguish good from evil ; and if left to ourselves, might embrace a curse rather than a blessing. Poor purblind mortals that we are, it is well for us that our Master should choose our trials for us, even though to our imperfect vision He seems sometimes to have appointed a hard thing.

" Ill that God blesses turns to good,  
While unblest good is ill,  
And all is right that seems most wrong,  
If it be His sweet will."

Yes, it is in absolute and loving surrender to *the will of the Lord* that the secret of true rest and peace is found. This is the alchemy which turns earth's sorrows into Heaven's blessings ; here is the antidote to every sting, the cure-all of each care, the unailing remedy for all

disquietude. Dear Lord, if I am Thy child, trusting, loving, obeying Thee, how *can* Thy will for me seem "hard"? Nay, rather, I should joyfully meet and welcome it, well knowing that Thy love to me could only send a message of peace, however dark might be the envelope which enwrapped it.

This comfort cannot apply to troubles which we make for ourselves, and which we sometimes glorify into spiritual hardships, when they are really selfish sins ; these are not God's will for us, but our own perverse way, and they bring nothing better than bitterness and tears. But a God-given burden or sorrow, carried out into the sunshine of His love, and laid at His blessed feet, immediately loses all its "hardness", and is



transformed into a blessing, for which our soul praises the Lord with tender thanksgiving.

*"It shall not seem hard unto thee."* Ah! dear Master, it must grievously pain Thy loving heart when we, Thine own redeemed ones, think any of Thy dealings with us harsh or stern. Thou hast loved us from everlasting, Thou didst not spare Thine own Son when a ransom was required for our souls, Thou hast led us, and fed us, and cared for us all our life long; can we be so wicked and ungrateful as to deem anything "hard" which Thy wisdom and love appoint?

*"It shall not seem hard unto thee."* Since this precious text rippled from the pages of God's Word, like "a brook by the

way," I have been drinking of its waters with great joy; and when a trouble, great or small, oppresses my soul, and causes my heart to faint within me, I take another draught from this sweet spring, and soon am ready to say, "'Tis no longer hard, Lord, for 'I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation.'"



## AMONG THE FURNACES.

*“Every thing that may abide the fire, ye shall make it go through the fire, and it shall be clean.”—Num. xxxi. 23.*

Is not this Thy way, even now, O Lord? The ancient statute has never been repealed, this “ordinance of the law which the Lord commanded Moses” is still in force in a spiritual sense for His own Israel. His prey which He has taken from the mighty, His precious spoil which He has gathered from among all nations, must be cleansed and purified before it can be meet for His use; and so it comes to pass that all that may abide the fire, shall be made to go through it.

Herein, surely, are comfortable thoughts for tried and

afflicted souls. “Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you;” it was even so in the days of old, and there is a needs-be for the fulfilment of the commandment yet. If we are God’s gold, we must be subjected to constant purifying by fire. If He claims us as His silver, we shall be refined again and again, that our pollution may be purged, and all that is true and precious may shine forth with fresh lustre to His glory. It is not the actual separation of the ore from its original dross that is here referred to, but the necessary cleansing of fashioned vessels and shapely treasures which have contracted any defilement, or suffered some dishonour. Alas! our inmost hearts tell us what abundant



need there is that "the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is."

But now, dear Lord, help me to apply this Thy law to my own most valued possessions. Let me see what I have that will "*abide the fire.*" Will my "good hope through grace" stand the test of such an ordeal? Will my "joy and peace in believing" crumble into nothingness under the fierce heat of tribulation? Can the "strong consolation" which God gives me disappear as a vapour when the flame of affliction touches it? Or, if I should lose my best and dearest treasures, can the hot furnace of bereavement burn up all my strength and comfort? GOD FORBID!

The true work of grace in a

human heart *can* abide the fire of any trial to which the Lord may be pleased to expose it. We *can* sing of His love when the heat is most vehement, and glorify Him by proving that promise true, "When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." This is why the command is so frequently heard, thrilling through heart and life, "*Ye shall make it go through the fire.*"

*Because* our faith is precious, and our love golden, and our hope "maketh not ashamed," they must be ever subject to the Refiner's fire. Does the flesh sometimes shrink from such an assaying as this? Yea, doubtless it does; "the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak;" yet need we not fear;



the purpose of our great Refiner is to discipline, not to destroy us. He makes the sighs of the furnace to strike the key-notes of the new and everlasting song; and the coming forth of His "tried gold" will be found "unto praise, and honour, and glory at His appearing."

Dear Father, what a blessed reason this gives for glorying in tribulations also, for thus we are being made perfect to do Thy work and will. What though the fire be hot, and the process a painful one, can we not see Thine eyes watching tenderly, and hear Thy loving voice saying, "Fear not, for I am with thee," and does not Thy presence give "fulness of joy" *anywhere*? To abide the fire, is sure proof that we shall pass through it, and emerge at last in Thy likeness. Thou

dost not melt, and try, and prove that which is spurious and valueless; but, having seen the glint of the gold which is Thine, even through the defilement which defaces us, Thou dost patiently wait, and "perfect that which concerneth us."

*"It shall be clean."* O glorious promise! Not a moment longer than the furnace is needed shall we be exposed to its heat; but only when all that is vile is consumed, shall we come forth white and glistening. Dear Lord, we cannot love the fire, but we do praise Thee for the fire's work upon us. By Thy grace, we would rather feel the hot breath of the purifying flame as it destroys our rust and rubbish, than disgrace our Lord and Master by living tarnished and corroded lives.



TESTING TIMES, THE  
PROOF OF LOVE.

*"Fear not: for God is come to prove you."*—Exodus xx. 20.

IT was not from amidst the thunderings and darkness, the fire and smoke of Mount Sinai, that these words reached my heart this morning. They were whispered by a "still small voice" in the quiet of my own chamber, and they brought courage and comfort in a time of sore need and depression.

*"Fear not,"*—this was the tender message; and the reason for confidence was given,—*"for God is come to prove you."* The blessed fact of His presence changed the appearance of all

the things that seemed against me. The trial was not taken away, but my eyes were opened to see that, if it came from the hand of my God, there must be a blessing in it. My soul pondered the sweet assurance, and found therein the calm of Heaven, after the storms and strifes of earth.

Whatever may be the grievous circumstances in which I am placed, or the injustice of others from which I am suffering, if my God says, "Fear not," I ought surely to be brave and strong. If we can only get firmly fixed in our hearts the truth that the Lord's hand is in *everything* that happens to us, we have found a balm for all our woes, a remedy for all our ills. When friends fail us and grow cold, when enemies



triumph and wax confident, when the smooth pathway upon which we have been travelling suddenly becomes rough, stony, and steep,—we are too apt to look askance at the visible *second causes*, and to forget that our God has foreseen every trial, permitted every annoyance, and authorized each item of discipline, with this set purpose: “The Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul” (Deut. xiii. 3). O heart of mine, what is thy response to this demand? Dost thou not love Him enough to endure any test to prove it?

I remember once reading words to this effect—that, the moment we come into any trial or difficulty, our first thought

should be, *not* how soon can we escape from it, or how may we lessen the pain we shall suffer from it, but how can we best glorify God in it, and most quickly learn the lesson which He desires to teach us by it? Had we grace and faith enough to do this, our trials and troubles would be but as so many steps by which we should climb to the mountain-top of continual fellowship and peace with God. The soul that has learned the blessed secret of seeing God’s hand in all that concerns it, cannot be a prey to *fear*; it looks beyond all second causes, straight into the heart and will of God, and rests content, because *He rules*.

“*God is come to prove you.*”  
My soul, think how great must be His love to thee, that He



should stoop to search for thy heart's obedience and devotion! Think of the Infinite God, thy Redeemer, longing, desiring, yearning to be assured of thy supreme affection! As He Himself puts it by His servant Moses,—"Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee, . . . to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thy heart, whether thou wouldest keep His commandments or no." What pains He has taken with thee! How tenderly He has borne with thee! Every trial has been a test, every pain has had a purpose. And can it be that thou art still keeping back from Him the full surrender of heart and life which His Divine love demands? Still lingering and wavering on the borderland of half-heartedness, instead of gladly

leaving all to follow Him? Nay, Lord, it shall be so no longer! Help me to give Thee, at this moment, instantly and eagerly, the proof of my love which Thou dost seek, in the submission of my heart to all Thy will, and the entire consecration of body, soul, and spirit to Thy service! Then, every yoke will be made easy, and every burden will become light, for I shall carry them under the firm conviction that my gracious Lord has laid them on me, and is but testing the strength of the love and grace which He Himself has given.



## BRIERS AND MYRTLES.

*"Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the LORD for a name."—Isaiah lv. 13.*

MY BLESSED LORD, how tender and pitiful art Thou to me! What a delight it is to tell of Thy mercy and grace to one so unworthy! Yet it is no singular story, for this is Thy sweet way and wont, dear Lord, towards all who put their trust in Thee. When depression and sadness come to me, by reason of the sin within, or the discouragements without; when the thorns and briers of daily cares and vexations prick and tear the weary pilgrim's feet and hands; then Thou dost turn my footsteps to where the pines and

myrtles of Thy loving mercies grow, and in their shelter and fragrance my troubled spirit finds rest.

Nay, more than this, dear Lord, Thy power is so great that Thou dost sometimes transform the very things that hurt and grieved me into means of grace and blessing to my heart and life. Disappointments in my work, obstacles to its performance, the estrangement of friends, conscious incompetence and weakness, and often an overpowering sense of deepening responsibility,—these experiences are all like thorns and briers, which irritate and worry by their persistent and close contact;—yet all these vanish when Thou, my gracious God, dost give the word, and I wonder as I find myself walking peacefully among



the fir trees, where the pine needles lie thick upon the ground, spreading the softest of carpets under my tired feet ; and where the myrtle's snowy blossoms and glossy leaves promise perfume and sweetness even to those who bruise them. Thy ways, O Lord, are past finding out, but they are very gracious and tender ; and this turning of seeming evil into good, of making Thy children's trials grow into triumphs, and their pains into pleasures, is a wonderful proof both of Thy pity and Thy power.

*"It shall be to the Lord for a name."* My Father, can this be really so ? Does Thy great Name receive added glory when Thou dost thus manifest Thy sovereignty on *my* behalf ? When I come to the next sharp thorn-

hedge in my path, will it *honour* Thee if, instead of trying to force my way *through* it, and getting wounded for my pains,—or attempting to *avoid* it by some roundabout course, and plunging deeper into the thicket, I should just calmly sit down before it, and pray, and wait for Thee to wither it up, or turn it into a myrtle grove ? Yes, I believe it will, and I seek faith and grace from Thee to do constantly this otherwise impossible thing. Past mercies and deliverances should strengthen me to expect yet greater manifestations of Thy marvellous love.

Dear Lord, when troubles come, I should like to learn to look upon them as ways and means of glorifying Thee, to accept them as tests and trials of my faith, and to meet them



with a brave heart, expecting the salvation of God! If my pathway were always smooth and pleasant, with never a thorn or brier to vex and trouble me, there would be no opportunity for the glorious exercise of Thy love and mercy in deliverance from them. Courage, my soul! Thy God will give thee grace to say, as did His servant Paul, "Most gladly *therefore* will I rather glory in my infirmities, *that the power of Christ may rest upon me.*"

## A CURE FOR DIS- CONTENT.

*"Let my mouth be filled with Thy praise and with Thy honour all the day."*—Psalm lxxi. 8.

LORD, may this cry of my heart reach Thine attentive ear this morning! Lips, and tongue, and mouth are all empty at this calm, quiet hour, and I come to entreat Thee to cleanse and consecrate them to Thyself and Thy service, so that "all the day long" they may be filled with the sweetness of Thy love, and out of this blessed fulness may "shew forth Thy salvation."

Far too often, O my Master, is my mouth filled with the bitterness of earth's impure fountains; but now, my chief



desire is that only the bright streams of thankful love and praise to Thee should flow from it. How seldom does the tender grace of the early morning devotion *last* throughout the busy hours of the day! It is gone as the dew on the grass when the sun looks upon it, or as the fleecy cloud when the West wind blows it away. Why is it, dear Lord, that earth and earthly things have such power to draw away my thoughts and heart from the unseen but eternal realities which are so near and precious to me when I am alone with Thee? Wilt Thou not teach me the blessed secret of abiding "under the shadow of the Almighty"?

"*My mouth.*" This is a distinctly personal matter, about which I should be seriously con-

cerned. "All Thy works shall praise Thee, O Lord; and Thy saints shall bless Thee;" but if every creature and all creation were silent, this tongue of mine ought to speak of Thy loving-kindness and Thy tender mercy, for "He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God."

"*Filled with Thy praise.*" Abounding in thanksgiving! Brimming over with grateful love! So full of joy and rejoicing in God that, "my tongue also shall talk of Thy righteousness all the day long." This is how it should be; but, alas! Lord, I have not thus glorified Thee. My heart has more often been troubled than glad, petitions have more frequently filled my mouth than praise, sharp and hasty words have escaped the



lips which should "drop as the honeycomb," and the glory due unto Thy Name has been less thought of than the passing needs of my sinful and selfish heart. O Lord Jesus Christ, how much Thou hast to pardon and to pity! How very far I am yet from being conformed to Thy likeness!

A surly servant is no credit to his master, a thankless guest is no joy in a house, and a miserable Christian is an anomaly in God's universe. Lord, help me to cultivate gladness, teach me to improve every occasion of receiving mercy from Thee; do Thou so *fill* my mouth with praise and thanksgiving that there may be *no room in it* for anything less choice and precious! I have Thy dear promise to plead when I ask this, for

Thou hast said, "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it." As the hungry little birds in a nest gape and clamour for the food they need, but cannot obtain for themselves, so do all the emotions of my soul long to be supplied by Thee with the power to show forth Thy praise.

Ah, Lord! there is no lack of material for thanksgiving, no dearth of causes for gratitude. There are mountains of mercies to praise Thee for, seas of exceeding love, boundless stores of grace! I am surrounded, weighed down, covered and submerged with countless blessings, all of which I owe to Thee, my God. If I could ceaselessly praise Thee throughout my mortal life, and then through all eternity, I could never begin to repay the debt of love I owe. If every word I spoke, and every



act I performed, and every desire of my soul were "to Thy Name, and to the remembrance of Thee," this would be far less homage, more incomplete devotion than I am bound to render.

*"Filled . . . . with Thy honour."* Lord, can it be that *Thy honour* is thus entrusted to the lips of Thy believing people? Dost thou look to such a source for the proclamation of Thy perfect justice and Thy glorious grace? Is it in this way that Thou dost come seeking "the fruit of our lips giving thanks to Thy Name"? How often, then, must we have disappointed and dishonoured Thee, O Lord! I bow my head for very shame before Thee, when I think how often Thou hast found upon this tongue of mine either a guilty silence, or thankless and half-

hearted words, when there should have been jubilant psalms of praise, and sweetest of songs of thanksgiving. But now, alter all this for me, dear Master: "Let my mouth be filled with Thy praise and with Thy honour *all the day.*" From morn to eve, may the chief thought of my life be, how I shall glorify my God by "speaking well of His Name." Through every moment of every hour of every day, may the consciousness that I am Thine, and that Thou hast loved me, stir my spirit to the constant melody of whole-hearted gratitude! Thou hast said, "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me," and I joyfully reply, "Yes, Lord, 'my lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto Thee,' and Thy praise shall continually be in my mouth."



THE FETTERS OF  
UNBELIEF.

*"Why could not we cast him out?  
Jesus said unto them, Because of your  
unbelief."*—Matt. xvii. 19, 20.

DEAR LORD, behold another poor failing disciple comes to Thee, this morning, with the same pitiful question! I have tried to live for Thee, and work for Thee,—with honest purpose endeavouring to bless others in Thy Name, yet, how signal, oftentimes, have been my failures!

Lord, *why could I not* overcome the sin which so easily beset me? *Why could I not* check the sharp word on my tongue, and subdue the

fierce risings of anger in my heart? *Why can I not* always walk so near to Thee that my whole life may be under Thy sweet control, and every thought, and deed, and word, be sanctified by Thy consent and approval? *Why have I not* the power to influence and draw others to Thy dear feet, that they may find in Thee, as I have done, "a very present help in trouble"?

Lord, I know Thy answer to me will be the same as that to Thy first disciples. Sadly and sorrowfully Thou sayest, "*Because of your unbelief.*"

What a humbling revelation these words convey! My soul, 'tis but a little while since thou didst ring the joy-bells of faith triumphantly! Has thy right



hand already lost its cunning? Has the wicked unbelief, still lingering within thee, stopped the glorious music thy faith was making, and turned the blessed assertion of "How shall He not!" into the faithless whining question of "*How shall He?*" Satan has taunted thee with thy unworthiness. But dost thou think thy demerit could stay the hand from blessing which gave "His only-begotten Son", or overturn the covenant of grace of which He was made "Surety" in the days of old? Lord, it is too true that my faith is often bound by the fetters of unbelief, and her wings are clipped, so that she can only painfully attempt to fly Heavenward. I know this is the secret cause of many an unanswered prayer, many a failure in service and in holy living.

Now I bring myself to Thee, with every whit as much need of spiritual healing as the poor lunatic boy had of deliverance from demoniac possession. Cast out every evil thing, Lord, and manifest in me "what is the exceeding greatness of Thy power to us-ward who believe." Thou art the Author and Giver of faith, endue me plenteously with this living grace, banish all doubt and mistrust from my heart, that faith may be always rejoicing, always conquering, always bringing glory to Thee! "Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief!"



## THE HILL-COUNTRY OF PERFECT TRUST.

*"Therefore I will look unto the LORD;  
I will wait for the God of my salvation:  
my God will hear me."—Micah vii. 7.*

HEART-RENDING griefs are often the forerunners of great spiritual blessing. It must needs be a heavy wave of affliction which casts some of us high and dry on the safe and sheltered shore of complete confidence in God. It was a most distressful acquaintance with earth's shame and sorrow which drew from the Lord's prophet the exalted utterance of the text, and we often have to learn the blessedness of turning to God, and trusting Him, by the sharp pain of finding out that He alone is a dependable and constant Friend.

Come, my heart, God has set thee a lesson to repeat, this morning, which has stood thee in good stead in many a time of sorrow! To say it over again, will help thee to get it by heart, for thou canst not too often remember the loving-kindness of the Lord, and the many deliverances He has wrought for thee.

Reading the first six verses of this chapter, we see in each of them a "because" for the "therefore" which follows in the seventh. Manifold miseries and woes are here delineated by the prophet. He has discovered the faithlessness of friends, he has endured the pitiless malice of enemies;—feuds and factions, bribes and betrayals, crimes and cruelties have encompassed him, even the closest of all human



ties has been strained; he is solitary, desolate, and discouraged,—his soul fainteth within him; but in the face of all this grief, nay, *because* of it, he remembers the Lord, and an upward look to Him brings swift and sure relief. The very extremity of his condition has caused him to flee to the only Refuge, the very bitterness of his distresses has suggested the sweet solace of rest in God's unchangeable love.

Dear Father, how often do we, Thy children, share in the experience so vividly described by Micah! Great tempests of sorrow beat upon us, we see the shipwreck of all our dearest hopes, and suffer the desertion of many friends, before we reach this rock of "therefore", and can stand upon its summit with

uplifted face, regardless of the angry waves below, and with all our hope and expectation centered in God alone. The teaching and the discipline of life are truly blessed to us when earthly troubles serve to raise us nearer to our Heavenly Father, and the sad inconstancy of the creature reveals to us more distinctly the immutability of Him who has loved us from all eternity.

*"Therefore I will look unto the Lord."* Eyes and heart are both sorely aching with grief at the sight of the sin, and selfishness, and sorrow which are within and around me; but help me, dear Lord, to look up, enable me to "lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh mine help." As travellers on the great mountains



refrain from looking down the steep precipices, keeping their eyes fixed on the heights above lest a sudden vertigo should overcome them, so may I look unto the Lord with humble, steadfast gaze, and receive courage and strength to press onward and upward in the path He has marked out for me!

*"I will wait for the God of my salvation."* Though bruised and wearied by the roughness of the way, I have at last reached a safe shelter and resting-place where I may wait till my Lord reveals Himself to me as my Deliverer.

How blest am I to know that One so mighty both in love and power watches over and directs my steps,—One who is not only "God", but "the God of my salvation"! He

has a more tender and personal interest in me than in the angels of Heaven, for I am that marvel of marvels, a sinner saved by grace, a soul redeemed unto God by His most precious blood!

For Him I will wait, confident and expectant. As someone lately said, "I know I am cared for; but just what His care may deem best for me, this I do not know." I can leave all with Him, and wait the unfolding of His will and purpose concerning me.

*Waiting* for the Lord is often the surest mode of progression in the Divine life; and to be silent before Him, is not unfrequently the most importunate of petitions.

*"My God will hear me."* Of course He will; let us never



doubt it. This is the language of full assurance, the tongue of the dwellers in the hill-country of Perfect Trust. Such speech well becomes those who look to and wait for the God of their salvation.

Dear reader, dost *thou* use it often and well?

## WAITING AT THE GATE.

*"I wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait, and in His Word do I hope."*—Psa. cxxx. 5.

I AM a suppliant at the door of a palace, a beggar at the gate of a King, but with this gracious dissimilarity to usual petitioners, that the Lord of the palace is my personal Friend, and, though I am waiting outside at present, I possess an invitation to enter, and know that the door will be wide open to me some day. Nay, more than this, if I tell all that is in my heart,—I am daily expecting that the King Himself will come and call me in, and admit me to His presence as His own child.

Well, my soul, this is a blessed condition of favour and privilege,



surely ! Thou mayest well afford to wait patiently for so glorious a hope as this. Thou knowest that *waiting* is far better than *wandering*, and that silently uplifted hands plead more eloquently than a torrent of words. Keep thou thy tarrying, entreating posture ; and if the summons come not yet, it should be joy enough to wait and watch for *His* time and *His* will, and to anticipate the coming glory in which He has promised that thou shalt share.

For what dost thou say thou are waiting ? Alms ? Entrance ? Welcome ? Thou hast the first even now, for His bounty reaches thee as thou standest watching daily at His gates ; and the better blessings are certain when He has perfected that which concerneth thee, for then thou wilt know with glad surprise

“ what He hath prepared for him that waiteth for Him.”

Meanwhile, dost thou not get some wondrous glimpses of thy glorious Friend through the lattices, and have there not been times when thou didst catch the sweet tones of His voice as He said, “ I will come again, and receive you unto Myself ” ?

“ *I wait for the Lord.*” Blessed Master, I thank Thee for my waiting times ;—they are times of love and favour, they draw me nearer, closer, more urgently to Thy feet. Thy “ delays are not denials.” Thy tarryings do but ensure a more bountiful providing. When thou seemest slow to answer prayer, it is but to make me more eager for the mercy, or to teach me to ask with greater confidence, or that Thou mayest gather up Thy



blessings in order to bestow them "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think."

"*My soul doth wait.*" Ah, Lord! what special blessedness of sweet content I find in waiting before Thee when Thou fillest my heart with adoring love and gratitude, when I am silent, because no words are needed between Thee and my wondering soul, when I am humbled to the very dust by Thy love and favour, yet lifted into the Heavenly places through Christ Jesus, and thus I wait, and watch, and worship! This is the waiting upon Thee which renews the strength of my spiritual life. This is the waiting that never wearies, the expectancy that never disappoints, the "hope that maketh not ashamed." Oh, to be found thus

waiting *for* God, and *upon* God, "till He come"!

"*And in His Word do I hope.*" What is His "Word" to thee this morning, my soul? Hast thou already gathered thy daily manna, and tasted its sweetness? The Heavenly food lies thick around thee, for the Lord has strewn the pages of His Word with promises of blessedness to those who wait for Him. And remember, His slightest Word stands fast and sure; it can never fail thee. So, my soul, see that thou "have a promise underneath thee," for then thy *waiting* will be *resting*, and a firm foothold for thy hope will give thee confidence in Him who has said, "*They shall not be ashamed that wait for Me.*"



## ABSOLUTE SURRENDER.

*"I am thine, and all that I have."*—  
I Kings xx. 4.

A LITTLE WHILE SINCE, DEAR LORD, Thou didst permit me to sign a contract for the building of a House of Prayer to the honour of Thy Name. This morning, on the table of my heart there rests another covenant, one I would fain renew with Thee, and to which I pray Thee to set Thy seal and signature. O my Lord, come near, I beseech Thee; look down with Thy great love upon me as I write these solemn words, "I AM THINE, AND ALL THAT I HAVE," and let my soul hear Thy tender response, "I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine."

There is nothing on earth, O Lord, Thou knowest, that I desire so much as to be absolutely surrendered to Thee, and to Thy service. I want the fullest spiritual blessing Thou canst see fit to give me; and to obtain this, I do gladly yield up body, soul, and spirit,—all that I am and have,—into Thy loving hands, that Thou mayest reign over me, and rule within me as my absolute King and Master.

Dost Thou ask me if I have counted the cost? Yes, Lord, it means, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." This is the cost, but Thy grace is sufficient to meet it, and to



fill Thy child's heart with joy unspeakable at the thought that she is no longer her own, but "bought with a price."

"*I am Thine.*" Who has so great a right to me as Thou hast? Created by Thee, I belong of necessity to Him who made me. Daily preserved by Thee, the life Thou maintainest ought to be consecrated to Thy service. But the closest tie of all is that Thou hast loved me, redeemed me from death, purchased me with the price of Thine own blood, and thus bound me to Thyself for ever. O love amazing and Divine, why didst Thou do all this for one so unlovely and unworthy? It is but another instance of "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight," and, since it has pleased Thee

to be thus gracious, and Thou hast made it possible for me to say, "I am Thine," it must naturally follow that I should add, "*and all that I have,*" laying every possession and power at Thy dear feet; for what have I, Lord, of anything good or excellent which is not Thine own gift to me?

I pray Thee to grant that my surrender may be real, practical, and complete; not in word only, but in deed and in truth,—not simply a spiritual submission, which might be counted easy and pleasant, but that constant denial of self and its pleadings, that keeping under of the body, and bringing it into subjection, which I find so difficult of attainment.

If Thou hast given me but one talent, may that be so



used as to bring the greatest possible interest of glory to Thee! My time must not be aimlessly frittered away, or merely employed for self-indulgence; but every hour should bear on its fast flying wings the witness of something said, or done, or thought, for Thee, my Master, or Thy service. My money all belongs to Thee, and every coin of it should be spent, as in Thy sight, and with Thy approval. I pray Thee, enable me, in this matter, to render a good account of my stewardship. Deliver me from the evil of looking on gold as a gift, to be used at my will and pleasure, instead of receiving it from Thee as a sacred loan or trust to be employed and expended only for Thy glory. Be it much or little which Thou dost bestow on me, help me from my heart

to say, "*All that I have is Thine.*"

O my pitiful Lord, Thou wilt remember that my dearest and most precious possession is already in Thy safe keeping, and that Thou hast long since taught me, by a sorrowful experience, to measure earth's losses by Heaven's gain! Yes, Lord, I can bless Thee that Thou hast but removed my treasure into Thine own treasury, and gathered my priceless jewel into Thine own regalia. "Of Thine own have I given Thee" when resigning into Thy arms that most dearly-beloved one who is now with Thee in the glory.

Dear Lord, in taking *him*, Thou seemest to have taken ALL THAT I HAVE, so that it is no longer a question of "surrender", but only of quiet,



happy submission, as Thy will daily unfolds itself, and directs my work and my way.

Lord, keep me ever thus in the secret hiding-place of Thy love, "as having nothing, yet possessing all things;" it is so safe a shelter for a weary, waiting soul, and so blessed a way of being made meet for the coming inheritance!



RE

2

Sp